Report of the Ninety Fourth Annual Conference Bridlington 2012

Registered Office:
Stanborough House, Great North Road, Stanborough
Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL8 7TA
Official Report
of the
94th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Held at
The Spa,
Bridlington
from
Sunday 10 June 2012
to
Wednesday 13 June 2012

General Secretary: Bro R Draper
National President: Bro I Hodson
## Contents

### Sunday 10 June 2012

| 1 | New Rule – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth | 14 |
| 4 | Rule 1.4 – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth | 16 |
| 5 | Rule 4.1 – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth | 17 |
| 6 | Rule 5.1 – No 4 Regional Council | 21 |
| 7 | Rule 5.2 – No 7 Regional Council | 23 |
| 8 | Rule 5.2 – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth | 24 |
| 11 | Rule 5.2 – Branch 450 Manchester | 25 |

### Afternoon Session

| 12 | Rule 5.2 – No 3 Regional Council | 37 |
| 13 | Rule 5.2 – No 3 Regional Council | 38 |
| 14 | Rule 5.2 – No 3 Regional Council | 40 |
| 16 | Rule 11.1 Complaints – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth | 43 |
| 17 | Rule 13.1 – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth | 44 |
| 18 | Rule 13.3 Legal Advice – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth | 47 |
| 19 | Rule 14.5 – No 3 Regional Council | 49 |
| 20 | Rule 14.8 (i) Shop Stewards – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth | 51 |
| 21 | New Rule – No 5 Regional Council | 51 |

### Monday 11 June 2012

| 23 | Rule 14.8 (K) – No 3 Regional Council | 61 |
| 24 | Rule 15.4 – No 5 Regional Council | 63 |
| 25 | Rule 17.2 – No 3 Regional Council | 65 |
| 26 | Rule 22.4(a) – No 3 Regional Council | 68 |
| 27 | Rule 22.19 – Election of the Executive Council – No 3 Regional Council | 71 |
| 28 | Rule 22.19 – No 3 Regional Council | 77 |
| 29 | Rule 22.21 Full Time Officials – Executive Council | 82 |

<p>| 35 | New Rule – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth | 104 |
| 36 | No 5 Regional Council | 108 |
| 37 | No 5 Regional Council | 109 |
| 39 | No 5 Regional Council | 110 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Branch 215 Postal Branch</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>No 5 Regional Council</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>No 5 Regional Council</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Branch 580 Greggs</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Branch 580 Greggs</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Tuesday 12 June 2012</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>No 5 Regional Council</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Branch 580 Greggs</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Branch 390 Manor</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Branch 505 Northumberland &amp; Durham</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>No 2 Regional Council</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Afternoon Session</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>No 2 Regional Council</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Branch 450 Manchester</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>No 3 Regional Council</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>No 7 Regional Council</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency Motion One</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Branch 505 Northumberland &amp; Durham</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Branch 390 Manor</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Branch 331/392 Birmingham/West Midlands</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wednesday 13 June 2012.................................................................................................................. 190

Morning Session............................................................................................................................... 190

69 No 2 Regional Council............................................................................................................. 191
70 No 2 Regional Council............................................................................................................. 193
71 No 2 Regional Council............................................................................................................. 193
72 Branch 580 Greggs ................................................................................................................. 197
74 Branch 450 Manchester .......................................................................................................... 200
75 No 3 Regional Council........................................................................................................... 203
76 No 7 Regional Council............................................................................................................. 206
Composite Two .............................................................................................................................. 212
81 No 5 Regional Council............................................................................................................. 214
82 Branch 390 Manor .................................................................................................................. 217
83 Executive Council.................................................................................................................... 218
84 No 5 Regional Council............................................................................................................. 219
85 No 5 Regional Council............................................................................................................. 220
86 No 3 Regional Council............................................................................................................. 222

Afternoon Session .......................................................................................................................... 224

88 No 5 Regional Council............................................................................................................. 225
89 Branch 215 South Western ...................................................................................................... 226
91 Branch 390 Manor ................................................................................................................... 227
92 Branch 215 South Western ...................................................................................................... 228
94 Branch 450 Manchester .......................................................................................................... 230
95 Branch 450 Manchester .......................................................................................................... 231
96 Branch 450 Manchester .......................................................................................................... 233
97 Branch 450 Manchester .......................................................................................................... 233
98 Branch 450 Manchester .......................................................................................................... 236
99 No 5 Regional Council............................................................................................................. 237
Emergency Motion Two ................................................................................................................. 238

Annual Conference Report 2012
Sunday 10 June 2012

Morning Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary to call the Roll.

(Roll Call taken)

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: There’s 172 Delegates present. If any of the Delegates who are late or don’t attend at all this morning, if you can make sure if the officials from the Regions, make sure that they attend the Standing Orders please.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, just to remind you of some logistics. Please turn your mobile phones off, believe that’s a Standing Orders offence, is that right Olive? We’ve got a big collection going yes? Obviously there’s toilets and I think everybody that comes often will know that they’re through that door. I think there’s some upstairs as well, I believe so, at the back. Obviously there’s a First Aid facility somewhere, I believe you go upstairs to the Reception to get First Aid stuff. Fire exits are clearly marked, there’s no fire drill planned that we know of. Standing Orders room is in its normal place which is up the stairs, you can’t get to the lift to the top of the stairs, but if you go through there, lift to the next floor then you get out the lift and you walk up the stairs to the Standing Orders. Obviously we try and make sure that the office is out of bounds during the Conference, and obviously it’s a No Smoking establishment, as all places are now, so smoking is in the designated areas only.

Okay. Can I call Olive Molloy to give her first report from Standing Orders.

Sister Olive Molloy – Branch 577: Good Morning Conference. Mr President, Platform, Delegates.

On behalf of the Standing Orders Committee I offer you all a warm welcome to this our 94th Conference. The Standing Orders Committee recommend that the procedures for this year’s Conference are as follows. Each Conference session will begin with a Roll Call taken by the General Secretary. Morning sessions will begin promptly at 9 o’clock until 12.30, and Afternoon sessions from 2 o’clock until 5 o’clock. All tea breaks, Guest Speakers, and presentations will be at the President’s discretion throughout Conference. The usual Conference rules apply. All Delegates must be in the Hall by the beginning of Roll Call. Any Delegate not in the Hall by then will be refused entry until they have been up to the Standing Orders Office where they may well be fined for lateness. Full Time Officials or Delegation leaders must come to Standing Orders with the names of any absent Delegates, and Delegates coming to the Standing Orders on Conference business must have the support of their full Delegation. All Delegates must vote for or against a Motion when called upon to do so by the National President, and any Delegate wishing to abstain from voting must leave the Hall when the vote is called, and return when the next Motion on the agenda is announced. Will Scrutineers please collect all nomination papers and bring them to Standing Orders Office by 11 o’clock this morning? I ask that you do not separate your nomination or ballot papers. This makes it a lot easier for the people upstairs to count if the papers are left in order, they can be put into the appropriate piles. The same applies for ballot papers tomorrow morning.

Will the Full Time Officials please see that these papers are collected and delivered promptly to enable the Scrutineers to carry out the counting and get the results out as soon as possible. Late papers just delay the whole process. The Standing Orders Office will be closed during counting, but a member of the Committee will be available to answer any queries if necessary. Any Emergency Resolutions or Composites must be brought to Standing Orders for approval, and not taken straight into Jan’s office for typing. Please carry your credential cards at all times, and
failure to show this to the Officials on the door will result in you being refused entry into this Hall.

Finally, please ensure that all mobile phones are switched off during all Conference sessions. Now please turn to your agendas.

First section under Rule Changes and New Rules. Motion 1 stands, Motion 2 is withdrawn. Motion 3 is out of order. Motion 4 stands, 5 stands, 6 stands, 7 stands, 8 stands, 9 stands, it is more of a statement and can stand but it’ll be more of a discussion on this Motion. Ten is withdrawn in favour of 11, so 11 stands. Twelve stands, 13 stands but falls if 10, if number 11 sorry, number 11 carries. Fourteen stands but falls again if the Motion 11 carries. Fifteen is withdrawn, 16 stands, 17 stands, 18 stands, 19 and 20 stand, 21 stands, 22 is withdrawn, 23 stands, 24 stands, 25 stands, 26 stands, 27 stands, 28 stands, 29 and the amendment stand, 30 stands but falls if 29 carries, and 31 stands.

Could I please ask that the movers of 32, 33 and 34 come to the Standing Orders Office immediately after this report. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Can we accept that report? Is this………?

Sister Olive Molloy – Branch 577: The amendment to Motion 29 has been withdrawn. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you Olive. To the Conference, we accept the report? Show your hands. Okay, anybody against? Okay thank you.

It’s now my pleasure to invite the Chairman of East Riding Yorkshire Council, Chad Chadwick to give us, to open the Conference officially for us. Please welcome Chad.

[applause]

Chad Chadwick: Mr President, General Secretary, Delegates. Good Morning. Welcome back to Bridlington and this wonderful Spa complex. I understand it’s the 16th time you’ve been here and we thank you very much for that. As Henry VIII said to his wives, I won’t keep you long. I’m sure you can’t wait to get on with the business of the day. I think it’s safe to say that everyone appreciates the job that you and your members do for us. Thank you to Ronnie and the President for organising the event and choosing Bridlington, and I hope that you all enjoy yourselves. Judging from the Roll Call it certainly takes some organising. Your few days with us, despite the weather, I hope will be enjoyable. A chance to meet old friends and maybe make new friends. So have an interesting and successful Conference, and thank you very much for choosing Bridlington. Thank you.

[applause]

Chad Chadwick: I now declare the Conference open.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Ronnie are we presenting the cake? The cake this year has been made by the fantastic bakers down at Park Cake in Oldham I believe, so it’s all made by trade union hands, and it’s…………where’s the camera man? Woman? Bit of a technical issue with the camera. Does take some organising. It’s Sunday, forgive us. Okay. So we are going to make an official presentation shortly. In the meantime, obviously can I welcome all the new Delegates to Conference, if this is your first time here I hope you enjoy the week. If you’re sat with somebody who’s an old-timer here they’ll be able to tell you how the Conference runs, and maybe they can come up here and remind me how it runs, because I think it’ll be quite an important opportunity to remind me what happens at Conference. So welcome all the new Delegates, and welcome to the new branches that we’ve made this year. I know we’ve had a lot of organising and obviously we’ve had Solway Foods which has recently been successful in a
ballot, and we’d like to congratulate the people in Number 3 on their successful outcome of that ballot.

Also we’d like to welcome our stallholders and our sponsors. We’ve got GM Freeze, LRC, Right to Work. I’d like to thank Warburtons for sponsoring the teas and the coffees, and Fox’s for the normal position with the biscuits. I think we’ve got some tins of biscuits somewhere yes?

[applause]

Okay. And now I’d like to introduce the Executive Council, if I can remember who they are. Okay, thank you very much. Obviously I’d like to make you aware that obviously Kevin’s unfortunately not been able to make Conference, so at the last Executive Council we nominated John, well he volunteered and everybody supported him, and obviously he’s our, my assistant, Vice President for this Conference, and I’d like to thank him for that.

So, right, on the back row...

[applause]

On the back row we’ve got Dave Murdoch, he’s over there, I take it not standing up, no? Okay, Marilyn French, Jackie Barnwell, Pauline McCarthy, Joe Knapper, John Newman behind me, Jason Moore, Seamus Farrelly, okay? Cecil John, obviously Helena England who’s the Substitute Delegate from Number 5, Noel Mullen who’s on the end there, Gulli as I always refer to him, Norville Grazette who’s there, John Fitzpatrick, Mr Fox as I’ve already introduced, and Vi Carr. And obviously on the end please welcome the EC’s Guest to Conference, Mr Dick Punshon who obviously needs no introductions whatsoever.

[applause]

Part of the reason for inviting Dick to Conference as our Executive Guest was to make sure everybody had the opportunity to get some of the freebies off the stall [laughter]. Okay. We’ve had a few messages sent to us, we’ve had obviously fraternal greetings and good luck wishes from Kevin Flood, and from Laura Graham who obviously wished they could be here but obviously you’ll be aware that they recently had a baby, and due to domestic commitments have been unable to come across. Also we’ve had from the LRC, fraternal greetings from, sent on behalf of Andrew Fisher, who asked us to have an enjoyable week, and a successful Conference, and like I say they have a stall upstairs. Pete Riley from GM Wheat who’s not here today but will be here on a stall for the rest of the week from tomorrow, also sends fraternal greetings.

So obviously the next point is the appointment of Scrutineers which is, who are, appointment of Scrutineers who are Region 1, Mo Singh, Region 2 Dawn Scott, Region 3 Richard Wainwright, Region 4 Michael Redshaw, Region 5 Adrian Hyde, Region 6 William Crean, and Region 7 John Halliday Junior. Okay.

Right we’ve got the camera, we’re going to have the presentation of the cake. Okay.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Hang on first of all, 94th Conference this, the Union has. Talking about anniversaries incidentally, it’s Ian and Deb’s anniversary today, and she’s not wearing her medals but she will be by lunchtime. So a round of applause come on. Anyone who marries Ian needs a round of applause.

[applause]

Right, these are biscuits that are actually made at Fox’s Biscuits in Batley by trade union members and we hope you take them away, remind you of your visit here. You don’t need to take them into the office or anything like that, you take them home and eat them all yourself.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** If anybody uses Twitter, I don’t know if anybody does use Twitter, but if you do can you make sure that you Twitter both myself and Ronnie, mine’s
ianbfawu and Ronnie’s is ronniebfawu, and we’ve put a hash tag as well of bfwconf, so if you are using Twitter, please could you make sure you copy us in so we can make sure we can get it on the website as well.

[applause]

While we’re getting a box prepared to take a photograph has everybody filled in their nomination forms? And if they have can the Full Time Officials make sure they go up to Standing Orders please?

If anybody’s not sure what you do, if you ask a Full Time Official they’ll advise you how you fill your forms in and make sure that they’re done properly. The young person is 27.

Okay, thank you very much and thank you for officially opening our Conference.

[applause]

Can I remind Delegates as well that we’ve had a Conference Resolution in place that says we do not allow The Sun into our Conference Hall and could I remind Delegates that The Scum is a paper that we would not support, we do not endorse and we actually do not want to see it in the Conference Hall. And in fact if you buy it, then any Standing Order fine is tripled or maybe quadrupled and goes to the Support Fund for the 96.

[applause]

And just while we’re on about sporting activities, I don’t know if people are aware about the issue with Adidas, but War on Want are running a campaign at the moment, and if you go to the War on Want website we’d encourage people to support that campaign to stop the exploitation of people who are being exploited in the making of sports equipment and kits during 2012.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Can I just explain I mean, I’ve had a number of queries about why you haven’t got nomination papers for the Substitute for the Executive Council, it’s pretty logical really, I don’t know why we’ve ever done it in the past. If somebody gets nominated for the Executive Council and that same person gets nominated for Substitute, the voting takes place at the same time, right? Rather than having then to run a re-ballot because somebody’s been, you might get the same person elected as Substitute and as the Executive Council member. So what you do, you run your Executive Council ballot first, you find out who the Executive Council member is, and then you know that person would not be included in the Substitutes. The problem you’ve got if you run the both of them at the same time, even if the President says well look, so and so’s been elected as the Executive Council member, so disregard them, you will still there’ll be people who will still count them, we’ve had it in the past. And so it’s much easier to run the ballot for the Executive Council today and tomorrow, and then once we’ve got the result which will be at lunchtime tomorrow afternoon, then we will run the Substitute nominations and elections straight after that, they will be done tomorrow afternoon.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay colleagues. Okay colleagues, obviously in the, for new Delegates, in the Red Book which is called the 94th Annual Conference Bridlington Annual Report, if you could turn to page 61, and I’d also like to obviously in the Foodworker there is also three obituaries in there as well, which was Derek Dawson, John Cohan and Morris Alderson. John Cohan used to be an EC member who passed away recently and I would like to take a minute’s silence. Please stand.

Thank you colleagues.

Just before we move on with the agenda, obviously at the end of the table over there responsible for the Powerpoint presentations, he puts a lot of work into it before Conference is John
Vickers. Obviously John Vickers also is the manager of our Learning Project, and there’s a couple of people I’ve been asked to mention, which is a Gail Bird from Manor Carlton, who, overcoming Dyslexia, and winning the Highest Commended Learner Award from NISA. She was also interviewed as part of the audit, and stated that she would never have done it without the help and support from the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union Learning Services and the ULRs, and she said where there is need, there to be a big thank you to the ULRs for all their hard work that they have put it. Also the Six Book Challenge this year was promoted at Gunstones Bakery in Dronfield, and they had an outstanding 55 people taking part in the challenge. This included also managers and HR and Occupational Health as well as operatives, and they wanted to thank the ULRs for their hard work that they put in and it shows what can be achieved. So I’d like to thank those people that take part in our Learning Service, and all those people from the Learning Services do a fantastic job on our behalf. Thank you.

[applause]

And another that obviously I didn’t have in front of me which is Nathan Pearson for the Job Club which was obviously set up at Shaw in Oldham, and I believe that’s been a fantastic success and I believe it is now a stand alone centre is it? Yes? Absolutely brilliant, so well done to Nathan from Warbies in Shaw as was.

[applause]

Just get me paperwork sorted. Okay. We will go through the Annual Reports and we start at page 6. I’m going to do it one page at a time, so for the new Delegates, I call out the page number, and if you want to come down and ask any questions on it, you come down to the rostrum and raise the question there, yes?


**Brother Martin Kelly – Branch 560:** Just on page 9, on National Accounts, on D, Union to move virtual server at a cost of £5,380 moved (inaudible) and seconded J Fox. Could you tell…….

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Martin could you speak into the microphone, we can’t hear you at the back here I’m afraid.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Ask if they can turn the speakers up under here.

**Brother Martin Kelly – Branch 560:** Can you hear?

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** I think it’s our speakers Martin, we have speakers under here but I don’t know whether they’re switched on or not.

**Brother Martin Kelly – Branch 560:** Can Conference hear? National Accounts, D, about Union to move virtual server at a cost of £5,380. Could you tell me and the rest of the Delegation what have you moved from and how much of a saving was there? Or if there was any savings? Thank you.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** General Secretary.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Thanks Martin, cheers. I know absolutely nothing about these things and I end up being the one who has to respond to them. Could I say, and I’m looking at John as well because he probably understands this stuff much better than I do. We had a, we used to have our own in-house server, which only has a certain lifetime, and if I’m not mistaken it costs something like, I don’t know, 35,000 quid, 40,000 quid, it was quite a big sizeable chunk of money when we bought it a number of years ago. But of course like anything else, it’s like buying a car, you buy a new car and after so many years it gets worse and it needs more and more repairs, and it slows down and all those sort of things. My understanding is a server’s exactly the same. And so what we’ve done, we’ve actually rented space on a server
that’s out in the ether somewhere, it doesn’t sit in our office, it’s something that sits outside, and
we access that. And that’s, you know, it works out I suppose cheaper in the long run in that we
haven’t got to keep coming up with this big lump of money of £35-£40,000, these things that
will increase year on year, and then find that we’ve got to keep on replacing them. So with this
it’s almost we have an unlimited amount of space on the server, and if we need at any time to
get more, we know it’s there, it’s guaranteed. And if anything goes wrong with it, the cost isn’t
down to the Union to go and repair it, somebody else is doing that for us. We took a lot of
advice on it and that seemed to be the best way of doing things. I’ve got to say, I’m not an IT
expert, we absolutely, you know we employ somebody who does the IT for us, and obviously
we’ve got people within the Union who understand these things much better than me.
Unfortunately they’re not the ones who have to answer here. But that’s the response anyway
Martin. Okay?

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Page 10, page 11. Page 11 yes?

**Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253:** Good morning Mr President, Mr General Secretary. Just on
the Industry Committees, F, section F, where it says General Secretary supported by M French
reporting on the financial position of the company and the potential to recruit new members
using the new application forms. I was just wondering, the new application forms, are they the
ones available in the Back Office in the Greggs Shops or is there any other application forms?

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Yes it is that, it is the thing going on in Back Office
where people can join through the company. There’s always a danger of allowing anybody to
join online through the Union in that they join when they’ve got a problem and we end up
getting saddled with the debt. But through the Back Office we can do it. The other thing we’ve
done with Greggs in the past, and we’re looking to keep that going, is that when somebody joins
the company, right? We were going to send a card out apparently at one time, to every single
person who applied for a job, but of course everyone who applies for a job at Greggs doesn’t get
one, I mean there’ll be many, many thousands of people who don’t get them. And so then we’d
be wasting many, many thousands of application forms. The idea is to send an application form
out with the offer of a job, so once Greggs say to somebody here is a job, and Anita’s
on……….these are the things we’ve negotiated a long time back, once somebody gets offered a
job with Greggs there’s in essence, there should be an application form that goes out with that
offer of a job, so to show that, you know, the company aren’t anti-Union in that respect, you
know as far as joining the Union goes. That’s what that is, but yes, it’s Back Office really.

**Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253:** Brilliant, thank you.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay? Page 12, page 13, page 14, page 15, page 16, page
be a loose leaflet, Executive Council minutes, and they should be dated 3-6 May 2011. While
you’re getting those out can I just put a correction to the Scrutineers, the Number 5 Scrutineer is
actually Kath Suggett, okay? And just to make everybody aware, that this week’s meetings,
fringe meetings, there’s going to be a Greggs one which is tomorrow, 11th June, which is going
to be in the Bayview Lounge which is over there, and on Tuesday we’ve got the Organising
fringe meeting which is going to be in the Harbour Lounge, which I’m assuming is over that
way. Okay? We’ll remind you of those on the day as well. Okay, everybody’s got the loose

Okay, you can put that one away now and get your Treasurer’s Reports out please. Okay, apart
from Ronnie’s piece on page 1 and 2, we start at page 3, which is page 1. Okay, same process
again, so if you’re going to raise any questions that I call out on the page, obviously come down
to the rostrum, and ask your question from the rostrum, making sure you tell us your Branch,
Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Delegates, Mr President. On the Fixed Assets on properties, what is the real value of these properties, because as they’re here, to come down to the book value of £56,000 on the Head Office of our Union, which is one of the biggest properties we have? Why is it, can we have or could we know what the value of our properties are because our Head Office is also guaranteeing the Pension Fund, but we don’t know the real cost of that property. In today’s market it must be more than £56,000 and if it’s not, if they’re going for sale, I want one of them [laughter].

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: These are accounting procedures, we have to depreciate on property every year, and that’s why it’s going, you will see the actual net book value of Stanborough actually went up slightly in 2011 from where it was in 2010, that was because of property repairs and improvements that we did to Head Office to make it look more like a Head Office, which I’m sure everyone now believes it does. Pat, the answer to what is the real value of Head Office I’ve got to say I don’t know and I couldn’t tell you. And I’ll tell you why, it’s that if we get it revalued now, if we go out and get a revalue, then we have to do that regularly, like on a yearly basis and it costs us to get it revalued. I would, if I was estimating what Head Office was worth, and it would be an estimate because obviously the way property is at the moment, I would think you would be talking elsewhere in the region of 20 times that sum. I would surmise that Head Office is worth more than £1 million, that’s for sure. But it’s a guess, and if we get it revalued, then we’ve got to do it on a regular basis, so we may as well just leave it like that, just keep deprecimating it, and it sits there as an asset that we can if ever we wanted to, we could realise in the future, and it’s the same with all our buildings. I think every building we’ve got’s worth more than what it shows on the book value there. Whole portfolio’s only worth £95,500, like you said Pat, I’ll have them all if they’re going at that price. Okay, thank you.


Brother John Fox – Branch 417: Can I ask our National President to give his Opening Address to Conference? Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I was hoping you’d keep asking questions on the Treasurer’s Report, you let me down. Just been handed a little note though, when we’re talking about money. For anyone who is wondering what you get for donating to the government I’ve just been given this handy little breakdown. Dinner with the Prime Minister, David Cameron, £250,000, dinner with the Chancellor £200,000 and if you’re looking for dinner with Nick Clegg, it’s half a bag of chips and a Curlywurly. Now I mean I don’t know if you know, David Cameron’s only ever had one real job in his life, and that was in the TV world. And I was watching the TV the other night and I saw this interviewer talking and interviewing Robert Redford, and he actually said to Robert Redford, do you realise for what you was prepared to pay for one night with Demi Moore, you could get four nights with David Cameron. Listen, I was told not to do jokes, and now I know why.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: I told him, I told him.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I was hoping you’d keep asking questions on the Treasurer’s Report, you let me down. Just been handed a little note though, when we’re talking about money. For anyone who is wondering what you get for donating to the government I’ve just been given this handy little breakdown. Dinner with the Prime Minister, David Cameron, £250,000, dinner with the Chancellor £200,000 and if you’re looking for dinner with Nick Clegg, it’s half a bag of chips and a Curlywurly. Now I mean I don’t know if you know, David Cameron’s only ever had one real job in his life, and that was in the TV world. And I was watching the TV the other night and I saw this interviewer talking and interviewing Robert Redford, and he actually said to Robert Redford, do you realise for what you was prepared to pay for one night with Demi Moore, you could get four nights with David Cameron. Listen, I was told not to do jokes, and now I know why.
of issues, therefore I’m going to try and be brief. Okay? There are many areas that I could touch on, most of it which are covered by the agenda, some are not. But it would take too long, such as the persecution of trade unionists around the world, like the nine trade unionists in Algiers, who are on hunger strike in protest of repeated violations of human and trade union rights. Columbia, Columbia’s probably the most dangerous place in the world for any trade unionist to be. In the past 20 years, 2500 people have been killed in Columbia just for being trade unionists. It’s an absolutely appalling situation. In Tehran we’ve seen (inaudible) and the Teachers’ Association Rasoul Badaghi both recently sentenced to six years, just for being trade unionists and carrying out trade union activity. These are just a sample of the problems trade unionists face. Over here we’ve had the Beercroft Report, this is an example of what trade unions face on a day by day basis. Governments, big business and other corporations using any tactics to smash unions and workers’ rights.

And with regard to other international issues, the Hollande victory in France provided us with a bright ray of hope. He argues for growth and not austerity, prepared to overhaul the tax system and won an election on a manifesto which the Tory press over here would see as a suicide note. Hollande’s policy of raising taxes on the rich was endorsed by the French people, they recognised that the debts of the country shouldn’t be the burden of the poor, they believe that the rich should pay their fair share, they believe that bankers should be taxed, and if they don’t want to pay they can pack up and leave. How refreshing in this modern era to see a government standing up for the people, and not just the powerful and the rich and the lobbyist.

Next week in Greece, the Greeks will have their opportunity at the polls, so let’s send a message of solidarity to Syriza, a campaign that says no to austerity, no to cuts, promotes self-determination of the Greek people. I don’t believe that anyone should be forced to suffer in the way the tax-evading leader of the IMF Christine Lagarde seems to think. We should condemn the likes of her, and the rest of the idle rich and the wealthy who wilfully avoid paying their taxes, and take delight at rubbing our noses in it. The sooner we make it a jailing offence the better.

But just before I turn to our internal issues, let’s also make it clear. In a civilised society we are judged on how we treat our most vulnerable people, and the way that this government has attacked the disabled and the sick, is a disgrace. Chris Grayling along with his millionaire chum Iain Duncan Smith, both who enjoy homes and luxuries at the taxpayers’ expense have been callous, vindictive and hypocritical. If David Cameron had any real sense of decency, he should reverse the policy of cuts on the disabled and the sick. He should apologise to the sick and the disabled, and he should have the good grace to resign. These uncaring Tories are not fit to be called human beings [applause], they should be rightly condemned and I urge you to support the campaigns against the cuts. I urge you to get involved in all the campaigns against the cuts, and on the 20th October, we want the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union on the streets of London, taking part in those demonstrations. We look forward to seeing you there, we join our colleagues, we join our comrades, we stand together, we support each other.

[applause]

And let’s be clear, let’s be clear, we’re not protesting, protesting’s what you do when you don’t like something. We’ll be on the streets to demand change, that’s what we’ll be on them streets for, demanding change. We’re not there to protest, we want a change of policy, we don’t like the cuts, it’s hurting the wrong people. Let’s tax the bankers, let’s make the rich pay. It’s about time, instead of the burden being carried by the people, the working people in this country, they’ve paid their fair share. Vodaphone, £6 billion, absolutely atrocious, absolutely atrocious, while the burden falls on those who are sick and disabled, like the cancer sufferers, the cancer sufferers who are having their benefits cut. People who can’t get support when they go to the
Health Service, because they’ve had to go on a waiting list longer than it’s been in, seven or eight years, it’s absolutely appalling. So on the 20th October, no matter what you’ve got in your diaries now, cancel it, get on those streets, march with us and demand the change that we need. Demand it.

[applause]

And on the subject of change, sometimes that can apply to us as well. If you look at what we’ve been doing over the last 12 months, so that you can see how we have tried to modernise, improve our resources, our training programmes. We’ve tried to modernise and improve in the way we communicate in general. We have learnt how to utilise social networking such as Twitter. And last year we had 1.1 billion hits on our website, so we’re obviously communicating with someone. Don’t know if it’s just David Cameron and his Tory spies, but we’re definitely communicating with someone. Also this year the EC have agreed to set up Stewards’ forums in Regions 1, 2 and 3, and it’s been great taking part in those debates and those forums, we’ve had some great presentations from good friends like Colin Burgon who’s going to be here, and John McDonnell that’s going to be here this week. We also had representations from the TUC and the LRC, and I would like to thank Dave Dash for his work in this project. The resources that have come out of this project will help our Reps for years.

And if you haven’t already got a Shop Stewards’ Manual they should be in the back of the Hall I believe upstairs, and I think that’s going to set us in a good state to enable our Shop Stewards to move forward.

I’ve spent this year working with our Officials and assisting with organising across the country. Both me and Ronnie, he’s the suave one, I don’t know where he’s gone, is he Twittering, yes? Okay, he said, it was suave wasn’t it, what else was it? There was a couple of other things I was supposed to mention about you. But we’ve been visiting some sites and we’re going to carry on doing that into the future. We have debated the impact of losing members and we’ll understand that membership is critical. We must ensure that we redouble our efforts in this year and beyond. We have been meeting Officials nationally to see how we can improve and to look at how we operate, with organising, recruitment and retention being the main focus. This has led to developing a strategy for example, how we support campaigns using Officials from different Regions. How we involve our activists and improve their skills. How we use our literature, I’m sure you will have noticed a change of direction of the Foodworker made by our General Secretary. So improving resources, literature, improving our Reps’ training, talking to our Reps, improving our website, providing the consistent approach that’s supported by Officials and the EC, all goes to ensure that we are successful, not just in recruitment, but retention as well. Later today we’ll reveal one of the new benefits that we believe will help us to retain members.

We’re a Union and the message we give has to be clear and consistent. We must say what we do and deliver what we say. Despite the loss of members due to closures and redundancies since last June, we have recruited more than 3000 new members this year. These people have joined because they see us deliverering, it’s a message they like, and it’s resonating with them. Now it’s too early to say what the future brings with the changes we have made, but it gives us a platform to build on. The Executive is pleased how organising has become an integral part of Regional Council agendas, and welcomes the initiatives that are taking place all over the Regions. I must make it clear though, there are no ifs and buts. Organising is a fundamental part of what we do, it’s incorporated into the job title of all Officials, we all have a role to play, membership is the key to our survival, and we don’t want to just survive, we want to grow. We have a good message and we need to work tirelessly to get out there. And I must pay tribute to all our Officers, and our activists across the Union, that have worked on all our campaigns. Throughout this year, and this is just a brief highlight, we’ve had the Solway Foods, the 100% membership achieved at Hovis Wigan, the new members at Hovis Birmingham, the new members at
Gunstones, the sustained growth at Warburtons, at Greggs, at RF Brookes to name but a few. And at this point I would like to pay tribute to you. Because the work that you do as our activists is absolutely fantastic. You are what makes this Union unique, your dedication is phenomenal and on behalf of the EC I’d like to thank you.

[applause]

All too often trade unionists underestimate their own economic strength, but this year we have faced up to some challenges and stood up for ourselves. Again some more brief highlights. Some of the key issues over the last year. Congratulations to the workers at Burtons in Blackpool, they said no to 1½% and got 6%. Congratulations to the people at Gunstones, said no to the change of terms and conditions, fought back, took the ballot for strike action, the company withdrew those off the table. Congratulations to the people at Park Cake who said no to the changes of the terms and conditions that would have made the Agency Workers’ Directive useless. Congratulations to all our members, Gulli’s Branch who this week will be taking a man into the picket lines, those people, we sent the message of solidarity to them, we wish them good luck, and we want to make sure that that’s another victory for this trade union, for our members. Our members, up and down the country, are standing up and showing they won’t be pushed about, they won’t be trampled on. We salute you, our message is clear, push us we push back, we are fair and reasonable, but we will not tolerate being bullied, we will not tolerate being ignored, we are off our knees, we are fighting back. Enjoy the week, enjoy the Conference. Solidarity. Thank you.

[applause]

They’re going very quick. It’s actually too soon to go for a brew, what can I say? Obviously you see the amount of motions on there, you just want to get through it quick don’t you.

Okay. What’s up with the jokes, I thought it were pretty good actually. It was a choice, it was the jokes or I had to strip, come on. It’s Sunday morning. You’ve got the rest of the week. Okay. Final agenda, has everybody got the Final Agenda in their wallets? Yes? Motion 1.

1 New Rule – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth

That this Conference agrees that all local agreements need to be signed in conjunction with the Organising Regional Secretary, and all National agreements to be signed in conjunction with a National Officer.

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: This Motion came about because I believe that we’re not communicating well enough, and I think the companies are exploiting us so they’re getting Reps to buy in to agreements then that nobody else knows about, and it undermines everybody’s Ts and Cs. I think it’s logical that just for communication purposes that FTOs should be involved in the process in some way. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded. Okay, formally seconded. Speakers? I know it’s Sunday Sedge, but it’s not a stroll.

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion. I agree with what Janine said. Going national, we need National Officers to sign agreements. I’d like to say to the lads at Warburtons here, when we decided to go local in Hovis, it’s been an unmitigated disaster. I know you’ve got national negotiations, stick to it. Because like I said, unscrupulous people and they’re just like shoving things round the back door. You make an agreement, and they twist, like they’ve done at Avonmouth, I’d just like to support this Motion.
[applause]

**Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215:** Mr President, Delegates, any agreement with no signatures on it is worthless. And that is why this Resolution is here, because it must be signed by officials of the Union, and officials of the company, and then it’s legal, and then it has to be carried out. I support the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Any other speakers? General Secretary.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Thank you President. The Executive Council would ask Conference to support the Motion. You know the Union’s history’s littered with local agreements that we could all dine out on. We could all tell stories about the things that we’ve done in our Branch in the past. I’ve got to say particularly from the past, many agreements that we’re still paying a high price for now. Joe Marino from this rostrum many times told the story of the chicken and chips agreement which was somewhere in London, I’m sure Steve Finn could regale us with that story. But I also worked at a strong Branch which was Scotts in Liverpool, no longer there, but a number of the people who have said to me I know John Owens works in the Hotplate there, and John Higgins is one of the Reps on site. But we had a really, really strong Branch and that Branch and the strength that we had enabled us to take advantage when it came to negotiating many local agreements, and I think when the factory actually closed we had 46 agreements that were far and above what the National Working Agreement said we should have. You know even cases that have gone through conciliation at that time, through the NJC, were still, when there was no positive outcome, we then went back, because of the strength and we negotiated above that agreement. Our hourly rates might have been similar across the Branches, but the reality was that our members enjoyed rewards far in advance of what was negotiated nationally by the NJC. You know it was excellent for the members who worked in Scotts, but how good was it for the future planning of the National Committee when it come to negotiations, it actually undermined what they did. Okay as a raw Shop Steward, and I’ve got to say I wasn’t raw all the time, I understood exactly what we were doing and like many people, trying to do their best for the members. But that actually undermined what the National Committee was doing.

I remember a time when Joe Marino, Wally Orminshaw and Dick Punshon came to Scotts where I worked when he was on the National Executive, he was the Vice President of the Union, came along to try and resolve an issue of BT lifters which is one of those things that went on for ages, you know, was it a forklift truck or wasn’t it a forklift truck? It went right through the NCC, it went right, sorry National Conciliation Committee, it went through the National Joint Committee, and at the end of it the result was that it wasn’t a forklift truck. Locally we refused to accept it, and we loaded manually, the company capitulated and it ended up that it was a forklift truck within the realms of Scotts of Liverpool. No evidence, there was no history that showed that we’d done it, as Pat rightly said, you know, when there’s no signature on something, it’s not worth a carrot. But there was no evidence, there was no history and there was no understanding of what the spirit of that agreement that was made at Scotts was. Delegates sometimes the short term gain can be long term pain, and in this case it was. Our actions probably tied the hands of the national negotiators who sought to improve the terms and conditions for all the factories within the National Agreement. The companies could refuse to uplifting national terms and conditions because they’d already appeased the stronger Branches at the expense of the less well organised, and so any threat of action to force a decision had almost disappeared.

In the longer term the company pointed, as I say, to the 40 plus local agreements that made the business economically uncompetitive, and used them as one of the excuses to inflict massive
redundancies and ultimately the closure of that site with 444 jobs lost. Delegates, the Motion makes a lot of sense from an awful lot of perspectives. It’s not about undermining the role of Branch Officials, it’s not about undermining the role of Shop Stewards or Health and Safety Reps, it’s about gaining consistency. It’s about gaining consistency of agreements and consistency of how we adopt these things. It’s about stopping the unscrupulous employers exploiting perceived weaknesses in our structure, and then marginalising those Branches and we’re seeing that happening within the industry today. It’s about improving the communications and building awareness amongst our Reps and our members of what’s going on. Anyone in doubt should talk to the President about the frustrations that he’s encountered within the Hovis Group over the past year in negotiations. It’s about involving those who you put your trust in, to take responsibility for ensuring that what is signed is not discriminatory. It does not undermine you, and is deemed to be fair by all.

The outside pair of eyes casting a glance over what could be a life-changing document. That’s the reality of what Janine’s talking about in the Motion. Above all we should be ensuring that we leave a traceable history of what was signed, where it was signed, and by whom it was signed, as to protect and inform future negotiators of intent and what intent was made, and who it was meant to apply to. Delegates, it’s always been tempting to prove we can cut a better deal than somebody else. But there should always be the major consideration of accountability. The one consistent in the Organising Regional Secretary or the National Officer is that they are accountable to you. Conference, you’re the supreme body of Conference, of the Union, please support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote, those in favour. Against? Carried.

Motion 4. While the speaker’s, mover’s coming down, just to let you know that Motion 31 has been withdrawn.

4 Rule 1.4 – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth

That this Conference agrees that Rule 1.4 needs to show the meaning of the abbreviation FGPC – as mentioned in Rule 20.8.

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: This is not a major big deal but it’s just a bit of a tidy up of the Rule Book that’s all. I was having a look through and I noticed there was an abbreviation in that wasn’t named like. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded. Speakers? No? Yes, I mean, obviously if you can be ready to speak because obviously, as soon as the Mover comes down if you’re going to speak, you know if you can come down and wait, so we know.

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: Mr President, Delegates, I agree with this and if I remember a few years ago we actually passed a Resolution at this Conference saying that no abbreviations should be put on either in the agenda or in anything else that we do because it makes it more clearer, so please support this.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are you coming down Pat yes? Point of information.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Keith, just to say, just to respond to that, where there’s the need to be an abbreviation, you know, I’ve got to put it, they were the words that were written by the Branch, I can’t change what that is, it was actually asking for what the definition of F & GPC was, which the President’s going to give, so I’ve actually put it in that form so that when the President comes he can put it. But in the Rule Book and all that it will appear as, you know, what it is. I’m not going to tell you what it is if you don’t know, because he’s going to tell you in a minute.
Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Conference, all of the abbreviations are in the Book, so we must add this one. It’s pointless having it if people don’t understand it, I don’t understand what it means, and it must be entered in the Book. I support, please Conference, support this Resolution. 

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Other speakers? Okay. Conference, we would, the Executive Council would ask Conference to support. The abbreviation actually stands for the Finance and General Purposes Committee, and we apologise for not putting that in the Book, so we would ask Conference to support. Those in favour of the Motion? Against? That’s carried. Going to stop for a brew, yes? Five past eleven, sharp.

(tea break)

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, I’ve got an announcement while everybody’s coming back to their seats. Region 7 are holding a raffle for six red and white unique BFAWU umbrellas, the tickets are £1 each or three for £3, oh three for £2, sorry, that’s when I buy them is it? So it’s £1 each or three for £2, and the draw will be made before the close of Conference on Monday. So if you want to be a unique individual make sure you enter the raffle.

Okay, I was stopped at break and apparently I was advised that last year I’d made mention of a footballing competition where somebody took part and won. I mean obviously this year, I understand that the Premier League was disbanded because Manchester City won on the fact that they’d bought the title, but obviously you know, there are some people that are sad enough to follow Manchester City, and obviously Roy would like to say that he congratulates Manchester City [laughter], and obviously someone who lives in Manchester, he feels that that needed to be mentioned. And I’ll have him up now saying well we won a Carling Cup.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Roy, never mind the Carling Cup, don’t be starting, Roy, Manchester United are selling off some silver polish, they don’t need it this season, do you want to buy it for your trophy?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Once in 44 years we’ll have to put up with it won’t we. What happens when you’ve got no money? Okay. Back to the agendas, and I’ve forgot where I am. We on Number 5? Motion 5.

5 Rule 4.1 – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth

That this Conference agrees that 4.1 Branch Safety Representatives are elected for a period of two years when they are subject to re-election in the same way as Shop Stewards under Rule 14.8(g) “and should receive basic training within 6 months, unless special leave is given by the EC.”

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: Branch Safety Reps in my opinion should be trained within six months. If you’re going to do a job, and let’s be honest, being a Safety Rep is a job that could cost people’s lives, and yet you’ve got some people who’s not willing to be trained how to do that job. We need something in place that makes it, unless it’s special leave given, compulsory that people are trained to do these jobs, because people’s lives depend on it. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded? Are you coming out to speak? You don’t have to put your hand up, just come down, just come down. Yes. If anybody else wants to speak on the Motion, you don’t have to wait for them to finish, you can form an orderly queue.
Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Conference, Delegates, this is about that great saying of Tony Blair, education, education, education. That’s what we need to do, to educate these members so that they can carry out their jobs. We educate Shop Stewards, we educate the Learning Fund, why not educate our representatives that has to represent people? How do they know what to do? And there’s, when you say education, they go on education, they’re trained, then they must have a simple exam just to make sure that they know and understand what they have learnt, and on that basis I support the Motion, and ask Conference to support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Duncan Dale – Branch 560: Retired. I’m here to support this Motion fellow Delegates, Platform, Chair. It’s vitally important anything in that description, same as First Aid, you wouldn’t send a guy out to treat somebody that had had a serious fall as a First Aider if you’ve never had any training, except for a couple of elastoplasts in his pocket. Their training is, and I don’t think it should just stop there, the same applies to all these courses that this Union is absolutely excellent, I’ve been on many, and they’re excellent courses. Also the fact that you want to inform your members that the Branch Secretaries and Shop Stewards, inform your members that these are available, because I still believe, and I’ve believed for a long time, that a lot of new members on the shopfloor think it’s just for privileged people, they don’t realise that these are available to all Union members that pay their subs. Fellow Delegates, please support.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: When you first join the company you always get basic training. At Greggs for example we get an induction period of 12 weeks. How can you expect our Branch Safety Reps to do their jobs tidy, and represent our members if they have not had the basic training? It should be done as soon as possible, at the latest, six months, and I hereby ask this Conference to support this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Safety Reps. In these days when they’re attacking the Union, at work, in any way, Health and Safety is a way to hit back because you can hit back, and we’ve got performance manager going through. Go and challenge it on Health and Safety grounds. So that follows that people need to be trained and know what they’re doing in Health and Safety, support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Conference, I’m not here to support or oppose, I just want a question of concern. What are we going to do where you’ve got a scenario where, for whatever reason, our Delegates cannot attend? It may be childcare issues, yes, it could be lack of release, not receiving release yes? Because all our courses, let’s be very clear, all the Health and Safety courses we do, they’re all a full week course, yes? Many of our Reps, whether they be Health and Safety Reps or Union Reps cannot for many reasons attend. So I think you just need to be careful in terms of that. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are you coming down Julie?

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: I’m here to oppose this Motion. When you’re talking about basic training, anybody that comes into a workplace has a safety induction about using the emergency stops and everything, so as far as I’m concerned, that basic training is covered at induction. Life sometimes gets in the way for Health and Safety Reps and Shop Stewards, and circumstance and family doesn’t always permit you to do the training within a specified period. Or courses can be cancelled because there’s not enough Delegates, are we then going to turn
round to somebody who’s volunteered for this position, to represent our members, and say sorry you haven’t done the training, you are no longer a Rep. That’s wrong. I oppose this.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, General Secretary.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Delegates, I’d start by saying that the reason behind the Motion, and of course Motion 20 which deals with Shop Stewards later on, being brought before the Conference is really sound. The ideas behind them, the sentiment behind the Mover is really sound. But the flaw in many ways as well. We fully understand both the motives and the possible benefits of the Motion, but the Executive would still ask Conference to oppose the Motion for a number of reasons. And I’ve got to say Delegates, it’s the same reasons that we opposed the Motion when it was brought before Conference in 2005, and in 2008. Delegates when, speaking to this Motion, as I said before, remember the reasons that I’m giving now are exactly the same reasons that I will give when I come to speak on Motion 20. It’s not about whether we educate our Health and Safety Reps, or whether we don’t educate our Health and Safety Reps, it’s a question of when we educate them, and how we do it. First of all, the Motion’s too prescriptive in its timescales. As far as, I’m going to explain, particularly for new Reps, that our own in-house courses that we run, what we do we plan when we think those courses are going to be needed, it’s all on demand. And that’s done a year prior to when those courses run. Depending on how many people we have coming through as new Health and Safety Reps or new Shop Stewards, determines how many Health and Safety or Shop Stewards courses we run. But of course when you come to do planning, it’s not an exact science. Sometimes we get less than we think (inaudible) so we change what type of course it is, sometimes we get more and we have to buy in some more courses. So if there’s a shortfall what do we do? We either cancel the course because of that shortage in demand, or we run it, and we run it at a loss, and we end up getting fewer reps trained for the maximum amount of money. I mean, money is not an exhaustive, well it is exhaustive, we haven’t got any to be running extra courses, so I think that’s the best point that I can make.

Clearly anyone who’s been elected as a Health and Safety Rep could find themselves in breach of this, if you pass this Rule, they could find themselves in breach of it, dependent on when the course was run within the Union. We’re not guaranteed to run a course every six months and so people can find themselves out of that timescale, and as far as the Executive giving special dispensation, we don’t know who’s applied for a course unless Jan gets it, and Jan doesn’t write out to every Executive Council member saying can we get special dispensation to cancel this. She comes through me, or she’ll come through Ian depending on the type of course, and that’s what we do.

Whilst we do signpost our Reps to our courses and we will continue to do that, it’s important that we run the in-house courses. But we also find because of them, Julie just talking about people’s work commitments, family commitments, some people cannot go away for a five day block of courses and so they prefer to go on the TUC courses. And that’s when we give special dispensation, for people to go on a ten day course. But let’s look at what the TUC basic courses offer, and those of you who’ve been round the Trade Union Movement for a long time will understand how they operate. They’re run on a quarterly basis in most Regions, they do not run courses during the summer holidays, so there you’ve got a massive break of it on the quarterly thing, dependent on when you’ve been elected. So again, depending on that election, and whether or not you’re going to be accepted onto the next available date, we could find ourselves being in breach of the Rule that we pass today. And what happens to the Safety Rep when they’re elected, as we see more and more often, that the company refuses release for the first time available? And I thought this was the point that H was going to make.
What happens when a company, and you know the companies, we don’t need to name and shame them at this rostrum, you know the companies because I’ll tell you what, very many of you work for them. The company who doesn’t like a Rep, they don’t like the fact that somebody’s been elected and so they know that by delaying it for six months or nine months, they can get that person debarred by their own Union. It would be a reality, we’ll get companies who are going to do that. I can think of, as I say in particular one company who we’re having a lot of problems with now, who would keep on batting the requests for release for a Shop Steward or a Rep just to undermine the Union structure. And for that reason alone, the Motion is dangerous to everybody. Would some basic instruction given by the FTO, and I’ve got to say, I know Steve Finn has done it for many years down in Number 1, when we get a new Rep, while we’re waiting for a course, you don’t wait three months for the course to let people know how they should be a proper Health and Safety Rep, or a Shop Steward. And they get basic training from their own Official, and it’s something that I used to do, you know, in Manchester and a number of Officials have done around the Union. Would that suffice to do that? And we can ask our Officials maybe to give new Reps that sort of help and guidance. But they’ll, it’s like the Mover, you know, we really do see the need for our Safety Reps to be trained to the highest level. So it’s never been about whether we educate or whether we don’t. We want our Reps to undergo basic training of the highest level as soon as we can get them through. It’s already in the Rule Book that they undertake the training that’s offered. So there’s a Rule there, it just hasn’t got the same timescale.

Indeed in the ideal world, we would want to go a step further and have that training starting on Day One of election, given the massive responsibilities that that job entails. We recognise it is a massive job, and yes, Janine, it can be a matter of life and death whether a Health and Safety Rep is trained. And we will always push for them to be trained, but we shouldn’t be doing something that debars those people because they can’t released for whatever reason. There’s nothing worse as any Rep being thrown in at the deep end to a job that you’ve never done, without the necessary training to build confidence and understanding of your rights and responsibilities. But Delegates we have to be pragmatic in both our approach and the application of the Rule as it is. We do want to, we don’t want to dampen people’s enthusiasm to take on these challenges, nor do we want to be seen to disenfranchise those who cannot meet the rigid parameters of the Rule. Delegates, I ask the question in 2005, I’ll pose the same question again now, and Julie’s already posed the question. What happens to the person who fails to undertake the basic training within that rigid six month time limit? Is the election revoked, irrespective of whether or not they are the only Rep at that site? Once we tell them that they cannot be a Rep, how do we then re-energise them should a course become available some time later on? In particular, if it doesn’t coincide with a Branch Meeting where they would have been re-elected? Delegates, in a Utopian world, we would agree 100% with the Mover, and 100% with the Motion. The best possible training as near to the point of election as possible. Unfortunately the world that we live in, and the industrial world that we live in, is a real living place. It’s full of everyday problems, a government that legislates against us, and businesses ready to jump on any passing bandwagon. There are some sad realities, and one of those sad realities is that the Motion is too rigid, and could have an actual detrimental effect on what we’re actually trying to achieve. I would ask you to oppose Motion 5.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right to reply?

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: I just want to address a few things that was mentioned. With regards to a full week course, the TUC does one day a week courses spread over three months, whatever it is, so that could be a way round the sort of rigidity of the training part. I still believe that special leave can be given by the EC, I’ve never said that nobody can be a Rep or anything...
after that. If you can’t attend the training, then just email the National Officials and they, all EC have got email facilities, that’s all they’ve got to do is have an email saying so and so can’t come to the training, and it’s like no problem. Try and go to the next one. It’s just to try and push people or give them a bit more of a shove to get them on the training. Also, I understand that the six months seems like a rigid number but it applies to Learning Reps. If it can work for Learning Reps, it can work for Safety Reps. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour of the Motion. Those against. That’s lost. Okay. Motion 6.

6  Rule 5.1 – No 4 Regional Council

That this Conference agrees that there should be a reduced contribution rate for part time workers. Contribution fees are disproportionately high for this group of workers.

Sister Dorothy Shuttleworth – Branch 459: Good Morning Conference. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Are you coming down to second Julie?

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: Here to support this Motion, but I don’t think it goes quite far enough. I do think there needs to be a working party that will sit down and seriously look at this, not just for part time workers but for agency workers. Agency workers are currently flooding most of our factories, and they’re there at the beck and call of a text message to say yes you’ve got eight hours work today, or no you’ve not got anything. And I think that’s one of the biggest catchment areas that we’ve got, so I think something definitely needs addressing, but I don’t feel the Motion quite goes far enough, but I do support it. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: Mr President, fellow Delegates, Platform. I’m here to oppose this, not on the sentiment but the vagueness. If anybody that works within Greggs or works within a company, what is a part timer? What is a part time rate? Where does it start, where does it finish? If you’ve got someone, if you’ve ever been into a Greggs shop they can work anything from 35, 34, 21, 16, and you get somebody on 17 hours, at 17 hours, is that full time payment? At 16 hours is that a part time payment? You’d have chaos. We last year, no sorry, the year before, passed a Resolution for a Young Person’s Allowance. How many people actually use that? How many times have we actually signed people up on that alone? I’ve signed one up in my last two years, with Mr Wood, Ian Wood, and I think that’s it. I went round Greggs shops yesterday, I got eight new members, all on 16 hours, not one complained about the rate of pay. My view is let’s give people more benefits, let’s make it pay for the members that we’ve got. But as it stands at the moment, I don’t believe it’s going to be easy to police. So please oppose this.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates. Delegates I’m not going to ask you to vote one way or the other on this Resolution, but do consider the position of your Union at the moment. We have a falling membership, we have a falling income from the Union members. Very, very big fall there. And, what will you do? Where will you get this money from? Consider these things that you have falling income, falling membership and rising costs at the moment. If you all looked at your Treasurer’s Report, it is not very rosy. But do consider these things when you’re voting, because it is detrimental to this Union, as to whether it will last or not. Thank you.
[applause]

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** I’m not here to oppose it, but I don’t totally agree with it. Maybe the answer is to resell the cost of being a Union member to the potential member, £2.60 it’s half an hour’s wage, it’s a lot less than a can of Guinness. It’s the price of ten cigarettes. So if you get it into context it’s not a great deal of money, you get a good deal for £2 on half an hour’s work. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** Here to oppose the Motion. Couple of the reasons behind the argument are as follows. Potentially it could open a massive can of worms. What will we say to members who go off on short term sick who suddenly say okay, the part time worker now is paying half, why shouldn’t we be paying half after five days or whatever the case may be? People on return to work who come back on reduced hours, what will we do there? People whose hours are reduced through companies enforcing reduction in rates, reduction in shift patterns has a knock on effect. Our members losing money. You may well have a massive discrimination situation with different segments of our membership, demanding the same application, so I think we need to be very, very careful with this. And I think as far as I’m concerned, the part time workers are receiving the same benefits as everyone else, so therefore they should have to pay full stop. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here to support this Motion. This is a classic one. The EC’ll come up with all sorts of we can’t do it, we can’t, let’s be right about this Motion. You’ve got a woman in Greggs earning £70 and you want her to pay £2.60. That’s not fair. We’ve got part time lads working in the bakery, paying £2.60. Let’s get real here, this won’t decrease membership, this will increase membership, and like you said, you get all sorts of reasons, we can’t do it, we can’t, you know, typical EC, I’ll not swear, you know. Ian making a few jokes, support the Motion, let people get a fair deal.

[applause]

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313:** Yes I thought it would make a change there, this year, when I come up to the rostrum, I’ll lose the hat, you’re quite right. So it’s a step in the right direction. Basically here to speak not against or for this Motion, but what I would request is many a time in the past years we have had this Resolution come up, and for wording and issues like that it’s been quashed. So what I would recommend that this gets remitted to the Executive Council because a part time worker, what’s part time hours? If you put in there 16 hours or 18 hours we have a definitive answer, so when, you know, we would know what the guidelines are and when it would be applicable. Because what’s part time? For example currently I do 60 hours a week, two weeks down the road I might do 40, am I a part time worker now? So I think we need a definitive answer of what’s the maximum hours that we would class as part time work. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Conference, the problems with the suggestion you was making is not in the Motion, so we couldn’t do it for agency workers anyway. There is no evidence that introducing the part time rate would increase membership, and one of the problems obviously that you’ve looked at this morning in the Treasurer’s Report was that the Union currently does have £119,000 deficit, and one of the risks we would run is that it would make that deficit bigger, because there is no evidence to support what you were suggesting Tony, that it would actually increase membership. But Conference I mean the Executive believes that the Union offers good and exceptional benefits that are available to all members.
We do not discriminate against either full or part time workers. While we recognise the Mover’s honourable intentions of course, we are not able to support this Motion, not for any of the reasons that may have been suggested from the rostrum, but in particular for one reason, and that is the mere fact that it says part time workers, is potentially discriminatory. If we started saying that we will introduce a part time rate that would offer less benefits to part time workers, then potentially that is a discrimination issue. And it’s on that reason why we ask Conference to oppose this Motion. Now what we can give a commitment to is to review our current membership contributions, and the types of memberships available, in fact, over the last 12 months we’ve been speaking to different bodies about how we could introduce a new contribution scheme, such as the Membership Scheme which we’ve been in discussions, it was put forward by Ian Woods, the Full Time Official from Number 5. But unfortunately because of recent announcements by the government in relation to legal changes and the way that employment tribunals etc will be run, and Legal Aid claims, we’ve had to put all those discussions on hold. But we can give a commitment that we have got our membership scheme under review, and once we are clear about where the government’s going with the Jackson Report etc, we do give a commitment to the Conference that we will look at how we can have benefit to our membership and make it affordable to all with the benefit package that reflects all of that. We ask Conference to oppose, on the basis that to make it for a part time worker would potentially be discriminatory.


7 **Rule 5.2 – No 7 Regional Council**

_Sickness Benefit should not be paid during maternity leave, it should only be paid before and after said leave._

**Brother John Halliday – Branch 706:** Mr President, General Secretary, NEC members, Delegates.

The purpose of this Motion would mean that Sickness Benefit would not be paid whilst a member is on maternity leave. After all they’d be certainly in receipt of maternity pay, and in some cases, this can be added by various company schemes. One could also argue that following birth and being on maternity leave, the member does not fulfil the requirement in relationship to being sick. In relation to a person who is on State Benefit prior to her giving birth, these stop when maternity pay is paid. Is it not much better that a member can claim Sickness Benefit before their maternity leave, when they are not in receipt of maternity pay? Delegates, again is it not better that a member does not use up all the benefit when in receipt of maternity pay? After all, no-one knows the circumstances that might occur before going on maternity leave, and when it finishes. This Motion is basically attempting to safeguard a member in that she would have a benefit to claim when needed. After all 13 weeks benefit used during maternity leave takes 52 weeks’ contributions to be paid before they can claim again. It could well be the case that the need is greater either side of the maternity leave, and Conference I ask you to support.

[applause]

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

**Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201:** I’m here to oppose this Motion because of the wording. I believe that this does women an injustice. If you’re on the sick, whether on maternity leave or not, and bearing in mind that women on maternity leave pay exactly the same contribution as anyone else, but you want to take the benefits away from them. At the end of the day, if you’re certified sick, you should be entitled to your sick pay. Please oppose.

[applause]
Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Point of information really on this. You cannot be on the sick and claim maternity payment at the same time. So it’s not anything against women, you can’t claim two lots of benefits. I can’t claim Unemployment Benefit because I’ve got an old age pension. You can’t have two bites at one cherry.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay? Conference the Executive would ask you to support the Motion. There is no legal issue with this at all, I mean Marilyn’s spot on. There is no duty placed on an employer to pay SSP during maternity leave, and so I don’t think it’s unreasonable that the Union sick pay is not paid either. Of course there are provisos in there, that protect anybody who’s sick, and if they do conform to the requirements of being sick, then obviously they would be entitled to sick and we would not be discriminating in any way. So we’d ask the Conference to support the Motion.

[applause]

To the vote, those in favour. Those against. That’s carried. Motion 8.

8 Rule 5.2 – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth

That this Conference agrees to add to Rule 5.2 - In the case of a member being on Maternity Leave “and receiving Statutory Maternity Pay, shall pay the same amount as unemployed members,” and having exhausted.

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: Maternity leave, you get Statutory Maternity Pay after your six weeks, whatever it is. Out of that Statutory Maternity leave which is not an awful lot of money, £130 something a week, it sounds like a lot of money unless you take into account that it comes at the most expensive time of your life, because having babies is not a cheap option. And if you’re used to earning £4-500 pound a week it’s a significant reduction in your wages. I’ve been asked questions obviously when trying to recruit pregnant women, is why do they have to pay the same amount when they’re not in work? Why do they have to keep paying when they don’t, the perception is anyway that they’re not getting their monies’ worth? I think it makes it fairer, it makes it clearer, but the question really does need to be how are we going to recruit and retain pregnant women? Please support.

[applause]

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

Brother John Halliday – Branch 701: Conference, here to oppose this Motion. I’m opposing it on the grounds that when we shut down Rule 6 for part time workers, who have a reduced amount of money, a woman on maternity leave is on a fixed sum. Therefore do we not discriminate against the part time worker for not having the reduced contribution rate for that of a woman in receipt of maternity leave? On maternity pay?

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion. When I was having my kids, you know, it’s a worrying time when you’re pregnant, so I think these, you know, they’ve enough to put up with, so support the Motion.

[applause]

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I’m here to oppose this, and when you’re talking about trying to recruit pregnant women so that they can get benefits, actually they can’t. They’ve got to be a member 12 months before they’re going to kick into benefits, so unless they’re an elephant, they’re not going to kick into any benefits. I ask you to oppose.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay? Conference, the Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose this Motion. We don’t believe that there’s an issue that needs addressing at this moment in time. We believe that when somebody goes on maternity leave they’re entitled to full pay, obviously if anybody’s off on a period of time, the contributions are reduced accordingly in line with the Rule Book, at this moment in time. We don’t believe that maternity leave is a sickness, we believe it’s a maternity, and obviously Tony we’d like to offer you an agent the next time you get pregnant. But obviously the Executive Council would ask you to oppose the Motion. Mover has the right to reply. Right to reply? No? Okay, to the vote. Those in favour. Those against. That’s lost. Number 9 has been withdrawn, so Motion 11. Back next year? Okay. Mover of Motion 11. It doesn’t mean you can sit any longer Marilyn. That’s you. Is it, 450?

11 Rule 5.2 – Branch 450 Manchester

That this Conference agrees Rule 5.2 needs to change to ‘after 13 weeks for 13 weeks’ so that members on long term sick will receive the payment and not the members who ‘allegedly’ take annual sick leave of three weeks every year so as to recoup their subs. The money saved could be used as a Strike Fund.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I know at this moment in time we haven’t got one but hopefully by the end of Conference we will have. The sick pay should go to people who need it, not people who are taking an extra three weeks off work. I’m asking you to support.

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

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to oppose the Motion and I’ll give some rationale as to why. Number one, the sick pay is one of our basic Rule Book benefits. I always use it as a recruitment tool. Suddenly if I go back now and recruit or try and recruit should I say, I think I’ll end up losing membership. That’s one thing. The other thing, we’ve also got to look at reality, reality is we’ve got other unions attacking our membership across the country in different Branches, different Regions, and they’re all in line with what we’ve already got, if anything some of them are actually paying it after a week rather than two weeks. And I understand it’s elements and perhaps it’s probably perhaps a small percentage of people who can actually afford year on year to go off on the sick, and fair play to that little percentage, but I doubt, I don’t see why all the membership should have to suffer as a consequence of a little percentage, and I think it would potentially create a massive reduction in membership rather than any type of benefit, so I think we just need to be a bit careful. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No other speakers? General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President. Delegates, the Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose the Motion. And there’s a number of reasons for asking you to oppose, and there’s probably, if you really analyse the Motion, there’s probably one reason why you could potentially support it. Clearly, the sick pay benefit is a benefit that’s there for people when they’re in hardship. During periods when they’re ill, why should we be the ones who determine when hardship kicks in with those particular individuals? You know, would hardship not be felt after five weeks, or ten weeks, I mean, depending on how many hours you work at work, depending on how much income you’ve got coming in. Who determines when hardship kicks in? And what makes 13 weeks so special? You know, 13 weeks is, or 13, the number 13,
is supposed to be unlucky. It’d actually be a lucky number for the Union wouldn’t it, because we wouldn’t have to pay anything out for anybody who was off sick under 12 weeks. They’d all lose out, and the Union would win. That’s just one problem we’ve got.

I’ve got to confess that I’ve never heard, and it’s in the Motion so I presume it must be true, I’ve never, ever heard of anyone who was so mercenary as to take three weeks off work, sick, so they can get their subscriptions back. It seems bizarre that three weeks off gets you £22.50. Why pay Union in the first place if you’re looking to get the thing back? I find it a little patronising to debate members’ annual sick leave in the context of sickness pay. I like to have a little bit more trust in the people that we represent, the people that you represent. I think, you know, when people are sick, I take them at face value, that they’re sick. It may be a naïve view, but there we go. Another reason for not wanting to change the 13 weeks is the amount of money that it could actually cost the organisation. Seems simple, 13 weeks, everything under 13 weeks, we save money. But of course, the way taxes work, it makes things different. Yes we’d pay significantly less out to members, but we could actually end up paying more back to the tax man. You see, sickness benefit is counted by the tax man as a provident benefit, and that can be offset against capital gains tax with the organisation, and we’ve done it on many occasions in the past. So we could actually be cutting off our noses to spite our face.

Motion 11 says the saving could be used as a Strike Fund, but having already established through the provident benefit thing, that there’d be no saving, that particular idea, and the idea why we’d have the Motion, goes by the board. If we could avoid the Capital Gains tax implications, we could in principle, see some reasons for supporting the Motion, although I totally agree with H, if you’ve already sold something to people and then you try and take it away, you’ll have the devil’s own job retaining those people in the organisation. Whilst the sickness benefit is not a major amount of money in the grand scheme of things in the organisation, it’s one of those small benefits that give us a competitive edge over other unions. It gives our Organisers and our activists who are out on the front line recruiting, a little bit of an advantage when it comes to dealing against the bigger unions. And at lunchtime I’m going to be talking to John Millen from the Morning Star, when we’re going to be looking at things that make industrial unions like ours different from the big general unions. And part of the things that we offer are benefits. Benefits like this, small yes, they’re not life-changing sums of money, but it’s there, it’s a benefit, it’s something that people can see that they get from their organisation, something they do different from what other organisations do. I’d hate to see us take that away.

It also becomes more relevant when we see companies attacking terms and conditions, and again, the same company I was talking about before who would use our own Rule on training against us, the same company are trying to reduce terms and conditions, at every single factory that they’ve got. They know who they are, don’t need to name them, we’ve got disputes going on with them, we’ve got a dispute going on this week with them, because they’re trying to reduce the benefits. And at a time when companies are trying to reduce sick pay, trying to demoralise people in the workplace, trying to take away the terms and conditions that you’ve fought for over the years, terms and conditions that have been long established. How would it look if their own Union starts attacking the very terms and conditions that we lay down at this Conference, years and years ago, that have given us that competitive edge?

You know, when our members are under attack from the companies, they’re under attack from the councils, and they’re under attack from government. They’re all trying to squeeze that last penny piece out of them, the last thing that any person, and I would challenge anyone to say different, the last thing that anybody wants is their own Union squeezing them as well. Let’s not alienate our members Delegates, at a time when they’re at their most vulnerable. And when they’re at the time of most need. Please oppose the Motion.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right to reply.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Exercising my right to reply. Thirteen’s an unlucky number? Maybe it is for you Ronnie, this is my 13th Conference. And you don’t know anybody that takes three weeks off for a bit of extra money? Well I’ll you what, you’re moving in different circles than I am, because people did it regular. I won’t be in next week, I’m taking my annual sick leave. There’s plenty do it Ronnie, I’m still asking you to support it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: To the vote. Those in favour. Those against. That’s lost. Okay Conference can you shut your final agendas for the time being? It’s now, for many years, Vi Carr has been the Female Rep on the Executive Council, has been responsible for bringing some fantastic speakers. And this year is no exception, and while Vi comes down to the rostrum to introduce, please put your hands together for Vi Carr and the contribution she’s made to the Executive and this Conference over the years.

Thank you very much, Vi Carr.

Sister Vi Carr, Female Rep – Branch 505: Conference, Delegates. Conference today I would like to say a little bit about Asylum Aid. I’ve brought along Violet Dickenson who’s kind said she would speak. It’s Development and Empowerment for Women’s Advancement, it’s Asylum Aid, and it says our asylum system now is so tough that all too often it’s how people seeking help are treated. They can’t have any rights. We believe the system should be fair and just and that every asylum seeker should have the legal help to make their case. Only when can we say in a good conscience, let the law takes its course, this what a young woman said. She was detained without charge, nobody believed her story, no-one spoke up for her, her family and friends didn’t know where she was, afraid and isolated. She had no idea what would happen to her, and that was after she sought asylum in England, in the UK. But Asylum Aid is an independent national charity that secures protection for people seeking refuge in the UK from persecution in their home countries. They provide expert legal representation to asylum seekers and campaign for fair and just asylum system. Founded in 1990 they have since helped 30,000 people get their fair hearing and in 2009, 85% of their clients were granted leave to stay in the UK, when decisions were made on their claims for protection. The speaker today will be talking about experience in seeking asylum in the UK, and she will encourage Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union to endorse the Charter Rights of Women Seeking Asylum which was set up by Asylum Aid. To endorse the Charter you just need to log on and then I’m going to email when I get back home and tell her that Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union endorses this Charter.

I would now like to introduce you to Violet Dickinson ?? and she can tell you where she’s from, I can’t pronounce that. Violet, she’s with Asylum Aid.

Violet Dickinson: Good afternoon. I’m from Sheffield and I’m a co-founder of an organisation called DEWA, Development and Empowerment for Women’s Advancement. The group of DEWA has a clear vision, equality, dignity and respect for all women worldwide. We work very hard to support women to reach their full potential to develop the skills and building up their confidence. Our organisation is about asylum seeking women and refugee women. We don’t have any funding at all, our funding comes from our book that we wrote and we sell this book and that funds all women that need help within the asylum system, the women that come to us.

Together with Asylum Aid in partnership, we also formed what we call Why Refugee Women based in Yorkshire and Humber, and it’s to create a safe and open environment to treat all
refugee women with dignity and respect. To ensure all workers are aware of the needs of gender sensitivity and implement appropriate practice for achieving this, understanding gender based issues, and act appropriately to take account of these, offering choice of female workers interpreters to refugee women wherever possible. To ensure refugee women are continually supported with childcare during asylum interviews so that they feel able to speak about confident and sensitive issues, ensuring refugee women are aware of their rights and independence from their partners. Support other refugee women to understand about Why Refugee Women.

Why we came up with this is we came across a lot of refugee women that go in the system and end up in trafficking because of the system they get given vouchers they cannot use for transport if they have to go to the hospital. These vouchers are only for food and it entitles them only up to £35 a week. And they are not allowed to work so there is no way these women would be able to find any money to go onto the bus. So she stands at Tesco and sells her vouchers to get money to go onto the bus. We are asking all people that are concerned with women’s issues to sign onto our Charter and it’s www.whyrefugeewomen.org.uk.

A lot of people feel that refugees come here and spoil it for people (inaudible). All they’re looking for is for safety and safety may be a small word to you but to them it’s massive. Today I was supposed to come with a woman to give you her own personal story, unfortunately she could not make it. But she asked me to read out a few words about a woman.

Because they are towers and pillars of their families and communities, because they make the nation great, because they have inner strength, ability to transform a problem into a blessing, their wisdom in troubled times, nine months pregnancy. They support their children from birth, no matter what happens in the end. They are emotionally creative, they switch on the light, a word, and the child smiles, they are caring, beautiful and passionate, and really strong. They stand by each other, they keep the wheels of the world moving. They become electricians, teachers, nurses, mothers, wives, cleaners, furniture removers, cooks, survivors and activists.

Today I came here to bring an awareness for you to understand what a refugee woman really goes through when she arrives in the UK. She is interviewed by a male with the children and asked to tell her ordeals such as rape in front of her children. This is why Asylum Aid was formed and through Asylum Aid we have managed to make the policy decision makers understand this and it is now being implemented in different parts of the regions, where interviews are conducted without children. The woman that’s involved is able to speak freely about what she’s been going through. Vi has read to you our Constitution for what we actually as Asylum Aid ask for. Women seeking asylum have a right to have their protection claims determined by asylum system in the UK that is informed in all aspects of policies and operations by a thorough understanding of a particular form of persecution and human right abuse that a woman experiences because of the agenda and their particular needs as a woman. Women seeking asylum have the right as an asylum determination process that recognises and takes into account the experience of persecution and human rights abuse. Women seeking asylum have the right to accommodation, support and healthcare appropriate to their particular needs as a woman. Women seeking asylum have the right to be treated with dignity, in a way that is appreciated through their needs as a woman, and that ensures their safety, if in detention or during removals. What I’m asking you today is to sign onto the Charter. Thank you very much.

[applause]

Sister Vi Carr, Female Rep – Branch 505: Today I will be collecting on the door at close of Conference for Asylum Aid. I would like you to give generously. We don’t want these women to be treated any differently to anyone else, and they’re put out to the people, the pimps that’re
trafficking, and even in (inaudible) there was a sex, no a massage parlour was busted, and they found women in there and it was Chinese women were doing this. How can one person do this to another person, especially women, and they had brought these women over on the pretext of jobs and they set them out to the sex industry, it’s absolutely disgraceful and never should be able to happen in this country. But people, women seeking asylum it says here, recently a woman seeking asylum, she was a pregnant woman, denied healthcare in Yarl’s Wood Immigration Removal Centre, a pregnant woman detained at Yarl’s Wood IRC was refused a scan for four days, despite repeated requests and a court order after she was told by a midwife that she was unable to find the baby’s heartbeat. It took a second court order before the staff employed by the UK Border Agency took her to hospital. She has already suffered from a miscarriage last year and was since suffering from depression and anxiety, and her solicitor raised strong opposition at the detention of the pregnant woman and empathised that at the very least pregnant women in Immigration Detention should be provided with the same level of medical treatment as women outside the Detention Centre.

So this is what’s happening when they come here, regardless of what anybody thinks are the reasons why they come here. This is diabolical that they should treat people the way they do, they wouldn’t treat a dog like that. They’d put it out of its misery. I think that’s all I would like to say. Unfortunately there was going to be three speakers but as Violet said one of the ladies was ill, and the second one her baby was ill, and she had family commitments and they come first. So I’d like to thank you for all your support over the years, and I hope you will support me today as you have in the past. Thank you very much.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Violet, got a presentation, some biscuits made by the fair hands of some trade unionists.

[applause]

So have you got your collection, are you ready by the door? At close of Conference? Okay. You’re lucky, you were going to have sit in your place because obviously we want to make sure you couldn’t get out of that door, and we were locking all the others. It’s quarter past 12, it’s Sunday, so 2 o’clock? Yes?

[applause]

But don’t be late.

**Afternoon Session**

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Secretary to call the roll.

(Roll Call taken)

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** There’s 174 Delegates.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, while you’ve been away, enjoying your lunch which obviously me and Ronnie, do you want to do it after mine? Oh right then, I know my place.

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** I’ve come here on a point of information. I was led to believe that we don’t use mobile phones while Conference is on. Well the National President and the General Secretary are both sat Tweeting before. Not on.

[applause]
**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Marilyn, it’s to keep our members informed of what the debates are, that you’re debating, and all the important conversations that you are leading to this evening.

[jeering]

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** We’ve only got one Rule Book, where’s the other one that says you can do it when we can’t? One Rule Book.

[cheering/applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Marilyn, if you actually recall this morning (whistling), if you actually recall this morning, while you was asleep and I was awake, I was saying anybody who’s on Twitter please make sure you put mine and Ronnie’s Twitter accounts on it and link up to us, and if you Twittering anything about the Conference please make sure we’re included. I didn’t say you couldn’t put it on Twitter, what I said was turn your mobile phones off so they’re not ringing. Well, to turn them on for Twitter, you know what I mean? That was a joke, I’m not a comedian.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** You are, believe me you are. On the Twitter thing, can I just say, I understand what Marilyn said, the fact is we’re not answering calls, we’re not taking any calls, we’re not, on Twitter, we’re using the phones as computers, like I suppose as people out there are using them. I know John’s been from the Morning Star’s been doing it. Just to say that on Twitter we’re actually getting the GMB Conference which is today, the same day as ours, they’re actually Tweeting about what’s happening at our Conference, and I think that’s bloody remarkable that another union is finding the time to Tweet about what’s happening at the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union, and that’s because we’re getting things out on Twitter. It is important that we use social networking, so it’s either we do it here or we get somebody to sit over there and do it on a computer. I mean if I ask John Vickers to do it on a computer, if I ask him to do it, no he can’t, he doesn’t even take photographs very well. But no, if we ask him to do it on a computer, it’s exactly the same, we’re using the phone as a computer, not as a phone. That’s, it’s actually doing some work that gets the Union out there and into the face of trade unions. And working people right across the country.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** You’ll have to come down here if you want to comment on that. No, you sit down. Come on we’ve got a busy agenda. You’re going to put me over your knee?

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** I’m really impressed that they’re following what’s going on over at GMB’s Conference. This is ours, put your phones away and concentrate on this.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** We are concentrating on ours.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Jim McLelland’s just used his phone as a phone. I think he should go to Standing Orders, I think somebody should make you go [cheers/applause]. He’s trying to get me to answer my phone, so he’s phoning me, and his has to be switched on to phone me. I think you should go to Standing Orders.

[cheers/applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, bit of order. Obviously you’ve gone out and been too jovial at break haven’t you. We won’t make it happen tomorrow, we’ll cut your dinnertime down. That’s if you want to go and watch the football tomorrow evening anyway. Listen, during your long extended lunch break, on your desk you’ve been given a photocopy of
How to join the Labour Party. Now obviously it’s very, very important that people do join the Labour Party. And if you look on there, down at the bottom it actually says for a trade union member it’s £21. We want as many of our members to be involved with the Labour Party as possible, and the reason for that is we want to make an influence on the Labour Party. We believe that the Labour Party should be reflecting the people it purports to represent, and the only way we’re going to achieve that is by being on the inside. For years and years, okay?

Brother John Halliday – Branch 701: Conference, my democratic right is not allowed because I live in Northern Ireland, but I can’t join the Labour Party. So I think pushing it from the top table doesn’t cover this Conference or Delegates or members as a whole.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Then maybe what we should do is make sure our people on the inside are working to make sure Northern Ireland has the right to be represented by the Labour Party like everybody else.

[applause]

We encourage you to join, okay? Listen, right, you don’t have to turn to your agendas yet, so there’s no Motion writing. It’s obviously my pleasure to introduce our Guest Speaker for Sunday, it’s a lad called John Slaven who’s the Development Officer with the STUC, it’s a post he’s held for five years, he used to be a train driver for 20 years, and is a long-standing Rep with ASLEF, both in London and Glasgow. He’s been involved with learning and organising at ASLEF, which was a post he held for three years, including the first National Learning Agreement of the Scottish Railways. And in his current role he supports the unions, including the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union, and develops their work and delivers learning and education to union members. So Conference please give a warm welcome to John Slaven from the STUC.

[applause]

John Slaven: President, General Secretary, Delegates. Thank you for that very kind, if richly deserved introduction [laughter]. I’m really, really proud to be speaking at this Conference for three reasons. I think the first reason is that the last person who addressed this Conference for the Scottish Trade Union Congress was my colleague Thomas Walker, many of you would have known Thomas Walker, and sadly Thomas passed away, so his thoughts, and very much his family are in my thoughts when I deliver this speech. The second reason I’m very proud to be speaking to this Conference is because the Bakers Union or the BFAWU are the Union that proves that size does not matter.

[applause]

And I know you have a little family tiff there and that’s what trade unionism’s about. But the point is you can feel it, you can taste it, you might not be the biggest union but every single person in here identifies with that union, your Union, you’ve got an identity, and that is very, very important. So you punch way beyond your weight in terms of the affiliates, though you’re not the biggest, you’re certainly one of the best.

And the third reason that I’m really proud to be addressing this Conference is because of the encouraging, nurturing words that the Scottish Delegation gave to me as I came up to speak. Jim McLelland’s words will stay with me forever and a day, make sure you don’t make a right arse of yourself (applause/laughter) and make us look stupid. So those words of Caledonian solidarity will certainly stay with me.

But anyway I want to talk very quickly about three things. I want to talk about education and why it’s important for the Trade Union Movement. I want to talk about organising and how
education and organising have to be indivisible, they have to be the same. And I also want to talk about why we have to organise, and that’s a great fight for social justice, for the Trade Union Movement, it should be all about. So it’s a really, really good idea and I want to congratulate the EC. You’ve had a wee drink, you’ve maybe got a hangover from the night before, what do you get the first session in the afternoon? A wee Scottish guy talking about economic theory. That’s what you lot’s really wanting isn’t it? Just after your lunch, and that is what you’re going to get.

So when I talk about education and I want to talk from a very trade union perspective, and I want to give you a very quick personal story. I was, despite my boyish looks, I was a train driver for 20 years, and people sort of thought I was a deep thinking intellectual on the railway and that was mainly to do because someone seen me read a book one day. And I became a union Learner Rep, and what really came home to me was the massive enormous latent demand there was for learning and education among our members. But also where it really came across to me was the lack of self-confidence that too many working class people have got about education. There’s this kind of idea that education’s about breeding, that somehow education’s something that’s innate within you. And it’s not to do with the opportunities or the chances that you’ve got. And that’s a big, big failure for this Trade Union Movement that we had to address. You know I’ve had so many trade union members come up and go you know I can’t work a computer, I’m rubbish with computers, or I’ve had so many trade union members come up to me and go I’m not really very academic, or I’m not very good with literacy and numeracy. But can I just use an example? Can you imagine, can you remember 30, 40 years ago, when you went to school, and you learned French? How much of the French can you remember from 30, 40 years ago? Je m’appelle Jean, and all the rest of it. Not very much. So why should we expect after 30, 40 years of working, people be given no educational opportunity, that they don’t have some sort of lack of self confidence in it? Learning and education is not innate, it’s not to do with breeding, it’s to do with opportunities, and the job of the Trade Union Movement is to bring those opportunities to our members. It was Tony Benn, a brilliant Socialist who said that if we want to live in a truly civilised society, we’ve got to raise the school leaving age to 80. And that should be the message that the Trade Union Movement brings when it comes to education.

But you know, we’ve got a different view on education. There’s also another very famous quote, and I won’t quote too many, just about nine. But there’s a really famous quote that says you know, Socialist quote, that says always rise with your class not above it. And what does that mean? We use education for something different. We don’t use it to offer an escape route out of your Movement, we should be using education to make every single steward, every single member, every single official, stronger in the fight for social justice. And that’s why we’ve got a different view of education from other people. It’s not about individualism, it’s about collectivism, and it’s about making us all collectively stronger.

Now I want to talk a little bit about the Scottish experience just for a couple of minutes. And there’s two reasons for that, firstly because I think it shows an example of how we’re going to take us forward and also Jim McLelland asked me to say something nice about him. I mean I have to say that you know, there’s been problems with our Scottish project in the past, they are in the past. And when I was asked to take over the Scottish project, I have to support Jim and his team, after my boss called me out of the toilet crying, there was a few things that we had to look at in terms of how we take this forward. And there’s three very important things. We want the project workers and we want the learning organisers to be part of the Union family. Union Learner Reps are not separate from Shop Stewards or Health and Safety Reps, they’re not somehow some different entity. They’re absolutely integral to what the trade union should do, and the job of the Union Learning Rep should be to make members more educated, yes, but also
to make our Union stronger. And that’s what we’ve always got to remember. And the only way you make the Union stronger is to be in the workplace and to be visible with your membership.

The second thing is, it’s not just about giving people individual learning opportunities, we’ve also got to change employers’ behaviour. That’s why we’re going to get learning and training onto the collective bargaining agenda. Do you know in our society, one in three workers get no training whatsoever. None in the place they work. Why? Because too many employers want to compete at low cost and low price. There’s too much of a race to the bottom, and what we have got to do is raise the aspirations of employers to make sure every single member, every single member of this trade union has the learning and opportunities they deserve. So yes, we’ve got to change, but we’ve also got to change employers because quite frankly they’re too interested in low skill, low cost approach, and what we’ve got to do is get them to raise their aspirations. So this second thing we want to do in Scotland is get learning onto the collective bargaining agenda and that’s what we’re going to do with our Union Learner Reps. Our new Learning Organiser Mark, and we’re going to be an absolute example of good practice in the next year, and that’s something I absolutely promise you.

[applause]

Now I know I’m down on the agenda between 2 and 5, but don’t worry about that, I’ll not be on from 2 till 5, I might even finish about 20 to 5, quarter to 5, something like that. But I want to turn to my second point. I said that why we’ve got to be involved in education is because education is a fight for social justice that this Trade Union Movement should be about. And I just want to give you a wee bit of the Scottish experience of why I think the Trade Union Movement has got to be central to this fight for social justice. In Scotland the Trade Union Movement is running a campaign called the Better Way campaign. And when we were setting up this campaign, we had a wee look at previous campaigns, and there was one word that kept on coming up in all the other campaigns in Scotland. Trade union campaigns. There was also one word that was repeated again, again, and again. Anybody any idea what that word was? Say that again? Who’s round is it? [laughter] It’s yours mate with jokes like that.

[applause]

The biggest word in Scotland was No. That was the biggest campaign word for the Trade Union Movement. It was no. No to cuts. No to the Poll Tax. No to job losses. And there’s a problem with that, because we’re starting to be defined by what we’re against, and not what we’re for. We’ve got to get off the back foot and onto the front foot. It’s not that we want to stop public service cuts, of course we do, but we want to do more than that. We want properly funded public services, we want a fair workplace, we want a social and just society. It’s not what we’re against, it’s what we’re for. And that’s what the Better Way campaign is, it’s about turning and changing those attitudes. And I think that the second thing that we have to understand is that we’ve got to start and get interested in this wider economic debate. Because for 20 or 30 years we’ve suffered under successive governments, who have followed a particular economic path, that has not been to the benefit of our people and our communities. You know there’s a word when you’re an educated intellectual like myself, that it’s often used, and that’s the word (inaudible), and people say what does that word mean? And I did go to the Prison Officers’ Association and the boy says Hogmanay, is that not the day before New Year’s Day? But despite that, it’s this idea that there’s a set, an economic and social issues that are just assumed to be right without ever being challenged. And let’s just look at a few of these assumptions. We cannot have manufacturing in this country, we cannot have manufacturing. Okay? All manufacturing’s going to go to the East, you know, all manufacturing is going to go to China because you trade unions in manufacturing make wages too high and make us too uncompetitive. An unchallenged belief, does somebody want to tell me the biggest
manufacturing exporter in the world? The Middle East? Germany. Germany. Highest manufacturing GDP in the world. Are they low paid? Are they non-unionised? Strong trade unions, because they compete in quality and that is what we have to do. This idea that somehow you cannot have manufacturing in this country is an absolute lie. And we cannot base our economy on a casino economy, a financial services, we’ve got to base our economy on people like you making things and paying our way in the world. And not one of the governments has supported that for 30 years. So we’ve got to rebuild our manufacturing base and that again has not been challenged.

The second thing that’s always challenged is trade unions cost jobs. Trade unions create jobs. Tell me the country in Europe with the highest standard of living. In Europe. I’ll tell you where it is, it’s Finland, 80% trade union membership. There’s no any jobs destroyed in Finland, trade unions create jobs, because they create the communication between the shopfloor and the employers that actually drives innovation, productivity, and makes good companies. And again we’ve got to get away from this idea that somehow you know, that trade unions are somehow destructive, when actually they create jobs.

And I think the third idea, absolutely shocking idea, is this idea that if we tax too much, if we tax the rich then the economy is going to collapse, and all we’re going to do is drive the wealth creators out of our country. Where’s a country with the highest tax rate in Europe? Finland, highest, second highest standard of living. Reasonable and fair taxes in Scandinavia, affected their economy? Absolutely not. It’s an absolute disgrace in our society that we have the level of tax avoidance that we do. One hundred and twenty billion pounds out of the economy every year because people do not avoid tax, they cheat, let’s stop using the word avoidance, it’s tax cheats, and yet we’re told that working people have to make the sacrifices for a crisis that we did not create. So again the third thing that we have to challenge is this idea that somehow fair taxes are somehow uncompetitive.

Now we’re facing possibly our greatest challenge in the next 20, 30 years of how the Trade Union Movement is going to respond on this, because we’re the ones who are going to have to lead the fight back. People say that the way the economy’s going, the way that the government is attacking us, it’s almost a return to the 80s. Though to be honest after seeing the Scottish Delegation’s dress sense, it’s quite clear some of them have never left the 80s (laughter/applause). But I’ll tell you this, I was involved in the Trade Union Movement in the 80s, I was involved in the Miners’ Strike, I was involved when Ravenscraig closed in my community. And that blighted a generation, that caused huge damage to our social fabric. That created terrible social injustice. My own father was made redundant, an engineer at 50, and never worked again. Whole communities blighted by an economic evil policy, that not only was unjust, it did not work, and it is the absolute responsibility of every trade unionist to make sure that we do not go back to those days, and we don’t have another generation of lost young people because of some stupid economic ideology that doesn’t work [applause]. Let’s have prescription for improving the economy. Let’s look at what has created this crisis. What has created this crisis is the greed of the bankers. The greed of the bankers that has collapsed demand, that’s collapsed tax revenues, tax revenues are going down, unemployment benefit and the social costs are going up. So the social cost is social failure is going up, and tax revenues are going down. And what’s their solution? Throw even more people on the dole queue. Can somebody tell me how that is going to deal with a deficit? All it’s going to do is stop the (inaudible) out of the economy, destroy communities and simply put the recovery back years and years and years. Look at the countries that have cut the fastest, Greece, Ireland, Spain, great examples of economic recovery. Absolute nonsense that economic alternative we have to build has got to be built on investment, it’s going to be based on equality, and it’s got to be based on
getting decent wages, and in working people’s pockets, and communities, because that’s what’s going to grow our economy, not slashing and cutting and burning public services.

[applause]

I’m going to finish with this, there was a very famous Socialist called Nye Bevin, and he put a quote and he says the bosses always wear the medals of battles that they lost. And what did he mean by that? What he meant by that was something very simple. Every single condition, every single right, every single advance that we’ve had in this society, nobody has given us it. Nobody has granted it, we’ve had to fight for it, and it’s been the Trade Union Movement that have fought for our communities and our people. So in the future, that fight has to continue. The means and the methodology might change, but the values have to remain the same. And that really is the message that I want to finish. How do we do that? And I’ll tell you how we do it. It’s down to people like you, the Trade Union Movement will not win back influence in the corridors of Westminster. I’ve heard too much of it, reclaiming different things. The first thing we’ve got to do is reclaim the workplace, we’ve got to get into new workplaces, there’s 22 million workers in our society not in a trade union, and that’s not their fault, that’s our fault. We’ve got to reach out to those people because the society that has been created because they’ve (inaudible) trade unions is really, really unfair. Just look at a few statistics, where a society that produces 444,000 millionaires, 444,000 millionaires in the same society with 3.4 million children living in poverty. What does that say about our society? We’ve got a society in 1960, your average CEO, your average owner of a company earned seven times that of a shopfloor worker. 1960. You know what it is now? One hundred and forty five times, and people say that is fair? Three point four million children living in poverty, half of them have got working parents because wages and conditions are so low. What does that say about our society? Ten million people in this society earn less than £15,000 a year, 10 million people less than £15,000 a year, and they say the working people have to make more sacrifices. Absolutely no way, we’re not agreeing to that, and we’re going to fight back against that.

[applause]

I want to finish on a word on Reps. I don’t know if any of you were on the recent Honours List, I personally wasn’t either, I did check the names and once again I’ve been overlooked, so if anybody’s wanting to put a word in in the Morning Star I’ll be very happy with that. But you know, there’s an even greater honour, and I mean this really sincerely. I came from a family of Shop Stewards, my Dad was a Shop Steward, my Mum is a Shop Steward, and I’ll tell you this and I mean it, and I’m saying it to you now, there is no greater honour, never mind the Honours, there is no greater honour than representing working people. That is the greatest honour [applause] that anybody can bestow upon you. If you just imagine what it means, you spend most of your time at work. Work, basically gives you the means to have a family life, to have a community life, without work you cannot do that. And what do people do when they make you Reps? They basically put their trust in you to look after the most important thing in their life. So you think about that, and you remember, that the battle for the Trade Union Movement in the future is not going to be won in the halls of Westminster, it’s going to be won in the workplaces and the bothies, and it’s going to be won by people like you.

My final quote, and I think this is a quote all about learning. We have to struggle to learn, but what we also have to do is learn to struggle. Thank you very much.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I think one thing’s for certain John, you certainly didn’t make an arse of it. I think that was pretty inspirational, I think the people in this Hall would have really enjoyed that speech. Thank you very much.
General Secretary?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Just to say, I mean, I think John, I’ve not known John other than the last two days, but obviously we’ve been in contact. I’ve got to say that John really has been inspirational in ensuring that this Union kept a Learning Fund in Scotland, and we did have some major problems and that’s down to his good offices and the work that he’s done along with Jim McLelland and Mark McHugh in Scotland to ensure that we continue with the values that we recognise as a trade union, and to help us to put into practice some of the things that he talked about with so passion within his speech. John, thank you coming and addressing the Conference. We’d like to make a presentation to you. The first one, I don’t expect you to open it, though you can if you want and have a look, it’s a limited edition baker, which shows the traditions that our industry came from, the old fashioned baking, you know, the cellar baking. I hope it reminds you of your visit to friends within the Bakers Union, I hope it takes pride of place, whether that’s in your office or within your home, but you’ll always hopefully remember us, your visit to the Bakers Union.

And of course, probably the main prize, everybody comes here you know, there’s a list of people who want to speak at our Conference because they know they get biscuits. And they’re made by trade union people, people who, well the people you said fought for the terms and conditions for many, many other people. And not only do they fight for fabulous terms and conditions, they make absolutely brilliant biscuits as well.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, I’ve got the nominations here. For new Delegates, the way it works is, if you’ve been nominated for something and you haven’t agreed to it or you don’t want to stand, you have to make us aware now. Okay? So I’m going to read out the names, and if you want to withdraw, you shout withdraw. Okay?


This is the TUC Congress – Pauline McCarthy, Cecil John, Cecil John’s withdrawn, Norville Grazette, Norville’s withdrawn, Tony Richardson, Paul Crandon, Olive Molloy, Dave Suddards, Lizzie Denning, Seamus Farrelly, Seamus Farrelly’s withdrawn, Marilyn French, Mark Brookes, Mark Brookes has withdrawn, Vi Carr, Marilyn McCarthy, I’m assuming this is Marilyn McCarthy, it’s got M McCarthy, I don’t think there’s another M McCarthy in the room is there? There’s only you isn’t there? Oh right okay, I thought I was hearing things then Marilyn. I do apologise for trying to pronounce this name, Kashmir Dosanjh, yes okay. Michael Redshaw, withdrawn. And an easy name, Jackie Barnwell, Jackie Barnwell’s withdrawn. Okay, so Olive’s withdrawn from both the Labour Party and the TUC. Okay.

Okay, Executive Council, Region 1 – Cecil John, Norville Grazette, Paul Norris, Paul Norris has withdrawn, Vince Payne, Vince is withdrawn. So both Cecil and Norville will be re-elected unopposed. Region 2 – John Newman, Jason Moore, Christopher Lay, and this is clearly wrong, we’ve got John Fox and Mandy Mason, Region 2, which obviously from Number 4, so they can’t stand, and Dawn Scott. Region 3 – Raja Hussein, Richard Wainwright, Jackie Barnwell,
George Tittensor, George has withdrawn, Gulli Purewal, Tony Hardy, we’ve got Joe Knapper which obviously he’s been lent to Number 3 so obviously he can’t stand, Dave Murdoch. Dave Murdoch withdraws. Okay. Christoph Lay? Dawn Scott withdraws as well. Right well I think that means then, in Region 3, in Region 2 I believe that means that John Newman and Jason Moore are elected unopposed doesn’t it? Okay. Right, I’ll go back to Number 3, we’ve got Raja Hussein, Richard Wainwright, Jackie Barnwell, George has withdrawn, Gulli, Tony Hardy and Dave Murdoch. Okay? Okay, Region 4 – Michael Redshaw, Michael Redshaw withdraws, Dorothy Shuttleworth, withdraw? John Fitzpatrick, John Fox, Seamus Farrelly, Mandy Mason, Marilyn McCarthy, John Owens, John Stott’s an employee in the Region 4 office so he can’t stand, Alan Carr, Alan Carr? I think Alan probably will withdraw when he realises his name’s on there, and Mark Baker. Okay? Region 5. There’s allegedly a nomination has gone in for Lee Pepper but it’s not on this piece of paper in front of me, yes? Okay. Mark McHugh, M McHugh, this is Region 5 by the way sorry, Lizzie Dinning, Pauline McCarthy. Yes, I’ve got Joe Knapper, Mark McHugh, Lizzie Dinning and Pauline McCarthy. Okay? Region 6 – Dave Burn, so he’s elected unopposed. Region 7 – Noel Mullen, Anthony Ellis. Female Rep – Janine Cokayne, Helena England, Jackie Barnwell, Jackie Barnwell withdraws, Kim Elveridge, Mandy Mason, Shobhana Patel, and Vi Carr. Vi Carr withdraws. There isn’t an Anthony Ellis in Number 7 so Noel Mullen’s elected unopposed.

So Number 5’s, we’re sure? Okay, so Number 5 there won’t be an election in Number 5, they’re all elected unopposed. Does that have an influence on Female Rep? So obviously Number 5, we’ve got Joe Knapper, Mark McHugh, Lizzie Dinning and Pauline McCarthy all elected unopposed.

Right we’re back to the Young Members again, I do apologise for this, it’s getting a little bit confusing, because of people being put in the wrong place. The Executive Council Young Member – R Mullen, which is Rachel Mullen yes, Christopher Lay, yes? Stacey Oakley, and I know he looks young but I don’t know if Pat Rowley actually qualifies [laughter]. Are you okay with withdrawing? I think you’ve just missed it because I think you’re 28 aren’t you next? Okay. Nominations for Standing Orders – Number 1 Vince Payne unopposed. Number 2 Gloria Martin unopposed. Region 3 Stuart Bailey, George Tittensor, Mark Brookes, Dave Murdoch. Dave Murdoch withdraws. Region 4 Alan Carr, Mark Baker, Mark Baker withdraws. Region 5 Olive Molloy unopposed. Region 6 William Crean, David Byrne. Region, what was that? Right okay. So William Crean is elected unopposed. Region 7 John Halliday unopposed. Thank you for bearing with me.

No, oh yes he is, Region 4, because Mark withdrew didn’t he, yes. We got there, it’s like pulling teeth isn’t it. Okay, where am I? Everybody got their agendas out? Motion 12.

12 Rule 5.2 – No 3 Regional Council

Rule 5.2 Benefits – To reduce deferment period for unemployment pay from two weeks down to one week.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: What this Motion is asking for is to allow people who are ineligible for Unemployment Benefit to receive the money a week shorter than what they used to. At this moment in time it’s two weeks. A lot of people when they are unemployed they’re suffering a lot of financial detriment and I believe it’s about time that we come in parity and helped those people who require that money in desperate times, and we need to look at reducing the deferment period from two weeks to one week. We’re a Union that shows a lot of compassion to our members, and how hard is it going to get when you fall on hard times? I urge you to support this Motion. Thank you, I move.

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

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Conference, just to show that the Executive Council aren’t such a hard-nosed, tight-fisted bunch, this particular Motion we’re going to ask you to support. So long as it’s dealt with under the strict guidelines of the Rule as it’s already laid down, and that, you know we don’t see any harm, it’s not a massive payment, the Unemployed pay, so we see that it won’t do any harm in reducing that deferment period down to one week, in particular where people are facing the end of, in many cases, their career. So please support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour. Against. That’s carried. Motion 13. Do you want to bring your seat?

13 Rule 5.2 – No 3 Regional Council

Rule 5.2 Benefits – To reduce deferment period for Sickness Benefit from two weeks down to one week.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Here moving Resolution 13. Similar to Resolution 12, this is aimed at giving our members the opportunity to get Sickness Benefit again after one week deferment, rather than two weeks. I think there’s been a few decades where this particular Rule has not been changed, and I think it’s important for all our activists back at the Branch, where they’re trying to get members through recruitment. It shows that our Union does care about its people. It shows that when people are in need that our Union is there helping. I accept there will be a potential of increases of costs to the Executive and to our Union because our people will be able to access the benefit a week earlier. However, I believe that we can use this as a tool to recruit our people. It will show our members that we are not just thinking about our finances only, but we are actually being sensible when it comes to giving back to our membership as well. You hear all the time when our members go off, for example, for a month, they’ve gone off sick for a month, and straight away, as soon as you tell them when they come up and you fill in a form, as soon as you tell them oh you’re not going to get nothing for the first two weeks it’s straight away they all huff and puff. I just think it’s important that we can demonstrate that we are giving something back to our membership, at a time at the moment, when we’re going through massive economic recession, where jobs are far and far between, employers are sacking our members like it’s gone out of fashion. There is no jobs out there, it’s a struggle to even get a job. Yes, you’re lucky if you get a job, and if you do, you’ll be very fortunate if you pick anything more than a minimum wage. So I think we need to be a Union that’s showing that compassion, giving that understanding and helping our activists to help recruit more members.

Most of our Branches, I mean, I remember having a discussion with someone on the Platform, and I think most of our Branches are below 100% membership. So that in itself tells you it’s a worry, yes? Lot of our Branches, we’ve got activists who struggle getting members because people just don’t want to pay towards the Union. A lot of occasions, I think this would be a massive tool for our people to use as a recruitment tool. So please consider this Motion. One last thing before I go, you’re not, we get attacks from other unions, Unite, I was asking one of the Unite Reps where I work what their sickness benefit, what their process is, and their deferment period is one week. I think we’ve got attacks at the moment in Region 3, xxx amount of difference, besides you’ve got Corby where we struggle but we’ve managed to get a recognition agreement now. But we struggled and we had Unite attacking that site as well, trying to get their foot in the door while we were trying to actively campaign to get recognition. Yes? And they’ve got a one week deferment period to sickness benefit, and yes I accept Unite’s a massive union in
comparison to our Union, but we must be able to demonstrate that we can, albeit we’re a small Union, but for us to grow there is no other way to grow but to gain more members. We have to somehow try and have some of, be able to compete with these bigger unions on some form of platform. Please support this Motion, I move.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Tony, you seconding it?

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Up here to support this Motion. Believe me, you don’t want to argue with them three [laughter/applause].

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I’m up here to oppose this, I think this’d cost us an absolute fortune. And as regards us competing with Unite, they can’t compete with us, we might not be bigger, but we’re a damn sight better. Oppose it please.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, no other speakers? Okay Conference, I mean obviously there’s significant increase in contributions to afford to pay for something like this. There’s only one way, there’s only one source, we’ve got one income stream and that’s our membership. You know, so we’ve got to consider you know what we want to do as a trade union. You know we understand and we recognise you know, how important it is to have benefits, but I don’t think anybody would say I’ll join the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union because it’s got a sick scheme that enables me to get it a week earlier. I think they’ll join the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union because we will make sure that we stand up for them, we’ll fight for them, we’ll defend them, we’ll negotiate the terms and conditions. That’s why I think they join the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union. I don’t think it’s because of the benefit.

I mean, this morning, when he went through the Treasurer’s Report, I mean we expected more questions on the fact that we’ve got a deficit. There’s £119,000 deficit that the trade union is facing, which is a direct relationship to the loss of membership we’ve suffered over the years. So we was expecting a major debate on that issue this morning. But we can’t get away from the fact that the only income stream we have is membership, so if we put anything up, we have to find a way to fund it. And last year, and the year before, we discussed at this Conference about how we wanted to ensure that we kept costs down, and if we was to actually bring this Motion into being, just on the people that claimed this year, it would be an additional £4,500 cost that we would have to finance. But that’s because those people are the ones that qualified after two weeks.

The chances are if those people had qualified from three weeks, it could have been £12-15,000, so we ask Conference, you know, to consider that, because if you vote for this Motion you will be voting for an increase in your subscriptions. We can’t make it any clearer than that. We absolutely cannot make it any clearer than that.

If we’ve got spare money surely it’s better to invest that money into investment in resources, to ensure we can go out there and recruit new members, than offer a benefit that by rights we shouldn’t be negotiating in your workplace. If you haven’t got a sick scheme, then we should be negotiating, it should be on your pay agenda. That’s the person who’s responsible, your employer is responsible for paying you your sick, they have a duty of care. Our sick scheme was never designed to replace an employer’s duty, it was to assist at the times of hardship. So we would ask Conference to consider very carefully how it thinks on this Motion, and to oppose this Motion. Please. Right to reply?

Okay to the vote, those in favour. Those against. That’s lost. Motion 14.
Rule 5.2 – No 3 Regional Council

That this Conference agrees to increase the Sickness and Unemployment Benefit as follows:

- **Unemployment Pay:** £7.50 for 13 weeks.
- **Sickness Benefit:** £10 per week after two weeks deferred period.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Good afternoon Delegates and Platform. I’m up here to move Rule 14 in relation to Unemployment Benefit and Sickness Benefit. In the present, at the present time, we have the rates, if you all turn to the relevant Rule which is 5.2, you’ll see that Sickness Benefit is £5, no sorry Unemployment Benefit is £5, and the Sickness Benefit is £7.50, and in its entirety if somebody was to make a claim for either one of them, if they claimed the full amount allowed in any financial year, they’d be entitled to £65, and if they had the full entitlement of Sickness Benefit, that would be £97.50 or thereabouts. What we need is we need to increase the sums because these sums have been in operation for well over a decade. At this present moment in time, the cost of living every year, year on year, goes through the roof, and it has been going ever since. And we as trade unionists (inaudible) in respect of workplaces, we have to fight with the employers every year to get some sort of pay rises and they come back saying oh we’ve got none, and we’ve got this, and we you know, we’re always fighting for pennies, and here we are that we haven’t had the increases in the pool benefits.

By increasing the (inaudible) benefit, it would give us a recruitment tool to make sure that the journey that we have tried and we are emphasising every day, every week, every year, going forward, by recruitment, recruitment, recruitment and retention, this will also help us in making sure that the recruitment is there. And the earlier Motion as has already been covered, the other unions out there who are poaching, not just in Region 3, they’re trying to do it on a national basis, I was just speaking to a Delegate earlier on today, whereby I know that it’s happening in one other Region as well. So we have to keep these people at bay and we have to make sure that people realise that the Bakers Union is, should be the Union of the individual’s desired choices, within this Union.

People go off on the sick, due to illnesses and work accident, nobody chooses to go off sick, nobody can afford to go off sick. So people, I don’t have this belief about people who go on the sick if the period or the payment is a greater deal, because a £10 or £12 or £13 extra in a week is not going to get the individual to say oh yes, let’s go on the sick scheme because I’ll be getting £10 off the Union a week after whatever deferment period. Because their ends will never meet. People are reliant on £3, £400, £500 a week, you know. Cost of living is going up so people aren’t going to be fully reliant, this is a time of need, when the people are desperate and that £10, trust me, when you haven’t got any change rattling in your pocket, that £10 will possibly, potentially take you quite a few paces.

I would strongly urge that people support this Motion, and show, it shows that as a Union we do care for our members, and yes there’s going to be a slight increase but these are all genuine cases. You know, people do not abuse the sick system within the Bakers Union, within the scheme of our Rule Book. I am not aware of anybody in my Branch that has abused the sick pay scheme or the unemployment scheme. Unemployment scheme, you don’t have a choice, you know, the employer comes in one day and says sorry, unfortunately here’s the particular notice, you’re no longer employed, as one of the reasons, yes? So these are benefits and we need to go in line with times and we need to have the necessary increases. Thank you very much.

[applause]
Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: The last Motion, Ian give a very coherent speech, and that, fair enough, I voted against it, but you know, he was right. But this one, the cost’s not going to be that much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Tony, before you go any further, I take it you’re not seconding it?

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: I’m seconding it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You are seconding it? Oh right okay.

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: I urge you to support our brothers from Birmingham, I don’t think the cost to the Union’s going to be that much. Let’s have a bit of compassion.

[applause]

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I’m up here to oppose this, the costs on this could be astronomical. And if you’re telling me that other unions are trying to get in our sites, and poach our members, I’m pretty sure we can complain about that to the TUC. Don’t just think because we’re going to get an extra £2.50 a week sick pay that that’ll put everything right. Don’t think it will. Your subs will go up anyway this year, they’ll decide that at the end of Conference. If this comes in they’ll go up a lot more. I’m asking you to oppose.

[applause]

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

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes, thank you President. Conference, the Executive Council would urge you to oppose the Motion. Again it’s one of those motions that we, you know, we see where people are coming from, but we oppose it totally on the basis of cost. At a time when like many organisations are seeking to control costs, the Motion actually calls for a 33% increase in sickness benefit, and a 50% increase in unemployment benefit. That is unheard of in any shape, in society. Besides the obvious financial impact on the Union, there’s absolutely no rationale for such a hefty increase as is being requested. You know, somebody, I think Raj said, you know, we’re got other unions competing, the bigger unions are coming and competing with us in our workplace, and they’re taking on, you know Marilyn’s right, if you accept this Motion, you won’t need to worry whether they’re taking you on in your workplace, you’ll probably end up being part of one of those big unions because you’ll bankrupt us. That’s the reality of where we’re going. We know that when it comes to unemployment pay, and that’s why we could be so benevolent Tony before, when we said we can reduce the deferment period for unemployment pay, it costs us virtually nothing. We can take that hit. Unemployment pay costs us nothing, and financially, you know, we wouldn’t see anything wrong with that. But sickness pay, to do what you want to do on sickness pay would be deemed an absolute disaster. Who knows what future claims we’re going to be faced with? In particular is this government stays in power, but let me talk about where the Union is at the moment. And the President’s right you know, at the moment we are carrying £119,000 deficit, or at the time of the accounts being produced, that was what the deficit was. So I don’t want alarm bells ringing because we do have assets and all that and we’ve got a programme of growth, and I’m sure that by next year we can turn that round, maybe into some sort of a profit, or something that we can then pass back to members. But let me just look at where we are as a Union. The National Association of Master Bakers, right, glad I never had a drink, they estimated when the government brought in the Pasty Tax, it was going to be this all-embracing thing, that was going to get loads of revenue for the country, the NAMB, who aren’t a left wing organisation, I’m not even sure they’re a right wing organisation, they’re just an organisation, they estimated within the baking industry alone, there would be a loss of 20,000 jobs. Now okay, that’s been averted because the government has pulled back from that. That’s not to say that this government won’t bring it
back in again next year, or look in some other way of getting money, revenue, from the industry. But that is what the cost in jobs was, 20,000. But then add that, exactly where are we as a trade union? Well first of all we’ve got 193 jobs which are being lost at RF Brookes in Leicester, that’s on top of the 200 that we lost last year. We’ve had this year the closure of Maple Leaf Bakery in the Birmingham area. Rathbones in Wigan have just announced the closure there. And whilst it’s not a mega amount of members that we’re going to lose, it’s job losses that are going to cost this trade union. In Number 5 Region recently we had the closure of Del Monte, and although that fight goes on up there, the fact is that is a net loss to the Union.

We all see the possibility of those figures growing significantly in the future. And of course the one that, the real worry to us is the 33% increase in sick pay. As I said before, at a time when we’re running a financial deficit, facing a decline in membership, increased pension costs, increased fuel charges, and also with the Stewardship of the National President, trying to invest in ideas for growth and recruitment, we’d be facing increased costs and this is, when you say it’s not going to cost us much, suppose in the great scheme of things it might not sound like much, but it would cost between £18 and £20,000 per year, to fund just bringing the contribution further forward. Now bear in mind that we’re running a deficit, that would go on top of that. That has to be funded. And the President’s right, there’s only one place where we fund it from. If you pass the Motion, and I can tell you, I mean the President didn’t have the figures to hand, but I’ll tell you now, if you pass this Motion, besides any increase that the new Executive, and I’m not putting any pressure on people who are sat out there who may well be sat up here, when that new Executive comes in besides any increase that you may have to put on to keep the Union running as a viable enterprise, you will have to add on top of that to cover this Motion, four pence, per member, per week, right throughout the country. That is the cost that you are going to be imposing if you pass this Motion. So at least you’re forewarned. I’d much rather think that if we’re going to save money for the organisation, because when you think about sickness pay it’s a great benefit, and it does hit those people who are suffering financial hardship. And you know I defended the thing before saying that we should be paying it right from you know, the start, you know, we shouldn’t be looking to defer the thing, we shouldn’t be looking to get rid of sick pay, we should keep it because it benefits those who are in need. But it benefits such a small percentage of the membership, I’d like to think if people are going to join our organisation for some other reason other than they get great representation or we go in and you know, the legal services they get. If they’re going to be looking at it from a financial benefit, then what they’ll do, they’ll embrace the benefit that the Union, that the Executive is going to launch this afternoon to you, and we’ve got Rohan sat at the back there and he’s going to give a practical demonstration. They’re the ways that we can actually make, so the money that they would save, or that they would get back on sick pay, we can probably double, treble or quadruple that, across the course of a year if they used the benefits that are open to them through the Union. You’re going to get a demonstration of that this afternoon. There’s only the Executive know what we’re going to be launching this afternoon, so I would wait and maybe be surprised by the stuff that’s going to happen there.

Before voting, you should think hard and look long as to whether or not the members back at the Branch, and they’re the people you represent, it’s easy to be swept away with the tide of emotion in this Hall, but you’re the people, not me, you’re the people who are going to go back and have to sell an increase in contributions. Unless you believe that you can honestly go back to all your members and sell a minimum of four pence increase in top of what other increase would have already been there, then you should oppose the Motion. If you believe that you should support the Motion then I would say that during the break and tonight you start practising the arguments that you’re going to be using to sell it because I can’t think of the arguments that you would use to sell it.
The Executive believe that given the present economic climate, the membership would not welcome such an increase, and I have to say I agree with them. I don’t think people are going to be jumping through hoops to get an extra increase at the time when we’re facing austerity measures from a government and cuts by companies. Comrades, you’re elected by your Branches, to attend Conference, and you’re charged with taking decisions that benefit them, as well as benefit the organisation. This benefit, or this Motion benefits so few members and would be detrimental to the future financial stability of the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union, that I believe that a major hike in subscriptions will cost us members, and could in the longer term threaten our independence. You don’t want that, these don’t want it, and I don’t want it. I would ask you to oppose the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right to reply? Okay. To the vote. Those in favour. Those against. Okay, we’re going to break for dinner, no not for dinner, you’ve had that haven’t you. We’re going to break for a tea break. I was going to say, obviously we’re pushed for time, so half past please.

(tea break)

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I’d like to congratulate Mark Brookes on his recent fantastic event for him and congratulate him on his new baby. Thought we’d like to give him a round of applause. And we have a Full Time Officer who’s been with us for a year now, and obviously you might have to reconsider whether he wants to continue being a Full Time Officer because he’s actually agreed to get married. So, like to congratulate Geoff Atkinson, and obviously Sharon who’s a first time Delegate as well to Conference, and wish them luck and obviously all the best when they get married on the 10th November. Geoff Atkinson and Sharon Innes.

[applause]

Okay are we all back in? Does that mean it’s a fine? Can we fine them, yes? Listen we also need obviously at the end of today, or the beginning of tomorrow morning, the movers of 37 and 38, and the movers of 40, 41, 42 and 44 to go to Standing Orders. Okay? Back on with the agenda, and we are at Motion 16.

And could I remind Delegates obviously we are pushed for time, so if we can obviously get your point across but try and you know be as quick as possible. Are we ready? Mover of Motion 16. And can I thank Delegates for obviously being back as quickly as possible.

16  Rule 11.1 Complaints – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth

*That this Conference agrees Rule 11.1 after the 1st paragraph: If the complaint is about Branches not being elected in accordance with Union rules, the complaint should be made to the Organising Regional Secretary, so it may be forwarded to the RC or EC.*

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: This is to do with the fact that I know from personal experience that there are some Branches who don’t bother having elections. And there’s no avenue for an individual member to be able to complain or get anything done about it. So we just want to put in the Rule Book because if a Rep is doing a good job then they need to be calling the elections. You know, the members can say whether they’re doing a good job or not. They can decide whether they want to keep you as a Rep. It’s the democratic way. Please support.

[applause]
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You coming down? Actually Pat I think you could have been on that Young Persons’, you know what I mean? Definitely.

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates, I must support the Resolution because (inaudible) it’s illegal practices in a Branch that they don’t give the members a chance to come and to elect their Delegates for Conference or whatever else it is. That is wrong, and has got to be stopped. I support.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support the Motion, exactly what Pat said (inaudible).

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No more speakers? The Executive Council would ask Conference to support the Motion. Those in favour. Against. That’s carried. Motion 17.

17  Rule 13.1 – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth

13.1 add to end of paragraph: A member must have 13 weeks continuous membership before they can access the legal services.

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: This, I put this in because I believe there’s too many people sitting on the fence, waiting till they’ve got a problem before they join the Union. I understand that potentially there could be a problem with Greenfields sites, but personally I think we need to put the message over to people, that that’s all you get if you sit on the fence, with splinters in your arse. Please support.

[applause]

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

Brother Jeffrey McCarthy – Branch 458: I’m up here to ask you to oppose this. We’ve got a Tory government in now who are attacking the trade unions far worse than Maggie Thatcher and Winston Churchill put together. And the problem is this guy is such a side-winding B that he’s doing everything he can to attack the unions. The Tories don’t need no help. If you join the Union, from Day 1 you should be supported in every which way you can be. Let’s oppose this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Mark Brookes – Branch 347, Jacobs: I’m here to oppose the Motion. If you sign a member up on a Monday, the person has an accident on a Tuesday, bye bye we’re not helping you for 13 weeks. That person goes down to the solicitors say right you take my case on, you get a bill to the EC, now pay it. Please oppose.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to strongly oppose this Motion. And I’ll tell you for why too. There’s a lad who worked with me, 50 years old, he were a good footballer too when he were younger. He had a bad accident, and the lad has ruined his life, you know what I mean? Now he’s been in the Union 15, 16 years. What if that lad had only been in the Union for one day and he couldn’t access legal services? Strongly oppose this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Paul Norris – Branch 189: Chair, Delegates. I would urge you to oppose this Motion. Although I can understand some of the reasoning behind it, I would feel that any member, no matter how they’ve joined, if they had the misfortune to need legal services within a day of
becoming a Union member they should be entitled to have that. It’d be the same thing as going out and joining something like the RAC, your car breaks down they say sorry you haven’t been a member long enough, we’re not going to help you. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: I came up here to support this Motion. But listening to the Delegates, standing there, I’ve changed my mind. I’m here to oppose this Motion. Yes she’s right, people do sit on the fence, but there’s an awful lot what don’t, and they do need the legal services. Oppose the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: Platform, Delegates. I’m here to oppose this Motion. We sell our legal services as one of the best, and they are one of the best, and we aim to make it better. I know that Ronnie and Ian and everybody concerned on the EC, and you know, the good relationship we’ve got with Thompson’s and one thing and another. It’s hard enough to get members, don’t let us cut us own throats. Don’t vote in favour of this, please vote against it. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: President, Delegates. I support the Resolution because you’ve got to take a stand somewhere. I mean you could have people just find themselves in trouble very shortly and then come to the Union. And if you have to go to court and have a big court case and you lose thousands of pounds on it, I don’t see how, they’ve got to have some length of time of membership before you can access, before you can involve tribunals and everything for them. How could you do it otherwise? I mean if I was in a factory and I wasn’t in the Union for years, and I turned round and found myself in trouble and I contact the Union and I join and pay my month’s subscription, and I want to get legal services which might include a big court case. And you know the cost of it today, you have to have barristers and everything even to go to a tribunal, which costs you hundreds of pounds an hour. Please support the Resolution.

[applause]

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: I’m here to oppose this Motion. Legal services, it’s not just about accident claims, because we all know that you can put a claim in within a three year period. Legal services is for everything else. Mortgages, these things can be used in a positive way, it’s not all negative and it’s not all about people taking the mickey and joining when they need it. We should be supporting our members, and it is a big selling point for all the legal services. So I say we need to oppose.

[applause]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. Here asking you to oppose the Motion. Couple of months ago, went to a recruitment campaign at work, and just sharing some of the basic benefits our Union provided, it was amazing how much kind of response I got, because people just weren’t engaged into what the Union provided. And one of the big benefits that I shared was specifically this one, the legal services, the right to a half hour telephone conversation with, so it’s not just about accidents, them are just basics. But you know the legal services are absolutely vital piece of benefit that our members have received. And I think whilst I can share the sentiments of the Mover of the Motion as, and yes you’re always going to have situations where you get members using our Union services and then choosing to duck out. Yes? Unfortunately that’s just a way of life, yes? I urge you to oppose. Thank you.

[applause]
Brother Mohinder Badhan – Branch 326: Mr Chairman, and members of the audience. Maple Leaf, which was closed in April. As the bakery is closed now I’ve been attending the Conferences for donkey’s years, so this will be my last Conference because I’m now retired as well. The reason I’m standing here is to strongly oppose it, because what we had at Maple Leaf Walsall, about I think round about 20 people deserted us some years back. And just before the bakery was going to close down, they all joined back just to get the legal services. So I ask everybody to oppose it. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Tony Richardson – Branch 569: I would like you to oppose it as well. How many years have we fought for Day 1 rights for employees, goodness me. So yes we should support our members from Day 1, sorry Janine love, but want we don’t support, and this is a trick I think that we’re missing, that’s why, I weren’t going to speak this time, but what we’re missing, we don’t support pre-existing cases. You knock that out, you’re okay, then you can support people. If they have a problem one day after they join fair enough, but not the pre-existing cases, and that’s the thing that we want to be watching for. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President. Yes the Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose the Motion. I’ve got to say it’s one of those ones where you sit down, you think you know, why? You know why are we putting this one forward? You know if it stopped new members joining with existing potentially expensive claims, then do what Tony says, you don’t them on. We don’t take retrospective claims on and I’ve got to say that there’s a caveat to that. If George Atwall’s in the middle of an organising campaign and he thinks there’s a potential on an absolute sure fire winner case, that the lawyers say we’re not going to lose, then we’ll take it because it absolutely helps the principle in the workplace and gets people to join the Union. But as I said we don’t take on retrospective claims ordinarily, only those that occur once people have joined and of course, we’ve had a first payment. Of course some of our officials will tell you that sometimes, as I said before, it’s tactically useful to be able to have you know the discretion to take on a really winnable case. To be honest, when we come to these cases, we lose very, very few cases which I suppose is testament to the excellent lawyers that we engage to do the services right across the seven Regions. What benefit is there in a Union in penalising a new member who has an accident within 13 weeks of joining by barring them from access to justice? Surely that’s what Jackson’s trying to do anyway. When we come to debate Motion 99 which is the last Motion on the agenda, unfortunately because it got lost in the ether somewhere and we’ve refound it, and that’s rather than change everything till the Standing Orders are done, we’ve put it in as Number 99. Well that’s talking about how the government is denying working people the right to Legal Aid. No doubt we’ll condemn them, no doubt we’ll seek to reverse the judgement of the Jackson Report, so why, if we’re going to oppose then, why should we then be trying to do the same thing within our own organisation? I know from practical experience that some unions, and I know the GMB in particular absolutely adopt this rule, they do it, they don’t take anybody on, but I’ve got to say I’m not sure they have the same safeguards that we have, that stop retrospective claims in the first place. We’ve already heard the President and a really passionate speech this morning talking about the need to grow the organisation. The need to recruit new blood into our ranks. Any benefit that we can offer to new members or potential members that gives us a competitive edge over the big boys out there, has got to be something that we have to utilise. And this is one of them.

We know that we already offer a better service. We know that despite our small numbers we already give better support, and we know that as a trade union we’re doers in actions as well as
in word. But sometimes telling a potential member how good you are is not enough. We have to be, have better enticements that those competing, than those competing for the same membership. And legal services I’ve got to say is one of those things. I mean you’re right you know, I can’t remember who said it, legal services is not just about tribunal cases, it’s not just about accident cases. Talk to the lawyers, and I was the one who actually negotiated it with our lawyers, we get free wills, we get discounts on conveyancing, they do family dispute reductions, letters to noisy neighbours if you want it. If anyone gets lifted you can get a lawyer, you get half an hour free consultation which would cost you in the High Street. So these are all part of that enticement that our organisers and our lay activists who are heavily involved in organising use to get people in.

The Motion saves the organisation absolutely no money. Has no obvious benefit to the Union, and could act as a detriment for potential membership. Delegates there’s many ways if we want to look deeply that we could save money for the organisation, but I’ve got to say this isn’t one of them. Please oppose the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right to reply? No? To the vote, those in favour. Those against. That’s lost. Okay. Motion 18. See last year you were sat at the front, you didn’t have so far to come did you?

18 Rule 13.3 Legal Advice – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth

That this Conference agrees that when receiving legal advice 13.3 to add to the end of the paragraph “and may seek a 2nd opinion as necessary.”

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: The second opinion, it’s because of something that actually happened at our Branch. Nobody is infallible, and solicitors do sometimes get it wrong. We had a guy in our Branch who was dismissed, the case was put to the Union solicitor and they were told there was no case. The guy then took it privately to a private funded solicitor, he received compensation and was reinstated in his job. Didn’t make us look very good at Branch level, and our members a little bit lost confidence in the legal services. Please support.

[applause]

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

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion. Everybody, even our Susan should have a second opinion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: And she married you [laughter]. Okay General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Tell you Susan takes the credit for a lot of stuff in your house Tony. Delegates, we would ask, the Executive would ask Conference to oppose the Motion. What does “and may seek a second opinion as necessary” mean? Does it mean that when the first solicitor’s advice is inconclusive or where they’re not sure about the way to proceed. Because if it is, we should be looking at why we have solicitors that can’t give us that right advice. We want clear advice from solicitors and that is the reason we engage employment lawyers and not High Street lawyers who try to do everything. Or does it mean where the member doesn’t agree with the advice that’s been given by the solicitor? Because if it does why should the Union pay twice for the same advice? What happens if the advice from the second lawyer is the same as the advice that was given by the first lawyer? Will the member keep asking for more bites of the cherry until they get the answer they want? And probably more importantly, because these people don’t work for nothing, who funds that second opinion if it turns out to be the same advice? Because I could see a situation where one of our lawyers gives
advice and says there’s no case, and so I say right well instead of it going to Thompsons we’ll send it off to Watkins & Gunn or Molloys and they say well look you know, we’ll give it but obviously we want paying, we’re taking extra work on there. And I don’t blame them. Who would pay for that second advice if the advice turned out to be the same? In particular if it was advice given to somebody who operated outside the Region where the original solicitor is operating? If we agree to this Motion, the first lawyer says you have no case, the second lawyer differs and says you have a chance, we take the case, and it’s lost, just like the first lawyer thought it would. Who pays then? When you think about it it isn’t the Union that pays for it, it’s you, because at the end of the day we get the money, our only funding is through you. And I don’t think that the lawyers, forget the Jackson Report or what’s going to go on, I don’t think lawyers are going to stand by and take the potential hit of a gamble on a contentious case. The Union couldn’t afford to run all these cases, in particular the dodgy ones, so again the question has to be asked who pays for it? The answer, you do.

The member has the option already of seeking a second opinion if they believe the original opinion is wrong. They can take the case on themselves, that’s if they’re really confident and I get members on the phone to me who are really confident. I’ve got a case that I cannot lose. The lawyer told me I’m going to lose it, or I’ve got no chance, but I know I can win it. Well I don’t know what gives people that legal mind that says they understand how to run a case better than the solicitors that we engage because I don’t question what they do. I might ask them a question, but I don’t question when that advice comes out. But let me just, you know, guard, tell people that we should be guarding against these cases, I’m not going to give any name, but we had a member who took a case on, not with one of our solicitors, they took it on with one of these High Street people, and ran the case for a little bit and then the High Street solicitor determined that there was no case to follow. The member had absolutely no case. So she then ran the case herself, and she won.

She won the case, she did exactly what Janine’s talking about, she won the case and I think she won, don’t quote me figures, I think she won £3,000. Great a victory for the working person, an absolute victory. Except that because the original solicitor had ran some of the case, they wanted a share because that case was run. Even though she ran it herself, she got a bill and I know this is fact because I know Thompsons have been back in touch and they’ve told me, because they’ve tried to act within their own legal profession to try and get it stopped. She won £3,000 and she got a bill for £60,000. Now that’s why sometimes second opinions don’t operate properly. That member is now being pursued for their house. They won the claim, they didn’t use Union solicitors, they decided to do it themselves in the first place, and then actually ran the case themselves. And yes, they won the argument, but they lost the war. And potentially they will lose their house.

As I say if they’re really confident, what have they got to lose? Well I’ve just demonstrated exactly what they have got. But of course in general members won’t, they’ll be willing to gamble with other members’ money to pursue a case, but not with their own. They won’t mind putting the Union finances at risk, but will not put their own finances at risk. As I say, we’ve seen the cost, the potential cost to a member who did not accept lawyers’ advice. We hope that that’s not going to happen to anybody else. We’re not, most certainly as an Executive, and you charge us with the Union’s finances, we are most certainly not going to accept anything that puts the Union’s finances at the same risk. We would ask you to oppose Motion 18 strongly.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Right of reply? To the vote, those in favour. Those against. That’s lost. Motion 19.
Rule 14.5 – No 3 Regional Council

Conference agrees that all Branch Secretaries must ensure that a quarterly report is sent to Regional Office with update of issues taking place on the site as well as the normal administrative tasks.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. Just to share some of the sentiments behind it, firstly a lot of our Branches tend not to use Regional Organisers or FTOs because they believe they’re more than capable of handling what comes their way. The knock on effect is that the Union, Region by Region, information is lost and we heard earlier on in the Resolution 1 where we’ve agreed, and that’s been passed now, we have a need to communicate better in all Regions, is absolutely paramount. There are lessons that our FTOs can learn if they’ve got that information. If the FTOs are that busy, here there and everywhere with dealing with closures and redundancies and all sorts of other chaotic things, it’s a struggle for them to be everywhere, yes? And all this is doing is just asking the Branch Secretary just to put a few sentences together every quarter, yes, when he does his quarterly returns, and send that back to Regional Office. At least the Regional Organiser can pick that up and share that with the FTOs, and hopefully be of a benefit to us. Please support this Motion, I move.

[applause]

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

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I’m here to oppose this, I know that’ll shock you all really but there we go. In Number 4 Region when we have Regional Council, one of the things that we do have on the agenda is Around the Branches, where I say what’s happened in my Branch, and believe me I can say it a lot quicker than I can write it down, where somebody’s expected to be able to read it. If I jot it down quick you’ll think I were a doctor, looks like a prescription. So I don’t really see why all of a sudden Branch Secretaries should have to be writing a report, when it can be done at your Regional Council. I ask you to oppose.

[applause]

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: I’m also here to oppose but somebody’s taken the words out of my mouth. You know, we go to Regional Councils, my idea of the Regional Councils when we were set up, that every Branch puts a report in, all Full Time Officers are there so Regional Councils, to make them work, I think that is the place to do. Not just sending notes to Regional Offices because I’m not sure, but I know in Number 5 Regional Office our Full Time Officer’s that busy they don’t always get to Regional Offices to read some of the stuff. So it is important that we don’t take away what the Regional Councils were there and what they’re there for. So please go against this.

[applause]

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: I’m a full time Branch Secretary at this site representing around 550 members, and for me to physically sit down and make a report, quarterly, I’d be in the office all day long, I wouldn’t be representing people, I wouldn’t be recruiting people, I won’t be doing any accident claims, I’d be spending all day writing down what cases I’d dealt with. It’s impractical, it’s not workable, it doesn’t achieve absolutely anything. You’re there to represent your members, you’re not there to be writing reports, it doesn’t serve any purpose to go to the Regional Office. We’re talking about being green, how much paperwork would that generate, or for you to sit and start messing about sending emails. It’s not practical. I ask you to oppose.

[applause]
Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to oppose the Motion. Perish the thought, them lovely people, hard working people, Full Time Officers, have they not enough to do? Here they can’t read [laughter]. Read? They’re working their socks off, let’s oppose the Motion, they’ve enough to do, and they’re very nice people.

[applause]

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: Here to oppose this Motion, Yes I do agree that we all need to keep informed but as most workplaces’ll know, facility time’s getting challenged all the time, and like the last colleague said, we’d be better spent representing us members. We all social network, we all email, I don’t think there’s a need for a quarterly report. Oppose the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, what can I say? I mean the Motion isn’t asking anything else other than you know, putting in a report. We’re not asking for War and Peace, but I mean there are a number of Branches that don’t attend Regional Councils. There are a number of Branches that can’t consistently attend Regional Councils. This suggestion, you know, we would probably put a format together, maybe a form that would come with the quarterlies, that a Branch Secretary would just say, you know, no issues in my Branch this quarter. I’ve got issues with me pay claim this quarter. We’re not looking for a War and Peace report, and the mover isn’t looking for War and Peace report. What we are looking to do is improve communications, we can’t say it’s all right for Full Time Officers to communicate with you, like motions in the agenda do, and then say but it’s not right for Branch Secretaries to do it. At the end of the day the Branch Secretary’s on the shop floor and they have a more opportune opportunity to talk to our members than the Full Time Officials do. Because as one of the speakers says, they don’t always have the opportunity to be on that site. They can’t always be there. I mean, I’m not sure what sort of work the Branch Secretaries envisaged would be involved. But one thing’s for certain, we don’t to tie Full Time Officials up reading lengthy reports, so we will make sure that any form that’s put together will have just about enough information to make sure we understand what’s going on at that Branch, and they have the opportunity to read it. We would ask the Conference to support the Motion, we have absolutely no problem whatsoever. Please support the Motion.

[applause]

You have the right to reply H.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Exercising right to reply. Just want to say I mean, I accept some of the comments that have been made, but I attend Regional Council and with the greatest respect to Number 3, you’ll be lucky if you get 10% of people if that who speak when it comes to Around the Branches. Yes. Do you know why? Because everyone’s more interested in getting out there and getting back on. Jumping back in their motor and getting back to their places of work or residence. Yes. That’s a reality. What I’m asking for was quite simple, just an enhancement for people to quickly do a quick report for the purpose of communication. We’ve already heard earlier on how many Branches are not sharing information yes? And Hovis is a prime example, yes? I mean we’ve got quite a good network of communicating through emails and we share information between ourselves but if I’m honest I don’t think it’s far enough and I think there needs to be a consistent message across the whole Regions, all our Regions, in consistent, and we can’t communicate enough. Regards the FTOs, I mean, the FTOs have got a very, very difficult job to do, and the reality is I’m sure through sharing information at Regional Council, through networking via emails etc etc, all we’re going to be doing is sharing common problems which could potentially assist our FTOs with the issues that they’re dealing with.

Thank you.
[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: To the vote, those in favour. Those against. That’s lost. Okay. Motion 20.

20 Rule 14.8 (i) Shop Stewards – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth

That this Conference agrees to add to the end paragraph in Rule 14.8 (i) “and should receive basic training within six months, unless special leave is given by the EC.”

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: I’m not going to go in depth about this because I made the same argument for Safety Reps and the Executive already hinted they’re going to go along the same path. But I will say one thing. Inadequately trained Reps damage our Union, and damage our reputation. Please support.

[applause]

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

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes thank you President. I don’t intend speaking for long on this, I mean, I did make the point when I spoke on Motion 5 this morning that the same arguments would apply equally to Motion 20 and they do. It’s absolutely no difference in how we train or the problems that we envisage if a course is cancelled, and I say, I can’t stress strongly enough the damage that an employer can do if you pass this Motion. The employer who really doesn’t want a trade union structure within the Branch can actually delay people going on a course, and if they delay those people going on the course then you debar them if you pass this. So with the same reasons exactly the same reasons that I made on Motion 5 this morning, I would ask you to oppose the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: To vote, oh sorry, do you want the right to reply? Right sorry. To the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s lost. Motion 21.

21 New Rule – No 5 Regional Council

Branch Meetings – That Conference supports an attendance bonus for stewards attending Branch Meetings.

Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582: Mr President, Platform, Delegates. Delegates some of my colleagues at Branch 582 ask for your support in requesting an attendance allowance being paid to Stewards attending the quarterly meetings, those in March, June, September and December each year. No amount is proposed by my colleagues, but the consensus was that a small contribution would help cover any travel expenses incurred. Thank you Delegates.

[applause]

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

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to oppose this Motion. I don’t know where it’s come from really to be honest, you know what I mean? We have a Branch Meeting and you make your way to the Branch Meeting, you have your Branch Meeting, then you get blind drunk then you go home [laughter]. I mean that’s it. That’s the way it is. I don’t want paying for it, I get battered when I get in (laughter/applause).

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: I’m here to oppose this Motion because my belief is that we need to be engaging with the members in the Branch Meeting. If you can’t even get the Stewards to come along without having to thrown in a bung, you’ve go no chance.
Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I’m here to oppose, most Branch Meetings take place on site, and if they’re not on site then they’re usually in the pub that’s more or less on site. So what do you want paying for? I’m asking you to oppose it.

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: I can understand where the Motion has come from in the fact that I know in my Branch it is a long way to get to our Branch Meetings for a lot of our members. However, if you’ve got the passion that we need to be attending these Branch Meetings, then we should damn well attend the Branch Meetings whether it costs us or not [applause], so please oppose this Motion.

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: Here to oppose this Motion. If Stewards can’t be bothered to attend the Branch Meeting then they shouldn’t be Stewards.

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: Again I’m here to oppose this. What next? Are we going to ask, what do they call it, all our members if they want 50p every time they attend the Branch Meeting? Where does it end? It’s ridiculous. It’s like Conference, you know, you come because you want to, you come because you care, you come for the reason. If you don’t come for that, don’t bother coming at all.

Brother Simon Frodsham – Branch 580: I’m opposing this Motion. If you haven’t got, sorry, I don’t think anybody should be paid for attending a Branch Meeting, you should come because you believe in it, and you believe what you’re doing, and you believe in your members [applause]. I’d pay to go to the Branch Meeting because you’re not going to keep me out. Thank you.

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

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President. The Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose the Motion. I’ve got to say this is the first time I’ve ever put an agenda for together for Conference, of course last year Joe did it, and when I saw this Motion for the first time, I actually thought one of my staff was having a joke, you know, I did. I’ve been a member of this Union for 40 years, next year that is, and I’ve attended 33 Conferences, hundreds of Branch Meetings, and I’ve never seen or heard anything as ludicrous as this Motion.

Why would a Shop Steward want paying for attending a Branch Meeting? You know, being a Shop Steward’s not a job, it’s not employment, it’s a vocation, it’s a belief and it’s a passion. People don’t become Shop Stewards for financial gain, or at least they shouldn’t do, and if you do, I want to know where the money’s coming from. If you did, then many, many people within our realms and probably every person in this room will be sorely disappointed. Being a Shop Steward is about protecting the vulnerable, it’s about protecting the discriminated against and those who are bullied, because you believe it is the right thing to do, and you have the capability as individuals to make a difference. It’s about seeking to improve the lives of ordinary men and women, by using your experience and your ability in negotiations, and it’s about signposting people to a better future, and a fairer way of living our lives. But it’s not about financial gain, it never has been and it never will be. You know last month, or well actually, yes last month, I was at the International Union of Foodworkers Conference in Geneva, along with Jackie...
Barnwell and Marilyn French, and we listened to stories, loads of stories, about what Shop Stewards had to do to fulfill themselves as Shop Stewards. We heard stories of them being beaten, we heard stories of Shop Stewards being raped by the militia in their countries, and many I think last week it was reported in the press that 76 trade union leaders were murdered this year so far. That’s the reality of being a trade union member in other countries. The right to be a member and the right to organise. In 2006 from this very rostrum we heard Joseph Mbabazi who led the Ugandan trade union, the foodworkers’ trade union, talk about what his Shop Stewards had to do. Chris you’re right, where you live might be a long way from where your Branch Meetings are held, but let me tell you in Uganda when I was there, we could be talking 300 miles to attend a Branch Meeting, and you wouldn’t go in a car, you’d walk it. That’s what the Shop Stewards did. Joseph Mbabazi told us about the Shop Stewards climbing escarpments to attend Branch Meetings, putting their own lives at risk. None of them seeking payment, all of them carrying out their vocation, a desire, and a choice. Listen I’ve known David Lawrence for a long time, there’s absolutely no malice in what Dave was saying, and that’s not why he put the Motion. I don’t really understand why he did, but the Motion’s there. I’ve got to say though Dave, it’s an ill-conceived Motion and it’s without thought for the consequences, financially and to the organisation. It actually undermines everything that you believe in, the very reasons why you became activists within this organisation. It devalues what a Shop Steward is all about, and it devalues the legacy that our forefathers left us. There are already a number of members who believe that Shop Stewards are in it for the money anyway. People back at the Branch think you’re on holiday this week, they don’t think you’re coming here to make a difference to their lives, or the lives of the people within society. They believe it’s a jaunt, they believe it’s a holiday, they believe you get paid for it. Let’s not add to it by saying yes we are going to be paid for it and we should be paid for it. Do not bring credence to the thought of those members who think that way. Delegates, there are no logical reasons why we should pay anyone for attending a Branch Meeting, let alone Shop Stewards. We join the Union by choice, and we become activists by choice, because of what we believe in, because of our principles. Let’s keep it that way and oppose Motion 21.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Right of reply?

**Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582:** I’d just like to point out to the General Secretary and to Delegates that I didn’t support the Motion, I was asked by a colleague to bring it to Conference. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, to the vote, those in favour. Those against. Okay that’s lost. Right colleagues, you can put your final agendas away for now, for today, yes, I’m not going to make you come back after. Whilst Rohan’s just setting up over in the corner, who’s going to show you one of the, what we believe is a fantastic benefit that’s going to be made available, that we believe will help retain members, as well as probably, you know, as a resource for recruitment as well. I think you’re going to enjoy what he’s got to show you. We may take at the end of his presentation, maybe three or four questions, but obviously we are stuck for time. So if I haven’t got time, unfortunately I won’t be able to take those questions. But while he’s getting ready, I’d just like to make you aware that obviously Violet Dickinson who was here this morning, has left a number of books with Vi Carr, so anybody who’s interested in purchasing, they’re on the Diverse Group, which are produced by a diverse group of women from different countries and different cultures, now living in South Yorkshire, it’s a difference in itself, eh? And it celebrates their experience and achievements through poems, stories and other pieces, such as recipes for a better world. The money received from the sale of these books all goes to the Asylum Aid books, the books are priced at £9.99, it might sound a lot, but the actual printing costs are £8.80 and it’s going to a fantastic cause. And don’t forget on
Rohan Bhargava: Good afternoon. Firstly I want to thank Ian and Ronnie for inviting me here to speak and present the new BFAWU Rewards website. As a quick introduction I run a technology company called Pouring Pounds Limited. We run rewards and benefits platforms for major media companies like the Daily Mail and Metro newspaper, for student organisations, professional organisations and now trade unions. To the best of my knowledge this will be one of the most competitive and rewarding platforms of any trade union in the UK today. Before I do a quick site demo, let me run through some of the key benefits of what we are proposing here with the BFAWU Rewards.

We currently work with 2,500 of UK’s most popular brands. These are places that you shop at anyway. Just to give you some examples, Vodafone, Argos, RAC, Boots, Tesco, just a quick show of hands, how many of you guys use these websites or brands? And this is just a small selection, there are literally 2,500 brands that we work with. On all these brands you can actually save by getting cashback offers, or instant discounts through our vouchers. The way it works is that we have a commercial relationship with all these brands and they pay us a commission for every sale that goes from our websites to them. We take that commission and pass most of it back to you as cashback. This is a fully retailer funded programme, what this means is that it makes this platform 100% free for you. Average savings in the UK for people that do use this programme is anywhere between £400 and £500. I’ll walk through some examples on how the site actually works.

So this is the BETA version of the site that’s already built for, and will be called the BFAWU Rewards. We’re expecting to launch in the next two weeks, and so this is the sort of landing page that you come to when you come onto the site. To get started all you do is sign in, we will be sending you log in information, the user name will most likely be your membership ID, and we’ll send you information in terms of how to create your password etc. So you log in as you would to any other website. Now you’re in. So let’s see if you were looking to buy something in Boots. Right, search for Boots. On the Boots page will give you details of exactly what cashbacks you can expect for doing what you were going to do anyway. So the cashback’s up to 7.5% and we have a whole bunch of vouchers also from Boots. In order to start redeeming or earning cashback, all you’re doing is you’re going to click out from the BFAWU Rewards website to Boots by clicking that button, and this is merely re-directing you from this website to the regular Boots website. What we have now done is Boots knows that the sale is coming from this website, and they’re going to now award us a commission, most of that commission is going to come back to you as cashback. So you’re now getting discounts on things you were doing anyway. So this includes travel, breakdown cover, healthcare, fashion, groceries at Tesco, etc etc.

Once you’ve done your purchase you get an email from us within 4-72 hours, this email confirms that we have tracked your transaction. Obviously there is a return period involved so your transactions will initially be in a pending status, so if you come back to your account, and if you just click on My Account, and go onto your earnings you will be able to see all your transactions in one place, with the current status of it. So everything that you’ve just done and within that return period will be classified as pending. Once we get paid from Boots, we’re able to transfer this money to you. In order to redeem your cashback all you do is come onto this website, request for a payment, and we’re able to pay this cashback to you either by BACS, ie bank transfer, or via PayPal. Again there is absolutely no cost to you for using the website, for receiving payments, or anything else that you might do with us.
In addition you can also donate some or all of your cashback to a charity of your choice, we’re increasingly working with more and more charities across the UK, so there’s a whole section of charities in being able to donate money to them, in case you wish to do so. In addition there are sections of the website for hot deals, top vouchers, you can even get cashback on a whole load of freebies, you know taking trials of Love Film or different survey websites. So this in effect is what we’re going to be building in the next two weeks, and details of that will follow by email shortly.

At this point I’ll take any questions if they’re there. I’ll also be around for at least an hour and a half so if anyone has questions please do come up to me. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Colleagues, we honestly believe that that’s a fantastic benefit. We believe it gives us an edge when it comes to retention of members, and we believe it gives us an edge when it comes to recruitment. I mean, I will take, I mean if there’s anybody got any burning questions they want to ask Rohan. Tony, okay, one, two, three. I’m going to take those three questions, yes you, Tony, yes and Mark. Tony yes. No from here, you have to come down here, and Mark. If you want to come down here please. Ask your questions, right, then I’ll get Rohan to respond to them.

Unidentified Speaker: My question is do you have [inaudible] once you get the cash back?

Rohan Bhargava: In order to keep the website 100% free you need to have at least £10 in confirmed cashback.

Unidentified Speaker: Time limit I mean.

Rohan Bhargava: No you can do your first transaction on the 1st January and then come back on the 31st December, the cashback never expires if that’s the question.

Unidentified Speaker: Yes because why I’m asking is, if you don’t, if there’s no time limit how do we know that you’ve got your commission back from Boots, for example?

Rohan Bhargava: Okay, so your transaction tracks right away, so within 4-72 hours we’ll actually send you an email that your transaction with Boots is tracked. After that it typically takes Boots four to eight weeks to pay us, and then we can pay you.

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

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: I’m just asking, if I go in Tesco and I say I know Ian Hodson will they give me a few quid back?

[laughter]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No, you’ve got to do it online.

Rohan Bhargava: I will add something here, we are actually in the process of including instore cashback. This will include brands like Tesco and Sainsbury’s, where we’ll effectively have a gift card that you can buy, the gift card, so say you’re buying £100 worth of Tesco purchase, it’ll cost you £95. So it’s like a Tesco or a Sainsbury’s gift card, but at a discount. Again that would be only open for members of the BFAWU.

Brother Mark Brookes – Branch 347: I’m just wondering, as you’re in conjunction with the Bakers and our Union, what does it actually cost the Union to actually work in conjunction with yourself? Sorry, obviously you work with the company, what does it cost the Union to work with you? Obviously they must pay you some sort of commission.

Rohan Bhargava: There is no cost.
**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** It’s a partnership. Okay? We’re not going to take any more, yes it operates in Northern Ireland. I’m not going to take any more questions, I’m not going to, I’ve said no to Richard, and I’ve said no to over there. Apologies, but we are running short of time. Rohan’s going to make himself available for the next hour, so if there are burning questions you will be able to get hold of him over there. If I can call the Executive back to the stage, but honestly I think this is a fantastic benefit that your members and your Branches are going to enjoy. I think, I’d like to pay a big thank you to Rohan because I know the work that he’s put on it in the last few weeks to make sure it was prepared for Conference. It’s been a lot of hard work and effort for him, so please put your hands, and welcome one of our new partners.

[applause]

I’ll take a point of information, but not a question.

**Unidentified Speaker:** Point of information guys. Park Cake Oldham and Bolton currently run a site, where we traded in a £20 Christmas bonus to join with another company that provide this service, Asperity. It’s absolutely fantastic, I’ve saved money on sofas, jewellery, clothing at Debenhams. You name it, it’s there. Cinema tickets, days out, holidays, it’s well worth your while. It’s free. Use it.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Colleagues, it’s that point in the day you’ve all been waiting for [laughter]. Conference, I’m really happy to introduce to you, I’m not going to make any comments because you’ve got an opportunity to come back haven’t you before the end of the day. Please welcome our General Secretary, Ronnie Draper, to give final address to Conference.

[applause]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** That sounded like a cop out didn’t it, eh, because I’ve got the mike he wouldn’t slag me off. I don’t know. Comrades, Conference 2012 may well be seen as a defining year in the history of our Union. We can see from the agenda this year, and I’ve got to say thank you, it’s absolutely remarkable agenda, with 99 motions posted and one amendment, round 100. Fantastic. And it shows all the areas where this Union and the people that we represent face attack. Public services, finance, taxation, transport, health and safety, employment rights, the list just goes on and goes on and goes on. We face the most radical right wing government that workers in this country have ever faced. Cameron’s a much different opponent from where Thatcher or Major were. A much more devious opponent, he’s slyer, he’s more devious, below contempt and he’s a sheep in wolf’s clothing. Realistically he’s going to be more difficult to deal with, and if we do succeed, like the President asked this morning, in ousting him, we face the very real danger that his replacement will be also right wing. Talked to John Millington this afternoon at lunchtime, you know, we’re moving within the Tory Party nearer to a fascist state than we are to Socialism.

Last year Cameron was enjoying a honeymoon period, portraying austerity as something that the country really, really needed. Something that he could hold middle England with. But now a year later things look slightly different. Ed Milliband seems to be on a renaissance, opinion polls show Labour moving way ahead in the polls, although I’ve got to say we shouldn’t get carried away by that lead, because leads can disappear with just one flaw in what they say, or a deed that they do. Members of his own party are now starting to turn against Cameron, and we’re now seeing the usual sleazy, greasy, slimy traits of Tory politicians coming to the fore. Clegg still hangs on to Cameron’s coat tails, because Cameron gave him his only ever opportunity of power, and he’s going to stay there. Clegg is a traitor to the core, he betrayed his
supporters and got his MPs to do the same. He bastardised the principles on which the Liberals were founded in his quest to get his own name in lights. And he heaped misery on the British people by acting as a crutch to this discredited sleazy Tory government.

But enough of this political never has been. Enough of this political never will be. And back to Cameron. U-turn after U-turn after U-turn. Which undermined both his tax raising plans and discredited his budgetary policies. You know Thatcher always said that the lady’s not for turning. Cameron turns that often he must think he’s on a spit. Turning regular, while the heat’s turned up. We were thinking about ideas for the raffle you know tonight, and if we could actually get him to donate his body to us, we could actually decide who wins the rod and where to put it.

But let us not necessarily view U-turns as victories. They could well be contrived to deflect from the bigger more hard-hitting policies to come. It would be remiss of me not to mention the U-turn, I think a great U-turn that was done on Pasty Tax, and to congratulate every single person who was involved in the success of that campaign.

[applause]

We had remarkable support from the members of our Parliamentary Group. Nationally we worked very closely with Greggs and the National Association of Master Bakers, culminating with a mass demonstration which was attended by many of our members in absolutely atrocious weather when Ian did tell me it wasn’t going to rain, and that I didn’t need a coat, but I took one. But we had a massive demonstration with all our members there, and I’ve got to say we won the day in the end. Street leafleting campaigns to build awareness in the North West and in the Midlands, got the Union’s name out there at the fore. Out into the public domain and demonstrated that success is not about the size of the organisation, but how the organisation uses itself. So a big thanks to everyone who took part, those who wrote to their MPs and those who vocalised their support. We, the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union, made a massive difference to our industry the day we took on that support. We helped to protect many small bakery businesses from going out of business, even if we had no members, our actions helped them to stay in business. And averted that potential loss of 20,000 people from the industry.

The government demonstrated their ignorance of the current legislation, and Cameron had a severe bout of memory loss about when he last tasted a pasty. He said he had his last one at a pasty shop on Leeds Station, and then failed to tell everyone that that was five years ago because the place had been closed for five years. His contribution to the industry was invisible. So what did he care if the policies that he had and his Treasury had, sent our industry down the pan? When Thatcher wanted to raise revenue to take on the Trade Union Movement, or to undermine working people, she privatised. She sold off the family jewels, our gas, our electricity, our water, our telecommunications, our building societies, our transport network, etc, and what did she do with it? She cut taxes for the rich, she invested the revenues from North Sea Gas in unemployment, in dole queues, to make unemployment, against employment a competition. She kept dole queues long, creating fear amongst workers, and the final coup de gras, was to cut terms and conditions. She sold our council houses, and kept the revenues. She rate-capped councils and cut services by stealth. We in this room, and we the members that we represent, we bought shares, we bought the council houses, and now we’re paying the price for that. And we’ll see that in the motions that are before this Conference this week. Our utilities are now in the hands of big business, many of whom are Tory backers. We probably made the cost of a holiday, but what we did we created a printing press for money, a cash cow that we were all complicit in feeding. Of course Cameron can’t sell off the family silver, because it’s gone, and you can’t sell the same silver twice. He can’t invest in North Sea Oil because the Tories wasted it. The inheritance that should have been our children’s legacy for the future,
frittered away by the Tories. The party that claims to have the best policies for the British economy.

So what is Cameron’s alternative? It’s that dreaded word austerity. A fancy word that has recently entered everyone’s vocabulary. It should have a dictionary definition that says a means to screw the poor without affecting the rich. Because that’s what it is. I know it’s flippant, but it means exactly that to us. They are unaffected by changes to taxation, their children still go to boarding school and they will still be multi-millionaires when all this is over. They are totally out of touch with the concept of what austerity brings. Just think, think of the impact that the 20, the 2½% increase in VAT had. Adding that relatively small percentage point, it might sound ineffectual, but the reality is to poorer families, it invoked questions and it invoked choices. Can we afford it or can’t we afford it? Increases in fuel have devastated both working people and those on the benefit system. Pensioners dying because they cannot afford to heat their homes. Nobody involved in Cabinet would experience any of these hardships, in fact we’ve got 27 millionaires out of the 29 who represent the British government, the Cabinet. Nobody in Cabinet exposed to the reality of always going for the cheaper option like we have. No-one in Cabinet foregoing the family holidays or the meal out in the fancy restaurant. They’re not affected by the austerity measures and they don’t care that you’re affected.

Austerity is a disaster for Britain. And one that we’ll be paying the consequences for, for many, many years. It won’t just affect us or our children, it’ll be our grandchildren and their grandchildren if this one-way plan to disaster carries on. The Tories have hammered our public services, they’ve destroyed business, and strangled investment confidence. Their policies have stifled the housing market, plunging thousands of families into negative equity territory. They’re presiding over the sharpest increases in unemployment that we’ve seen in decades, in fact since the last time that they were in power. The banks, who we bail out, aren’t lending, and therefore nobody is borrowing, and those that are face usurious interest rates from loan sharks and payday lenders. We’ve seen a peripheration of payday lenders and companies willing to buy your gold, all intent to take you for a ride and make a fat profit. Your pain, their gain.

We have a deficit that we didn’t cause, that we had no say in and to which we will be the biggest contributors. Bankers taking toxic debt on, politicians doing nothing to regulate these criminal acts, but then leaving us, the working people of this country to pick up the pieces. We do have an alternative that is both credible and do-able. Instead of cuts, let’s go for growth. Let’s invest in services, let’s invest in industry, and above all, let’s invest in people. It’s not clear as a Tory blasé retort that borrowing more will only exacerbate the problem. Apply a simple logic. I spoke a little bit earlier about council houses being sold off. So let’s release some of those capital receipts and build lots of affordable new social housing. If we do that we’ll need people to make bricks, to mix mortar, to produce cement. That sound convincing? Because I’m not normally allowed to talk about anything that has anything to do with DIY or building, I’ve got to say, I confess, I’m a DIY disaster. But I recognise what the country needs to turn away from austerity. We need architects, we need bricklayers, we need plasterers, labourers and a multitude of other building workers. In those houses we’ll need carpets, we’ll need curtains, we’ll go to Pouring Pounds and buy some. Wardrobes, kitchen appliances, seating, televisions, all those things, all of which we will need somebody’s expertise and an industry to produce. Are there any bells ringing? You know, we’re invigorating the construction industry here, we’re employing tradespeople who will pay taxes, who will also spend the money in the local community, who will go on holidays with their family, who will buy cars, and they will buy houses. Besides, we may also have another affect, we may get homeless people into homes, reducing the burden on councils, whilst at the same time restoring dignity to these people.

Increasing the money merry go round. This is just one industry used as a simple example of how we get round austerity.
But the same could be applied to the increasing of policing, and cutting the cost of crime. It goes beyond speculating to accumulate Comrades. It’s a realistic alternative to the slash and burn policies of the Tories. How long will it be before the Tories and their Liberal crutch realise that they’ve got it wrong? And more importantly, start to bring about change. But for how long will working people allow themselves to be kicked before we rise up and we object. How long will we allow ourselves to be used as the dialysis machine, cleansing the monetary veins of the rich? We need economics that are based on politics, or political choices, not vice versa. We’re a powerful force Comrades when we’re united. The old adage you know that united we stand, divided we fall has never been more relevant than it is today. We’re under attack from the government, and we’re under attack from the employer. We need to do something about the perception that the election of a Tory government heralds a free for all for all workers on their terms and conditions. We need to fight back if we are to protect what we have. Yes, as a last resort, like the people at RF Brookes, we may have to take to the cobbles. We may have to withdraw our labour, and yes we may have to cause some inconvenience to the consumer. So be it. The Trade Union Movement’s done it years and years before, and we won. We won many, many victories by doing that. But I did say it’s a last resort. But I’ll tell you what, if we don’t, get ready for the biggest cull on workers’ rights that you have ever seen. Or that your forefathers ever saw. It’s says something you know when the police and the doctors are voting to take strike action. Bodies who are not renowned as militant groups, but who nevertheless have voted to defend their pensions. I’ve got to say and I was talking, when we were doing the interview with John earlier on, I wish the police were going to take industrial action to defend the police force, and I wish that the doctors who are going to take industrial action were going to do it to defend our National Health Service. But at least it’s a start, they are going to fight for terms and conditions that were theirs.

I’ve heard some of our Branches say that their members would not vote to take action against employer who wanted to decimate their terms and conditions. All we can say is that we have got to encourage those Branches to come on board, to defend what is rightfully theirs, and what is rightfully the ownership of our members. But I would also point out to them, look at the example of Gunstones Bakery. Never renowned as a militant Branch, and I don’t wish to do them down, they weren’t always on the cobbles, they weren’t the first Branch that you heard of causing trouble. That was probably Tony Sedgewick’s. It did happen, this was a Branch who were, you know, continued to bob along serenely. And then they rebelled when their employer threatened them with absolute decimation of terms and conditions. We had a massive vote and I think, probably someone from Gunstones here will correct me, I think the vote for yes was 95.8%, and it was on something like an 80% return. It was absolutely huge vote for industrial action, because they said there weren’t going to allow their employer to do it. What we got with the vote, we got a major U-turn by the company, all of a sudden the company realised that the trade union was serious, and that these people who may well have been pacifists or preferred jaw not war in the past, all of a sudden had said no, that ain’t going to happen. And we won what I see as being a victory within the industry, and I think that we should use the example of Gunstones in other parts of the country to make sure that our terms and conditions aren’t undermined.

We should be as individuals but as activists collectively, we should be ready to take on the haves, not be ready to take on other have nots. Our argument is not with other working people, our argument is with the people who seek to destroy what we have as terms and conditions. We also need Comrades the return of a Labour government. But it can’t be the return of a Labour government at any price. We may as well fight against the enemy we know as the friend, who stabs us in the back. We need a Labour government that will listen, and who will deliver on the needs of working people. If not the danger is that people will turn to those who they perceive will listen. The BNP, the fascists and the xenophobes. We’ve seen it in parts of Lancashire, in
small towns in council elections where people perceived that Labour wasn’t listening. And so they moved to the far right. It’s those who peddle evil amongst society like a cancer that spreads, and eats away at values. The British Trade Union Movement has the ability, like John Slaven said, to sway public opinion. We have nothing to fear, and we have everything to gain. Trade unionists across the world face much greater challenges than we do on a daily basis. Many in South America face incarceration for their beliefs, and many have lost their lives in pursuance of those beliefs. In Burma many are branded as terrorists, and throughout Asia many put their lives on the line to protect working conditions. We’re not faced with those challenges, and we’re much more organised than those organisations. We need to ensure that we recruit those outside of the Union into our ranks, we need to build confidence within our membership, and indeed throughout the whole of the Trade Union Movement. And we need to convince people that we can succeed. The strategy for the coming year was summed up ideally at the recent International Union of Foodworkers Conference in Geneva, when their working slogan, the daily slogan was organise, fight and win. That was their rallying call, and I believe that can also be ours.

Comrades, our challenge starts this week, but the real work starts when we leave Bridlington. The rhetorical speeches have to become a reality, and the passion and the claps that we make in this room have to become our fighting spirit when we return home. Comrades, the message has to be delivered to those employers who want to do us over. That we will not lie down and die. We will challenge, and we will confront where necessary. Comrades, organise, fight, together we’ll win.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay? You’ve got to take everything with you today, you can’t leave anything here unfortunately because when we leave here today, they’re going to be removing all the tables and binning anything that you leave, so make sure you take all your belongings with you. We’ve got a do in here tonight which starts at, does everybody know? Eight o’clock, glad you know because I wasn’t sure. Look forward to seeing you all tonight, have a great evening, and back here at half past nine in the morning, back here half past nine in the morning. Everybody has to leave through that exit over there, and make sure they put in the collection.
Monday 11 June 2012

Morning Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No doubt we’ll be quiet this morning [laughter]. Okay Conference can I tell you, and thank you very much, the collection yesterday raised £182 and obviously we’d like to thank everybody for their generosity. Thank you very much Conference.

Well, here’s a familiar name, a winner of something else, Mr John Bennett, who’s won the Westfield Health Prize Draw. Obviously it’ll be an alcoholic recovery set I’m sure. Number 4, they’ve asked me to advise Conference if you haven’t already bought a ticket, they have got somebody that’s coming across from Las Vegas, the Waterloo Las Vegas I believe it is, and their do’s on Wednesday evening, and when you consider you’ve got somebody from Las Vegas, well worth buying a ticket at £2.50. Obviously don’t give your money to Roy, give it to the sensible one in the team, which is Phyllis.

Okay, Conference, there seems to be a bit of confusion on the first page. On the Labour Party one it actually suggests that there’s three Delegates to be elected and two must be female. Yes? And then it tells you you’ve only got one vote. Quite clearly you haven’t [laughter], you know but, obviously we put them together after we’d been to the pub, so apologies. So you’ve got three votes on page 1.

And that also goes for the TUC where obviously you’re entitled to three votes as well.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Right, just for clarity. If everyone has their ballot papers in front of them. Okay? You have up to three votes for the Labour Party, ignore that it says only one vote, just forget that. So I’m telling you now before you fill your papers in and hand them in, on the Labour Party you have up to three votes, two of those who go to the Labour Party will be women, they have to be, that’s the rule of the Labour Party. On the TUC again you have up to three votes, you don’t have to take the three votes, but you can up to three votes. When it comes to the Executive Council, on, I’m trying to think from memory, I think it’s Number 3 and Number 4 isn’t it? They’re the only ones who’ve got it. Yes, Number 3, I haven’t got a paper here, is it Number 3 and Number 4? Right, again on Number 3 you have up to three votes, on Number 4 you have up to three votes. Okay? Eh? Clear as mud, but don’t do the Number 4 yet as Ian said before, because we’ve got a candidate who’s been missed off the list, and so we’re just reproducing Number 4 Executive ballot paper so don’t worry, just leave it blank and we’ll get it reissued with all the names on. That’ll be done very soon. Okay?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Delegates, sorry for the confusion this morning. It is Monday, we’ve got those Monday morning blues. Bit of a blue season actually wasn’t it?

General Secretary to call the Roll.

[Roll Call taken]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: There’s 179 Delegates present.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, Motion 22. Sorry, apologies, Monday morning. Motion 23.

23  Rule 14.8 (K) – No 3 Regional Council

Insert: under Rule 14.8: Functions of Safety Representative as per ‘Safety Representatives’ and Safety Committees’ Regulations 1977’ as amended. Regulation 4: (I) (a) to (h) to list.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: It’s a Rule change.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Can you talk into the microphone mate?

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Under our Bakers Union Handbook which is, I’m sure you’ve all seen these yes? Under that we’ve got a full page worth of documentation relating to how important health and safety is and how integral a part we see it as a trade union. When we look under the Rule Book there’s only specific to two areas of notice about Safety Representatives, and if I can just quote under 14.8, what it specifically states under (k). Safety Reps shall be elected from members of the Branches. The function of the Safety Representative is to inspect plant and machinery and to advise members of dangers and keep the Secretary informed of dangerous practices which may affect health, safety and welfare. The reality is Conference when we met members, what we should be doing is giving them a copy of the Handbook when we recruit, and a copy of the Rule Book. Even if you do give them out, when you recruit, the reality is there’s very, very minimal information as to exactly what the role of that representative is, and what the function is of the Health and Safety Rep is meant to carry out.

All this Motion is asking for is a bit more meat on the bones within our Rule Book which is the central part of what we’re about. So when we do recruit new members, members are crystal clear as to what the role and function of our Health and Safety Reps are, because at the moment there’s no clarity as to what it is that they’re meant to be doing.

The other thing is, what it will also do, by having it in the Rule Book, what it will also do is clarify and encourage members to come forward and become Health and Safety Reps. I move, thank you.

[applause]

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

Brother Mark Brookes – Branch 347: We have this, for any Safety Rep in here, you do a Stage 1, you have something called a Brown Book, for Safety Reps it’s a Bible, it has rules and regulations in it. So what do you want to put in the Rule Book? Your regulations, your (inaudible) and your guidance? The Brown Book is about a quarter of an inch thick, it’s in there, it already has it. If anyone wants one you can get one.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, I mean Mark’s spot on, it’s, you know, it’s a piece of legislation, which part of the legislation do we put in next? I mean, you know we have no misunderstanding and no problem with people bringing and, you know, raising issues on health and safety, we think it’s critical and we think it’s important they’re debated. But we also think what’s important is when we put something into the Rule Book, it doesn’t put an onus, or place a duty on somebody like the Brown Book would suggest to us. You know it’s not there to place a duty on Safety Reps. And I would ask the question as well, if we was to put a) to h) into the Rule Book and then nobody brings forward a Motion and that’s been changed, we’d be left with an out of date Rule Book and we’d be asking Health and Safety Reps to conform to requirements that are no longer recognised by the Brown Book. We, the Executive firmly believes that the best place for people to learn about their role as a Safety Rep would be on a training course, and obviously we believe that the Brown Book is the Bible that is taught by Willie Calhoun who does some fantastic training for us, and obviously that’s where we want to send our Safety Reps. So you know, we obviously thank H for raising the issue of health and safety, because it’s a critical and important issue for us to debate, but obviously Conference we ask you to oppose the Motion, basically on the fact that if it was incorporated into the Brown Book, nobody brings forward a real change, we would be left with an out of date role for our Safety Reps, and we believe that the best place to learn is on the training course, and that will
explain, not just what the bullet points mean, but actually what the role of the Safety Reps is. Please oppose the Motion.

[applause]

Right to reply? To the vote, those in favour. Okay. Against. That’s lost. Twenty four.

24 Rule 15.4 – No 5 Regional Council

*Travel Expenses – That Conference agrees to support an increase in travel expenses in line with the AA (Automobile Allowance) guidance.*

Brother Adrian Hyde – Branch 582: Mr President, Delegates. Motion 24. We believe that the current rate does not reflect the true cost of travel when using your own vehicle. Can I just mention as well I’m glad that it got mentioned yesterday about Manchester United not winning Premiership? Can somebody else mention it today, tomorrow and Wednesday [laughter]. Please support, thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I hope your back’s really bad now.

[applause]

Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582: I’m here to formally second the Motion, and offer my support to Adrian on both issues. I’m not sure how many Delegates use second class rail, but those who do, know that the prices are very expensive. Delegates are fully reimbursed for travelling by second class rail, or bus, yet only a small token is received for car travel. Delegates please support an increase in the present allowance. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: I’m also here to support this Motion. I believe in fairness, and at the moment with the price of petrol, the way things are going, and also depreciation on the use of our own cars, then we need to support this Motion to make sure that we all get a fair retrospective price when we travel to places for the Union. Thank you.

[applause]

Sister Anita Giblin – Branch 301: I’m here to support this Motion. It’s about time we had a realistic increase in fuel costs. And I’d like to say if the EC think this is fair, then all get rid of your company cars, buy your own like we do, and pay yourselves the same fuel allowance that you give us. Please support. 

[applause]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to support the Motion. I think it’s absolutely critical that we’re not left behind in terms of expenses. I think we’ve got a lot of lay officials who are doing a lot of good work organising and stuff, and the reality is they’re not even meeting with their expenses, they’re not even meeting their petrol costs. And I think it’s slightly unfair to say the least. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President. Just like to endorse what Adey said before about the President and Manchester United. But he is mellowing of course because last night he actually, well sort of danced, You’ll Never Walk Alone at the end of the night and
you know, we’re grateful for that, you know, it shows that he’s not as biased as we all thought he was in the first place.

Right going back to the Motion, and first of all the Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose the Motion, I’ll explain why in a minute. But I think for the point Anita, the Executive Council don’t get company cars, they’re the same as you, they pay their own fuel like anybody else, well the officials, well okay. Well obviously the officials are probably saving a fortune if they didn’t have company cars, they actually pay tax on all those, and you’d probably find it a damn sight more difficult when you’ve got a problem to get them to your Branch as well. You know, you either have it one way or you have it the other way. But let me say that the Rule Book at this moment covers travel expenses for travelling by either train, or by bus, and so the Executive was faced some time ago with a dilemma when people started using their own cars. First of all, did we pay for the fuel costs for those travelling by car? And secondly how would we base that payment? The decision was taken that we would pay the fuel costs as recommended by the AA, and then we would use an escalator which increased it by 2p per mile. That is what we pay now, well I’ll tell you what, if you’re a betting person, you can shake your head all you like Anita, you’ve got plenty of money I know, I’ll give you a bet, because I’ve got the rates here, off the AA website. I bet, well you show me yours and I’ll show you mine [laughter]. You know, right yes, we recognise that we do not pay the top rate on the AA as put forward by them, but the figure, that figure, the top rate on the AA includes all charges for a car, okay? So that includes the likes of insurance, Road Tax, well if you think that the Union’s responsible for Road Tax or responsible for insurance, then I’m sorry, you’re going to have to make a better claim than we’ve made in the past. If you look at the AA lists, you will see that the rate payable is based on the cost of the vehicle when new, which ranges from £12,000 to £32,000, so it doesn’t cover anything that’s worth under £12,000. So anyone who’s got a car that’s under £12,000 there is no claim for that car, as far as the AA goes, it’s only on new cars that were £12,000, between £12 and £32,000. You also see that the AA rate includes a charge for parking, well of course, when you go to a meeting, we pay your parking as well, it is, that is not separate, we don’t expect you to pay your parking, you know, within the charge that we give you for the petrol. So that’s, they include it at 1.8p per mile, as I say we already pay parking and we already pay tolls where necessary.

You then have a sliding scale of increase that is applied to fuel when fuel goes up and when fuel goes down. This ranges from 7/100ths of a penny, to 14/100ths of a penny for diesel. And again, dependent on the cost of the car. On petrol it’s between 1/10^6 of a penny and 17/100ths of a penny. That is what the fuel escalator that’s used. We used to pay at one time before we went onto the AA rate, we used to pay receipted travel costs, but we found that some, and we’re not talking about one or two, some took massive advantage of that, and I’ll give you some examples. We had a member travelling from the North who was travelling to Northern College on a course, because I had to make a judgement on this. They started at home with an empty tank, and they filled the tank up where they lived. When they got to Sheffield they filled the tank up again at Sheffield, and then started the journey home. When they got back to the North they’d fill their tank up again. So they wanted to start outside their house with an empty tank, do our business, and end up with a full tank. Clearly that’s not fair on the organisation, or on you, because at the end of the day it’s you that pay it. Members attending bona fide meetings or Conferences sanctioned by the Executive have the right to be paid travelling expenses. And if you believe they’re not paid enough to travel in their own car, then they can travel by bus, or they can travel by rail, no quibbling, no ifs and buts from the Executive Council, we will accept those charges. Go on the train line, get cheap train tickets, it’s not all £200 and odd for a ticket, and we do travel sometimes by train to save money on fuel.
I was approached by a member on a course who said the fuel allowance nowhere near covered the cost of driving to the course as their car only did 16 miles to the gallon. Well, you know, clearly expenses, you know, should they be covering cars that only do 16 miles to the gallon? That’s not our choice that somebody wants to go and get a gas guzzling car, that’s their choice. I mean if we’re going to have the power of veto over what car members drive, then it is going to be a fine day when it comes to expenses. And neither though can our office staff, and we haven’t got that many office staff, neither can they put the time to one side to determine the size, the age, or the fuel consumption of the vehicle that somebody’s using. Half the time we don’t even know people are going to go in a car until after they’ve been and the claim’s made. So the best way to come up with a figure that has some foundation is the case of the AA fuel, the fuel only rate, which includes wear and tear on tyres, spare parts and servicing, all in the rate that we pay and it’s 2p above. We do not pay for the tax or insurance of the car, that’s paid whether you use the car or whether it sits on your drive. And we don’t, neither do we deduct the parking or the tolls element from the AA thing, you see you get that twice, if you park your car, or you come out of the, going into Wales sorry, not coming out, you’re going into Wales and you go over the toll, which you have to do, then we don’t make a deduction because you’ve done that because we’ve already paid it in the escalator, which you’re actually claiming it twice. You know, c’est la vie, that’s, we know that happens.

Delegates we actually do what the Motion asks for, we do pay the AA rate. It doesn’t signpost what band the Mover wants us to follow, and I told you that we follow the fuel only band, which is Band F, which is open to all of you to have a look at. We’ll continue to monitor fuel costs and adjust the rate accordingly. But if the proposer was to ask for a significant increase then remember that the increase will be passed on to the whole membership in a way the contribution increase, or whatever, was already needed.

Do you think that would sit easily with people back at base? On that basis we would ask Conference to oppose the Motion. And if anybody does, incidentally, want to have a look at the escalators I’ve got them all here. All up to date AA rates. Okay? So we’d ask Conference to oppose the Motion.

[applause]


Sister Olive Molloy – Branch 577: Thank you. Please turn to your agendas. Motion 32 stands, 33, 34 and 35 all stand. Now onto the General Motions, 36 stands, 37 and 38 stand, 39 stands, 40, 41 and 42 stand, 43 stands, 44 stands, 45 stands, 46 stands, 47 stands, 48 stands, 49 stands, 50 stands, 51 stands, 52 stands, 53 stands, 54 stands, 55 stands, 56 stands and 57 stands. That’s the end of this report. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are we okay with that – 32, 33 and 34 have been composited and become Composite 1, yes? Is the Conference okay with that report? Those in favour? Anyone against? Thank you. Motion 25. Morning Raj, nice to see you with your hat on, recognise you today.

25 Rule 17.2 – No 3 Regional Council

That this Conference agrees that all FTOs visit their respective sites at least once a quarter.
There are sites that do not have any visibility of an FTO.
**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313:** Morning Conference, Platform, Delegates. The reason for putting this Motion in through the Regional Council was quite simple. There is a clear understanding in being involved in lay jobs as going around helping the FTOs and Regional Organisers in the recruiting, come to realise there is a lot of sites out there that do not get serviced regularly as they should. There’s sometimes where they’ve had issues and they haven’t seen a Full Time Officer in the last three to four months. Now there could be several underlying reasons for that, so I’m not here attacking the FTOs or anything, but I think because we have enough FTOs in the Regions, we must make it a must that at least once, one visit a quarter is made by the relevant FTOs at the relevant sites. That way we will have clear visibility and we will most definitely help retain our membership levels because if we don’t, it’s okay recruiting people but if we do not service them then we definitely going to start people going on the wayside, and you know, leave, deciding or making the decision of leaving the Union. And in this volatile time we are within a cut throat industry anyway, where we’re getting attacked by other unions, I’d love to quote which other unions but it would be wrong of me to do that, but we know that we’re being attacked from other unions within our own Branches, where they’re trying to poach members so we need visibility. That is one of the main ways of recruiting, make sure that we have retention within our membership. So this is not an attack on any FTO, I think we’ve got excellent FTOs, yes? But we need to make sure that we are servicing our Branches. Thank you.

[applause]

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

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here to oppose this Motion, and I understand where Raj is coming from but I don’t like tying FTOs down, I mean in our area, I don’t know what FTOs are like in other areas, but he does a good job. So if I don’t need him for six months, I don’t want to see him for six months. Plus we’ve got, there’s a point of order, if Jeff’s on holiday and you get tartar Roy Streeter after my place. I don’t want to see him [laughter].

[applause]

**Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580:** I’m also here to oppose it, and the words have been taken right out of my mouth. What is the point of bringing an FTO in when there’s that much stuff going on in places that need them? If an FTO is wanted for any reason, and you ring an FTO or you ring Ronnie or Ian, they’ll come, but why tie one down to put a date in the diary to go to a bakery, when there’s no issues? FTOs should be there to go to place where there’s issues and to spend the time there. Please don’t tie FTOs down going to bakery for a five minute visit. You’ve just talked about fuel, you know. Ian Wood, to go, to come to Greggs of Yorkshire for no reason, we’re using fuel when he could be out recruiting which he does do, or going to Fox’s or going to another place where they’re having problems. Don’t tie an FTO down by agreeing to this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253:** I’m not here to oppose it and I’m not here to support it really. I believe it’s up to the Full Time Officials to organise themselves, logistically, and do it. I know my Full Time Official at the start of this year said to me can I have three dates when we can go round and do shop visits? These have been in our diary now since October, and we’re sticking by them. The Full Time Officials can organise themselves. If there’s a problem in fairness, they’re always there for us, whether we pick up the phone, by email, whatever form of way. Don’t tie the Full Time Officials down, but they are there for us as well. Thank you.

[applause]
Sister Mandy Mason – Branch 423: First time speaker. I’m here to oppose this Motion because I believe that Full Time Officers are invited when needed. I may not need my FTO in a quarter, but depending what’s going on at work, I could need him or her three, four times. You need your FTO when you need them, let’s not take them away from the important matters for no reason. And for this reason I ask Conference to oppose this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566: I’m here to oppose as well. One of the former speakers has said that there’s sites that’s not being serviced by FTOs. Well that’s what your Branch Secretary’s for then, your Shop Steward. They’re there to do the servicing, you only need an FTO when there’s a serious problem. Please oppose.

[applause]

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: I’m also here to oppose this Motion. Just want to reiterate what Mandy said, your Full Time Official is available at any time and can come on your site at any time with invitation, as can the National President and General Secretary. Please oppose this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates. Conference, why demand a Full Time Official to appear at a bakery once a quarter? You don’t need the Full Time Official in the bakery if you can handle the subjects inside. If you can’t handle the difficulties that you have, you then get in touch with the Full Time Official and have him in and have the problem sorted out that way. I mean, he has to call the company, why he’s coming in to the bakery. And there is no reason for him to be coming in because there isn’t a problem within the bakery. He won’t be allowed in to walk round the bakery talking to people, I doubt if he’d be allowed that. Conference I don’t see the reason for this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We’re improving communication with the Full Time Officials as you can see, they’re delivering the newspapers to you this morning. So one thing’s for certain [laughter], you do have an opportunity to speak to them, and I’m glad that we managed to find out that nobody wants Roy Streeter, it isn’t just me [laughter].

Conference, the General Secretary reminded me, when we had the debate about moving from Regional Boards to Regional Councils, we transferred the power from the Regional Board to the Regional Council. If Regional Councils wish their Full Time Officials to visit Branches within that Region, then it’s up to the Regional Council to direct them. I mean, the Regional Council holds the power of what the Full Time Official does, and obviously that’s where the decisions of what’s happening within your Region are taken. So we would be asking Conference to oppose this Motion. If this Motion would have probably said that the Officers communicate with the Branch, we’d have probably supported it. But we don’t believe that making a Full Time Official attend a Branch every quarter would do anything to improve anything. Yesterday there was a Motion about Branch Secretaries filling in reports to keep Regional Councils and Full Time Officials informed. And everybody recognised that that might be a little bit difficult because of the nature of the job that people do. Well vice versa as well, it’s also very difficult when redundancies come up, when disciplinaries come up, dismissals come up, if we were to say Full Time Official you haven’t visited that Branch in this quarter, and he says, that’s because I was representing someone who’d been dismissed, does the Executive Council then discipline that individual for not doing their job?
It would be very, very difficult for us to be able to do anything to enforce this change of Rule. We would ask Conference to oppose, and like I say, we recognise the importance of communication, but we don’t think that this would enhance our communication in any way. If the Regional Councils do have an issue with Full Time Officials not visiting, make sure that you raise it at your Regional Council, and ask those Full Time Officials to support those Branches that require it.

[applause]

To the vote, those in favour. Those against? That’s lost. Motion 26.

26 Rule 22.4(a) – No 3 Regional Council

_That this Conference agrees that calling all Delegates one day earlier to have a pre-Conference and training on public speaking, so that it encourages better participation at Annual Conference._

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313:** Here to move Motion 26. What the Motion’s calling for is calling all Delegates to Conference one day early to have pre-Conference and speaking courses if people wish to do so. And the reason for putting that through was quite simply I’ve been coming to the Annual Conferences for the last 12 years, year and year, year and year we have lesser and lesser and lesser amounts of Resolutions, and lesser and lesser amount of people coming up to the rostrum speaking on motions. So there’s quite clearly a lack of participation due to all these reasons. We’re all fully aware that certain parts of the Delegation like the Executive Council come here a lot earlier than the rest of the Delegation, so let’s have consistency and let’s make sure that we’re all here a day earlier so that we can have our pre-Conferences and that we could have our public speaking courses within our respective hotels or in this Delegation Hall or what have you, and get a greater participation. Because I remember times when we had queues bigger than this on every single Motion. Yes? And it was very, very, very hard to get through the day (inaudible). This year I recognise that we’ve had a lot more resolutions than the previous couple of years, but it’s still not enough. You know we should be getting 200, 225, that’s where we’ve come from. And we used to have solid debates, and we used to be scared of will we finish on time. This way, you know, if we didn’t have all the speakers and everything else, 100 resolutions, we could get them done in just over a day, day and a half. So I request that you support this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

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

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** I’m here to oppose this Motion but I agree with what Raj says. I mean getting up on the rostrum and speaking I think we should educate, you know, people how to do it. I mean I’ve got a grandchild, seven like, and with Jubilee I said to her, I was telling her about the Queen and everything, and I said Regina, and she says what’s Regina doing? You know what I mean, so we should educate people how to speak on the rostrum, so I think although I oppose the Motion, I think there is room to do something better and encourage people to come up.

[applause]

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** Again I’m here to oppose this. We had hours in Number 4 Region on the 30th May, the packs were given out, we went through the agenda, decided which way we were going to vote on it, and who was going to speak on which motions. The other thing is I don’t know that some of these people’s bodies would take another day on the beer [applause], so you know, oppose it.
[applause]

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529: I know we do have less Delegates than we did last year, we’ve got nearly 50% more motions than we had last year. But only 70 last year, there’s 100 this year, hopefully it’ll continue going up. We’re not lacking in participation, there’s a little queue here and there’s been queues to speak for yesterday and this morning. And if people want to go on a public speaking course, GFTU has public speaking courses, that’s what they’re there for, use your resources.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: Five weeks ago I was on my Stage 2 course up in Barnsley. Willie Calhoun turned round and we did a session on motions, and how to get up, speak, oppose, or support any sort of motions. It was a great assistance to us. The facilities are there for us if we want to learn, we can learn. We’ve got to learn, we need more people to come up here and speak out. So I oppose this Motion. Thanks.

[applause]

Brother Andrew Dalby – Branch 3579: I’m here really, this is my first Conference this year, those of you that’s been before will be used to it, all the getting up and participating. But for somebody who’s never done it before it’s quite daunting and it’s like it takes a bit of guts really getting up so I’m here to support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: Platform, Delegates, I’m here to oppose the Motion. I know the sentiments of the Motion are great, but realism, or as Joe would say, live in the real world. If, when does Conference then start? Do we travel on a Friday, so do we go back to the companies and I can see it, and I don’t, I’ll get shot. It’s harder and harder to get time off for Union activities. To put, ask for another day off to come to Conference a day earlier, would be I believe a problem. It could actually restrict the amount of people that companies allow you to send to Conference. And it could actually stop some companies from even allowing us to take any people to Conference. So it might not get more people to Conference, it might get less people to Conference. And you know, we’re right what’s been said. The EC and everybody work hard on putting courses on for public speaking, and one thing and another, and you see courses cancelled. Why don’t we use them courses for what the Resolution says, for public speaking and to encourage people to get up? So please oppose this, but the sentiment I believe is right.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thanks President. First of all, the Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose the Motion. But I think it would only be fair to say that you know, this year’s Conference, and Rachel just pointed it out, the massive increase in the amount of motions that we’ve got to. And it’s only because the likes of Raj and H who bother themselves to sit down and put loads of motions in. It may seem there’s, you know, that we’re going against everything that they’re putting forward. Mainly we’re against those motions on finance. But let me say, you know, one thing that they have done, the Regional Council in Number 3, is they’ve actually got to be stimulating a massive debate, and that brings people like the new Delegate who’s just got up then, found himself in a position, even though he’s never spoke before, and you’re right, I’ll tell you it’s daunting here on the first morning, it really is. Believe me, anyone says that it isn’t daunting just aren’t telling the truth. But what you have done you’ve actually stimulated a debate within the Conference, with all this variety of motions.
And I’m sure there’ll be some as we go through that we’re going to support as well. So thank you for the motions that you’ve put in because this is what we want every year. But it shows the value of what learning on courses, because you’ve gone away, you went away on your organising course, and I know the effect that that had on organising. That’s for another debate elsewhere.

But on the assumption, just one other myth Raj, I’ve got to say, that EC members don’t come to Conference earlier than anybody else. The only time they get here earlier than everybody else is if they get up earlier. And travel earlier. They don’t have an extra night, I think Jackie and her husband came on Friday, but they’d booked as a holiday, the Union aren’t paying for them. And I think the same with Marilyn and Vi, they’ve both paid their own rooms, they come and take it as a day’s holiday. So there’s no cost to the Union whatsoever of an EC member coming. The only two who come early is Ian and I and that’s obviously we’re doing some of the stuff within the Hall ready, making sure the Conference runs on time. But on the assumption Raj that you mean we bring all Delegates to Conference on the Friday, into the Saturday, that would actually increase the running costs of Conference by about £12,000. That £12,000 again, I’ve said it before, and I continue to say it, can only be recouped from one place and that is from member contributions, we have no other way, unless we get Ian to go and put a bet on the 4.30 at Lingfield or something like that, we’ve got no other way of recouping that money.

Another consideration I think Keith and other Delegates hit on it, is the question of release from work. I know many of our Officials have had the devil’s own job this week to try and get people released, and we’ve seen Delegates only turning up last night because they couldn’t get released on the Sunday. So that’s going to be another problem. We, you know, we accept that some people don’t have a problem with their employers, give them whatever is needed, and that’s absolutely fantastic. But I know from the requests I’ve had to intervene with national companies to get people released, it’s absolutely on the increase at the moment. The reality is that many companies now are looking to reduce the access that our activists have to Conferences and to meetings, cutting down on attendance at Regional Councils and any other sort of meeting that we’re doing, so don’t get me wrong, I love the sentiment behind the Motion. I think it’s fantastic because, you know, getting more Delegates to actively participate in Conference from a lectern is what’s needed. And that will heighten understanding within the Union and it will build confidence, in particular with new Delegates. There’s nothing more frustrating for us, not so much this year, but in years gone by, when there’s not so many motions is that we see people come and moving something, and then we get them formally seconded, and nobody’s got anything to say. And that’s why Conference runs very quickly, and I’ve got to say if it wasn’t for the likes of Pat Rowley, you know, Conference would be over on a Monday most years. And of course the President stretching things out and giving longer dinner breaks. So we’ve got to do things that create an interest in Conference, and I think that’s what you’re doing H and Raj by the motions that you’re putting in.

But the cost factor’s got to play heavily when we’re considering the pros and cons of the Motion, and what it brings to the Conference. Arguably we already bring Delegates a day early to Conference because they’re here on a Saturday, and if that is what you’re suggesting, people coming a little earlier on the Saturday I’m sure that, you know, I’m quite happy to speak to the GFTU, speak to Willie Calhoun, about you know, maybe putting on an hour or a couple of hours class on a Saturday afternoon that looks at how, you know, we best operate a public speaking thing. I’m sure we could explore that, and the cost wouldn’t be prohibitive. Rachel touched on before that the excellent group of courses that we have got, and we would ask people that can get released to have a look at going on them and that’s the GFTU public speaking courses. I’ve
never been on one but the reports that I get, I get like a summary of how courses, and what people’s opinions are, and I believe that those courses are excellently run and the people love them, you know, they actually get a benefit from them. Maybe we need to talk with Judith and with Willie about on the courses that we already have, the generic course, the Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3, the Stage 4 course very often is an update on legislation or it’s a refresher of what people have already done. Maybe we could actually look at scrapping that and introduce our own public speaking courses. Actually having a course that is dedicated to people getting up in front of people and public speaking. And I know there’s a difficulty with some people on courses with role play and all that, but you know, maybe that’s something we can get round.

But irrespective of what training we give, or what courses we go on, we need to encourage more Delegates to speak from the lectern. And unless we have an absolute desire to do it then it isn’t going to happen. The Motion Delegates has a great sentiment behind it, but frankly it’s too costly for the organisation to take on at the moment. We have pressures that Ian’s putting on me to release money for organising activity, and that’s great, and that is bearing fruit. We’re modernising the literature that we’ve done. You’ve seen, you will see over the coming weeks, and it’s out now, we’re upgrading the website and that’s cost a fair bit of money. We’re improving the communication structure that we’ve got. And all these things have a cost factor that’s attached to them. We’re trying to keep subscription increases to a minimum but you can only spend that £1 once. We look for the possibility of improving access to the public speaking training, I give you that guarantee, I will be speaking to Judith and to Willie hopefully today. But we can’t afford to throw another £12, £10 to £12,000 on an extra day at Conference, I’m sorry Delegates we’d ask you to oppose the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Right to reply? Okay, to the vote, those in favour. Those against. That’s lost. Motion 27. Just while Raj is coming across can I make you aware that Motion 42 and 44 have been withdrawn in favour of Motion 40. So motions 42 and 44 have been withdrawn in favour of Motion 40. Okay Raj.

**27 Rule 22.19 – Election of the Executive Council – No 3 Regional Council**

*That this Conference agrees that only members from the appropriate Region will take part in the election of EC members from their respective Region. The voting and counting to take place on the same day, with the results released before the close of Conference on the said day.*

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313:** Here to move Motion 27 in relation to voting for as an example Executive Council members from all the seven different Regions. The reason for putting the Motion in in the first place is over the last ten, twelve years that I’ve been coming here and every two years that we’ve had the elections, all the, near enough 200 Delegates is what we normally have, this year we’ve got 174, 75, whatever the case may be or 179 this morning. Normally it’s about 225 to 230. When we have the election papers given out we’re all amongst our own tables, amongst our little groups and within our hotels in the functions bar, we all speak to each other and say vote for so and so, vote for so and so. The fact of the matter being the majority of the people do not know who the people are that are on the nomination papers. So they have to rely on the old timers like Tony Sedgewick or H Rashid or John Higgins, or whoever the case may be to say, listen mate, who do I vote for, who is this person? Who is T Sedgewick, yes? And so on that basis, the best way of elected Executive Council members would be Region by Region, done at Conference, but as an example Region 3 if we got four Delegates or five Delegates or six Delegates, whatever the case may be, everybody within Region 3 knows everybody that’s being nominated because we know each other from
Regional Councils and what have you. So there would be no grey area. I wouldn’t need to ask H or H wouldn’t need to ask me who do we vote for because we know all these individuals, and I would be able to exercise my democratic right and vote for who I believe would do us a grand job. And surely every single other Region within the Union would also, does also know all the people that’s nominated within their own Region. There is a good number of people from all Regions attending and if we voted Region by Region we would have better representation because the Executive Council for whatever Regions they are, they are there as an Executive Council member, but representing that particular Region. I move.

[applause]

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

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** One hundred percent here to second this Motion. This Motion, and we’ll see what this Conference is made of this morning. We’re not all nodding dogs here, because this is the right way to do it. We’ve gone to Regional Council right, we go to Regional Council. You know the people at Regional Council, you know the people who’s going to be a good EC member, or a bad EC member, so I think this is true democracy. Let’s vote for them on credentials. And I leave you with a thought too. The other day this lot up here, I don’t know if they’re going to go for it or go against it. But we’ve suddenly found out we’ve got a Vice President, a new Vice President. How was that voted in? The EC voted, I didn’t vote him in, you didn’t vote him in. So what’s so wrong the basis of you vote your own EC members in. They voted the Vice President in, unbeknown to us, so let’s not be hypocritical, let’s say yes to this Motion. Let’s see what we’re made of.

[applause]

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** Chair, Platform, Conference, here to support the Motion. I think, we had a very straightforward example this morning, where we’ve had elections for the EC, Labour Party, etc etc. There was numerous names there that I’ve never even seen. The reality is, is that democracy that you’re voting on people who you don’t even understand who they are. They may well be some absolutely tremendous people on them papers, but we don’t even know who they are. Yes? That surely has got to be wrong. I’ve had a little think about what the Executive would say, and if anything, the only one issue that I can see is that the Executive Council is a national set-up, yes? But the reality is the set-up, well where’s it come from, it comes from Regions, it comes from Regions and then becomes a national thing, so really I don’t really see that as a major issue. We all know our Regions, we all know our Delegates, we know who’s the best people from each Region to represent our Regions, and as far as I’m concerned. When we took the decision many years ago to go from Districts to Regional Council, it was made in this Hall, and I personally believe it’s about time now that we made that decision to pick our own Delegates from Regional Council. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253:** I’m here to support this Motion, believe it or not this is my first Conference as well. Looking at the ballot papers yesterday and the nominating papers today, to be honest I didn’t have a Scooby Doo who anybody was when I was voting. I looked at them and I needed to seek advice, I didn’t know people, who they were. So I really do support this Motion. It’s about time we know the people who we are voting in. Thanks very much.

[applause]

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** I’m actually supporting this one. With the best will in the world, what do I know about a guy that lives in Cornwall, that’s standing to be an EC member? Absolutely nothing, but if somebody from 450, sorry from Number 4 Region, I know what
they’re up to and I know whether they should be on that stage or not. So I’m asking you to support this.

[applause]

Sister Stephanie Irish – Branch 339: This is my first Conference as well. I think I would have had a better chance of picking a horse in the National off that list. I’d have probably known more about it than the people that was on those voting forms this morning. Again, like Chris Lay, I had to seek advice from the FTO on who the people were that I was voting for. I hope you support the Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates. Conference, support the Resolution because it’s democratic, it’s right, and it’s honest. There will be no horse trading, no running around pubs looking for votes, and all of that kind of thing that goes on. Conference we will, at our Regional Councils, we will select the best candidate, not for the Region, but to ensure that this Union carries out what Conference moves every year. That is what it’s about, and if you don’t do that, the reason, what a difference about what goes on here, whether it’s right or not, is there’s cliques in the EC and all of that. Well this will remove all of that, we will elect who we think is best suited to run this Union and carry out the policies for the year coming. That’s what you want. Conference, support the Resolution.

[applause]

Brother John Halliday – Branch 701: I might slightly come at this from a different point of view and I hope, Delegates, you understand where I’m coming from. I think at this stage we have seven Regional Councils. What’s wrong with that Regional Council, at their meeting, selecting the Delegate who’s to go on the NEC? Then when you come to Conference, depending on the size of the Branch, you already have either one Delegate for the NEC, two, it’s already done at your Regional Council. Why do we need to go through all this here? We have the power at the Regional Council to select or elect the people we want on the NEC. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: I understand the sentiment of this Resolution, and I understand where we’re coming from. But I just would like to ask the question, you know, there’s positions, national positions on the EC. How do we elect them? Does one Region elect them? Does, how do we do it, because if this Resolution goes through I don’t understand, and I’m sure the gentleman who proposed it can explain it to me. Again, how do we do that? Do we just leave it to one Region to put one person forward? Does that get elected the old fashioned way at this Conference? I’m not sure. So I’m not here to support it, I’m not here to what do you call it, say it’s a bad idea. I just would like some clarification on that. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President. Just, the Executive Council is going to ask Conference to oppose it and I’ll explain why in a minute. And I think there’s some fundamental issues that everybody at the moment has missed but two points I have to make. First of all, the Vice President, the sitting Vice President we’ve got who’s gone to get water. It’s always been an Executive Council appointment. It always has been from time immemorial from before even I was around. Before Joe Marino was around, it’s always been an election that eh? Yes it’s done, right okay, it’s done within the Executive Council. Until we know who the Executive Council is after you’ve elected the Executive Council, we won’t know until Wednesday who the new Vice President will be. But, there’s one point, I mean it did make me
smile and I’m not being facetious but, the two Regions that have come up and give it large about what’s, you know, we know the people best in our Region, we know the people who should be on the Executive Council, we should be the people who elect it, is Number 3 and Number 4, and they’re the two Regions who’ve got to go an election of everybody here because one’s got seven and one’s got eight. So if they know the best, who the best person is to stand for the EC why have we got seven and eight people from those respective Regions standing? That seems absolutely bizarre. John Halliday is absolutely right, that’s the way to do it, that’s what we used to do under the old District system, when I was in Merseyside, we came to Conference, we knew exactly who our Executive Council member’s going to be. That was it. No ifs no buts. Didn’t matter what Conference said, Merseyside, Manchester, always knew who their Executive Council member was going to be beforehand. And maybe that’s something you should listen to. But I’ve got to say you know, Motion 2 was withdrawn, Motion 3 was ruled out of order. What they did they both weakened the responsibility of the Executive Council. And I’ve got to say this Motion does exactly the same. It weakens the responsibility the Executive has. The Motion, if passed, only allows you to have a say on who is elected from your Region, not who is elected from the rest of the country. And again, and this is the big flaw in the Motion, and I hope you take this in the spirit I’m giving it, the one thing it doesn’t do, and it’s not being pedantic, you’ve all got the Rule in front of you, you’ve all got that Motion in front of you. Have a read about what it says. But I’ll pose the question to you. The Motion does not say where or when nominations take place. Doesn’t say where those nominations will take place, and without a nomination you don’t have an election. That’s democracy. When you talk about democracy and shout about it, that’s where it lies. Once again I would stress that if we’re to defend that democracy then we must have a timetable and policy on nominations. It’s not in here. The Motion once again stops short of doing this, and clearly does not address the concerns of the Executive Council have.

Will nominations come from Branches after Branch Meetings? You answer. Will nominations come from a gathering of activists getting together after work? Will nominations be a result of a power struggle within the Region? Will nominations be determined by the bigger Branches because they have the numbers that they can wield? Once that, you know, I’ve got to stress, it’ll be no good in the right to reply, the Mover coming back up here, and answering those questions because it’ll be very, very much a personal opinion because it isn’t something that has been addressed in the Motion. And you can only vote, with the greatest respect to you, whether you’re a new Delegate or an experienced Delegate, you know that the way the Rules are, you vote on what it says there. And what you’ll be voting for, if you carry this Motion, you will not be voting for elections because there are no nominations included in that.

Would those people who were elected, given that they were elected under this system, have the full support of those they represent? Or would they just have the support of those who cast the vote when it comes down to the right time? In essence you would have a Regional Executive only answerable to the Region, and they would be virtually untouchable. Irrespective of capability to fulfill the role as an Executive Council member, and you know, it’s a fairly big job when you get up here. They’d only be responsible to those people in their own Region. But talk about democracy. The Motion actually throws democracy out the window, and the reasons that, you know, the Executive Council are giving now are valid. More Delegates in a Region means a greater say on who is elected. And you could do absolutely nothing about it. So Number 1 Region with two Executive Council members versus Number 5 Region with four Executive Council members, the numbers game. If you’re on a Regional Executive Council then the North of England wins every time, because you’ve got four in Number 5, you’ve got three in Number 3, and if we count Number 3 Region as being part of the North, then you’ve got another three
there. Ten of the Executive Council elected in three regions. We’ve still got another four Regions that have got absolutely no power at all when it comes to a say within the Executive.

This Motion’d be fine if the Executive was only to deal with local issues. But that’s not the reality of the situation. The National Executive members are elected to carry out Conference policy on your behalf, whilst Conference is not in session. National issues dealt with by a nationally elected body. Honesty, and faith in democracy must be the over-riding and the determinate factor when you come to make a decision on this Motion. One of the biggest problems for the present Executive, and the very reason I ask you to oppose the Motion, is the fact that if you passed it, then you will be taking away the one thing that makes any Executive perform to the highest standards. The same in any public office. And that’s accountability. The people behind me are all accountable, and they’re not accountable to me, and they’re not accountable to the National President, they’re accountable to you, and they’re accountable to the membership that you were elected to come here and represent. Accountability Delegates can not stop at the factory gate. Accountability cannot be allowed to be the sole preserve of the big Regions. Being accountable at all levels is the thing that makes the BFAWU unique, it’s the thing that makes the BFAWU great, and the stand out factor against all those other unions.

The reality Delegates is that instead of a National Leadership being elected by a majority of Conference Delegates, we’d have pockets of voters, who may not even attend Conference, holding the balance of power. That’s a lot of power that you’d be investing in those individuals. As John Halliday said, some Regions have come to Conference and they’ve already decided who they want as their EC member. And if everyone in the Region is in support of that, then there’s no problem. There’s no problem in the Region and there’s no problem with anybody standing behind here. That is their choice, they exercise their right, and they did it. If you’re nominated and you don’t wish to stand, like yesterday when the President read out the names, then you have the right to withdraw. If you’re nominated against the wish of your Region, and you want to stand, you can still stand. That’s democracy, that’s what it’s about, and that’s what it should be going to the vote.

Delegates, like the wording in Motion 2, and I’m glad that was withdrawn, this Motion in just a few words asks for a lot. But it explains very little, there’s so many flaws in it. It explains who elects, and where they elect, but not how to nominate. So can we have an election without a nomination? You determine that. It gives no guarantee of power, what it gives, sorry, it gives a guarantee of power but it doesn’t tell you or me where that power lies. The only advantage, if there is an advantage over Motion 2 that was withdrawn, then I’ve got to say that I fail to see where that advantage is, it’s no better wording, it’s no better for democracy. It doesn’t answer the question on nominations.

Delegates the system of election’s not broken, it doesn’t need fixing, support democracy and oppose Motion 27.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Right of reply.

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313:** Thank you Platform. Delegates, nice speech by the General Secretary, but I think personally the Delegation’s got it right with the amount of speakers that we had down here. And the amount of people that backed it.

[applause]

I will take on board your point of the Vice President and how the EC elects him, fully endorse that, haven’t got an issue, that is what it should be. The Executive Council in anything else, are the prime body that would put someone in the Vice President role so I’ve got no issues with that. You go on about the democracy and seven, eight people from Region 3, and seven, eight
people from Region 4, putting their name forward. That is democracy, you know, it’s not us going to our Regional Councils and choosing the best three if that’s what’s allowed in Region 3 and the best four if that’s what’s allowed in Region 4, it’s about whoever wants to be nominated should be nominated and then that Delegation from within that Region takes part in the vote, and votes for the best three or the best four or the best, whoever, whatever the number is actually required.

[applause]

That is democracy, not anything else. And the Motion quite clearly states that the election for Executive Council will take place at Conference Hall. Where does it say in the Resolution that this is to be done at Regional Council? It’s saying on the day of the Conference the voting and the counting to take place on the same day at Conference, so it would be the Delegation from the particular Regions sitting at Conference, that the papers would come out, and for example, Region 3 would get all the papers for the nominations of the people within the Region, and no I’m sorry, I do not agree with the Region at Regional Council coming up with the best three. If there’s five people that want to go for three positions then so be it. The rest of us within our respective Regions know which would be the best three people serving us on a national basis. And this does not take away the power of the Executive Council, it does not do that. We understand, we fully understand, the speakers fully understood that the EC is the national body which governs Conference and which is in process for the whole year that when we’re done with, the Executive Council meets on a regular basis and that’s who’s in charge of the running of daily affairs.

There would still be democracy because we would know who we’re voting for and what have you. So none of the democracy’s being taken away, and we are a democratic Union, and we want to be the Union of stand alone, and we are a special issue. I mean I don’t see any problem with that. The EC will and always will remain a national body. Accountability will still be there because the Executive Council is accountable for the Conference, no-one’s taking, the Motion’s not taking any accountability away from anything. And the democracy is that we have the nominations and that we have the ballots and that we have the process, and people won’t, for who, (inaudible) I don’t want to be voting for Mr X, Y and Z when I don’t know who Mr X, Y and Z is. So this is the democratic process, that we are voting for the people we know. Simple as. Thank you.

[applause]

Listen.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Raj, you can’t say there’s nominations……

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313:** I’m sorry but General Secretary has asked the question and I have the right to reply to that question. No, no I’m sorry, I was walking away and the General Secretary asked me a question, where does it say, what does it say about nominations, and I’ll tell you what, I’ll give you a response, let me give you a response. We as Delegates [applause], we as Delegates know that the Executive Council gets elected every two years, that’s crystal clear, so we know come 2014 we will have further elections so it doesn’t need to say on there that the nominations, we know it’s, there’s nominations, we know it’s for a period of two years, we know the next voting will take place in 2014, so it doesn’t need this clarity within the Motion there itself. It’s telling you what the process is, right?

[applause]

It’s telling you that’s going to happen at Conference, it’s [applause] not telling you that it’s going to happen at Regional Councils. This is the governing body of the Bakers Union and this is where the Executive Council position come from so……
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Raj, you’ve had to rights of reply. But we can only vote on the Motion, and the Motion is worded in front of people. Conference, to the vote, those in favour. Those against. The tellers?

[cheers/applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are all the Officials in place to count? Are you ready?

Can’t hear you. It’s two-thirds, don’t forget that, it’s a change of Rule. So, we need you to count. Those that are voting to support the Motion, please keep your hands up. And don’t forget the EC members. And I think people have changed their minds (applause/whistles).

Okay, just to confirm then. Those that are voting against it. Eh, where did you all disappear? Come on [laughter/cheers/applause]. Okay, that Motion’s carried.

[cheers/applause]

Point of order

Brother Mark Brookes – Branch 347: A point of order on this. Surely this Motion falls? We’ve just voting through on your own Region who you’re going to choose, so why does someone have to come up on the lectern to actually address Conference?

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Mark, you didn’t vote on that at all. What you voted for that the Regions were going to be the people who did the, because there’s no nominations, the people who were elected would go from the Region. I made the point when, in what I said, that in Number 7, Number 3 Region and Number 4 Region you had six and seven people standing for those nominations, and they said yes that’s okay, but we’ll be the people who’ll decide. You’ll still have to have them standing up here, if you get new Delegates who don’t know who they are then, I’m not saying you have to have it H, I’m saying the Motion doesn’t fall because of that. There’s nothing, if Conference decides they want to do this, then it’s not, you know, Standing Orders haven’t made a ruling on that.

28 Rule 22.19 – No 3 Regional Council

'Elections at Conference' – It is recognised many Delegates do not know who they are voting for. In an effort to address this Conference agrees to all nominees wanting to stand to address Conference.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Moving Motion 28. I think it’s important that, in particular for the new Delegates who are completely oblivious to what the business of the day is through this week. It’s very, very important for them to be able to understand who the nominees are, one, and b), more importantly what, just to hear a quick descriptive response about what these people are about that have come forward. It allows people to make a judgement or decisions and vote based on listening to someone speaking rather than just hearing someone else saying what Joe Bloggs. Please support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Raj, you seconding?

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: I’ll second the Motion, I’m here to support the Motion obviously. And just some clarification for the gentleman’s question there, yes you was voting this morning for EC, but you weren’t voting for the TUC and the Labour Party. Nobody, I’m standing for the TUC, nobody knows me from Adam I don’t suppose. So yes, I think it would
be right that people come up, introduce themselves and let you decide who you’re sending to the Labour Party and the TUC. Support the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313:** Here to support the Motion. This is democracy. This was the Motion backing up the previous Motion, because next year, in the Delegation for example, the Hardings Branch are entitled to three Delegates under the present set up. I could have a brand new Steward with me who hasn’t been elected from his Branch to go to Regional Council, hasn’t had the opportunity for the last 12 months to go to Regional Council but ends up being a Delegate to Annual Conference, he would, this Resolution, he would know that all the people that’s standing for nominations would come up to the rostrum, give two, three minutes speech, and what they’re about, where they come from, and a bit of background for him, for her, to make his, her decision on who to vote for. Please support the Motion.

[applause]

**Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201:** I’m here to support this Motion. I think it’s right and appropriate that we can at least put a name to a face. It is good, let us know what people are about, give us a little bit of information what you’re all about, and why you think you’re going to good on the EC like. Please support.

[applause]

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here to support this Motion, and God bless democracy.

[applause]

**Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529:** I’m here to oppose the Motion. You were saying before the previous Motion, that you want to vote in your Regions. If you go to Regional Council and stuff like that, you know who people in your Region are better than being someone from Region 3 or Region 2. And also if folks haven’t left you wanting to go for somebody into the EC why should they be forced to come and address Conference? They mightn’t want to come and speak to you, they might make a brilliant EC member, but they might be an absolutely crap speaker, and also the people that are going to Conference, why should they force people to address Conference when they might be very, very scared or be very nervous, but they might make an excellent EC member and be brilliant at all the meetings, and the running of the Union.

[applause]

**Brother Tony Richardson – Branch 569:** It’s a new Branch, that’s why I keep having to think about where I’m from. No, I’m here to support the Resolution. I remember, you all know that I speak a little bit, I’ve tried not to this time, but keeping a low profile. But I remember the very first time I ever spoke and it was very hard. And you know, I hear what the last speaker said, and I accept that, that somebody could be great at committee and they can be crap on the rostrum. Brian Scarthe were like that, smashing fellow, great up on EC but not very good on the rostrum. But if you’re going to stand for a position at any level, the very lowest position, the very highest position, you need to come and talk to people. And if you can’t do that then you know, should you be standing for them positions? I do support the Motion, I think people should at least come up and say hello, this is my name, this is who I am, and that’s the very least that we as Delegates, and we as a Union, should demand.

[applause]

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** Here to support this. Oh happy day. What a good one it’s been so far. The reason that I think that they should stand is every year somebody nominates me
to go to the Labour Party Conference. I’m very proud to say I am not a member of the Labour Party, I don’t support millionaires. Please stand for this.

[applause]

**Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109:** Conference, Mr President, General Secretary. I’m here to support this Motion. It is highly important for us to understand the fact that as Socialists, as workers, as representatives of workers we have to show our responsibility with due caution and care. We are here to represent a larger group of people and as such should be able to speak on their behalf whenever we come to the Conference. And it is important also that when we nominate people to represent our interests at larger bodies outside this Conference we should rest assured that those people we are electing to represent our interests outside this body, are people who are capable, who are knowledgeable, who understand our situations, who can be able to speak for us as an activist which we are. We are meant to speak, not to only look. We are meant to talk, not only to listen. We are meant to shout with positive anger, not negative anger. I want to say here, apart from Tony Richardson who we normally send to the TUC and the Labour Party. Most of us are voting for him because we see him as a confident speaker, we see him as somebody who has the intellectual capability to understand what is going on within the Labour struggle. And when he goes there we have the confidence in him that if there’s any debate that relates to the Bakers Union, he will surely stand up to make a speech about it, to say something regarding it. But how can we be able to defend every other one that we are electing to represent our interests in these bodies? We need to understand that, there is need for us to begin to have good relationships with those we are electing to represent us. They need to speak to us here. We need to understand their mind, we need to know where they belong, we need to know where they are going, we need to understand if they are really working for us, or working for themselves. Please support this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253:** I’m here to support this Motion. I understand it is very scary getting up here, as I said it is my first Conference and it is scary to get up here and speak from the rostrum. However, if you’re going for a nomination or if you’re going for a position within our Union, then you should make yourself aware, people aware, who you are and what you’re all about. So I agree with this Motion. We wouldn’t, when we do election, when they do elections in the first week of May, the government, we wouldn’t want to, we wouldn’t vote without knowing who they are. They come round, they knock on your doors and stuff like that, I’m not saying we go round knocking on doors like, but at least make sure people know who you are. Thank you very much.

[applause]

**Sister Vi Carr – Branch 505:** Speaking in opposition of this Motion. Tony Richardson mentioned Brian Scarthe, a better EC member you couldn’t wish to have, who’d stand his corner in any room, and fight for you, fight for the rights of his members. But he could not get up to the rostrum and speak. You should be given the opportunities to speak, but you shouldn’t be forced into, bullied into speaking. Please oppose this Motion. You are debarring some people who are going to be great EC members, great members, but they can’t get up to speak. Please oppose this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother John Halliday – Branch 701:** Here to oppose the Motion. And I oppose it on the grounds that the last Motion said it all, which was carried. Because if the Region elects its EC member from that Region, and I don’t need to know who Tom, Dick or Harry is, because the vote has
already been had within the Region, not the Conference floor. Therefore I ask members to oppose it.

[applause]

Sister Kim Elvidge – Branch 367: I’m here to oppose this Motion, just on the fact that I’m against bullying, harassment. I think if you’re forced to do something that is classed as bullying. You should be given the option [applause], if you choose to do it, do it, if not do not feel forced. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thanks President. The Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose the Motion. You know, whilst understanding the reasons for the Motion, the reasons why it was put in, the frustrations of the Mover and people find when they’re voting in an election where many of the candidates are unknown, as I say, we’d still ask Conference to oppose the Motion. And the main reason is purely the need to address the Conference. If you think about it, I can’t remember which Delegates got up and said look it’s important, I think it might have been Godson, it’s important that when people come up here that they can address there, because we want an elected body up there. We want the people up there to be able to go out and talk for us, yes fine, and I believe that they do that. But don’t forget you know, all these are, the Executive Council and the Executive Council that you elect later on, is only a four day snapshot of what you do, sorry, they’re the, you’re the four day snapshot of what happens at Conference and they’re there for the rest of the time doing your bidding. So the most important body within any union is it’s Annual Conference. So surely when you’re elected from your Branches, they expect you to get up and speak on behalf of what they want, as some of you do, but I’ll tell you what, I bet you there’s 66% who don’t. They come along, year after year after year, and they’ll sit there and say nothing, they’ll vote, but they’ll never say anything. Now if the important thing is that you must be able to speak to people then why don’t the Branches send Delegates who are going to come here and do the bidding of the Branches? Because you’re the most important people in the Union, the Conference Delegates, you’re the people that make that policy, these are the people who carry it out, and I believe that they do that.

You know, if the Motion was passed last year, and been adopted at this Conference where would we have got the time to allow for 18 candidates, or 18 positions to address Conference? How long would that address be? I’ve got questions for the Mover. Would they just come up and say my name is, and this is where I work? Or would it be a proper election address? Would we have a hustings, a sort of manifesto of what they would bring to the Union? What they would bring to the Executive and what their visions were for the future? Where there’s to be no contest like there isn’t this year in Number 1 and Number 2, Number 5, Number 6, Number 7, would they still have to address Conference because don’t you accept, you accept it, it’s a National Executive Council, whether you’ve changed the way how they get there, how you vote, the fact is it’s still a National Executive, and don’t you have the right to know who those people are if you pass this Motion? So I would argue, even the people who’ve been voted as a one-off, if you pass this Motion they would have to get up, and they would have to talk as well.

Imagine a year like this, the position of the Youth seat, and the Female Rep seat, where there’s likely, well there are quite a few candidate for that competition. We’d have had a massive long snake of people waiting to talk, this is in a year, where the President’s got 99 motions to deal with, and we’re not even a third of the way through. It’d be an absolute nightmare. I glad you know, it took a young member really, Rachel Mullen to get up and bring a bit of reality to what we’re looking for. And that’s a position of somebody who wants to stand for the Executive, they’ve got a great track record within the Branch. They’re the people who I think you would be
voting for, the people who you want to see here. They’ve got a great track record in the Region, it’s not about what they say from a rostrum. And Vi you know, hit the nail on the head, I’ve got to say I’ve served as an Executive Council member for many years but as a National Officer for the last 13 years, and I’ve got to say one of the best EC members, and well respected even amongst the Full Time Officials, was Brian Scarthe. Brian Scarthe would never have been on the National Executive Council if you had this Motion in place, because there’s just no way Brian Scarthe would have got up at that rostrum but I’ll tell you what, in committee a fantastic Executive Council member, in negotiations anywhere, a great negotiator with other unions. That was the reality, but we would have lost him had we passed this Motion.

You know, his chances would have gone of being elected and it wasn’t because he didn’t like getting up in front, he just had an absolute phobia, an absolute fear of speaking, he wouldn’t have done it. One thing’s for sure, the Executive Council at that time would have been worse for his omission. It would have been a much weaker Executive Council. I’d hate to think that we would lose exceptional potential within the Union just because they had a phobia about standing up there and addressing. Because if that’s what it’s going to be, because the next thing could be every Conference Delegate has to get up and speak, and then we’ll see how many people we’ve got in the room then, if they were forced to do it. What you’re doing, you’re asking people in to take these positions, to get past that phobia. Comrades, it’s fantastic, we have so many motions before Conference this year, I’ve already praised the people who’ve actually put them in. And I think the President’s going to struggle to finish the agenda on time anyway, and I know people are trying to get away early tonight because there’s some football match going on somewhere. And people will want to finish early on Wednesday. With the motions we’ve got, if you adopted this Motion, we would have been working into Thursday morning, you can be absolutely guaranteed of that.

If not for the reasons I’ve given, then for Ian’s hairstyle and sanity please oppose the Motion.

[applause]

Sorry, there’s one point that I did, I missed out. The other thing is, that the Branches, right, Branches at the moment, do the nominations for Women’s TUC, Women’s Labour Party, the LGBT Conference, the Conference of Labour, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual Conference, and where would they address? That’s a national Conference they’re going to, it’s not a Regional Conference, it’s a national Conference, they would be representing the Union at a national level, just like people at the TUC and Labour Party do here, and I agree with Dave Suddard, you know if you’re going to have those people here, you would actually be debarring people from going to Conference, because they wouldn’t be allowed to address this Conference unless they happened to be a Delegate. Or we would have to change the whole system of how we get to elect those people to those Conferences. So on that basis, I would ask Conference to oppose the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right of reply? And you can only have one [laughter].

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Exercising the right to reply. I share some of the sentiments of some people who’ve made the issue in regards, forcing people to come up here and it’s a type of bullying and whatever. The reality is we’re going to end up having a vote in the next couple of minutes, there’ll be a vote so whilst I accept the sentiments that potentially people in the future will have no choice but to inherit this Resolution if passed, the reality is I mean, we’re all Branch Secretaries, Branch (inaudible), lay activists as normal Shop Stewards, on a day to day, that’s what we do, we’re constantly in dialogue with people, with our members, whether it be one, 20, when you have Branch Meetings and there’s you know, I’ve attended Branch Meetings where there’s been 300 members a few months ago. Yes? So as far as I’m concerned in our position, in these positions we should be able to get up here and speak. Yes, it should not be
something that people should fear from, oh we’ve got to go up and say something, because the reality is, irrespective of what some of the comments Ronnie has just made, as far as I’m concerned we should all be in a position as Branch activists to be able to come up here and speak. I’m not asking for a massive 20 minute or half hour speech, just a quick debrief of what your past is, how long you’ve been a Union Rep, what courses you’ve been on, what your educational history is, you know what I mean? It’s just basic stuff. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, to the vote, those in favour. Against. That one’s lost. I’m going to call Composite One. Sorry, Motion 29.

### 29  Rule 22.21 Full Time Officials – Executive Council

*That this Conference agrees that the Full Time Officials’ Committee can nominate a maximum of five motions at Annual Conference for one of their representatives to speak on. The Full Time Officials’ Committee to determine the five motions and who will speak on their behalf. The individual Official to speak can vary but no more than five motions can be spoken on behalf of the Full Time Officials at any annual Conference.*

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Oh that’s us. Alright, don’t rub it in, I’ve had a stressful morning. A long night as well, yes.

Delegates, obviously we’d be asking Conference to support Motion 29, which is not surprising given that it’s our Motion. The Motion Delegates is self-explanatory and follows a series of discussions that we’ve had over the years with the Full Time Officials’ Committee, or at least a sub-Committee of that Committee. Can I say before I go on with the Motion that I thank the South Western Postal Branch for withdrawing the amendment, that was helpful.

Conference, you’ve always allowed, or the Executive have always allowed Full Time Officials to speak on motions that challenge the terms and conditions subject to the discretion of the President. This has never ever been extended to general issues. This is my 33rd Annual Conference, many of which I’ve attended as Chair of the Full Time Officials’ Committee, and unless my memory’s fading fast, and maybe it is, I can’t think or remember any Conference where Full Time Officials have actually exercised the right to speak on five things. So they’ve never ever taken the five things on their own things. Our discussions with the Full Time Officials’ Committee focussed on embracing the opinions of all, and we have listened to what Delegates have said when we’ve gone on courses, when Ian and I have been away on courses, saying about how we integrate Full Time Officials into the family of the Conference. And we see that they play obviously a valuable role on a day to day basis, but then they cannot channel those opinions when it comes to the decision making body. I’ve got to say they won’t be part of the decision making body, they may well be an influence to that decision making body, but they won’t be getting a vote that’s for sure, even if this Motion’s passed.

Those of you who’ve been coming to Conference for a long time will know that for an Executive Council to put such a Motion forward as this, is a major departure from past thinking. We put it forward with a deal of trepidation, but we’ve put it forward in good faith. To go from potentially speaking on nothing, to having the right to speak on five motions to be determined by their Committee, is massive progress. If the FTOs want to speak on their terms and conditions as part of the five motions, then we’re happy. If they want to speak on changes of Rule, or general motions, then that is their choice if this Motion’s passed. No hindrance, no pressure from either the Executive, the Standing Orders Committee or indeed the National Officers. The Full Time Officials have self determination over the five motions that they want to speak on if this Motion is passed.
They also have self determination on whether they nominate one individual to speak on all the five motions, or different individuals for each of those five motions. So long as the FTOs do not speak on more than five motions, and there is only one FTO per Motion of the five nominated, we’re happy bunnies. But I remind you, it’s a Delegate Conference and that is sacrosanct, and it always will be sacrosanct. I’m sure FTOs will have an opinion on virtually every motion on the agenda, I’d be very, very surprised if they don’t, but this is your platform, it’s not their platform. We’re trying to embrace all opinions whilst at the same time maintaining a balance. We’re trying to give the opportunity for Full Time Officials to speak on issues that may well be dear to their hearts, without allowing them to dominate the Conference. We’re trying to be fair to all, without detracting from what Conference is about, and that is Delegates.

Delegates this is a major move by the EC, based on a gentleman’s agreement with the Full Time Officials’ Committee. We’re happy, they’re happy, we hope you are happy. Please support Motion 29.

[applause]

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

**Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201:** I think this is the right thing to do. This is the way forward, we’ve got Officials who care about this Union, passionate about it, who can have no input at all. This is the way forward, please support.

[applause]

**Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109:** Conference, I would like us to be able to have a clear understanding of what this Motion is talking about and what the Conference is going to stand on with regards to this Motion. First of all I would like to get the General Secretary or the President to give us a clear definition of the Full Time Officials within the Conference or within the Union. Because every one of us here are employed by one company or the other and this company pays us salaries. The Union does not pay us salaries. We are here as Delegates. The Full Time Officials are employees of the Union, and every act and responsibility of their office and duties is to be taken care of by those men up there. Every relationship they have to deal with on behalf of the Union should be dealt with with the Executives on behalf of every member of the Union. I would want to say that we cannot share Delegates, Conference, Platform with Full Time Officials because we pay them salaries. Are they going to be negotiating what we pay them and how we pay them with the Delegates? I expect that whatsoever be the issues arising within the Full Time Officials’ Committee, regards to their job and responsibility and problems with their official assignments should be dealt with by the Executives, and the Executives should report to the house any circumstances or problems they’re having with the Full Time Officials, and the house should be able to pass a resolution that determines the way forward with regard to that. But sharing the Platform with Full Time Officials who are employees of the Union does not show any signs of credibility within the Union. We are all equal, we are all in this Union for a good purpose, but we should always realise this fact that these guys are doing a professional job, the (inaudible) to what they can do and how they can do things within the Union. Please, I want to oppose this Motion. Thank you very much.

[applause]

**Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215:** Delegates, yes we must support this Resolution, because for many, many years that I know the Union, Full Time Officials have been basically discriminated against by not allowing them to have their views heard at Conference. Now right, they were covered with their terms and conditions, but how many resolutions up here, that comes up here that are political, that affect everybody’s life, yet they were not allowed to speak on it, they were not allowed to have a say. And that is wrong in any organisation, they’re human beings, the
same as we are. As Joe Marino said once here, and it was the greatest saying I ever heard, we’re all people, that has got to be remembered. And we must support our Full Time Officials, they represent us, they work for us and are we afraid of our employees? If we are, we’re not great employers. Please support the Resolution.

[applause]

**Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580:** I’m here to support this Resolution because let’s bear in mind, all these Full Time Officials are members of this Union, if you do it wrong, you’re gagging members of your Union so you’ve got to support this Resolution. Ronnie’s right though, we have got to, it sounds awful, but limit, because it as well a Delegates’ Conference, so yes please support, but don’t gag any member of this trade union. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother David Suddards – Branch 561:** I’m here to support this Motion. How can you have a democratic body with a part of it silenced? It’s not a democratic body when a part of it’s silenced. And as for the Delegates, if they want to bring five motions up that’s fine. The Delegates can still do, as they have done this morning, and vote on them motions. So there’s no problem why they can’t have their say. I support this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Point of order. I think it’s a disgrace this. The smokers in this room here we’ve not been told we’re not having a break. My nicotine, I’m going through the roof……..

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Tony, that’s not a point of order, you either want democracy and people able to speak, right, or you want me to cut off debate so you can go out and have a smoke. I think you’re here to work not just to think about your breaks Comrade.

**Brother John Halliday – Branch 701:** President, General Secretary, NEC and Delegates. Number 7 Region welcomes the NEC’s forward thinking on this Motion. The right of an FTO to participate in Conference is long overdue and some might see it as a move in the right direction. Number 7 Regional Council, and I as a retired FTO cannot unreservedly support the Motion, and take the view that whilst it is a starting point in FTO’s participation at Conference it does not go far enough. Delegates, FTOs already have a platform for putting motions to Conference, and that platform is Branch Meetings, Regional Council Meetings. No-one can convince me that FTOs cannot influence the content of motions that are presented at Conference. I myself did this just at Branch and Regional Council Meetings. The Branch had nominated a Delegate to speak on the said motion or motions. The same can be said for the NEC as their motions, I am sure the General Secretary and the National President who are also FTOs of this Union have put their collective influence on NEC motions, and the rest of the agenda and rightly so. All Regional Officers and Regional Organising Secretaries work for this Union. Delegates you and I pay the members’ wages, yet the Rule Book that bars them from participating at Conference unless it was matters in regards to their terms and conditions. Delegates we should not forget that before their elevation to the position of an FTO, they like you are members of this Union, and like you they pay their weekly contributions and still continue to do so. The Motion in total can be seen as a ground breaking move, in the history of this Union, but I am not convinced that it goes far enough. Delegates, we take great pride in being a democratic Union, and we’re here and holding high moral and democratic views on a wide range of subjects. As a Union we strongly defend the rights of freedom of speech for all, yet members of our Union, namely FTOs have been denied this right for years. The Motion before us goes some way in improving the situation, but in imposing restrictions it does not give them the full right or freedom of speech. The Motion
proposes that FTOs can nominate a maximum of five to speak on. I again ask the question why not seven as there are seven Regions?

Some may argue that the fear the consequences of allowing FTOs to speak at Conference, but remember Delegates all motions from whichever quarter are debated and it is you, Conference, that holds the right to vote on them. And whether they’re won or lost. Conference as I’ve already said, the Motion before you to change the old Rule does not go far enough. If the Motion is carried it would be my view that, or my Region, that full participation will eventually be achieved over the next few years.

FTOs have the platform for getting motions to Conference, the only drawback is they cannot propose or speak on them at Conference. They like I have views on (inaudible), that could be termed as bending the rules. Given the unfettered knowledge and the experience that they have it is nothing short of scandalous that they have to resort to back door approach. Conference, the time is now, we should grab the bull by its horns and give FTOs, as members of this great Union, the right for unrestricted speech. I would therefore humbly ask the NEC to remit the Motion and look at it again with the view of fully giving our FTOs the right to take part in Conference, not just a restricted one. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Tony Richardson – Branch 569: It’s with deep regret that I’m actually going to sit on the fence on this one. I’ve got a lot of old friends that are Full Time Officers, some bloody good speakers Full Time Officers, and I tell you what they don’t frighten me and they don’t frighten a lot of people in this Hall. There’s a lot of experience there that we might be losing. Bear in mind it’s only for five resolutions, they’re not the enemy, I’m passionate that this Conference is run by you, by the people, by the membership. We are the supreme policy making body of the trade union, and anybody that’s involved in politics understands that that is the essence. That is the essence of trade unionism. However, yes, why should we not let people speak? Let them have, I said I were going to stand on fence. One point that I did want to make. Yes they can bring the five motions, they are not the enemy. We shouldn’t be afraid of these people, and they can’t vote. So that’s one thing. The only people that can vote are you the Delegates, so just those things to bear in mind. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Here to support the Motion. I think anything that comes forward through the resolutions that’s going to improve participation and increase resolutions is a good thing and we must really support that. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Anybody else like to speak? No? General Secretary, right to, okay.

Brother Martin Kelly – Branch 560: I think a number of people’s a bit not sure on this Resolution. The wording of it. I think a lot of people think that this Resolution says that Full Time Officials can bring five resolutions to the Conference. But the wording doesn’t say that, it says that they can pick five of the resolutions that’s on the agenda to speak for. I believe that Full Time Officials should be able to bring their own resolutions, you know, not take over Conference, bring five of their own, but I would like the possibly if the people can come, can understand when they vote what this is about. It’s not that Full Time Officials bring their own resolutions. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, General Secretary right to reply.
Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: I’m just replying, because just a few of the points that have been made. Firstly Martin, well whether or not you’d like Full Time Officials to bring motions to Conference or not, that’s not what the Motion’s about, it’s not what it’s calling for. But to be honest with you, Full Time Officials can bring 1000 motions to this Conference, they’ve got the ability to do it now by just going along to a Branch Meeting and moving it there, so their opinions can be heard here. Godson, the only time that Full Time Officials in the past have responded, and you know they don’t respond on everything that appertains to their terms and conditions, it’s when they’re questioned by Delegates on the floor, they may not have any forewarning of what’s said, and so they will respond maybe to a debate, and that’s why it is. I mean, look, I said before in the speech that I made, that this Conference is a Delegate Conference and that is sacrosanct. You can’t have it being taken over by anybody. Pat says that we’re discriminating against Full Time Officials, I don’t think we’re discriminating against Full Time Officials at all, it’s got absolutely nothing to do with discrimination. Yes, unheard, we don’t hear what they have to say, but they’re not discriminated against. And it’s got absolutely nothing, and I repeat, nothing to do with being afraid of Full Time Officials. Neither I nor the Executive, nor I would hope Delegates out there, Shop Stewards back at the ranch, are afraid of the Full Time Officials. If they are there’s something wrong within the organisation, if anyone’s afraid of anybody else. So let’s get away from the idea that we’re afraid of them speaking, that’s got absolutely nothing to do with it. It’s purely and simply that it’s a Delegate Conference, and it’s Delegates that speak on that.

No, that’s up to the Chair whether he accepts it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No, Pat………

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Well while he’s coming down to make, it’s no good doing it, come down here.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No Pat, you’ll have to come to the rostrum mate.

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Conference, it is, it is a form of discrimination when you say a person cannot come here and speak or they have no right to speak here. What is that? Discrimination.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Pat, that’s not a point of order. Sorry Pat, now you’ve got loads of experience, you should know better, that’s not a point of order. That’s not a point of order.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: That is not a point of order. If you’re discriminating, if we’re discriminating against Full Time Officials at a Delegate Conference because we don’t allow them to speak, then you’re also discriminating against the hundreds and thousands of members who are back at the thing, who’ve got an opinion who aren’t allowed to come here and speak as well.

[applause]

It’s not about gagging anybody. I say, right from the start, I think this is a momentous move on behalf of the Executive Council, we’re moving to allow Full Time Officials to speak. I mean, we didn’t need to put the Motion, but as I say, it was an act of good faith between us and the Full Time Officials’ Committee, and John, the reason why it’s not, why it’s five and not six or not seven, is because five was the figure that was agreed with the Full Time Officials, at the meeting, of which your Officer, your Regional Officer’s won those people there. So I mean, it’s not a figure that we’ve plucked out the air, that was the figure that was agreed with that sub-Committee of the Full Time Officials, it’s not a number we’ve plucked out the air.
Dave, you talk about everybody being embraced, and everyone has a right to talk at any way, shape or form in life, I tell you what, you don’t get any say in your Board of Directors’ meetings, you might be shareholders within the company, but I tell you what you get absolutely no say in the way your business runs. The same with Greggs, you might buy shares in the company, but I’ll tell you what, I bet you Ken McMeikan doesn’t invite you along to the board meetings to take the big decisions on there. We have to fight for everything that we get with companies, I think it’s a momentous move that we’ve actually got by allowing the Full Time Officials to do this, and I think the day when companies allow member, or worker directors on the board with real teeth to do something then we’ll see that they’re doing the same as what we’re offering to do.

John, you’re right you know, you hit the nail on the head. That you already have the ability to put motions in through your Branch Meetings. And there’s not an Official in here who hasn’t got the power to influence. I know when I was an Official, young, new Delegates coming along here would very often ask you to write a speech. So if you wrote a speech for them, you didn’t write what they wanted to say, you wrote how you wanted to put it across as a Full Time Official, and that’s what they portrayed when they got there. And you’re not telling me that Officials don’t influence Conference now. They don’t get a vote, and that’s where it stops. It is a ground breaking Motion this John, you’re right. A stepping stone, maybe. Maybe it’s a stepping stone, maybe it’s something that we’re going to look to consider in the future. But I’ll tell you, it remains a Delegate Conference, and I don’t see the day when we’re going to get all-embracing where we get Officials voting at Conference, or speaking on every single Motion, I think we’ve moved today, and yes it may well be a stepping stone to the future, but I think that when it comes down to terms and conditions, those terms and conditions, and you’re right Godson, they should be debated in committee. Not something that we debate before Conference. We do that outside of this, where the Executive Council meet with their Committee.

The Conference is not and shouldn’t be a platform for Full Time Officials. It shouldn’t be, it’s your Conference, but we value the opinion they’ve got, and we have listened to Shop Stewards and activists as I say when we’ve gone on courses and when we’ve gone round the Branches, and that is why this movement’s come. We ask you to embrace what the Executive Council has done, I’ve got to say John, we’re not going to remit the Motion. We’re asking you to support the Motion. If you want to tear it down that’s fine, it just means that they’ll carry on speaking on things that affect their terms and conditions only. That’s your choice, but we will not be remitting it as an Executive Council. We’ve got a gentleman’s agreement with the Officials and we think that that should go forward. On that basis I ask you to support the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** To the vote, those in favour. Those against. That’s carried.

Break time. Fifteen minutes. Just to make you aware, Motion 30 falls.

[tea break]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** A £20 note? Definitely not yours. As, it’s what? Can we just say then thank you very much for the kind donation whoever you were.

Okay Delegates. While you’re coming back to your seats, can I make you aware that Number 7 Regional Raffle, and you get your tickets from Billy Gallagher or Noel Mullen, they’re £1 each, or three for £2, and the draw will be made at the close of Conference today. And there’s six special umbrellas, you won’t be able to get them anywhere else, they’re quite unique, so worth every penny of them.
Okay, Delegates, despite what somebody said from the rostrum this morning, I’m actually proud to be a member of the Labour Party, I don’t believe it’s a party of millionaires, I believe that it’s a party that the people in this room need to be part of to return it back to the people who it purports to represent, which is the working class. There are two people in this room that I know they were recently elected as representatives and became councillors on behalf of the Labour Party, they certainly aren’t millionaires. One of them obviously was Tony Richardson who spoke from the platform this morning, and the other one is Gary Johnson and I’d like to congratulate them as new councillors on behalf of the Labour Party.

[applause]

And I think it’s very important that our members get involved with the Labour Party because if you think it’s a party of millionaires then what we have to do is make sure we reclaim our party. I always look forward to this part of our Conference. Whenever our Conference is called I look for what day this guy’s coming, because I think his enthusiasm, the way he talks, the way he represents working people is incredible. And it’s always, I feel proud and privileged to have the opportunity to introduce John McDonnell, the Chairman of our Parliamentary Group.

John McDonnell MP: Thanks Ian. I arrived just at the time when you were shafting the Exec basically (cheers). Now look, I just want you to confirm, I was not part of that conspiracy. It’s good democracy sometimes isn’t it.

I was here two years ago when there was a Motion and no Executive was elected at all, we had to take legal advice, so it’s becoming catching. Look I’m going to say I want to take you through the Parliamentary Report, has everyone received a copy? Yes, okay. I just want to briefly take you through the Parliamentary Report, before I do, can I just say thanks. Thanks to the people who have assisted us throughout the year. I want to say thanks to Simeon Andrews and his team, who’s our Parliamentary team for the hard work that they’ve put in on behalf of the Union in Parliament.

[applause]

Can I say thanks as well, because we wouldn’t be able to do our work in Parliament if it wasn’t for the Executive, if it wasn’t for the support of Ian and Ronnie, and the whole team, they work hard in backing us up. But also I want to thank all of you because everything we do or say in Parliament comes from you. You know how we work, individual Branches will raise issues, they’ll come through the Executive, we meet with the Executive on a regular basis, we have a Parliamentary meeting, and then we raise the issues in Parliament, meeting with Ministers, civil servants, and then engage in debates. And that’s democracy, that’s true democracy. The agenda is set by our members at the grass roots level, and then we have a Parliamentary voice to recommend it. I always say this is not so much a Union as a family. Now some of you may wish we were a bit like Cameron’s family and you’ve been left down the pub a few times, but it is a genuine, I think there’s a genuine spirit in this Union, like in some there isn’t, and people working together and ensuring that we’re effective as a Union. Over the last year you’ll see our membership of the group is around 26, fairly active members engaging in a whole range of issues. In the Report, we’ve listed the priorities that you’ve set us over the last year. First of all our workplace temperature campaign, we’ve been campaigning as always to ensure that this issue is addressed by government. We had under the last government a number of meetings and then a set of research done, and we never achieved the breakthrough. I think that was a lost opportunity by the last government. We’re now back on the (inaudible) and as you can see we’re raising the issue in Parliament, with Early Day Motions, interventions in debate, and now again, again further meetings with Ministers coming up. We’ve asked the Labour Party, and we met with Ed Milliband, we’ve asked the Labour Party now as we launch the next stage of this campaign, we want a commitment from them that when they go back into government, that
there’s absolute commitment for the implementation of the Union’s policy. We’re trying to secure that before the launch of our campaign later this month. And again we’re confident we can get that.

With the bakers’ asthma again, we’ve been meeting with the HSE, there’s a resolution up from one of the Branches about the cuts in the HSE and what’s happening. To be frank with you health and safety in this country is at its, well under threat in a way it’s never been before. We have now got cuts in terms of the staffing, they’ve withdrawn the HSEs from all areas of operation, the lack of inspections and all the rest. Nevertheless on the bakers’ asthma issue we’re plugging on and we’re looking for Parliamentary debates, we’ve picked up a range of support, you’ll see in the Report 41 MPs signing the Early Day Motion and we’re back on the stomp with it as well.

On the supermarkets issue we’ve been running a campaign about below cost selling for a number of years. We’ve promoted the idea of introducing legislation, where there would be codes of practice for supermarkets and suppliers. The Tory government and how it’s introducing the new Grocery Bill, and what we want to do is in the Grocery’s Code Adjudicator Bill we want to try and amend that and shape that in line with our Union policy, so that we do not have this ridiculous situation where there’s under-cutting that goes on, that not only undermines the product, but actually also undermines the jobs associated with creating that product. Actually we’re beginning to build up a head of steam, the Bill’s been published, we’re looking to amend it, and we’ve now formed an alliance with Members of Parliament from all the political parties who are interested in the subject, but also an alliance with the supermarkets and other campaigners in the field as well. So we’re hoping, we’re hoping that we’re seeking amendments to the legislation itself, both in the House of Commons, and the House of Lords.

VAT on hot food, well you defeated the government basically didn’t you? You defeated them [applause], you took them apart. Someone said to me can you ask the Bakers Union to do the same on caravans. Look you just did it didn’t you, you just did it, and it was as a result of exactly as you said when we met to discuss this matter with the Executive, you formed an alliance with a whole range of groups, you undertook the demonstrations, I think the direct action on this was incredibly effective, getting people out on the streets, turning up in terms of eye-balling MPs, and it turned it round overall, and I just want to congratulate you for it.

You’ll see in the Report we’ve continued our membership of the Trade Union Coordinating Group, we now meet with nine other unions, ten other unions now, that represent over a million workers. The reason for doing that is because we want to add strength to the campaigning that they do, and we want them to add strength to our campaigns. And that’s working, we coordinate our activities in Parliament, we back each other up, and in addition to that if there’s actions that are taking place, as we’ve said here on pensions, and cuts etc, that other unions are taking place in campaigns including industrial action, we’ve done everything we can to possibly back them up as well. With regard to trade union employment rights, well the reality is this, they’re coming at us. They’re coming at us in every way you can possibly think, with the potential of new legislation outlined in the Queen’s Speech. Both to undermine the ability of trade unions to represent their members, particularly at employment tribunals, introducing charges to go to the tribunals themselves, but also this idea of no fault, no fault, sackings effectively. The ability of individual employers to get rid of people just because your face doesn’t fit. And that’s a serious threat now. And again as a Union, what we’re seeking to do is to raise it, raise the implications for our industry, but in addition to that, coordinate with other unions through the TUC and others, to make sure that we mobilise opposition to the legislation as it comes, and then seek to defeat it. And if we can’t defeat it, at least try and ameliorate it, make it better than it is now. And again what we’re seeking to do is ensure that the Labour Party front bench plays its full role in all of that.
That’s a fair amount of work that’s gone on over the last year, and it’s on the basis of the work that you put in, as Delegates, raising these issues, the Executive then identifying this as our priority agenda, and then us working as a group, working with Ian and Ronnie to make sure that we articulate your demands in the House of Commons. I think we’ve been effective, we’re certainly respected as a Parliamentary Group now, both by other trade unions and also in the House of Commons, and even in the House of Lords now. So the group works on. I just say I’m very proud to represent the group overall, and I’m proud every time I get up to speak that I can speak with authority on behalf of this Union.

Let me just briefly set out where I think we’re at at the moment, and then the President said as we’ve done in previous years, if I speak for a short period of time, then we open it up for questions and comments, and that’s usually the better part of our discussion because again it enables me to go back with a clear view of what your concerns are.

Last year when I was here, I, some of you may recall that I said if you learn from history, you learn from our last Recession in the 1930s what happened then. And what happened then, it was a bizarre irony, we had a coalition government, unfortunately it was led by Ramsey MacDonald who was a renegade Labour Prime Minister that joined with the Tories. And when the Recession hit, exactly the same as this one, there was a debt bubble built up by speculators, rich, greedy, I’ll try and constrain my language, my Mum’s told me off, rich greedy bastards basically, who built up a debt bubble, and that bubble burst, and then a coalition government came into power and what they did is they cut public expenditure, they reduced benefits and they cut wages. And they turned a Recession into a Depression. Does this sound familiar? Because that’s exactly what Osborne has done over the last two years. He’s cut public expenditure, he’s cut benefits, and forced down wages, and last year when I was here I predicted that we’d most probably go into a double dip recession or we’d scrape along the bottom of economic activity. Well Osborne’s brilliance is that he’s brought about both. We’ve scraped along the bottom of economic activity for so long and now we’ve gone into a double dip recession. We’re witnessing that now. I predicted three million unemployed, we’re at 2.67, so I got it wrong. What I didn’t predict was that we’d have nearly two million, two million, on forced part time, or short time working. So although we’re not at three million unemployed, we’ve got another couple of million who are actually now forced into part time work. So that’s masked the unemployment figures. We now have unemployment figures coming out each month which are supposed to show that the last couple of months unemployment’s declined. What’s happened within three weeks of them being published, they’re being recalculated because so many people are turning up at Jobcentres, and so many cuts of staff at Jobcentres has gone on, they can’t even count properly the number of unemployed that’s taking place. That’s the recession, that’s causing the recession to deepen, because actually it’s taking demand out of the economy, if people are unemployed they’ve got no money to spend, there’s no demand, therefore more people get laid off. It’s simple economics isn’t it, absolutely simple.

Last year I said, I described the legislation that the Tories were proposing to bring forward, and I explained that I thought what this was all about was basically them using the recession as an excuse to dismantle the Welfare State. In the 1930s the lesson of the 1930s was that we realised just what human suffering really was, so after the Second World War a Labour government, the Attlee government was elected and what people said was never again. Never again are we going to experience that suffering. So we created the Health Service, we created council housing, free education, social security systems so that people would not starve if they were unemployed, and a decent pension, and we tried to create full employment. The Tories never supported that, they always opposed it, so they’re using this recession that’s turning into a depression to dismantle the Welfare State, and over the last 12 months that’s effectively what they’ve done. I warned last year, and now it’s happening. The NHS Bill has now become an NHS Act. What that means
effectively is they’re privatising the NHS. They’re privatising it, they’re selling it off. We’ve got our first hospitals now that are being run by private companies. On top of that there’s £20 billion worth of cuts out of the £80 billion expenditure on the NHS. So the combination of cuts and privatisation is going through. Now this is effectively, if they’re allowed to get away with it over the next two years, this is the end of the NHS. And charging will start. Here’s the irony. Just a couple of miles away from my constituency Cameron went along to Ealing Hospital during, before the General Election to say the NHS was safe in his hands. Ealing Hospital this month is announcing the closure of its Accident and Emergency Service. It threatens the whole hospital itself, we’re calling a public meeting in the area to try and campaign against it. But it’s an indication of just how far they’ve gone.

In terms of education, well the free schools, the academies, effectively is the privatisation of education as well. Some of you may have missed it, but Gove, this supposedly brilliant Education Secretary announced two weeks ago if the Tories get re-elected he’ll allow schools to charge for education. Effectively basically privatising education overall. Last year I said the council housing legislation would be going through, and it has. Effectively what they’ve done now is brought to an end council housing. The legislation that they put through over the last six months means that councils now are able to say to tenants you’ll be in a council house for two or four years, but if your wages go above a certain level, you’ll be asked to leave. Now they’ve also introduced the cuts in Housing Benefits, which in my area, I represent a working class multi-cultural constituency in London, it already, people cannot afford the rents. They’ve cut the benefits, so that the difference between the rents and what they can afford in benefits, is something like £100 a week and rising. What’s the Tories response? Well in my area, in London, they’ve been told they can go to Birmingham, Manchester, Southampton, wherever, round the country. That’s where they’re supposed to go. And what have those areas got in common? Actually high levels of unemployment. That’s what’s happening. And in terms of benefit cuts, well you’ve seen it. The worst people that have been affected as a result of the benefit cuts are people with disabilities. And we’ve got many members who’ve actually raised the issue with us as well. What’s happening with people with disabilities at the moment is that they’re forced into a new supposed ability assessment by a private company called Atos. And what’s happening is many of them now are being told that they’re fit for work. I’m dealing with case after case in my constituency surgery now, where people have lost all benefits. Unable to work, signed off by their doctor, but told they’ve got to work by this Atos assessment. We’re publishing in a few weeks’ time some of the reports that coroners are now doing, where they’ve identified the cuts in benefits with the suicides that have been going on because there’s been a significant increase in the suicide rates amongst people unemployed and also people who have lost benefits. That’s the society they’ve created. That’s the society, we predicted it last year when we discussed this, and they’re driving it through. This is the most brutal Conservative government, the most brutal government that we’ve experienced in generations, and they’re coming at us all the time. They’re coming at us all the time. They’re dismantling our welfare state, they’re impoverishing people, and I suppose it was symbolic, I don’t know what you felt about it, it was symbolic on the Jubilee celebrations, which lots of people enjoyed, I went to lots of events in my constituency. But I thought it was very symbolic of what our society has come to now, it’s that you have the richest people in our country floating down the Thames on the boats, whilst at the same time you’ve got kids sleeping under bridges, not paid, just in the hope that they might get a job. I don’t know what you think, but I think that’s a scandal. That’s an absolute disgrace by anyone’s standards.

[applause]

So we need to talk seriously now about where we’re going from here. In all of this, in all of this, what our community is suffering, because I now feel nothing is safe any more. Nothing is safe.
No-one’s job is safe. No service is safe from privatisation. The NHS, education, whatever service there is, nothing is safe from being cut any more. This has gone well beyond anything Thatcher dreamed off. Thatcher said there’s no such thing as society. Well Thatcher’s children, Cameron, Clegg and all of them, believe there’s no such thing as the State. All there should be is private companies and individuals, and they know the value of nothing but the price of everything. Everything’s through the cash (inaudible), everything has to be bought, I mean if you can’t compete in this law of the jungle, you go to the wall, and there’s no welfare safety net to protect you. That’s the society they’re creating. And I just think it’s remorseless, the attack on our people. And to be frank we need to call it what it is. This is an attack on the working class. In other eras we would call it class war, because that’s what it is. Because it’s not the rich who are suffering they’ve just had a tax cut. The Rich List, if you saw the Sunday Times Rich List published last month, over the last two years the richest have made another £145 billion, so they’re not suffering. The people who’ve caused the crisis are not suffering, the people who are paying the crisis are the ones who didn’t cause it, working class people and especially the most vulnerable within our community.

So what’s the hope? What is the hope? Well to be frank, you’re the hope, all this, you’re the hope. At every trade union conference I’ve been saying this. You’re the hope, you’re the hope. You’re the people who actually are willing to fight back. It’s got to be led from somewhere and to be frank it’s the Trade Union Movement that’s got to lead this campaign to get rid of this government. Because I tell you this, 99% of my time now is devoted to what? It’s devoted to bringing this government down, because that’s what we’ve got to do isn’t it? We can’t stand back and let them continue to undermine our community in the way that we have. We’ve got to stand up and fight. And you’re showing it in campaign after campaign. Trade unions now have said we’ve had enough. And they’re fighting, they’re fighting back and there’s three ways, three traditional ways in which we fight back. One, is through the ballot box, yes it’s through elections. We’ve seen that, we’ve fought back in council elections and we’ve had our members elected here, as was demonstrated today. But it is all through Parliament. But to be frank in Parliament, Parliamentary debates will not bring this government down. However the Labour Party could be more effective and that’s what we’ve got to say to them, honestly, in as comradely way as we possibly can. I’ve worked out now to be honest the psychology behind Ed Milliband and the Labour leadership. They will shift on an issue when it’s completely safe, like they did on Murdoch. When it was safe to attack Murdoch, they started attacking him. It’s the same on the banks, when it was safe to attack the bankers, they started attacking them. Well what we’ve got to do is say well they won’t lead us, we’ve got to lead them. So we’ve got to make issues safe for them, we’ve got to lead the campaign on issue by issue basis, so we create a climate of opinion where they realise if they want to win votes, it’s our agenda that they’ve got to adopt. So don’t expect big activities in Parliament or events in Parliament which will bring this government down. But at least expect us now to lead them down to a working agenda of our making that they can then oppose the government on.

There’s two other mechanisms. One is industrial action and the other, well they used to call it insurrection, but now we’re polite and we call it direct action. In terms of industrial action what’s happening at the moment is you’ve seen over the last 18 months more strikes and more industrial action than we’ve had in 30 years. And the reason is because individual unions, as government’s attempting to pick them off one by one, but they’ve combined together to fight back. Now our Union, we’ve done our best we possibly can to support them when they come because it’s largely been public sector unions. That’s not going away, in fact it’s building. And I welcome the TUC’s call for the October demonstration. Because at that October demonstration we’ll demonstrate how many people oppose this government. But also it’ll be the backdrop to the next round of industrial action. I was at the UCU Conference on Friday, they’re planning industrial action in the autumn. The NUT are planning exactly the same. PCS are planning the
same, Unite in the public sector are planning the same. And when that industrial action takes place, even if we’re not part of it, our job is as we’ve done up until now, is to support those members in industrial action. Join those picket lines, support them when they come out.

The third activity is direct action. And we’ve been party to that. The direct action that you took over the Pasty Tax, actually produced a result. So people will take direct action and we’ve seen it being effective. We saw UK Uncut take direct action and make the tax evasion, tax avoidance issue relevant to so many more people. We’ve seen the Occupying Movement actually raise the whole issue of what’s happening within the City itself. I’ll give you another example. I went and spoke last week to the TUC Disabled Workers’ Conference, and the Remploy workers were there. The Remploy workers were there. And what they, I don’t know whether you’ve heard about it, but the government wants to close down 36 of their 54 factories. The Remploy workers are disabled workers, if they lose their factories to be frank, they made it clear there’s no chance that they’ll ever get a job again. And the government used this woman to produce a report, a woman called Sayce from Disabilities UK to produce this report to recommend to the government the closure of the factories. And they called her the Trojan Horse for doing it. So what do they do? Well last week as part of the Conference they went down to her Head Office, it’s got a lovely garden out front, they set up a tent and they occupied the garden. But they thought well it doesn’t get enough publicity really, so they brought a stallion along and said here’s the Trojan Horse. Unfortunately the horse disgraced itself, but we won’t go there. That gained the publicity to demonstrate what? That actually the disabled movement isn’t all supporting the closure of the Remploy factories, in fact the resistance is taking place. And now what they’re discussing, and we’re meeting them tomorrow, the occupation of their factories if they’re closed. That’s the sort of direct action that’s taking place.

I just want to close on this. The other lesson from the 1930s was this. All throughout the 1930s people didn’t sit back and just take it all the time. They actually campaigned, they had the Jarrow Marches of unemployed workers, there’s industrial action that was taking place in factory after factory. There were demonstrations, there were forms of direct action even then, occupations and all the rest, and that led eventually to a Labour government to create the Welfare State. The lesson in the 1930s is how to win, and the lessons are these. What do you need? What do you need? You need first of all determination, real commitment that they’re not going to grind us down. They’re not going to defeat us, determination. You need courage, courage to stand up and fight even if you’re on your own, just to stand up and fight, even if you’re the lone voice in that meeting, that says this hospital shouldn’t close, or this cut shouldn’t take place, you need courage. But the third thing you need is the thing that we learnt as a Union, as a Union Movement two centuries ago, it was learnt by the workers in the fields, and in the small workshops of the industrial revolution. It was a secret. The secret is together we’re strong, and we put it on our banners, Unity is Strength. The slogans, Workers United Will Never Be Defeated, they’re not slogans, they’re truisms. We learnt the lesson of solidarity. Now in this the most difficult period, our Union, our Movement has faced in generations, we need those three things now. Determination, we’re not going to be defeated, they’re not going to treat us like this. Courage, even if we’re the last people standing, we’re still going to fight back. But above all else, solidarity, because together we can win and the way we win is to defy them, and in defying them we can defeat them. Solidarity.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay colleagues, if you want to start coming down to the front to ask your questions. Questions? Pat do you want to come down the front? Godson are you coming down?
Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Hello again John, I’m here every year. My point, what you’re saying, absolutely true and we do need to bring this government down. Problem I’ve got is Ed Milliband in that report is sympathetic on the issue of workplace temperatures. What’s that about? I’m very sympathetic to the plight of the Syrian people with the situation in their country. That sympathy does nothing to ease their suffering. He’s so good at being sympathetic, he needs to get a job in an undertakers.

[laughter/applause]

Brother Martin Kelly – Branch 560: I’d just like to thank John for his attendance at the Disability Conference last week, week before last. Really proud of him speaking up for the Remploy workers who’s possibly 15, 1700 people are going to lose their jobs. That’s an additional 15, 1700 there’s quite a number of factories shut down. They’re all disabled, almost 90-odd percent of them disabled workers, they’re not going to get a job again. But I’d just like to thank him. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109: I have a couple of questions for our Honourable MP. I would like to start by saying that it’s been a disappointment to the entire trade union in this country of their actions, and their miscalculated intention, when they voted in Ed Milliband as the Leader of the Labour Party, because now they begin to bite our finger, they are realising it’s not what they intended that they are really getting from the Labour Party leader. He’s drifting away from the (inaudible) of the trade unions. What agenda is he now following? Where do the trade unions stand in the Labour Party?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Could you ask your question Comrade?

Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109: Yes, basically what I’m trying to get through to the MPs. Where do the trade unions stand in the Labour Party? What is the hope that we get back to the reality of our Socialist idea within the Labour structure? Are we still going to be working on our market Socialism? Are we still going to remain strong revolutionists? Are we still going to remain strong reformists? Or are we just going to be playing along with what I call the middle way Conservative/Liberal/New Liberal economic agenda? Because we seem to have lost it, we kept crying and blaming the government. The Labour Party has not shown us any positive agenda, they have not shown us any form of alternative……

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Godson, we want to try and get as many questions in as possible so please, just a question.

Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109: I mean, they’ve not been able to show us any positive alternative policies towards what the government is proposing. All we’re hearing is bla bla bla all the time. But they have nothing to show for it. Please sir can you tell us why should we have people who propagate a Socialist agenda in the Liberal Party?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We’ve got the question Comrade, next person please, okay Pat.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: John, the Health Service is something the people pay for. We contribute to this, now I asked you before about how much we do contribute. But I’ve got the figures, we contribute over £90 billion of the Health Service. The full Health Service costs the country £120 billion every year, that’s what it costs. Our contributions are made up from the employer and from us, I think it’s about £35 billion that the people contribute to the Health Service, and £50 billion or something is what the employers contribute to it. There’s also £920 million or something picked up on prescriptions, eye charges, and things like that. But why
should any government be allowed to change the Health Service without asking us? The people, and the doctors that work in it? Andy Burnham has here that 30 million nurses were demoted under wage cut…….

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** A quick question Pat.

**Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215:** And this is all happening. Now I believe that the Health Service should be set up in such a way with MPs and the doctors and the people that use it. We are big stakeholders in the National Health Service, and I don’t know why we don’t have a say. It shouldn’t be at the mercy of every Health Secretary that comes, there’s a difference between a Health Secretary in the Labour Party and in the Tories…….

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** I think that’s a statement. Quick questions!

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Last two questions, sorry Marilyn I said Tony was the last one.

**Brother Jeffrey McCarthy, Branch 458:** Over the last couple of years I’ve seen every Labour politician that’s come on the telly or news, squirm at the question will you support us in strike action. We’ve been told a lot this morning that us and Labour Party should be hand in glove. So why is it they squirm off the hook every time they’re asked about the trade unions, when the mention of strike gets mentioned?

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** I expect yours to be quick Tony.

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** I just want to ask John, I’m a Labour Party member, I want John to sell the Labour Party to people in here because at the end of the day, the question from me is millionaires or working class? Join the Labour Party.

[applause]

**John McDonnell MP:** Let’s go to the heart of this shall we? No-one’s listening are they, apart from us eh? So I can be straight with you can’t I? Yes. Well I always am anyway, that’s what gets me into trouble. Anyway look, let me just, I tried to do it in my speech and clearly I wasn’t clear. This is how I understand the situation as it is at the moment, right. I’m a Socialist, we’re a Socialist Union, simple as that, we always have been, it’s embedded in the Constitution in the what we aim for. And what does Socialism mean? It means basically, Neil Kinnock wasn’t sure what it meant so he sent off for a guy called, he was an academic at Burbeck, he went across and said do me a short draft of a booklet on Socialism. And he came back he said actually you can sum it up in a couple of words. What Socialism means is the achievement of equality through democracy. And both of those things are linked. So what our objective is is to create a society in which we’re all equal, but also we all have a democratic say. That’s what it’s all about basically, and our society at the moment is structured in a way that it’s dominated by a class, the rich and the corporations and all the rest, and they can over-ride anything that we wish, and the one way that we’ve been trying to transform that is through the ballot box, and through Parliamentary democracy and democracy at the local level. And that’s why the Labour Party was founded. The Labour Party didn’t come about through just a small group of people coming together, it came about by trade unions saying we need a voice in Parliament, and most of those trade unions, constitutionally set up to try to transform society in the interests of their members. Most of them had, as we have, we’ve built into them, their whole being, into their Constitution, into their objectives, was the creation of a Socialist society. One that’s democratic and equal. And we set the Labour Party up as our voice in Parliament. Now over the years within the Labour Party, it was always a coalition between the left and right, between those that were
Socialists, like us, those that were Social Reformers, and then also you had others who just tagged along as opportunist careerists, or whatever, you always have that in any organisation. But the Labour Party always has been a struggle between those that are in favour of social reform, those who are in favour of forward Socialism, and it’s always been a debate between the left and right, and its history has always been like that. Up until the arrival of Tony Blair, that’s the problem, let’s be honest with each other, up until the arrival of Tony Blair because Tony Blair was not either a social reformer or a Socialist, he was beyond that. I think he was a Neo-Liberal, I think he imbued the ideas of Thatcher when he was relatively young and believed the market was the best way in which society could be organised. So then we had within the Labour Party the struggle between Socialists and social reformers against Neo-Liberals. And the Neo-Liberals have dominated for a long period of time. But they lost us the last election. Why did they lose us the last election? Not because people swapped over to vote Tory, it was because we lost four million votes, and they stayed at home largely, four million Labour votes said we can’t vote for this any more, because it’s not what we want a Labour Party to do. They didn’t recognise the Labour Party any more, because actually as someone said, you couldn’t, sometimes you couldn’t distinguish on some policies like privatisation or Iraq, between them and the Tories. And that’s where it is. Now since we’ve lost that election, the reality is this, people are beginning to learn to wake up, and learn a lesson, why did we lose? Well we lost because we lost, not just those votes, we lost our sense of purpose. We lost the reason for why we were set up, we’re not here to manage this capitalist society. We were founded to transform it, to transform it in a Socialist direction. So people I think between this last election and now are beginning to wake up and realise if we ever stand a chance of being elected again, we’ve got to go back to our own people, explain what we’re about, that we are with them, we are about supporting them, we are about transforming society, and regain their confidence. I think that’s beginning to happen, but the reality is this as well, Ed Milliband and Ed Balls and all the rest of it, they were policy advisors to Blair and Brown and all the others, they were brought up in the heart of New Labour, I don’t think they were particularly committed, I think they, I don’t think they had much of an ideology, but they were brought up in the heart of that, so I think it’s almost like having a blank sheet of paper. A blank sheet of paper, and they will go, electorally, where the votes are going to be. And what we’ve got to do, and this is what I tried to explain, on an issue by issue basis, we’ve got to explain to them the votes that we lost, if you ever want to be re-elected again, the votes that you lost, the working class people who just want the Labour Party back. They just want the Labour Party to represent them in the way that they expect the Labour Party to do. That’s why I think, they’re beginning to understand that. You don’t hear about New Labour any more, it’s Labour again, thank goodness. And we’re beginning to have this tussle within the Labour Party on an issue by issue basis to say if you want to be re-elected you need to be Labour again, you need to start listening to us again, and you need to start supporting us. Now that relates to the issue of industrial action, because we haven’t won that argument yet. We haven’t won that with them because they’re terrified of supporting strikes and industrial action because they think it might lose them ground with middle England and all the rest. And what we’re trying to say to them is actually if you listen to the arguments around these disputes, they’re about fairness and how people are treated justly. And if you stand on the side of fairness and justice, you will win the argument and you’ll gain votes rather than lose them. That’s the battle that’s going on within the Labour Party itself.

Now I understand the issue about Ed Milliband expressing sympathy with regard to our heating campaign, our heat campaign and sympathy on some other issues, and Marilyn I’ll mention the potential of his role as an undertaker, I’m sure there’s a career move for him, but I don’t necessarily endear me to him, or it’ll go down particularly well. But, I will make the point, because you’re right, expressing sympathy on something is not good enough. And we said that to him actually, when we met him, think about this issue, we don’t just want your sympathy, we
want your support, we want you behind us when we go in to this campaign. And that’s what union after union is saying to him at the moment. I think the message is beginning to get heard, but let me just say this, I just go back to my main point really which is I don’t believe in leaders, I don’t believe in leaders. I don’t think we’re like sheep, that we need leaders to take us to the promised land. We’ve all got to be leaders, we’ve all got to lead, and Ed Miliband needs leading. We’ve got to lead him, we’ve got to lead him by being straight with him. This is what we want you to do, these are the policies we want you to pursue, we’ll support you if you pursue them, and if you don’t we’ll come for you. Yes we will expect more from you, we will be critical, if you’re not abiding by what we wish you to say. At least have that debate with us, and that’s what’s happening. And that’s what’s happening. There is no other alternative other than to fight within the Labour Party itself because our electoral system means that it will always be between the two main parties, and maybe one other. All those attempts at forming parties outside the Labour Party have failed, significantly failed. So therefore if you want to change society, the only option you’ve got is to fight within the Labour Party, but you should do that armed, and strong and with others. That’s why as a Union, we’ve supported the Labour Representation Committee, it’s the left of the Labour Party, Socialists with the Labour Party, and Socialists within trade unions, coming together to discuss a political agenda that we can then drive into the Labour Party, and then, and we believe, form a government that’s worthy of its name. And that’s what, I’ll do a selling point if you like. It’s important, if we’re going to win this battle, you can’t stand outside and criticise, you can’t stand on the sidelines and say I’m moaning about the Labour Party or Ed Miliband’s done this and I don’t like it, you can’t stand outside. You just leave us on our own basically, isolated. You need to join and get stuck in, but to strengthen that getting stuck in join the LRC as well, because what we’re doing, constituency by constituency is getting people standing up at meetings saying we’re pleased with some of the progress we’ve made, but we’re not going far enough. This policy isn’t acceptable, we want it changed. And we want a Labour government that will do this, we want a Labour government that will do that. And that’s beginning to work.

So if you’re interested, if you’re anxious about what Labour is doing in opposition, change it, and change it by joining but joining the LRC at the same time. And the message is very, very simple, it’s we want a Labour Party, let’s be straight about it, we want the Labour Party as a Socialist Party. We want a Labour government that ends all privatisation don’t we? We want them to invest in public services [applause], we want a Labour Party that goes into the government saying that they’re going to restore trade union rights don’t we? Simple as that. [applause] Now here’s a tough one for them. But we’re going to win it. We want a Labour Party that goes into government and says no longer will working people pay for economic crises, it’ll be the rich who made their money in the boom years. So we want a Labour Party that introduces a wealth tax [applause], that redistributes wealth in this country. And also let me just say this, because Syria was mentioned. I want a Labour Party that goes into government again as a party of peace again. I’ve had enough of wars, I’ve sat in that Parliament five times now where they’ve decided to send our troops into war and on every occasion it’s resulted in young men and women dying. Our own troops, and civilians and others. And often you know, the enemy we’re fighting, a lot of them don’t even know what they’re fighting for, they’ve been press ganged into their military service in Afghanistan, the Taliban etc. So I want a Labour Party that no longer goes on military adventures, withdraws the troops from Afghanistan, no more Iraqs, no more interventions for oil and yes, I want to save money, I want one cut especially. I want Trident cut, I want the end of nuclear weapons and I want [applause] them paid back into public services.
They’re all the issues that we should be campaigning for and the point was made about the NHS. All the things that the Attlee government did you know won popular support, but it wasn’t just popular support by people congratulating them, we had a Labour Party membership then of about a million people, active on the streets, campaigning all the time, holding MPs to account, de-selecting MPs if they weren’t good enough or weren’t representing us. That’s what we want back again, we want our Party back again. And what I’m saying to you, don’t stand on the sidelines, help us get that, help us get our Party back again. Help us get a Socialist Party elected again. It’s happened in France, it’s just happened in France, I think it’s going to happen in Greece. You could be part of that revolution in this country, because it’s going to come, it’s going to come. People aren’t going to take this all the time, we’re going to bring this government down, and we’re going to elect a government again, but not a New Labour government, we’re going to elect a Labour government. Solidarity.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Conference, I mean obviously an inspiration and a true working class warrior. Someone who really does represent the true face of Labour and the true face of working class people. John McDonnell, unbelievable.

[applause]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Yes, just to say John, well on behalf of the Union, I would thank you. I probably see more of what you do than most people given that we sit on the Parliamentary Group with you, and we’ve actually invited some lay members along to that group to see exactly how the workings of the Parliamentary Group are. I said it yesterday and I’ll say it again, I think it is one of the most successful Parliamentary Groups because we look at direct action. But it isn’t just about John McDonnell, he does a fantastic job for us, there’s all those other MPs and I’d like you to take our fraternal thanks back to those MPs, and of course, it would be very remiss of me if I didn’t thank the likes of Simeon Andrews, who’s the Secretary, who’s sat at the back over there, and Stuart Watkin who’s probably sat in the office, [applause], and Lawrie and everybody else associated with that Parliamentary Group, that has helped us shape it into a real Socialist Parliamentary Group. So John, we just want to make a presentation, which we always do every year, in fact we’re going to stop inviting you, we don’t know what to buy you, he’s got more bakers than Greggs [laughter].

We won’t give him any more bakers, we won’t do that. And we adopted children for him in the past, his wife’s now asking questions of him, why he’s got all these kids. So John, what we’ve done, if you like it, it was my idea. If you don’t like it, it was my wife’s, she went to the shop and got it for us, I don’t even know what it is, so if you open it and have a look so you can show everyone before you go, there’s the, I don’t know, I’ve no idea.

[Bang and laughter]

**John McDonnell MP:** It’s a signed print of a portrait of Tony Blair [laughter]. It’s fantastic, it’s absolutely lovely, thank you very much.

[applause]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** We, I’ve never been lucky enough to get you near a bar John, but maybe that time’ll come in the future, but I’m reliably informed that you like a tipple as well, so we’ve got you a bottle of Irish whisky which I believe’s your favourite, bottle of Jamesons, so I know you can’t stay and have a drink with us, but you can maybe toast your time with the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union when you get home.

[applause]
And last but by no means least we’ve got the biscuits made by trade union members in Fox’s. We only ever use trade union stuff at this Conference, so hope you and your wife, or you and your researchers enjoy them. Simeon we’ve got a tin for you as well, we won’t, so if you come down John Fox’ll give you a box of biscuits.

Thank you John for attending the Conference.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Delegates, back here for 2 o’clock, on the dot because if you’re not you won’t be finished for half past four. The Greggs meeting is going to be, where’s it going to be? We think it’s over there, so Greggs, that meeting’s going to go on now.

Afternoon Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Colleagues, can I remind you about the Different Cultures One World book, easy for me to say, that’s what I get when I keep getting starved at a dinner time.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Looks under-nourished doesn’t he.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I am under-nourished. But fantastic books, we had about 20 or 30 of them, we’ve only got three left. This isn’t hard sell, but we’re looking for obviously people to buy them. Once in a lifetime opportunity when you go away from Conference, obviously you won’t have the opportunity to buy them again. So make sure you buy them, and buy them quick, because they’ll probably have gone. Okay. I can’t remember whether I mentioned to Phyllis that you’ve won a prize? You’ve won a prize, you’ve got a night out with Roy Streeter (cheers), and I believe he’s paying. Watkins and Gunn, you must have entered a competition at Watkins and Gunn and you’ve won Phyllis. Go see them at the break please Phyllis yes? General Secretary, roll call.

(Roll Call taken)

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: 179 Delegates present. Brilliant eh? Worked that out really quickly, in fact it was the same as this morning, helped me. Just before we do the ballot results, we’ve just finished a Greggs meeting. Have we got the Greggs DVD lined up? So I want to show you the new, what we’ve done, we’ve commissioned a new DVD for recruitment within Greggs, which has been done by Irwin Video, Eddie and Ronnie, who’ve done quite a lot of the stuff for us. In fact they’re the ones who did the funky music that you get right at the beginning, they did that as a sort of freebie for us when we changed our logo, and we thought it was a good way of introducing Conference, having our own set, so if you, just give the EC time to get down, because none of them, Ian and I have both seen it but nobody on the Executive Council’s seen it yet.

[DVD shown]

[applause]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: So I’m sure you, you know, obviously it’s pretty good isn’t it, I mean obviously that’s why we get professional people to do it. The President incidentally just asked me, he said why did you smile in the middle of it? I said somebody just told me that Manchester United lost an eight point lead. I mean fancy filming when I got to know that.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We’re a bit worried, because obviously when you see that, would you buy a car off him? You wouldn’t would you? Dodgy. Listen Colleagues, it’s a pleasure today to welcome the new General Secretary from the GFTU. Doug has been a good
friend of the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union for many years. Doug’s background was working at the community, as the General Secretary for the Community and Youth Workers’ Union, he later became a National Officer of Unite. I know under Doug’s stewardship, one of the main areas of development would be young people, I mean, young people and trade unions, without young people the Trade Union Movement will die, and one of the things about Doug is, his commitment to making sure that opportunities, aspirations and understanding of the Trade Union Movement will be at the forefront of everything the GFTU do, so Conference please welcome Doug Nicholls.

**Brother Doug Nicholls:** President, General Secretary, Sisters and Brothers, Comrades. I can’t tell you what a pleasure and honour it is to be at this Conference. I’ve worked closely with many Comrades from this Union over the years. When I came into national work in the Trade Union Movement in 1975 that was a year as I recall and there was about 30, 40,000 bakers on strike, I think it was a strike against Sunday working as I recall. And that’s when the Union came into my consciousness. In 1985, ten years after that, my Union was one of the first, 1984-85, my Union was one of the first to declare 100% support for the miners and of course, your Union did as well. And when we started to work in the TUC, we discovered that we had many things in common, culturally and politically, with the Bakers Union, and we made many friends, many friends are here today, Tony, Vi, others who we’ve met and worked with over the years, to fight for progressive causes, for working people. And I can’t resist, I can’t resist talking about one of them just briefly. It was a Bakers Union, my Union, Unison and others, that warned the Trade Union Movement that we shouldn’t go into the European Single Currency because we said at that time that that would be a disaster particularly for some of the weaker economies, Ireland, Greece and Spain. And it’s all come home to roost in a most tragic way. But our unions, because we’d been principled on really difficult issues at really difficult times in our history, we’ve made a difference, and we’ve stood strong together.

So I’ve always felt great affection for this Union. Above all its way of empowering working people in a democratic structure, which as Ronnie said earlier on, is pretty unique to some small specialist trade unions. The Union belongs to its members, and of course we’ve worked side by side in the General Federation of Trade Unions for many, many years. And I must express my thanks publicly to the Union for its steadfast support for my nomination when the previous General Secretary declared his retirement a couple of years ago. It wasn’t just about me, it was about progressive forces in the specialist unions, wanting to make sure that in this difficult climate where the storm winds are blowing harder than we’ve ever heard them blow before, that we have a Federation for small specialist unions that enables them to be strong, to be independent, and to shape up and to be more organised, more professional and more in tune. And that’s what we want the GFTU to support us with.

Your Union as you know has been an active member of the GFTU for many years. Joe Marino of course was President, Vice President when I was President, played a great role on the Executive with the progressive forces there. And now Ronnie and Marilyn, both on our Executive, making an indispensible contribution. And you know that the health and safety training that is delivered through the GFTU makes a major difference to your members, and we’re trying to work with Ian and others to make sure that that education moves into the political sphere and into organising. So yes the GFTU’s done a great deal for its affiliates on education and research. But I want it to be seen more as a helping hand, to support independent unions in anything that they want us to do. Because you know the history of the British Trade Union Movement is a history of over 5,000 small specialist trade unions. They come and go with the different industries, some collapse because of finances, times change, politics change, but the history of our Movement is a history of specialist independent trade unions. And the Bakers is one of the longest lasting of those, and I hope that we’ll see it through for another
couple of centuries. But at this critical time, we need a GFTU to support those independent unions. There’s no issue too big or too small that we won’t have a go at helping you with. And I pledge our complete loyalty and support for all that the Bakers bring to us, for support and assistance.

Now Ian’s mentioned the whole question of young people and the Trade Union Movement. And it’s something that I’ve been banging on about for years, because I used to represent youth workers, we used to organise a lot of campaigns with young people. And it’s obvious that those of us in the Trade Union Movement now are just on an escalator, and when we get off the top of the escalator, we’ve got to make sure there are people behind us carrying on our work. But we’ve got a problem, and we can’t shy away from it as a Movement. One of the biggest gulfs that exist in our society is between young people and the trade unions. The figures are out there for all to see, but it is less, it is less, than one in five young people under the age of 25 who are in a trade union, let alone active. Now that doesn’t mean that young people are being bought off, or they’ve become the Thatcher generation. Quite the contrary. In the last two years, if the government’s done anything, it’s politicised a generation of young people to get involved in progressive politics, and building organisations to look after their interests in a way that we haven’t seen for a generation. But those young people who’ve been active, have not been channelling that energy, that creativity, that consciousness of how bad this system is, into the Trade Union Movement. And it’s our task to make sure they do.

Young people have been singled out by this government, and I challenge anyone to say to the contrary. One of the main targets of this government was youth, the state of being young. The discriminatory National Minimum Wage, getting rid of the Education Maintenance Allowance, getting rid of all meaningful apprenticeships. Making higher education unaffordable through a system of loans. And above all, making the highest figures of unemployment amongst young people that we’d seen in a lifetime, and no wonder many who felt so alienated, so frustrated, by being at the centre of the target, did spill out into anti-social behaviour and other things last year. And when young people saw themselves under attack in all those ways, they had one service left that was giving them support and encouragement and political education, that was the Youth Service. And the Tories targeted that in the budget in May 2010, the explicit reference to take away the one service that young people themselves had built to give themselves a chance in life. So we’ve got a major job to do. Others who’ve looked at young people not being engaged and involved, like for example, local councils, have said we’ve got to do something about it, we’ve got to employ some youth workers to build young councils to get young people back into the political system, and to get them involved and to get them empowered. But the Trade Union Movement has not done it to the extent it needs to. We’re a fast emptying, ageing house, and there’s some urgency to tackling this.

So I don’t know if it’s come round yet, I don’t know if it’s here, but we’ve just done a special issue of the Federation News, and this tackles a number of ideas, both for dealing with the ageing workforce, work till you drop, work forever for nothing at the end with your pensions diminished, and the younger end of the spectrum, and some ideas that we hope that unions can consider for taking up. So I’m absolutely delighted to be at your Conference when I understand that you’re electing your first young person to the Executive. But you’ll find in that Federation News there are many other ideas that we need to work on as well. And with some of my contacts, with youth workers and other things, I’m hoping to bring some of that to assist unions. We will be having another GFTU Youth Conference next March, so we hope that you’ll be able to fill that one up for us.

So, the second area I wanted to touch on, was commented on by John and a couple of other speakers this morning. And I think it’s one of the big issues that we face, there are too many issues that we face you could say, but this one gets to the heart of the matter. It is the question of
Remploy, and it kind of, for me symbolises what’s happening to our country. You remember the story presumably of Remploy that after the Second World War Bevan and others, the government said, that we need to create employment support services for the disabled and for disabled servicemen coming back from the war, to be involved in productive manufacturing, to be involved in employment situations which support them and make them feel an integral part of our society. So Remploy was established, and over the last few years various governments have decided that they’re going to have a go at that excellent service, which provides a lifeline, a lifeline to so many disabled people.

As was said earlier 1500 jobs to go, 36 factories to close, doesn’t sound a lot, particularly doesn’t sound a lot if you recognise we’re likely to lose up to a million public service jobs next year. But what does this symbolise and what does it stand for? Remploy stands for manufacturing, it stands for subsidised public service, and it stands for care of the vulnerable. And above all it stand for the trade unionised workplace, because one distinctive thing about Remploy is that it’s highly trade unionised. Three GFTU affiliates organise there. Now we’re told aren’t we in situations like Remploy which costs £555 million over five years, we’re told continually, and we’ve been told since the start of this government, there ain’t no money in the kitty. Well we’ve been having a little look at actually what you could afford with some of the money that is around there. Now there’s about seven million disabled people in Britain, the total expenditure on all employment services for the disabled in Britain amounts to about £46 a year for each disabled person. Now, in real terms this provides us with a little interesting situation with in relation to expenditure at Remploy which the government say they can’t afford. If you took the wealth, the private wealth of the richest 1000 people in Britain it could pay for all the employment assistance, not just for Remploy, not just for Remploy, but for every disabled person in Britain for 1,236,000 years. If you took the money, our money, that was used to bail out the banks, the £1.3 trillion, whatever that looks like, our researchers have worked that one out, if you took that money, our money, and you gave that to Remploy that would keep it going for 10½ million years. When they say there’s no money, they’re telling the biggest lie that we’ve faced for many a day. Our country is about the fifth richest in the world still, it’s awash with money, and John and Ian and Ronnie have said a few things about this government, and I just need to add a couple myself if you don’t mind. I think there’s a danger we under-estimate them, there’s a danger of writing off as just millionaires, or the blue bloods, those strange pedigree animals, you look at their partings on their hair, the back of Osborne and Cameron. Pedigrees, strange hair formations. Don’t understand, don’t under-estimate, don’t under-estimate the way they’ve planned for this. When the miners kicked off in ’85 we discovered that they planned for that in 1975 for the Ridley Report. And don’t let anyone tell us that that budget that they passed to move this whole austerity programme through, just came overnight in March, April and May 2010. And remember too what that budget said. The words that ring out in my ears from that budget were from Osborne in the introduction. He said this budget is a way of changing the way in which Britain is governed for ever. So they determined that they were going to do something major to our country. Change the way in which it was governed, that was the purpose of the budget, it was a political, ideological attack, and alongside it went all of those plans to say that this government, that had no mandate for that budget from the people, would be there for ever as well, because that’s the effect of that constituency and Parliament Act that they’re trying to push through. They want a 1000 year Reich where no other party other than the Tories can rule.

They’ve done it quite systematically. Thatcher gets rid of industry, privatises the utilities and now this lot want to sweep up the remnants of the unionised public services and everything that our people built up. And don’t under-estimate their ability to lie so that many of our people are fearful. Their central lie that we’ve got a debt that is so big there’s a hole in the piggy bank, the nation’s bust, there’s no money around to spend on anything. The National Debt now is what?
About 60% of the Gross Domestic Product. When my parents came back from the Second World War, to rebuild the country with decent public services for all working people, the National Debt was 250% of the Gross Domestic Product. In fact the debt has hardly ever in our history been lower than it is now, so they are using that as an excuse as John said earlier, for their blitzkrieg against everything that creates value in manufacturing and public services.

And don’t under-estimate too the way this lot represent a new lot. In the past the Tories have always represented the landowners and the manufacturers. This lot represent a very small group of spivs and speculators in the City of London, speculating on those finance markets with all of our wealth, our pension schemes, our savings, our mortgages, our wages that we stash away, our savings, that’s what they speculate with in the City.

So if you’ve got a government that ain’t been properly elected, if you’ve got a government that lies, you’ve got a kind of dictatorship. But if they’re representing such a small group of people then you’ve also got a government that is weak, and what Conferences like this say, and what that new life in the Trade Union Movement is beginning to say, in a louder way than we’ve heard it for many years, is that we are not going to put up with this for any longer. It is our class, and all of its strengths, that have got to rule this country, and we’ve got to do that with a new generation of young people.

Every success to your Union, I’m here to give you whatever support I can. All the best to you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay General Secretary.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Yes, just to say Doug I’ve got to say right through, and he knows it to be true, despite some big difficulties with the GFTU in getting a new General Secretary, I think the one consistent was that our Union supported you all the way through in both the campaigns. It was one of those things where you have to get two campaigns to get one election, but we got through it. And Doug, on behalf of the Union, I’d like to wish you all the best in your new career. I’m sure you’ll do a great job based on the first few meetings that I’ve seen, and they’re most certainly more interesting meetings since you took over. And long may that continue. So Doug just before you, obviously feel free to sit here all afternoon, you can sit here all night if you want it’s up to you, but I’d like to make a presentation just to remind you of your visit to the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union. It’s actually a limited edition pewter baker, which shows our history, where our industry actually started, we never always had been plant bakers, we started in cellar bakers, and this is a limited edition that will actually show you where that heritage is. We hope it takes pride of place and we hope it reminds you of a visit amongst friends at the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union.

[applause]

Do you know this is, out of all the people we have speaking here this is the one where I might actually share in these, because if you take it to the Executive in a couple of weeks, we might all share them as biscuits. They’re made by trade union members at Fox’s Biscuits, and donated by the company, hope you enjoy them.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, Full Time Officers are just having their meeting, we’ve got Executive on the door yes? Okay? Ballot results.

Okay. **The Labour Party** – Marilyn French 117, Pauline McCarthy 108, Vi Carr 98, Tony Richardson 77, Dave Dash 36, Seamus Farrelly 34, Michael Redshaw 10. So the people elected to go to Conference will be Marilyn French as the Delegate, Pauline McCarthy and Vi Carr as the guests yes? Okay.
TUC Congress – Pauline McCarthy 82, Tony Richardson 81, Vi Carr 61, Marilyn French 52, Dave Suddards 43, Marilyn McCarthy 40, Lizzie Dinning 37, Kashmir Dosanjh 30, Paul Crandon 17. So elected to the TUC Conference top three which is Pauline McCarthy, Tony Richardson and Vi Carr.


Young EC Member – Rachel Mullen 113, Christopher Lay 30, Stacey Oakley 19. Young EC Member Rachel Mullen. Landmark.

[applause]


[applause]

Region 5 – elected unopposed Joe Knapper, Mark McHugh, Lizzie Dinning, Pauline McCarthy.

Region 6 elected unopposed David Byrne, Region 7 elected unopposed Noel Mullen.

Standing Orders – Vince Payne elected unopposed, Region 1, Region 2, Gloria Martin elected unopposed. Region 3 Mark Brookes 82, George Tittensor 31, Stuart Bailey 23. Number 3 Standing Orders person will be Mark Brookes. Region 4, Alan Carr elected unopposed. Number 5 Olive Molloy elected unopposed. Number 6 William Crean elected unopposed. Number 7 John Halliday, elected unopposed.

That’s the end of the report thank you.

[applause]

Can I thank everybody for taking part in that ballot, and congratulations to those that succeeded, but don’t let it deter anybody that wasn’t successful this time. The Substitute ballot papers will be going out, if they haven’t already gone out? Yes? I don’t know if they’re out on the table or not. They’re not? We’ll make sure they’re out shortly. We’ll double check.

Okay, I’m going to take Rule Number 35, and then I’m going to take the Composite Motion because that’s the last Rule change. So we’ll take it obviously under the last Rule changes. So Motion 35. Oh 31 was withdrawn, it was withdrawn. No I was going to take that as Composite One after this. Absolutely, 35.

35 New Rule – Branch 201 Hovis Avonmouth

That this Conference agrees that a new Rule is added, to state when Rule changes come into effect.

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: There’s nothing in the Rule Book that actually says that once we’ve passed anything in Conference when it would actually take effect. Some people say straight away, some people say September, so just clear it up. I move.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded. Speakers? General Secretary.
**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Yes thank you President. The Executive Council would ask Conference to support the Motion. I think there’s always been an understanding that Rule changes come into effect in the beginning of the September quarter, what that does, that gives the Executive Council, the new Executive at their August Executive time to go through the stuff that’s been fed in from this Conference, and then look to see how we get the funding and whatever. So yes, it’d be the 1st September, yes it will in the new Rule Book when we print it.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** To the vote, those in favour. Those against. That’s carried. Composite One.

**Composite One New Rule – No 3 Regional Council**

\textit{Strike Fund – That this Conference agrees that we should have a 'Strike Fund'. The said fund will be governed by the General Secretary and the National President. This fund could be raised from Branches, Regional Councils and Annual Conference and of course with the generosity of the National Executive Committee.}

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** While we’re here we do various forms of fundraising, that’s right, do it, but put the money into this. I believe more than ever we now need a Strike Fund. I ask you to support.

[applause]

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

**Brother John Halliday – Branch 701:** Here to second the Motion. Conference, going on strike is a decision which is not taken lightly. It comes at the end of a long and hard negotiation, with both parties failing to agree and no compromise in sight. Recently we were in a position of balloting in Allied Bakeries in Belfast for industrial action. Members of the Unite union were boasting that they would receive £25 a day Strike pay. This made our members very uneasy, as we have told them we didn’t have a Strike Fund. During the strike members faced untold hardships, and these only get worse as the strike goes on. Delegates we are a caring Union and should have a fund to help our members who are facing difficulties. Any help, no matter how little, helps boost morale. I realise the difficulties of setting up such a fund, but we should have one, and the time is now to make a start. Delegates we must collectively set about the task of having one. I ask you to support.

[applause]

**Brother Jeffrey McCarthy – Branch 458:** I’ve been waiting for weeks to speak on this. I don’t know about you Brothers and Sisters, but I am totally pissed off every time the Tories come into office with them destroying the rights of the working people in this country. And I’ve had enough of my arse being kicked since 1979 by Tories. I think it’s about time that we stood up and started kicking the Tories’ arses back. There’s been a lot of things said the last couple of days, Ronnie said a lot yesterday, and John Slaven, and John McDonnell about things that the Tories have done against us. But one of the biggest things, I told people more than two years ago, and warned them about David Cameron. Now I’m not an educated person, I left school at 15, but I could see that this guy was going to be a bigger problem than Thatcher and Churchill and all the rest of the Tories who have ever attacked the trade union. And that has come to pass. A few weeks ago I was lucky enough after about 15 years of trying, to get on Question Time and sit in the audience, and I didn’t get the chance to ask a question because I think the questions that I put forward were a bit controversial. The first one was in light of recent events in France and Greece, is there at last a beacon of light for the working class people of the United Kingdom to follow? They wouldn’t ask that question. And the second question was in view of the fact that the present Home Secretary can’t even work her way round a calendar, what chance
have we of trusting the Tories to run this country? Not a hope in hell. And the last thing I would like to say on that is I took part in the debate, I went in a pink shirt, I went in a pink shirt on purpose, because I know David Dimbleby likes going the guy in the pink shirt. I took some stick for it but it didn’t bother me. A guy asked the question at the front and that was why can’t the people in the public sector take their medicine like everything else. And my reply to that was let’s not reach for the road to the bottom, if the public sector have got better pensions than the private sector, then that’s what we should aspire to, and I shot the Tory MP down, she was about to say no. Ever since the Tories have got in you’ve heard red tape, red tape, red tape. Let’s make it easy to sack people. Well we don’t need reminding in this room that we are amongst the easiest people in Europe to sack, we have the worst terms and conditions with regard to redundancy than anybody else in the EC basically. And finally I would like to say the Tories have tried ever since they got in to turn the private and public sectors against each other, and they’ve even tried to turn regions against each other. I believe that this is one of the most important debates that have been brought to Conference, and it’s never been a more important time in the working class lifetime to have a Strike Fund. I believe we should support this wholeheartedly. Even if that means going out and collecting pennies in a bucket to support Strike Funds. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109: I’m here to oppose this Motion. I’m opposing this Motion on the grounds that we have to ask ourselves basically are we in this Union ready and prepared to go on an industrial action at any point in time between now and when is it’s demanded? Every one of us should be aware just like the honourable General Secretary of the General Federation of Trade Union has said earlier on, the last time there was a strike, an industrial action of this magnitude, nature, was in the ‘80s and I could say that I cannot remember the last time in memory that the Bakers Union ever went on the strike in the last 20 years, for any particular issue within the Union. We have to understand that if you are putting up a Strike Fund are you ready to go on an industrial action that would be aided by this Strike Fund? What is the essence of the Strike Fund? Is it able to pay for your salaries or your maintenance for the period of time that you are being relieved of your job by the company you are striking against? No. So why have an industrial Strike Fund when it’s going to pay you for only a minimum period of time? How do you survive next? We should be able to have a defined and a strategic constructive principle, procedure of designing such issues like this when we move these motions. Basically I am saying the essence of being in the Union is to sacrifice yourself for the hope of the future. You do not go on industrial actions because you are always having at the back of mind that you have money going to be paid to you one way or the other. You take the risk, you take the sacrifice, you give your life for it, and that is why we are all here as Union activists, working towards the hope of the future. I want to say this is not a clear fantastic Motion, and basically I do not see the ground why the Strike Fund should be developed or created for us to be able to call up a strike. We need to support this issue based on the fact that whatever strike we’re going to take, wherever industrial actions we are taking as a Union, it should be as a matter of sacrifice to the hope of the future for the workers. Thank you very much.

[applause]

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: I’m here to support this Motion wholeheartedly, in fact I’d go further. I would gladly take back to my members a five, ten p increase to put into our, I may get berated for that, but I would. I believe it’s important and it’s important at the moment. There’s never been a bigger time really that we needed a Strike Fund. Ronnie said, John McDonnell said this morning, we need to lead the way, we need to be strong and firm, we need to send messages back. We need, we don’t have to be cowering to our employers because of
fear of finance. Like the lads from Gunstones sent a strong message and the employer changed their mind. Support this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** Chair, Platform, Conference, here to support this Motion. Clearly no-one likes to use this work strike, but the realities are we’re in the middle of a recession, where we’re watching employers up and down the country looking at terms and conditions and seizing the moment. We need to demonstrate to our members that we have made allowances as a Union, yes, to set up something that will assist them and give a bit of support when they most need it. I urge you to support the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Peter Barszczak – Branch 561:** I’m here, not to oppose it but I’d like it taken back and relooked at again. Because you can’t have a Strike Fund run on donations, it’s got to be on so everybody contributes, and that’s got to be on your subs. You get Branch Meetings where there’s only two or three, so to have a Strike Fund you need to know what you’re getting. And if you don’t put it on your subs you’ve no idea what you get. This is like when you’re supporting somebody when you’re on strike, and you definitely need a Strike Fund and it needs to be levied properly so everybody contributes to it, and everybody gets something out of it when they’re on strike. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Pete’s just took me aback there because I was here to support the Motion, and I do believe in a Strike Fund, but what Pete’s just said there I probably more or less agree with him. I think it should be levied, because don’t forget, you know, we collect for this and we collect for that, these are our people and they’re going through tough economic times and there’s, we’re going to be on strike more and more. So I think I’ll probably go with Pete, I wouldn’t mind them taking a pound a week out of my wages for a Strike Fund for the lads, fair enough.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** The question’s been asked, did you want to remit it Marilyn? No? Conference, obviously last year, opening address to Conference, my first one ever, just goes to show you listen, put in there how important it was that we look forward and if the employers are going to attack us, then we have to prepare, and we have to be ready to take action, and Comrades, over this last 12 months, many of our members have taken that ultimate decision and agreed to take industrial action. In most of those cases fortunately they’ve never had to take any action because the company has capitulated. What this Motion is actually asking for is to set up a Strike Fund. We already actually have the ability within the Rule Book to actually to support our members, but this takes it a little step further because it gives us an opportunity to overhaul what we’re actually being asked to do with this Motion. The Executive would ask Conference to support it, and we are determined as an organisation to send a clear message, and that message as I said to you yesterday in my opening address, we won’t be pushed around. And if the employer thinks we’re going to allow our members to be starved back to work, understand it’s not going to happen, we are an organisation that supports its members, we will not be pushed about, we will not be curtailed, we will not be bullied, we will stand up and whichever way we need to raise funds to make sure that our members can stay out on strike if that’s what it takes to force the employer to reach a reasonable negotiated settlement, we should be prepared to do it. Never be afraid. Never.

[applause]
We only win when we force the employer to see reason. Every gain that’s ever been made in this country is because trade unions have forced politicians to listen. It’s because employers have been forced to accept that they’ve acted incorrectly. That’s why we take industrial action, that’s why our members expect trade unions to lead them, and that’s what this trade union will do. We ask Conference to support the Motion. The Executive Council is completely at one – our members will not be starved back to work by any employer, we will ensure [applause], we will stand up, and like this week, when the people down in Birmingham or Leicester should I say Gulli, go on strike, we will be 100% with them. Colleagues, please support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Marilyn, right of reply. Okay to the vote, those in favour. Those against. That’s carried. Okay Colleagues, that’s the end of Rule changes, everything’s straightforward now. We’ve done it, we’ve done that one. So it’s just a majority vote. Okay, mover of 36.

36 No 5 Regional Council

_Vulnerable workers – That Conference agrees to support Branch 582 in asking the Parliamentary Group to lobby against the increasing use and abuse of vulnerable workers and a lack of protection from present legislation._

Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582: Mr President, Platform, Delegates. We hear reports from this present government that the picture is better now for vulnerable workers than it was under the previous government, that dark corners of the labour market no longer have an opportunity to exploit the vulnerable. Yet exploitation is still prevalent because employment rights are still abused. They’re abused because of a lack of enforcement from this government, a lack of protection to those most in need of their help. There should be no dark corners for employers to exploit. There should be no hiding place or capacity for employers to abuse workers. And government enforcement bodies must improve their detection and deterrent. And they must exercise greater penalties to create a fair framework of employment rights for all. I appreciate the Parliamentary Group have many concerns with which to campaign for on behalf of our members. But we ask for your support Delegates, support us in asking the Parliamentary Group to lobby the government to eradicate this abuse by increasing detection, increasing penalties for this abuse, and protecting every worker. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder?

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582: I’m up here to support Dave on this. I believe as an Executive Council we have to be seen to be looking after the worse off within our communities and we need the government to look after them as well. So support. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: This is why you didn’t get a break this morning, you take too long to walk down here.

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion. When I first started at British Bakeries Wigan they used to set people on like, you know, who, were disabled, and what have you. It seems to have all gone away that now, you know we had a certain percentage of people I mean, that’s why I got took on because I’m not full shilling like, you know what I mean? But it seems to have gone away that now, and I think we should go back to them days, and we should, you know, we should look after, we’re all one society, everybody’s, you know, more vulnerable people, support the Motion.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, we actually have already started the process of putting this in front of the Parliamentary Group. When those brave people down at Park Cake in Bolton and Oldham made that decision to take a ballot for industrial action to support those workers who were going to lose out on the rights that they’d been given due to the vulnerable workers’ legislation and the agency legislation, obviously the people was about to be denied their rights. So the people at Park Cakes, both in Bolton and Oldham, instead of going out for themselves or for the pay or any issue that affected them personally, they decided to take part in an industrial action ballot that said we will not stand by and allow people to have their rights removed. We did raise it with our Parliamentary Group and we made a lot of noise about the issue. And congratulations to the people at Park Cake, this is already on our agenda, but we would ask Conference to support the Motion and endorse what we did at Park Cake and make sure that we spread that message across. Please support.

To the vote, those in favour. Against. That’s carried. Thirty seven.

37 No 5 Regional Council

Changes to agency labour laws – That this Conference put pressure on this government to close all the loopholes in the agency workers laws and make companies follow the laws and changes and not at the detriment of the employee.

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: This Motion I must admit I wrote it when I’d had a beer or two. But like I say, the agency laws, even though they were good, well we initially thought they were good when the government brought them in, equal rights for all workers after that amount of time. As fast as we were thinking this were good, our employers were picking loopholes in it. They’ve found loopholes in it, there’s a Swedish Derogation, there’s my place of work, they’re bringing them in on hygiene and put them on any other job. They’re exploiting agency workers, and the loopholes need closing. I’d ask you to support this Motion.

[applause]

Sister Kim Elvidge – Branch 367: Right the new Agency Labour Laws, the loopholes. One of the favourites at the minute is a word, called a comparator. Now a comparator is an agency worker that you’ve probably had working with you at the side of you for 12 weeks. But the thing is that agency worker has only probably done, if you’ve got five jobs on your production line, three of them, which is not the agency worker’s fault, but this then gives the management right to say yes but you’re not a comparator because you cannot do the extra two jobs that the full time worker next to you can do. Not the agency’s fault, again. So how do we get round this? We don’t. I have not seen any evidence in the bully, the large major bully boy companies that we work for of this happening. They’ve also got another loophole round it. This is if they do get on, if the lucky ones do get on, then they’re being taken on on secondary contracts. How is that fair? Lower pay, lower, unfair terms and conditions. Not the same as what the person that they’re working next to is on. So as I see it at the moment, the Agency Laws that was there to protect them have failed. I ask you to support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: I’m not here to ask you to support or oppose this Motion because a lot of guilty people in this room, and I’ll tell you for why too. Second generation contracts, they’ve not bothered me with them. Why have they not bothered me with them?
Because we never let agency in in the first place. That’s where we’ve gone wrong, when we let agency in the workplace.

[applause]

**Brother Peter Barszczak – Branch 561:** I’m here to support this because second generation contracts is how they pay the agency less. And everybody that would be employed if they get away with it will be employed on that second generation contract which is less money. And eventually everybody in that workplace will be on less money. And therefore devaluing your wages, in bringing (inaudible) employee. Please support.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, I mean clearly the Motion before was of a similar nature, so we would ask Conference to support the Motion. Those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Motion 38. It is a very similar Motion, I don’t know whether you still want to go ahead with it Raj or, because obviously it’s just been passed. Yes, so you’re withdrawing it? Thank you Raj. Motion 39.

**39 No 5 Regional Council**

*Agency Workers – That this Conference agrees to support that agency and new starter workers receive the same terms and conditions as the permanent staff they are working alongside.*

**Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582:** Mr President, Platform, Delegates, Motion 39 Agency workers. Before the implementation of last October’s Agency Workers’ Regulations, certain employers were already planning ways to undercut employees’ pay and conditions. As Dave Suddards mentioned, a loophole called the Swedish Derogation allows employers to bypass the Agency Workers rights, by allowing employees to be directly employed by the agency itself, then any pay comparison with permanent employees becomes non-existent. The agency worker rates then no longer apply, and as some of you in this room have witnessed, the employer brings agency workers into workplaces on reduced pay and conditions, calling this a New Starter Rate. These unfair systems are spreading as other businesses follow suit, claiming the new rates are essential to remain competitive. We at Manor in Barnsley suffered this treatment last year, through the threat of industrial action, we were able to limit the period of continuous employment that agency workers are employed on, and this new rate is set at five months. But as many of you have Delegates, many of you here Delegates may be aware of, our business involves seasonal peaks and troughs, enabling our employer to monitor the service that agency workers are employed, then break that service, to re-employ them after a given break on the New Starter Rate once more. Delegates we again ask for your support in demanding that we campaign against this unfair practice through our Parliamentary Group. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconder? You’re not seconding it. Have we got a seconder? Formally seconded, okay.

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here again. This agency is where you’ve got an agreement on site, and like I said, they’ve changed the laws and what have you, so get the agreement off the site, don’t agree to it. You know what I mean, I mean all these here are of our own making. We’ve made this situation, we let agency come in and now we’re all speaking about it. It should have been fired off straight away, we should never have let the agency come in. But this is about agreements on site, if you’ve not got an agreement, they can’t Swedish Derogation or nothing. We’ve just had six lads took on in despatch Wigan, same terms and conditions, same contracts as us. So go back to workplace and say we don’t want no agency now.
[applause]

Brother Jeffrey McCarthy, Branch 458: For those of you who’ve got good memories about ten years ago, for three years on the trot, I brought resolutions to Conference about agency workers, and that was that anybody who comes and works on the site with you, they get at least the same minimum terms and conditions as you do. It took me three years and a lot of work to eventually get it passed through. The only way we’re ever going to close agencies in this country is not to make it worthwhile for them to be open. And the only way to protect our terms and conditions is when somebody starts, if the lowest paid on our site is on £7 an hour, then that’s what they come and get paid. And we don’t let agencies have rates for separate workers, it protects everybody yes? Simple.

[applause]

Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109: Conference, I would like to oppose this Motion, based on two main factors. One being the fact that agencies are not directly employees of a company, they are third party employee and as such has no contractual agreement with the company that they come to work for, rather than the company that directly employ them which is the agency employer. So are we going to be having a negotiation agreement with the agency company that employee the agency to give them the same conditions, terms of employment, with the employees of the company they are going to work as a third party employee? We have to define this fundamental factor because we can just come and we can just open our mouths, and our ideas, to just be challenging issues, or propagating issues, that has some strategic means of arguments. Secondly, an agency is only (inaudible) worker who can appear today and you can never see him or her again in the next one year. So how do you give that person same terms and conditions which a newly employed worker, who has a long term contract with the company that is employing him, with somebody who appears for one day and could never come up again for the next ten years in the company. We have to define what we are defending for. We have to be able to get an idea that is very specific, that is oriented and that is very rational in the way we challenge it. Thank you very much.

[applause]

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: I’m here to support this Motion wholeheartedly. I agree with what Tony said a lot what he said, we should have been stronger and stopped agencies and got people in proper jobs. I agree with what Godson says, we should have people in proper jobs. We didn’t. We’ve got to mend it, do we mend it now or what do we do? I certainly think it was a step in the right direction but as I said in my last one, they close the loopholes. And people like companies, I mean when I first started work, they used students for them peaks and troughs, and temporary workers, but they had the same terms and conditions, the same money, same everything. Agencies locked onto it and the agency owners have made vast amounts of money, out of workers. Support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Here supporting the Motion. I think it’s a shame that we haven’t had to do, I think it’s been over a decade now since agency workers have been in, and it’s just unfortunate when many, many years ago Joe Marino on this very rostrum made it very clear, now was the time to fight, don’t wait until they’ve come in, and unfortunately that’s exactly what we’ve allowed to happen. And now we’re seeing the eradication and attacks on our jobs, attacks on our terms and conditions, and the reality is we have only got ourselves to blame.

[applause]

But I think it’s also important that going forward, we can learn from them mistakes that we’ve made in the past, and the only way we’re going to do that is if we stand firm, and try and assist
this core group of people, and try and ensure that we’re do negotiate the same terms. If I can just share one of the discussions we had with our own bakery, we were having some discussions in despatch. The manager is saying you may get a pay rise, but you may get it on the basis that you allow us to bring in new starters. Our response was, over our dead bodies will we allow you to bring in new starters [applause] and threaten us with no pay rise, we’d rather not have a pay rise than earn money on the back of cheap labour. Because I think Tony’s made the point earlier on and it’s a fact, the lower, once you start letting these people come in, you may be being naïve and think well it won’t affect me, they’re new starters, I’m old. But the reality is in a few months time, a year’s time, they’ll start nibbling away and as soon as you start seeing people being sacked, they’ll be bringing in more and more of these New Starter contracts, and before you know it, they’ll be issuing you notice, and you’ll end up on them. Please support it.

[Sister Kim Elvidge – Branch 367: It’s quite a sad state of affairs that we have still got agency workers, we should have jobs for them, but the fact is we have agency workers, and these people they want to work, that’s why there is no jobs out there, so they are on agency, which should entitle them to exactly the same treatment, pay and conditions that we have. I actually picked this up from the Thompsons stand, the Agency Worker Regulations 2010, which obviously came in in 2011. What redress will an agency worker be entitled to if they have not received equal treatment after 12 weeks? An agency worker is and can make a request for relevant information from the agency who has 30 days to respond. If the agency does not respond the agency worker can make a request to the hirer, which would be the company they were working for, who has 28 days to respond. The agency worker can also bring a claim in the employment tribunal. Now if you was to ask any agency worker that you had if they would like to go down the route of employment tribunal, the answer will be no, because then I will lose my position, I won’t get any work. These people need all the support they can get. Please support the Motion.]

[applause]

[Brother Peter Barszczak – Branch 561: Wholeheartedly support Tony, no agency should have been getting in. I remember being a guest at Conference where there was uproar over Emergency Motions regarding agency, but it’s got in. The New Starter Rate, which is what we’re setting them on as, eventually you’ll have ten people on a New Starter Rate, less money than you, you’ll ask them to join the Union, and eventually they’ll click, can you do something? That employer’s treating me less favourably than all these others are, and you go to the employer, you’re treating him less favourably, less money, and the employer’ll say yes, you’re right, and knock everybody else down to their pay. You really need to stick up for this and make sure that everybody’s paid the same, same terms and conditions. Please support.]

[applause]

[Brother Duncan Dale – Branch 560: The previous speaker, Chair, Platform, the previous speaker said the last decade, the last ten years or so he thinks it’s changed. I can go back, if we go back originally about 40 years ago, I think it’s four decades ago, a very reputable company called Manpower came into the agency supplying labour. Very reputable, they were on their books, and the job had to be done right, the wages were paid, they were trained and they were watched on, and all of a sudden then, a year or two later, along came the cowboys and I did have some experience with a couple of these agency companies, and they are, they’re literally, as far as industry goes, and employment, they are cowboys. They don’t give a monkey’s, they’ll ring them up say be at so and so eight o’clock tomorrow morning, and they’ll tell you what to do, they’ll sit in that office, they will have no idea what the company’s up to or whatever, how they’re being treated. Unfortunately as time’s gone on, some companies now are something like]
90% of their employees are agency labour. It’s not the agency labourers to blame, and a lot of cases, and a regular case, that companies are mistreating them. And also the regular workers alongside are abusing them. Your charge hands and your foremen, I’ve seen this being done, they’re abused, so how much they want to try and put their effort in and hopefully to get on the books with that company and try their best, they will, there are certain individuals who will abuse them. Oh they’re only agency labour, you get, and they’re treated very shoddily, it’s sad, it’s a thing that’s come along, agency labour is with us, there’s no way we’re going to get rid of it, because companies obviously, it’s there, it’s beneficial to the companies, seasonal as has been said before. I won’t reiterate all the things that’s been said, the points that have been brought up but at the end of the day, let’s not, let’s show a bit of empathy towards these people that have no choice, they cannot get full time employment. I support the Motion, thank you.

[applause]

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: I’m here to support this Motion and it is very difficult once you’ve got agency on site, it’s a reality, they exist and we’ve got them. Once they are on site it’s very difficult to get without them. We do try and fight that they get our terms and conditions, and as Ian mentioned earlier, Park Cake Oldham and Bolton went through something where we put in a comparator in the chance that we would be able to assist these people in the future. There was a caveat, they would then come onto our terms and conditions. What’s currently happening is the company now have brought in a ruse where they’ve started doing performance reviews on these people, and they’re getting rid of them. And basically they’ve admitted that anybody with less than two years’ service, they’re going to be dismissing and these people, there’s no recourse for them whatsoever, but obviously they can’t go to tribunal. It’s not the answer we wanted, we thought we were trying to be a little bit clever, but the way the company are operating, anybody who steps outside will be gone. Anybody, any permanent staff that leave, are made redundant or anything, sorry retire, in time they will be replaced by people on these new comparator rates, but these people are just going to keep getting churned out, and they’ve no rights whatsoever so please support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, I mean, I spoke twice at Conference once about agencies, and my role as a Branch Secretary when I worked at Burtons, and we never had them, and we kept them out. And I became a Full Time Official we kept up that, and we kept them out of Wigan as well because I took part in those discussions, and we should always keep them out. What the General Secretary said to you yesterday was when we show a sign of weakness and we do deals and we think that we’re reaching an agreement that’s in the best interests, but we give something away, this is how employers turn round and repay us. They force more and more people in, and then they use the arguments they don’t have the ability to pay, and agency workers are used by employers to exploit our terms and conditions. We try to work with employers and we did try to come to a compromise because we recognise the issues that we face in our industry, and that issue was that we can’t always make sure we have the skilled workforce. And the reason why when I took part in that debate at Conference and I lost, was because the bread industry and the people that spoke, and the platform up here, said that what I had to understand was that the bread industry is a skilled industry, and we rely on those skills, and if those skills aren’t available then the industry will stop. And we can’t afford that to happen. And what these employers have done, is that they’ve taken that opportunity to say well not only will we bring in more and more of these people, we’ll also deskill and devalue the skills in the trade that our members have. And that’s what the employers have done, they’ve devalued us, they’ve undermined us, and we have to take a decision. We want them to be on the same terms and conditions, yes, but we don’t want them in our industry. We want employees in our industry...
through a third party. And this is one of those areas that we are going to have to put under review, and where we have an agreement with employers we’re going to have to ask that employer to consider whether or not we are going to continue working with it. We should be looking at those agreements and standing up and saying no longer will we allow people to be exploited [applause], we don’t want agency workers brought in to undermine terms and condition. They ain’t paying them the same, they’ve used it as a tool, it’s time for us to fight back, it’s time for us to say to the employers, and I want it on every pay application, that no agency worker should be brought on this site where people are unemployed in our towns and our cities, the local people want jobs, they should be given jobs, and we’re going to fight for jobs. Full employment, full terms and conditions [applause], that’s what we want to see in this country, not exploitation. Absolutely no way [applause], we want full employment, proper terms and conditions, directly employed, that’s what we want to see. I have to ask you to support the Motion, but go back and tell your Branch, tell your members we’re fighting for proper jobs, real jobs, not made up jobs, or cheap jobs. Support the Motion.

[applause/cheers]

To the vote, those in favour, those against. Carried. Fifteen minutes, if you’re longer than 15 minutes, you’ll miss the England game.

[tea break]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference. Can I remind everybody that 42 and 44, 42 and 44 were withdrawn for Motion 40. Mover of Motion 40 please. Motion 40? Sorry Pat, didn’t see you there mate.

**Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215:** Delegates, Bill of No Rights. It’s a great name for a Resolution isn’t it? This Conference must support this Resolution because it’s a terrible thing to have they have now made laws that people can be sacked easier, and they have made laws that it’s almost impossible to get to a tribunal. This has got to be opposed and this has got to be stopped. Comrades, Delegates, when the law is unjust it’s no crime to break the law to stop it. That’s what we must do. We must never let them away with this. Remember the people of England in the 13th Century that paid a high price for democracy when they marched to London and they were slaughtered on the way home. You must remember the people of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, look at the price they paid for democracy, look at the price Egypt is paying for democracy, look at the price people in Syria are paying for democracy. Conference if the day comes that we have to do what them people, and remember, women had to take drastic action to get their rights in this country. Conference it’s our duty now to take up the mantle and carry it. This, these laws have got to be opposed, no matter what happens. Forget about breaking the law, if you’re going to march down the street every day and they herd you around like cattle and sheep, they’ll be happy to let you do it. Times we will have to break the law, and if that call comes tomorrow we must be ready to do it. Conference support this Resolution.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Sedge are you seconding? You’re seconding.

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here to second this Motion. I agree wholeheartedly with what Pat said, and I agree with our National President because he’s one of my best mates
[laughter]. Join the Labour Party, fight from within, fight the Bill of Rights, we need to join the Labour Party, that’s the only way we’re going to change things.

[applause]

**Brother Michael Lynch – Branch 505:** Mr President, Platform, Conference, Adrian Beecroft, what a guy and he’s in commission. Now can you picture the scene Conference, wonder what would happen if a Labour government got elected? And Ronnie and Ian were commissioned by the Labour government to write a report on how workers’ rights could be better protected. No doubt there’d be howls of outrage in predictable quarters. The thought struck me when the Tory Party doing Adrian Beecroft’s government commissioned report on employment law was published. He’s a businessman, with a hidden agenda. Beecroft is a venture capitalist, a species who by nature who go for high risk investment in cash in quick and get out sharpish. Not exactly renowned for being employee friendly. Conference let us fight every move to protect those who need us. Please support.

[applause]

**Brother David Suddards – Branch 561:** I’m here to support this Motion wholeheartedly. As we’ve said, as John McDonnell said this morning, they’re attacking ts and cs, this government, they’re attacking health and safety, I’ve heard of a number of companies what are on a drive, and it’s a drive to the bottom with their employees, everything should be stopped and challenged. Support the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359:** I’d ask you strongly to support this Motion because it’s quite simple. If the government continues railroading legislation through like they’re doing, it’s not a matter of whether we can or can’t take things to tribunal, the problem is they’re bringing in laws that have got more holes than the bloody woodpecker’s nest. And unless you’ve got some super slick solicitor, that’s usually only the very rich can afford, you haven’t got a hope in hell of winning the cases, even when it’s straightforward. In the final analysis, if they carry on bringing on many more of these laws, and we don’t stand up to them, it’ll be just a boot on our neck, and it doesn’t matter what colour the boot is, if it’s a Tory that’s wearing it, you know what’s going to happen. So please support.

[applause]

**Brother Jeffrey McCarthy – Branch 458:** A lot of what I have to say on this, and I’m asking people to support, I said about the strike thing before. I hate the Tories with a passion. If my hatred of the Tories could be measured on the Richter Scale, that goes one to ten, the Richter Scale wouldn’t be bleeding big enough to put my hatred of the Tories, and everything they stand for. Enough is enough. You’re now talking about sacking people because the manager doesn’t like your face. I am all for the Bakers Union calling for a General Strike in this country if the Tories even put one word of that into the Houses of Parliament. And I believe that before 2015 [applause] we will be on General Strike in this country.

[applause]

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** Chair, Platform, Conference, here to support the Motion. The reality is if we go back a few months when we had the General Election the reality is we’re blaming the Conservatives and the Con-Dems government, yes it is their fault, but the reality is if we look deep down, whose fault is it? It’s the people who couldn’t be bothered to get off their arses and go and vote. As a consequence now we’re all having to suffer.

[applause]
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Conference, needless to say we would ask you to support it. We’re now experiencing one of the sheer and utter contempt that this government has for working people. It’s often been said you know, tongue in cheek, that workers are just a number, just a means to a profit, expendable commodity that’s easily replaced. But under this government working people do not register as anything significantly as important as those things. It’s not just the attacks that they’re mounting on a daily basis against terms and conditions, it’s also the thinking and the ideology behind those attacks. Everything geared to reducing your ability to object to the abuses handed out by the unscrupulous employer, ever eager to grow profits at your expense. Very often the changes are introduced are contradictory at best, devious and undermining at worst. An evil ethic propagated by an evil government. I tell a lie, some of the changes what they’ve proposed, and what they mean to you. In February the tribunal award will increase by £3900 at the upper limit. Now that sounds promising when you first look at it. But in April access to tribunal moves back to two years from one year, exactly the same as it was under the Thatcher government. The bond on access moves, goes from £500 to £1000 and the costs that can be awarded moves from £10,000 to £20,000 so there’s more money available if you win, but you’ll only have a chance of winning if you find the bond to get there in the first place. And if you take that chance, you could lose twice as much. The Sword of Damocles is hanging over the head of workers, particularly on costs, and access to justice is denied to many. The tribunals are notoriously loaded against working people, even now irrespective of what shade of government we’ve got in, the figure I’ve always been quoted by lawyers is that we win about 1% of tribunal cases. That figure probably hasn’t increased very much under the Tories if at all. The thing that really demonstrates the government’s contempt is the way that outsiders are allowed to influence what shape the attacks will take. The scandal used in the Cash for Honours, buy a knighthood with a sizeable donation to the ruling party. But now we see Adrian Beecroft, a venture capitalist, a major donor to the Tory Party, being allowed to write a report that blatantly seeks to decimate workers’ rights. And let’s have a look at some of the points in that Beecroft Report. Cutting the mandatory consultation period when companies want to make redundancies from 90 days to 30 days. It makes it quicker, it makes it easier for the company to get rid of you. A cap on lost earnings, the compensation for employees who are unfairly dismissed. You can bet it’ll not be a generous cap allowing you to live a decent standard of living after you’ve proved the employer’s broken the law. Legalising crime for the benefit of the employer. That’s what the Tories are about. A reform of the rights that workers are allowed to carry over to new employers when they’re subject to takeover, this is obviously an erosion of the already limited provisions of TUPE that our Officials experience almost on a daily basis. The scrapping of the Provisions and the Equality Act which make employers liable for claims from employees for third party harassment, eventually discrimination will be allowable so long as it suits the employer. And they’re giving responsibility for checking for foreign workers, their eligibility to work in the UK, to the Border Agency, or the Home Office rather than employers. At present, and I’ve actually been witness to this in a restaurant in Manchester, where 20 illegal immigrants were captured on one night in an Indian restaurant. Hundred thousand pound fines, that’s going to be scrapped because it’ll be down to the Border Agency. It’ll herald the return to work as being illegally paid under the lamp, being exploited and paid poverty wages. We already know, it’s been on the news so many times, the queues at airports, that the Border Agency is already massively under-funded and now they’re going to put even more pressures without increasing their numbers.

Interestingly I read yesterday, a spokesman for the Department of Business and Innovation, new fangled title, said that the government was committed to reforming employment law and boosting growth, whilst at the same time ensuring we do not weaken the employment rights of workers up and down the country. It’s garbage. By deed and thought, they’re weakening your
employment rights on a daily basis, encouraging business to go for growth, and you, the workers’ll be the ones who pay for it. Just like the demise of the banks, who bailed them out? We did. Not the millionaires, not the billionaires who rape the profits during the good times, and shirk their responsibilities when things got bad. The spokesman went on to say about the Beecroft Report that the Beecroft Report is but one of many submissions gathered by government in the last year in response to red tape challenge, most of which would have been submitted strong evidence based proposals in response to suggested changes to labour market rules. The red tape challenge indeed. It sounds like some sort of bondage game that the Tories are playing with people. It may well be actually in some of the corridors of power, we get these things on Twitter all the time. It’s not about removing burdens from business, it’s about removing protections from working people, that’s what it’s about. Cutting employment law, cutting health and safety legislation, and cutting access to justice. All part of a heinous plan where a nasty party to drive us back into the dark days.

It’s mooted you know that Beecroft wants licensing for children to work, the reintroduction of children. It’s one of those things that haven’t made the paper, but it was out wasn’t it, it was in there in that Beecroft Report what he first put out, a return, we’ll have kids going up chimneys again, or people going to sea to the beat of a drum, somebody on the front of it. A return to the days when workers slept under the counter, worked for slave wages, and worked until they literally dropped, and that’s exactly what’s going to happen if they have their way with the pensions.

I read that if Cameron does back the Report, he risks raising tensions with the Conservatives Coalition partners, the Lib-Dems. Well he must be quaking in his boots, I mean fancy having Nick Clegg on your back, it’d be terrible wouldn’t it? Vince Cable’s quoted as saying the Report is the personal views of one individual, adding that it’s not surprising that Number 10 would back a report compiled by one of the Tory Party’s biggest donors. But this is not just about the Beecroft Report. It’s the Young Report, the Jackson Report, the Loftstead Report, and any other number of reports that you care to mention that are all aimed at reducing your terms and conditions and your protections at work. It’s about the ultra-right of the Conservative Party, the unseen Fascist right, systematically putting you back where they believe that you belong. Comrades, it’s not the fanciful rant of trade unionists this, this is a reality of Tory Britain today. And there’s only one way we’re going to stop it and that is to use the example of our forefathers like Tony just said before. We have to be ready to stand up and be counted, and ready to pick up the cudgel when it’s thrown down. Yes we’ll always be ready to negotiate, as we always have been. But the message has to go out that if it comes to a fist fight, then we’re prepared to get in the first blow. No government, no employer, has the right to abuse, to discriminate or devalue working people. Neither should they seek to strip us of our dignity. If we are to protect what we have then we have to be ready to take action against the employer who seeks to destroy our terms and conditions. We must be ready to rise up against a government that is not only anti-union, but also anti-working class. Not just through the ballot box as John said this morning, but by other means that are available to us and always have been. Comrades, organise, fight, win, support Motion 40.

[applause]

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

Motion 42. Sorry, 43, no, hang on, sorry Motion 41. It’s when we were beating Everton 4-2, and they came back 4-4, should have remembered that really shouldn’t I?

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** That’s why I was smiling on that DVD, just remember that was one of the things that made me smile.
41 No 5 Regional Council

Employers’ Charter – That Conference agrees to demand that the governments’ attack on Employment Law is challenged through the Parliamentary Group.

Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582: Mr President, Platform, Delegates, Motion 41. Our National President sent out an email warning about the Employers’ Charter early last year. A government initiative intended apparently to help employers act in accordance with their legal obligations, or a very clear attack on workers’ terms and conditions. The Charter reminds employers that they must still act in a fair and reasonable manner, before providing guidance on how they can reject an employee’s request for flexible working. That they can dismiss an employee for poor performance, require employees to take holidays when it suits the employer, and dismiss employees who have a poor attendance record. These are but a few of the Charter’s recommendations and unfortunately again at Manor, in Barnsley, we have seen our employer fully embrace the Charter’s guidance, and for the second year running they have issued the Union with an HR1 document, opening up a wide attack on many of our terms and conditions. We are in the process of balloting members for industrial action and although we have seen many high times over the last 12 months, we understand that the near future will present many more challenges. We must embrace John McDonnell’s speech this morning. We must be proactive by encouraging our members to retain their determination to show courage for the fight ahead, and to strengthen our solidarity in these challenging times. Delegates we ask you to support this Motion, and challenge these clear attacks through our Parliamentary Group. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconding?

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to second the Motion. Jeff’s got me fired up to be honest, so I’m going to put it on record how much I hate the Tories. Me Dad, a sweetheart he was, I only ever heard him swear, he was a good Catholic, I only ever heard him swear once and that was about Tories. He was a left winger, he brought me up a left winger, I’m very proud I followed in his footsteps as a left winger. But I was on about the Tories right? I don’t see anybody, this war in Afghanistan, when soldiers are coming back, they don’t send them down to Knightsbridge, Mayfair, I’ll tell you where they send them, Solihull in Birmingham, Bradford, Wigan, there’s none of them been out their fighting, you know, their kids are not out there, and like you said, disabled people, now you can’t even get disablement if you’ve lost a limb. NHS, my girl’s in the corridor waiting for to be treated. Jeff you’re right, we should get up here, I hate them, and I’ll take a leaf out of John McDonnell’s book, they’re all bastards.

[applause]

Sister Kim Elvidge – Branch 367: I’m here to support this Motion. It’s imperative that this attack they have got on Employment Law, we must fight it, as they might as well change the name to the Employers’ Law. If we let this happen they’ll attack everything down to health and safety, Working Time Directive, there’ll be no Minimum Wage, we’re back to the Thatcher years. Support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Not going to say too much on this. We’d ask you to support. Except to assure you that it’s already been taken up as part of the Parliamentary Group work, and we’ll continue to be raising it at that forum. I’m sure you don’t need reminding though that the Parliamentary Group isn’t the only way that we can take these things forward,
it’s just one facet of the attack that we have on government. We’ve got to utilise our membership of the TUC, the GFTU, with Doug this afternoon, the TUCG which is a great campaigning arm of the left wing Trade Union Movement, and of course we’ve all got to be prepared to go back and utilise people within our communities. We’ve got to get the message out to people around where we live as well, it can’t just be the domain of the workplace, you’ve got to make sure it goes out. We can’t become too self-reliant on politicians, I suppose if you, you know, if we’re going to find the answers then we’re not going to find them all because many of the problems that we’ve got were caused by politicians in the first place, so I don’t think they should be the people that we’re using as a crutch to get us out of it. We have to stand up for ourselves in tandem with what goes on through our group, and let people know, as the President said this morning, this Union isn’t about to be bullied. Please support Motion 41.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. I believe it’s 43. I was right wasn’t I, 43. I’ve caught up.

**43 No 5 Regional Council**

*Changes to length of time employers can dismiss or give out temporary contracts That this Conference put pressure on this Tory government and consecutive governments whatever party to make changes to the laws on how long employers can keep employees on temporary contracts or shorten the time that companies can terminate employee contracts.*

**Brother David Suddards – Branch 561:** I must admit I came to this Conference first time six years ago, and I were a bit disappointed with the first Conference because we were rattling through motions, I thought, is this it? I must admit today has been absolutely fantastic. But what I will, going to make the Motion, what I will say now, what happened to the days when we went for a job, you went for a job, you had an interview, they gave you 12 weeks and then you were set on as a full time employee. What’s happened to them days, and now, what they do is they bring you in, they string you along for as long as possible, as long as possible, abusing you, exploiting you. I’ve six just come to Bradford on temporary contracts, I’ve approached every one of them six, five, six times now, to join the Union. I’ve got one in, the rest of them daren’t. And this is what another uphill task we face, people are frightened, they’re on a temporary contract, they know that if they make a muff, they will be out of the door. The temporary contract, we fought for, Ian, because it was six months starter rate, rather than a second generation contract. Do you know they daren’t even go and ask for their pay, they’ve done six months they should be eligible for the full money, they daren’t go ask. I will go ask for them, even though they’re not Union members, in the hope that they will come as Union members. Support this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconder. Formally seconded. Okay. You getting up?

Okay. You’ve got to be a bit quicker. You know what I mean? Point of order Sue, we want to finish for football.

[laughter]

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** Chair, Platform, Conference, here in support of this Motion. I just want to say that I found it very disgusting a few months ago, I spoke to the agency manager, a young woman and basically her response in terms of recruitment, it was a discussion that I was having so I was just trying to ascertain from her what her service agreement was with the employer. And the response she gave me was absolutely shocking. The response was it’s simple H, we use people for 12 weeks, then we get rid of them, we’ll bring in new people. And that’s the attitude, as simple as that, no compassion, no consideration for people that have been
working on and off this agency for six, seven years on and off, do you know what I mean? Nothing whatsoever, not interested. We’ll use them for 12 weeks then because of what the law says we have to get rid of. Yes? So it’s absolutely vital that we kind of support these kind of things, and try and get into dialogue with the employers and reach some form of consensus and agreement, because it’s disgraceful how the employer is getting around, not only loopholes with the agency, but the actual agency, their attitude is shocking, they just see people as a commodity. Use, abuse, get rid, replace. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support the Motion, like Dave said, I think to be honest we need to have a long hard look at ourselves. If it carries on the way it’s going, there’s nobody going to get a job. We’re all letting this happen and it should be stopped, so support the Motion please.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Conference obviously we would ask Conference to support. I mean how typical is it I mean, as the General Secretary just said before, how typical is it of these Tories to return back to a failed Thatcherite policy? What we didn’t realise was of course, that the Liberal Democrats would support such a policy. You know these were supposed to be Liberals, used to sit on the left didn’t they? You know, what liars they were. I mean, this government doesn’t know how to be anything but vindictive. You know to be fair this shower isn’t going to listen to us. What we need to do is we need to make sure that we contact the local newspapers, contact our MPs and tell them we will not tolerate this any longer. We must make sure that they understand the feelings of people on the shopfloor, they must understand that this approach is wrong. And we also must make sure that the Labour Party understands it must make a commitment to working people, if it wants to regain those four, five million lost votes, it has to make sure that it commits to workers’ rights, and from this Conference, which has been a long standing position that this Conference has held, it’s not employment six months or 12 months, it’s employment rights from Day One. We ask Conference to support.

[applause]

To the vote, those in favour. Against. Carried, Forty five.

45 Branch 580 Greggs

That this Conference lobby government to put in place a national grievance and disciplinary in place and ensure all companies follow this procedure.

Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580: First time Delegate. This would ensure consistency across the board. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: I’m here to second the Motion, and well done Sarah, your first time, I’m proud of you. End of the day, and we’ve heard speaker after speaker after speaker, you know, complain and say about all our terms and conditions and everything being eroded. We need to fight, fight, fight just to protect what we’ve got and make it better so please support this Resolution.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion, it’s definitely, there’s some people who need a national agreement and disciplinary procedures so I’ll ask you to support.

[applause]
Sister Stephanie Irish – Branch 339: I’m not here to support or not this Motion, what I’d just like to say I’m concerned that sites that would have better procedures in place for grievance and disciplinaries, that companies would try and bring our levels down to the national level rather than keep them at the higher level that they were. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: I’m on the fence with this one, I appreciate the girl, first time, fantastic, but you’re to guard against this. We’ve just been talking about what they did with the agency laws. Once it’s done by government employers will pick holes in it, it needs to be, sometimes you’re better off with a local one, what’s agreed locally, what everybody knows. Be careful with this one.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference I wasn’t actually going to speak on this I was just going to tell you to support it. I don’t think there’s anything to be afraid of to have a minimum standard, we should always have minimum standards in everything. As a trade union we always want to improve on minimum standards, we think there should be a level that’s set that covers workers in all workplaces, but obviously they have to then show and be able to show that by being in the trade union, you don’t just get minimum standards, you get better than minimum standard. We believe that Conference should support the Motion, and we would ask Conference to support the Motion.

[applause]

To the vote, oh sorry, right of reply. Do you want to get back up? Congratulations anyway. To the vote, those in favour. Against. That’s carried. Forty six. Number 3, Regional Council?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Just while they’re making their way up to the rostrum can I just say tonight’s function which was supposed to be in this room has been moved. It’s going to be in the Harbour Suite which is on that floor there, it’s that room with the two red lights in the middle. And the entrance will be from the North Entrance which is on, right opposite the Southcliff, it’s those double doors there, they’ll be open, and that’ll be the way in. You’ll be able to leave all your gear in here tonight, so it’s going to be in there, alright?

46 No 3 Regional Council

That this Conference agrees to “The Right to represent” members in the above process as a legal process for all employees. That we lobby the TUC to push the government to make it a right. Currently the legal right only covers employees in disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Unidentified Speaker: Platform, Delegates, sorry about that I was one page behind everybody else. Here to move Resolution 46 in relation to representing members in an investigation process. Currently under legislation there is no protection for us as Shop Stewards, Branch Reps whatever level, under legislation there is no right to represent dealing with investigation. That, I only come to realise that about 12 months ago, I thought it was a God given, and that yes we can represent our members in an investigation, but I was told otherwise from our reputable FTOs and Union solicitors that we use. And I find that to be very, very appalling, that’s why we took it to Regional Council. We had a discussion, we had the debate and it’s about time that we did something because we need protection from grass root levels. Employees facing some sort of dilemma, being asked to go into investigations, without being represented, they could say things or do things or twist things around and you know, it would be (inaudible) when we do get involved, once the company decides to go down the disciplinary route, so we need to attack from the onset. I urge you to support.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You seconding Tony?

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to second this Motion. I agree with what Raj says, this is an ongoing problem in the workplace now, this accident investigation, I mean every accident now is treated as really serious. We’ve got to that level at Wigan now where I tell my lads there’s no legal precedent where they have to make a statement against one of their workmates. And if you look at it, that’s a lie. They don’t have to make a statement, but I mean, the right to representation, I mean, I’m lucky, I mean I’ve got my ex Branch Secretary and the Godfather of all Branch Secretaries here, John (inaudible) and they, our company (inaudible) so, even in investigations we get the right to accompany. But it is an ongoing problem, but like I said you’ve got to be careful what you’re doing these days because the accident investigation it’s serious, but nobody has to make a statement if they don’t want. I mean police have tried to make me make a statement for years, I’ve never made one [laughter]. So why make one at work?

Brother Jeffrey McCarthy – Branch 458: Yes just recently we’ve encountered a lot of problems with this. It seems every time we get a Tory government in power, and you know how much I love the Tories, that the management seem to be able to think right, this is the time when we can take advantage of the workforce. But I have to stand up for my workforce. Accident investigations, return to works, whatever, statements given by witnesses as Tony just said is a whole legal minefield. What I tell my members is if you want somebody in to sit in with you, you’re allowed to sit in with the people. What you’re not allowed to do is actually talk during the investigation part of the meeting. But all you do is piss management off by keep asking for adjournments, you just tap them on the knee and you go out for 30 seconds, yes, use these. Management use the smarts, that’s all we do, use the smarts and trust me, after you’ve had about 20 go out of the door and come back in again, they’ll say right, for God’s sake, just say what you’ve got to say. Just stand by your guns, and tell your members never ever go in on any occasion without asking for representation first.

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: I’m here to support this Motion as well. Just recently we’ve had, we had a major investigation where I work, luckily I was able to go in with the lady who I was representing into the investigation, and I was able to ask questions which she may not have, she didn’t think of to ask. As Union, as Shop Stewards we are trained, we do know the questions which we ask. Unfortunately, some of our members do not, that’s why it’s so important that we do get to go into the investigations so they don’t get tripped, or conned into tripping themselves up. Thank you very much.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. In support of this Motion. Just want to share a little scenario that I went through a couple of months ago. I recruited a young lady who worked in the canteen. She actually worked for another employer, not actually the bakery. She got into trouble because of some issue that she was going through. I went to the investigation hearing, she asked me to represent her so I went in with her, and there’s a manager there, a young lady, turned round and says you’re not required, we only want the young lady. I said with the greatest of respect I’m here to represent her, and as such there will be no hearing without a representative. She then called an adjournment for 20 minutes. She called me back in she says look I’m going to ask you again, I do not wish you to be present, there is no legal rights for a Union Representative to attend because this is only, we are only acting on an
investigationary hearing. And if I’m honest I was sure myself but I stood my ground and says I’m sorry but without, under the Employment Relations Act as far as I’m concerned she has the right to representation, she pays her dues and she will be represented, she will not be on her own for you to manipulate and intimidate. And they cancelled the hearing. Unfortunately when I left the hearing, I phoned the solicitor just to confirm what I was saying was true, unfortunately I was told otherwise, which I was quite embarrassed about but, they then called the young lady two or three weeks later, and asked her to attend an investigation. Unfortunately I couldn’t, I wasn’t allowed to attend for a better word, which I was very, very peed off about, and she was unfortunately manipulated into saying certain things and they ended up sacking the young lady through the process. I went to my own HR Manager and asked him, I says you know I can’t understand this I says, explain to me why internally within the bakery we have a policy where, although it’s not in black and white but, we always get involved in the early stages, and many, many a case, whether it be a gross misconduct case, whether it be a disciplinary case, many a case we’ve avoided the need to suspend people and dismiss people, because the trade union’s been involved, and they’ve assisted that process and we’ve resolved matters. So why is it that this contractual, contract person, they’re saying something else. He said look there’s no legal right to represent and it’s just good practice, and I think it’s about time that we should be allowed, legally, to represent this group of people because it’s absolutely disgraceful that, in an investigation, there’s so many things that come out, and if our members say the wrong things, and clearly they will, they will, because they’re scared and vulnerable in that predicament. Clearly there has to be something legally that we should be able to do to give our members the right to representation. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother David Suddards – Branch 561:** Yes I think we all are counting things like this happening in the workplace at the moment. What we do have, if we don’t, if we’re not allowed in investigations like H says, and they are actively keeping us out of these investigations and accident investigations, what we do have in law is we have the right, our Safety Reps, the BFAWU Safety Reps, have the right to carry out their own investigation. And that would carry forward as part of it. Also, I’ve lost me train of thought sorry. I’ll leave it now. Support the Motion.

[applause]

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** Yes definitely supporting the Motion. When I was a Shop Steward at Park Cake I always said to people do not go in the office no matter what you think they want you to go in for, without a Union Rep. If you think they’re going to say you’ve done really well, we’ll take you to the pub for a drink, I’ll come with you. It’s not a problem. Right okay. The other thing is if they won’t let you, tell your member to no comment, you’re allowed to say no comment in a police interview, you must be allowed to say it in an internal one. Support it.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** I couldn’t imagine you saying nothing Marilyn, I really couldn’t [laughter]. Yes, even no comment. General Secretary.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Even I think you’d wake up apologising if you ever got that thought. The Executive would ask Conference to support it, you know, two things. I think what you said H there’s absolutely right you know. There’s times when you’ve got to take the bull by the horns, you go in, you do something, and when you said you weren’t sure exactly about what your rights were, but it shows, it demonstrates something, when you do that, very often as long as you’re forceful enough, very often the employer doesn’t know what the rights are either. I give you an example of this. My daughter was on a disciplinary, going to be
dismissed from a care home where she worked in Liverpool, and she came to me, I said, tell you what, tell them you’re bringing your trade union Rep in. So she said who’s me trade union, I said it’s your Dad, it’s me [laughter].

And I went into a care home and they brought a Director up from Birmingham, the company was owned by a Birmingham family and this guy come up from Birmingham, big tall guy, you know I was sort of looking at him like I look at John Owens. And we went to the patients or one of the people, you know, whether you call them a patient, whatever, we were sat in the bedroom, they must have threw her in the lounge and he was sat in one bed and I was on another one, and when I give him my name he went, oh he said Mr Draper he said, would you by any means be related to Joanne. So I said yes I would be. So he says well we don’t normally allow families to come in and represent people. So I said no but I’m an accredited trade union official and I’ll tell you what we’ll do, we’ll make an exception this time eh? And he went, yes we will, we’ll make an exception [laughter].

And this guy became a blithering idiot, he was nervous, he didn’t know what to do, because he wasn’t sure about what the law said. He kept coming to me, saying like, look is it okay if we give her a final warning? How about we do that? And I said how about we don’t. How about we look at some consultation, this is how this thing went through, and in the end, cut a long story short, she got nothing. So I think sometimes it’s about you know, if they’re going to try and bluff you, you try and bluff them, use the strength that you’ve got to take these people on. Because they’re very much unaware of what they’re entitled to do. And I actually used it with, well somebody who is an Official, a Full Time Official now, and I represented them when they were a Branch Secretary and got dismissed. And we got into a situation where the company was saying well we are just not going to have this Branch Secretary, we’re not going to recognise them any more, that’s it, you know, we will give him the job back but we will not allow them to represent people.

And I said well hang on, you know, this isn’t your choice whether you represent them, that’s the choice of our members, they chose that person as Branch Secretary, and that person will continue to be a Branch Secretary. Okay you might not sit in the same room as them, but that’s great, every single time you make a point or somebody makes a point, our Reps will leave the room and we will have an adjournment, we’ll go and meet with our Branch Secretary to determine what his opinion is. And the company capitulated, because they just didn’t know where to go with it. They bully us, we bully them back at times.

And that’s how it happens. But I’ve got to say that you know, yes we’ll talk to all the interested parties as the Motion calls for, but I’ve got to say, you know, you have to ask yourself will the Tories listen to us? You know a lot of the motions that are before this Conference this week, a lot of the motions in particular that we’ve debated this afternoon, have been about the systematic cutting of employment rights, that have been based on this government’s proposals. I’ve got to say it’s highly unlikely that a government that’s looking to cut all your terms and conditions and the right that you have at work and health and safety and all that, is going to say yes to giving you increased powers to represent people. We know from experience that the best way of getting powers in work, of getting strength in work is through our collective strength. Us as trade unionists sticking together and fighting for a common goal. And backed by strong trade union agreements, making sure that when we sign it, we don’t sign something that’s got no strike clause in or crap that we get. We do the thing properly and we do it so it protects the people that we represent. Organising is the key to all of this. We heard the President stressing on Sunday the importance of a really good organising culture. Recruitment, getting recognition and putting in place a strong Branch structure that is not only going to stand the test of time, but is also very much trusted by the people that we represent. That’s how we build strength in the workplace, and that’s how we improve our chances of delivering the representation rights that the Mover came down here and asked about.

If we depend on the Tories to deliver, we’ll eventually as trade unionists get tired of waiting. Their manifesto promises that they made are long forgotten, and we’re back to the good old
Tory anti-worker ethos. I’ve got to say there’s one thing that sums them up the Tories and their policies, it’s that they’re like babies’ nappies, full of crap and need changing regularly. Support Motion 46.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: To the vote, those in favour, against. Carried. Forty seven. This is going to be the last Motion, yes?

47 Branch 580 Greggs

To protect Union members from being put under extra stress from managers who believe they have no procedures to follow.

Sister Sarah Woolley, Branch 580: Mr President, Platform, Delegates. Motion 47. We need to protect our members from managers who believe they have no procedures to follow. Why should our members be subjected to extra stress in their jobs worrying about their job security, all because their manager, their leader, the person or people that are supposed to lead by example, are not concerned with theirs. This is wrong. We need to protect our members that go to work every day, following procedures that are set out, not throw them to the lions that don’t care. Please support.

[applause]

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

Sister Kim Elvidge – Branch 367: Yes. Stress in the workplace at whatever cost should be completely just stopped. Stress is one of the biggest killers. At the worst scenario, heart attack, stroke, depression. I have a word for these people, it’s not managers it’s bullies, please support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: I also work for Greggs. In Greggs we have a set of values which the management decided to bring out about ten years ago. It’s to be enthusiastic, fair, considerate, all the usual rubbish, and it is the biggest load of rubbish going. Because none of the management bloody stick to it themselves. Managers live in the dinosaur era where they think they can bully us, and it’s not on any more. Stick up to them, they do get scared, my Area Manager as soon as I start saying stuff from the Union, and especially when I start quoting laws and regulations, she runs like a mile. Stick up for yourselves and go for it.

[applause]

Brother Duncan Dale – Branch 560: Chair, Platform, fellow Delegates. I support this Motion and very briefly, I’ll just leave you with this thought. You go for an interview, most places, 95% of these places you go to, you get interviewed by the management, congratulations, you’ve got the job, and by the way we are very Union-orientated. They’re bloody liars, majority of them. Support.

[applause]

Brother Jeffrey McCarthy – Branch 458: Tony, you’ve inspired me mate. There’s an old saying in Salford, get your revenge in first and put them under stress first.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference. The EC would ask you to support the Motion. Those in favour, those against. Right before you go, we’ve got a raffle somewhere. Have we got a raffle? We’ve got a raffle. Obviously the Irish Delegation want to make sure that
you don’t get out too early. Who’s drawing it? Who’s good at drawing it? You going to go over there Bill? Who, do you want some? Do you want to come and draw this, come and draw the raffle Paul. There you go.

Brother Noel Mullen – Branch 703: 721 to 725.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Did we get that – 721 to 725? I’m translating, yes. I was just translating for you Noel. Have we got a winner? Hurray! Come on.

Brother Noel Mullen – Branch 703: Yellow again, 396 to 400.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: 396 to 400, 396 to 400?

Brother Noel Mullen – Branch 703: Pink 246 to 250. 246 to 250.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: They haven’t got a football team to watch have they? Come on.

Brother Noel Mullen – Branch 703: 216 to 220, pink. Pink 46 to 50, pink 46 to 50, 46. This here’s the last of the umbrellas here, pink 236 to 240.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay for those Delegates that are leaving, half past nine in the morning. Don’t forget the buffet tonight, and disco etc.

Brother Noel Mullen – Branch 703: 241 to 245 pink. 396 to 400 is the umbrella. Pink 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
Tuesday 12 June 2012

Morning Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Roy, if Marilyn’s late back can you make sure she’s sent to Standing Orders please mate? Oh and Tony, don’t forget you’ve got to report to Standing Orders as well for using foul and abusive language [laughter]. Oh you’re back. We thought we had you Marilyn [laughter], there was a lot of people hoping.

Morning Conference, General Secretary, Roll Call.

[Roll Call taken]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Sorry, Will, thank you. Okay, 177 Delegates present Chair.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you. I believe Paul Norris had something he wanted to raise.

Brother Paul Norris – Branch 189: Chair, Platform, Delegates, good morning. Trust everybody’s well and fit. I’ve been asked to give a little presentation to Steve Finn. So if he’d be kind enough to make his way down here please we would do the said……..

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Take your time Steve, we’ve only got 50 motions to go [laughter].

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Didn’t know it was your birthday, is it your birthday?

Brother Paul Norris – Branch 189: Morning Steve. It gives me a somewhat dubious pleasure to present you with this, and to say that Frank Loveday seems to have a bone to pick with you. [applause]

You have the right to reply.

Brother Steve Finn: Morning Conference, Delegates, just a quick thank you Frank for that, but I’ve still got a bigger bone than you anyway [laughter].

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: There’s too much innuendo, too much innuendo. Okay Conference, Motion 48.

48  No 3 Regional Council

‘Branch Noticeboards’ – That this Conference agrees all Branches ensure that 'Union noticeboards' are active and updated.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Morning Conference. Chair, Platform, Conference, Delegates. Here moving Motion 48. Conference, in September I was fortunate enough to be asked to go and attend an organising course in Manchester. I found it absolutely amazing course, I learnt a great deal, and it hit home, something might bounce off that’s called all about organisation, and it suddenly dawned on me, what we believe us at organised Branches are really quite unorganised Branches. Some of the lessons that we learnt, some of the basic stuff was use of noticeboards, how we communicate with members, how well we engage with our membership, and the reality was when we done a survey in that course, the reality was we was nowhere near where we should be. I think it’s absolutely imperative, I mean since I went back to Branch, I’ve mapped the Branch, we recruited, we ensure that we’re using the noticeboards. It was an absolutely amazing tool that we used, we managed to recruit a lot of new members, a
lot of the old members have now seen how we’re engaging with them. Because let’s be honest the reality is we cannot, although it would be the perfect world, but the real world is that it’s very, very difficult to constantly have a one to one with our members. So second to that would be a noticeboard and I think it’s absolutely vital that we all understand how important it is, not only that we use it, but that we use it as an effective tool to share information with our members, and ensure that they are fully updated and are seeing the progress and work that the Union Reps are doing on site. I think a lot of us do a hell of a lot of work and it’s under-appreciated by our membership, but unless we communicate the hard work that we do, especially the gains that we make, and shout and tell them about it through our noticeboards, I think it’s very, very difficult for ordinary members to actually understand what it is that our Reps are doing.

Engagement is always a must, and I think it’s an absolute vital tool for all of us in our Branches. I mean at present we’re doing a recruitment and we’re on 94.8% and we’re constantly pushing day by day to try and recruit those that are left. Please support this Motion, I move.

[applause]

Brother Anjam Hussain – Branch 313: Morning Conference, Chair, Platform, Delegates. First time Delegate, I’m here to second the Motion. Where I feel the noticeboard does give some people the chance to see what the Union is doing, because it’s hard to communicate to somebody to their, face to face, for some reason, if they’re on a break, and you try to approach them, they might be having their dinner or whatever it is, it’s harder. I think it’s easier for the noticeboard to be used properly, it’s, for instance, where we need to know anything or is unsure, can approach us after he’s seen the noticeboard. I second the Motion, thank you very much.

[applause]

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: Good Morning Delegates, Platform. You know as a trade union, I am here to support this and anybody’d be a fool that doesn’t support this, as a trade union over the years, and I mean over the years, 30 years plus I’ve worked for Greggs. What we don’t do and what we should do, we don’t publicise the good things we do, and by Christ this Union does a lot of good. We need to get them noticeboards used, and we need to put down all the benefits, you’ve seen this week what the EC’s done, the new benefit, let’s plaster them all over, let people know that the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union is here to stay, so get them noticeboards used. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, obviously we’ve produced a lot of new resources over the last 12 months, which obviously we’ve been very grateful to the EC for endorsing, and obviously we’d like obviously every Branch to use those new resources. Noticeboards, if we have them, should be kept up to date, they’re a great communication tool to our members, so we would ask Conference to support.

[applause]

To the vote, those in favour, against. That’s carried. Motion 49.

49 No 3 Regional Council

'National elections' – Conference agrees that Executive Council do an investigation to establish why only 15% membership actually voted in these elections. With view to reporting back to October regional council.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Good Morning Platform, Delegates. Here to move Motion 49. Basically what Motion 49, what we want to achieve with Motion 49 is that the Executive Council to do an investigation into why only 15% of the membership actually voted in the
General Election. Quite clearly we should not be happy that there was only 15% turnout, so this isn’t an attack, this is a lesson that we need to learn, and hopefully the next elections, if and when they happen, we’ve got a very good period to rectify our mistakes, learn from our mistakes because we should never ever be tolerating a 15% turnout. What I did realise if I just go just onto my own Branch level, there was quite a considerable amount of people that had never actually received the ballot paper that they’re on, where to post the ballot. On checking our databases, we as a Branch had 99% accurate names and addresses, membership numbers and what have you, but for whatever reason, and I can’t for one believe that it’s the fault of the Royal Mail. When we contacted Regional Office, took the onus as a Branch to contact Regional Office, prior to even the ballot papers even going out, when they gave us a list back they had certain amounts of differences in the addresses and names I had, compared to the names held on database. So quickly we rectified what we believed was right to do and we even approached some people where we or myself wasn’t sure of their right address. Made the corrections, sent them off to Regional Office, asked for a re-list, got the re-list, it looked okay. Bit further down, this, please don’t take this as an attack on any form of the Union, you know the Regional Office or Head Office, this is a learning thing and we need to learn from it. So got the list back and it was near enough right. After the elections, asked for another list and I got a list back which was identical to the very first list which was totally wrong. So I’m here to move the Resolution and we do need to look at it. Above all, the question on this is that if the Regional Councils, if we can have a report back (inaudible) of any findings because we need to get better and it’s diabolical and we’re a perfect Union, we’re a specialist Union with, and it’s like one family here, we need to get it right. We lead in a very, very good way, and this is the time where, we’ve got time now, and we need to react in a positive manner, and I hope that whatever they finding comes out they share in the October Regional Councils so that if there is anything that we Branches, as Regions, whatever’s going wrong, as long as we can rectify it so that we never, ever in a situation like this and once again I do not blame Royal Mail, they can’t be this bad because of Royal Mail, or any delivery company. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to second the Motion.

We’ve heard throughout the last few days whilst here at Conference how important it is to get people engaged, how important it is for participation. Some of the resolutions share them same sentiments. And it’s just sad to see that two of our senior posts being, are having such a small turnout when you come to electing these seats behind me. Just seems a shame and I think there’s something that we’re missing, whatever that is, whether it’s issues in terms of the addresses from our Branches, whether we’ve got issues in terms of how we engage as Reps, as senior people on site, how we’re engaging with our membership in terms of their understanding in terms of how important it is that they do take part in voting etc yes? But there’s certainly something lacking and I think it’s an absolute disgrace that we’ve only got 15% voting, and we need to establish the reasons why and try and tackle them problems. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Michael Lynch – Branch 505:** I’m here to oppose this simply because two years ago we sacked these guys up here, we were forced into a postal ballot by people that I don’t want to talk about any more. That’s what happened. Well I’ve been involved with politics all my life and I know what (inaudible) with postal ballots. You go out on election night, running around trying to get your votes in, you’re knocking on people’s doors, have you sent your vote in? Yes, I’m sending it in tomorrow. They’ve got the postal ballot stuck on the mantelpiece. Then we get back to the workplace, ballots, we’ll get more people voting, and then that would be better.

[applause]
Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Conference, Mr President, Conference, Delegates. It’s a sad story that people have the right to vote and that we have a great right to vote, and that we throw it away. We’re going down a very dangerous road, I don’t know what’s wrong, where the education is needed to get people to vote. Not only in our unions, they’ve got the envelope, they’ve got everything, it is paid for, all they had to do was mark an X and put it in the post box. They didn’t do it. One day we’re going to regret this, look at the countries that don’t have a vote, look at the fight they’ve made to get a vote. And look at their joy when they do get it. It’s the same in national elections in this country. In Bristol for the mayor vote, 24% of the people just turned out to vote. They don’t care, they think it’s alright just, some say oh they’re all in it for what they get out of it. Times are going like that. Now something like that in the home breeds the same for the children, they grow up the same way, we don’t want to vote, it doesn’t matter. Conference, we all have to double our efforts and try to do it with our families, in our homes, and with every other place we are. And in the, in your factories, Shop Stewards and Union Officials have to educate the people, and talk to them, encourage them to vote, or otherwise one day we’ll regret it. I move, I second, or support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: Platform, Delegates. I remember two years ago we were in a position of which would you like to be? As a trade union we was proud of the way we used to ballot through the workplace. No postal votes, no changing (inaudible), they were done right, it was done proper. And I bet if we use the system that we used to use and not force down the system we’re using now, I bet that percentage would be a lot higher. I’m positive that percentage would be a lot higher. What we need to do, we need to get hold of the Labour Party, we need to force the Conservative government to get back to the old ways, because the old ways work, we would have a better turnout for National President, I think the General Secretary had already been balloted on on the old system, and let’s get back to proper trade union ways about it, because I tell you, there won’t be 15% they’ll be 60% plus. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I’m listening to you before you start, no foul language from that rostrum.

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Yes, I agree with what Pat Rowley says, you need to use your vote. But these elections, I mean, I make no bones of it, we campaigned for the governor, Mr Hodson, but anybody who wanted to come in our Branch we publicised the election and we let them on the Branch. I don’t, I think a lot of people in this room have got a lot to answer for. If you don’t publicise an election, then you won’t get people voting in it, and that’s what we should have done.

[applause]

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: It’s simple. Fifteen percent of the members go out and vote. The Tories are laughing at us, why? Because if only 15% of the people vote, it’s very easy to get the wrong people in. Fortunately I believe we got the right people in. But it works the same in unions, and it works exactly the same in countries. The only reason the Tories got in power was because there was low voter turnout. And if that isn’t scary enough, just open your history books and look to Germany in the ’30s. Hitler got in power and he got in on 25% of the vote. That was it. And that’s, that changed the world for a couple of generations. If we don’t engage the members and get them out voting, this Union will be pulled down by the wrong people, and I ask, I firmly ask you to support this Motion.

[applause]
Brother John Halliday – Branch 701: Platform, Delegates. A couple of points I want to pick up on. And firstly is the workplace ballot. I think we must remember that Maggie Thatcher’s anti-trade union laws made it illegal for us to hold a workplace ballot on the importance of an item of President, or an item of Secretary elections. So I think we can never return because if the Labour Party’s not going to change the anti-trade union laws, we’re stuck with what we have, and we have to have a postal ballot. A postal ballot itself, we just debated about noticeboards, I used to run around sticking notices up on the noticeboard, change of address. Nobody bothered us. At the end, the first people to complain that they didn’t get a ballot I says why did you not get one? There’s your name. But that’s not my address. It’s like for two months I’ve had a notice up asking you had you changed your address. So that’s the point, that members are a bit lackadaisical, it’s like Branch Meetings, you get very few, but start to talk about terms and conditions or the annual wage rise, and the meeting will be full.

Noticeboards are a great tool, but it’s the membership, it’s a lackadaisical approach that all your members have, they leave it to the Shop Stewards who leave it to the activists, and as the previous speaker said, we have to get the membership involved in all aspects of this Union.

Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President, I’m just going to start off actually by I think it would be remiss not to comment on the stuff that Pat said, because I’ll tell you what, I come from the same school as Pat Rowley does [applause]. You know, there’s many, many countries around the world and we’re not talking about third world countries, we’re talking about oppressive regimes where people never get a vote. And they have to fight with their lives to get that honour. We haven’t got, you know, it’s not that many generations ago that in this country women didn’t have the right to vote, and women gave their lives up to get the vote, and then when we get it, people don’t take those opportunities. I think they should. The only thing we were missing Pat, actually, with the postal ballot is we never sent everyone a pen. You know, it’s very, very difficult to know what we could have done, but as far as the Executive goes, H, we’re going to ask you as the Mover, Raj, as the Mover, to remit the Motion to the Executive Council and I’ll explain why. Because it’s the element of time, we just don’t have the time to go out and conduct a survey amongst 22,000 members and get a result back to you by October. If you don’t agree to remit it then we would ask Conference to oppose it because we just haven’t got the timeframe. I don’t want to make a promise to somebody that we’ll do it, or you to put something on us, that we couldn’t possibly deliver by October.

As I say it’s not because we can’t be bothered to do it, it is purely and simply because of the time constraints that the Motion puts on us. I believe that reporting back by October to the Regional Councils would be like searching for the Holy Grail, we’ll have virtually no chance of doing it. Of course we’d all like to know why people didn’t vote, why we had such a low turnout, but finding a definitive answer to that, there’s one question you’ve got to find out first. Who did vote? Because what you don’t get in a secret ballot, you don’t get a result, you don’t come back and say oh John Owen’s voted this way, Steven voted this way, Anita Giblin voted this way, you don’t get that, you just get a sum of votes. All our elections now are carried out by the Electoral Reform Services. And this is not because the Executive Council wanted it to go that way. Think about, those of you who’ve been in this trade union a fair time, go back just a little bit in history, when Joe Marino was elected to the post in 1979, the first time Joe Marino stood for re-election despite the anti-trade union legislation coming in was 1998, the year I came in, sorry, four years, it was 2002, the first time he stood. And he stood then because he was forced to, and he was forced to by one of our own employees. Somebody threatened to take us
to court and we couldn’t win the battle, and so the Executive took a decision, and I spoke on it from this rostrum, and asked people to support that we do accept that part of the anti-trade union legislation, because if not we would have just been fined month after month after month for non-compliance.

So we then had ballots for National Officers which you know, I’m happy to stand for a ballot any time. We then have a situation as Mickey Lynch said before, where another employee then decides they want to change the way the balloting’s done within the Union. Every single postal, every single ballot that we had for an Official, National or local, always had a miles bigger turnout than 15% when it was a Branch ballot. When people could actually register their vote, and a Branch Secretary could push people, and you could have the hustings on site. We always got a bigger turnout. First time we go into full postal ballot for a National Officer, we get 15% turnout. I would ask the question though of the Mover, have they carried out a survey within their own Branch, just to find out the difficulty of why people didn’t vote? After all I mean Branch Secretaries are much closer to the question and the answer than the Executive or National Officers are. To get an answer I believe we’d have to interview every single member, sit down with them, find out first of all did you vote, didn’t you vote, if you didn’t, why didn’t you vote? If the Mover agrees to remit the Motion to us, we’ll look to conduct a survey of all Branches to determine what went wrong. But remember, when it comes to a postal ballot, these results that elected both Ian and myself are very much in line with what’s happening in other unions when there’s a National ballot, a Postal ballot, we’re forced down that line and it’s about whether people can be bothered to fill the thing in.

Think about your own elections. How many Branch Officials, how many Shop Stewards, how many Health and Safety Reps were elected with a bigger turnout than that? I’d wager there wouldn’t be too many because most elections take place at a Branch Meeting, there are some who do the full election, but of them are at Branch Meetings, and how many people do you get at Branch Meetings? Have a look at the percentage of your membership who came and who elected those Officials. So again it’s about who turns up. I’m not criticising the way you’re elected, it’s about who you get to that meeting in order to get them to vote.

Apathy, they were too busy, wrong venue, wrong time of day. You’re going to get a multiplicity of excuses as to why people didn’t vote. And that’s going to be extremely hard for the Executive to evaluate. We want to encourage bigger turnouts. I would have loved to have been elected with a 90% turnout, would have been fantastic, it’s a much bigger confidence booster for you. But I don’t find that a 15% turnout is less a confidence booster to us, I was elected by the people who took the time to elect. And at the end of the day we serve the membership who elected us, including those who didn’t vote.

We’ve got to seek to improve the system as it is now. Comrades, you’re going to set many, many challenges this week. We’ve got a new Executive coming in, and they’ve got to have time to bed in as well. The challenges to oppose government on certain things, to defend the rights at work, to defend our public services, our National Health Service, our education services and our policing. Where will the time in those few months that we’ve been allowed under this Motion come to carry out the detailed analysis of why individuals chose not to exercise their right?

Delegates that is the only reason we’re asking the Mover to remit the Motion back to the Executive Council just to give us time. We’re happy to carry out the survey, but if you don’t agree to remit it then we would ask Conference to oppose the Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Raj?
Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Platform, Chair, Delegates. Here you loud and clear but also want to exercise the right to reply because somebody actually did oppose the Resolution. On the basis that we have to realise, and we realise that at the Branch levels that there was discrepancies within our own systems. When I say our own system, not the system of the Branch, but the system of data at Head Office or Regional Office, whereby before the last elections we did our utmost to go round nearly every single member at our Branch to make sure we had the right names and addresses and corresponding trade union numbers. We sent that list off to Regional Office, asked for another list back and as I said in my opening speech, the list (inaudible), so clearly there is a problem within the system. And what this Motion was doing, and I like all the discussions that’s been had, and we want to go a bit further into it, but the main thing was we wanted to get our own house in order, whereby our own systems, Branch level, Regional level, Head Office level. But take on board what’s been said, we will remit this to the Executive, we don’t see no issues with that. However and all for carrying out this service at Branches, but before and the simple request that I’d like to make before you go down that road, which is a good road, of carrying out the surveys of all the relevant Branches, we need to carry out the survey of our own system within Regional Offices and within Head Office. Because why on earth, how on earth can we get the names and addresses wrong? I did a survey, or we did a survey on our site whereby we approached the people, and most people approached, because we did a positive campaign to say there’s re-elections, bla, bla, bla, these are the candidates, look out for the postal vote, they’re coming to your addresses. We had a large percentage of people came up to us and said we haven’t had our ballot papers at our home. We then, myself and H, on separate occasions chased up through the Regional Office and what have you, and even found this, there was a number given to us, we phoned this number trying to make it so we can get the postal papers delivered out to the members that have said it, some people got them, some people didn’t. So quite clearly there is a problem. It could even be with the Ballot Reform people. There is an error, discrepancy, and that needs to be addressed, but we will remit, and thank you very much.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you Raj. Olive Molloy, Standing Orders.

Sister Olive Molloy – Branch 577: Turn to your agendas please to Motion 58, 58 stands, and all the following numbers stand, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65 and after 65 we will be taking Emergency Motion One, which will be given out very shortly. 66 stands, and 67 stands, and the following all stand, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73 is withdrawn, 74 stands, 75 and 76 stand, and the next three, 78, 77, 78 and 79 stand. If the Movers of 77, 78 and 79 wish to composite those three, will they come up to Standing Orders immediately after this report. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, accept that report? Those in favour, anyone against. Thank you.

Unidentified Speaker: Good Morning Delegates, look all fresh and well, bit of a surprise at some, but there you go. Want to take this opportunity of making a small presentation to Olive Molloy, because she’s someone who we all accept over the years, but at the end of the day, she does a fantastic job for both this Union and indeed makes everybody more than welcome. We have found ourselves in a position over the years from knowing Olive, that she’s always someone who you can depend on, ask a question, you get a straight answer whether you like it or not [laughter], and sometimes you don’t like it. But that’s Olive Molloy so, we’re taking the opportunity to make this small presentation of this umbrella, and I hope that it keeps the rain off her head, and that’s all we can say for that.

[applause]
And just while I have this opportunity can I ask John James to come up please because part and parcel of the draw obviously was to give money towards charities, and John James’ charity this year is the Wooden Spoon, so we’d like to take this opportunity and the money that was collected for the draw for the umbrellas to pass it on to John James.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** He’s obviously tired isn’t he, sleeping somewhere. Oh he’s just coming in, he’s probably just arrived Billy. Okay Motion 50.

---

**50 No 3 Regional Council**

*Branch Elections* – **Conference agrees all Branches conduct above every two years as per Rule Book with Full Time Officer policing to ensure that this is taking place.**

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** Chair, Platform, Conference. Here moving Motion Number 50. Let’s just go back to basics with our Union structure. We have members that form Branches, we have members that form Branches, and after the first elections, every two years as per Rule Book, elections should be taking place. The reality is at certain Regions, certain Branches, these elections are not taking place. I think it’s absolutely important, we’ve been up here numerous occasions since Sunday, demanding democracy. Yesterday the controversial Motion passed which our Ronnie was very happy with but hence the word democracy, and I think it’s vital at ground level that we make sure at our Branches that we are showing democracy and we’re making sure that we follow our Rule Book, in particular making sure that each and every Steward, whether they be Branch Secretaries, whether they be Branches, or whether they be just normal Health and Safety Reps, or Union Reps, we must make sure that we follow our Rule Book and give our people the democracy that they deserve under our Rules, and allow our members to have their say. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Amjam Hussain – Branch 313:** Chair, Platform, Delegates, I’m here to second the Motion. What I feel that, after two years, they should, everybody should get a chance to choose who they want to vote for, not the same people standing in the same spot for over two years. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here to support this Motion. Obviously you need organisation in your Branch, you know what I mean, we’ve got John Fox, I mean Branch Secretary, he’s not got a pair of magic knickers he can’t be everywhere. So John organises everything and he makes sure everything’s done proper. I’d just like to support this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Conference, the reality of this, the actual Motion says Regional Organiser to make sure that these Branch elections take place. I’m not being funny, I mean how on earth would a Regional Organiser know when your Shop Stewards were last elected? It’s not feasible. You know I understand the sentiment, but it’s the job of the Branch, it’s the job of the Branch to make sure it runs properly, it’s the job of the Branch Secretary and the Shop Stewards to ensure that they apply the Rules that you make at this Conference. We don’t believe it’s feasible in any way, shape or form to, one, who is the Regional Organiser? We have Organising Regional Secretaries, and we have Regional Officers, but we don’t actually have a Regional Organiser any more. So which person do you want to actually take responsibility for that role? We don’t actually have them any more. So it’s not feasible. We couldn’t do it. We understand the sentiment, but that’s why we have Shop Stewards, that’s why we have Branch Secretaries, and that’s why we have Conference. We put the Rules in place and then you make the Rules, and you’re expected to follow them. Sorry.
Unidentified Speaker: Point of order, it doesn’t say Regional Organisers, is says Full Time Official.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Apologies, I was reading 51. Full Time Official, okay, apologies.

[applause]

But even still which one? Which one? Which one’s responsible for making sure you do it? How do they know when you’ve had an election? How do they keep track of when you elect your Shop Stewards? We send out the information when you send it in to the Regional Councils to get endorsed. You don’t then tell, once we’ve endorsed those Shop Stewards when the elections have been held, only that they’ve been held. And in two years’ time, you’re expecting a Full Time Official to remember when that election was held, because you don’t say we elect at the same time every year, because if you did we could end up with a situation where we’ve got no Shop Steward in place because maybe someone’s left. Or do you just want to elect people every two years? Then if they leave, you can’t have anybody in that place till the two years is up. Understand that people want to make sure that Rules are applied, but you can’t expect Full Time Officers to police the Rules. You make the Rules, you enforce the Rules, that’s the role that we place on you and we expect you to deliver on. We ask Conference to oppose the Motion.

[applause]

Right to reply.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. Here exercising my right to reply. Conference most Branches know who the FTOs are that cover that Branch and that Region. All we’re asking for in this Motion is not for the Full Time Officers to be sitting there while elections are taking place. All we’re asking for is every two years that the FTO is communicated, that there’s been elections, so we’ve got some form of accountability. That’s all the Resolution’s asking for, nothing else. Nothing too deep. We’re not asking for the FTO to be released or leave sites where he’s got very important issues to deal with and come running to Branches just to make sure the Branch Secretary, or Branch Chairman has ensured that elections are taking place, that’s not what the Resolution’s about. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s lost. Motion 51 and I’ll make sure I read it this time.

51 No 3 Regional Council

'Branch Meeting' – Regional Organiser to ensure all Branches are conducting quarterly Branch Meetings as per Rule Book. Conference recognises the devastating impact of not doing so.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Here moving Motion 51. Again, this Motion is all about some of our basic structures that we have at site level, at Branch level. The reality is that without us conducting and following our Rule Book and ensuring that members have the right to come to their Branch Meetings every quarter, what, in effect what we’re doing is weakening our Branches and I’ve heard it time and time again over the years that I’ve been coming to Annual Conference, this Branch is weak, so and so’s Branch is strong, so and so’s is okay, fifty, fifty, yes? And part of it has got to be the activists in that Branch, the way that it is organised. Yes? And the lack of engagement that we give our members. Wherever you see a strong Branch, what you will see is normally a Branch which constantly has information on noticeboards, you have, they make sure that they have the elections, you make sure that there’s a Branch Meeting taking place to ensure that our members have the right to attend and they
know what’s going on, and they’re involved. Please understand this isn’t, the only mistake I’ve made is unfortunately I’ve put it as Regional Organiser which I know I’m going to be slated for in a bit. But please understand the sentiments behind this, this is about getting back to grass roots, because I think we’ve forgot them, a lot of Branches are like tending to just switch off on these things. This is vital that we get back and wake back up, because this is the basis of our Union structure. I move.

[applause]

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

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here to oppose this Motion, not on the sentiment, the sentiment’s right but I think it’s down to Branch Secretary to make sure you have Branch Meetings.

[applause]

**Brother David Suddards – Branch 561:** I’m here, well I’m on the fence really, but I’m here to oppose this Motion. I agree with Tony, I think it’s down to Branch Secretary to have quarterly meetings, and I think it’s down to Branch Secretary, out of courtesy to let their Full Time Official or their Organiser know what’s gone on. Luckily at Bradford, I’m lucky because once my minutes come out, my management let my Full Time Official know exactly what’s going on at our place. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Spot on H, Regional Organiser, who are they? So you pass it? What you going to do? When they don’t do it, who are you going to put the complaint to? So, would ask Conference to oppose. But I agree 100%, I agree with Tony, 100%, the Branch is run, the Branches are efficient, good Shop Stewards, good Branch Secretaries, strong Branches, large membership because we’re well structured. We ask you to oppose the Motion. We don’t have Regional Organisers but we do agree, Branch Meetings should be held, Shop Stewards should make sure they receive the training, we should make sure that each Branch is fully efficient and working properly. If Branches are struggling, then Full Time Officials should be there to support them. If Branches want to bring in you know solicitors or Full Time Officials to the Branch Meeting to try and encourage people to turn up, then obviously you know, our solicitors, people that we work with, are more than happy to attend our Branch Meetings to raise one, the profile, and make sure that when you have your Branch Meetings that they are both educational, informative and obviously communicating to our members. So we’d ask you to oppose, but we support and fully endorse the principle behind making sure the Branch Meetings are held.

[applause]

Right of reply? Is that a no? To the vote, those in favour. Those against. Thank you, that’s lost. Fifty two.

### 52 No 3 Regional Council

*Branch Conference Resolutions* – To ensure that all Branches know how to formulate Branch Resolutions. Regional Organiser to ensure that all Branch Secretaries are aware as clearly year on year, less and less Resolutions are being submitted from Branch level, this is a major issue that needs addressing.

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** Chair, Platform, Conference. Unfortunately used the wrong word again so I know I’m going to get slated so. I think, although I know what’s coming, I think it’s vital that the sentiments of this Motion are clear. Year on year we’re coming here and less
and less motions are coming through Branch level. It’s mainly looking in your final agendas, it’s mainly Regional, coming through Regional Council. I think we have got a major issue at Branch level, I think members haven’t got a clue how to forward motions through to Conference, and I think that shows the lack of organisation in terms of our Branches. It’s vital that our members are very clear as to how to formulate these motions, how, what the process is, and our Branch Secretaries are the key to all that, to ensure that a) that there’s Branch Meetings taking place and b) even more so, making sure that our people understand what a motion is, what it does, and how far that process goes. And I think it’s vital that people understand the sentiments. I urge you to support this Motion. Thank you, I move.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Platform, Chair, Delegates. I’m here to second the Motion on the basis a few Regional Council Meetings ago, we had Regional Council Meeting prior to the meeting where the December quarterly we have to formally send the resolutions through Regional Council. We carried out a simple survey when we arrived at Regional Council we asked the question how many people in this hall at that time, how many people in this hall at this Regional Council know how to write up formally a resolution for any Conference or meeting? And what the result was, well over 45% of the people did not know how to formulate, well that’s what the show of hands did. It showed us well over 45% of the people that were present at Regional Council at that particular time did not know how to formulate or were not comfortable at formulating a resolution to Conference. Yes I understand there’s a word in there, Regional Organiser, but whatever the case, we need to make sure that our Branches, our Regions know how to formulate resolutions so that we can get back to 200 plus resolutions for Annual Conferences. Personally I’m not, I am not of the view like last year, I remember there was a Motion, or was it the year before, somebody feel free to correct me, we was thinking about moving to bi-Annual Conferences, that would be totally, totally wrong road to go down. Annual Conference should be done on an annual basis, if not sooner, and I understand why it can’t be sooner, because there’s costs and all the rest of it, but we should, it has to be on an annual basis. And if we don’t get the resolutions year on year, year on year, then we would have to go bi-annually because of the cost basis. So I urge you to support the Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: I’m getting a bit worried about this because I’ll end up with concrete boots on me, here to oppose the Motion again. Although I agree with the Motion, but at the end of the day we don’t need Regional Organisers, I mean we’ve got 99 resolutions this year, so the message is getting across. You don’t want to be seeing the likes of Roy Streeter and Geoff Atkinson sat on your bed telling you how to put a motion in, you might just, you know, put one in.

[applause]

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: Yes I’m here to oppose this Motion, again. The sentiment’s great, there’s one word in there that needed to be, or two words taken out, Regional Organiser. I believe it’s down to Branch Secretaries to go to Branches, find out these motions, and put the motions together. And Stewards, and I’d like to say I’ve been on a course this year where we spent two days, or a day and a half with Willie Calhoun, finding out how to word and how to do motions correctly. And a bit on speaking on them, and it does get easier and easier, although you wouldn’t think so. But no, I think the sentiment is great apart from the Regional Organiser. The Regional Organiser or FTO should be out there doing more important things than showing us how to write motions. Oppose the Motion.

[applause]
Brother Paul Norris – Branch 189: Chair, Platform, Delegates. Well actually I’m going to say I would support this Motion, apart from the fact of using Regional Organiser because we haven’t got one. But I’ve been a Branch Secretary now for two years, believe it or not, and I’m ignorant of the fact of how, I’ll admit my own failings here, to make up a motion for this Conference. Now there’s probably a lot of you are in the same boat as I am, I don’t doubt that, where with the day to day job to do, and also with all the other things the Branch Secretary has to do, it’s easy to overlook this aspect of it. The courses I’ve done, there’s never been any mention of oh you know, the way to put a motion forward at a national meeting like this is this way. Nobody’s ever explained it, and because it doesn’t get mentioned within the Branch, it’s easy to get overlooked. So therefore I would ask you to support this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President. Start by congratulating Number 3 Region and all the other Regions and Branches on the commitment [applause] shown to ensure that this year’s Conference has many more motions and much more lively debate, so thank you because, you know, absolutely fantastic. Bit worried when you say you want 200 motions in a year Raj, we had sleepless nights over 100. The Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose the Motion on the wording only. We think it’s right and just that members should understand how to frame a motion. But we don’t think it’s the duty of any Full Time Official, let alone a mythical Regional Organiser to do that, and I agree with exactly what Dave Suddard just said, you know, we want our Officials out, at this time with dwindling membership, we want them out actually organising. I was actually led to believe, and Willie Calhoun’s up there, that this was an integral part of the Shop Stewards’ courses that we ran, that part of that teaching within what Willie does, and he’s nodding so it is, that we actually teach new Stewards how to formulate a motion when they go on those courses.

[applause]

If it hadn’t have been I most certainly would have been speaking to Willie at lunchtime and speaking to the GFTU through Doug Russell very, very quickly, but clearly that’s not what it is. I say I totally agree with the Mover, there’s a need to formulate motions within Branches. Too many depend upon the Regional Councils to get a point across. But this has the effect if you like of diluting ownership of that motion. When I first became a Steward it used to be the Branches and what you had is you had the Regional Councils if you like with a fallback, and if somebody had forgotten to put something through at their Branch, then it went to the Regional Board at that time, to give you a last chance saloon. Now it isn’t the last chance saloon, it’s the only chance saloon because nobody or very few use the Branch structure. If it comes from a Branch, you would expect that the Delegates from that Branch will get up and speak. They will be vocalising exactly what their members put forward at the Branch Meeting. And that’s right. But when it comes from a Regional Council, the emphasis is put more on the vocal members from the Regions, so it could be somebody who just goes along to a Regional Council, quarter after quarter after quarter, puts a motion in, and then doesn’t even come to Conference. If they do come to Conference they won’t get up and it’s left to the prominent people like Raj, and like H, to get up and get that message across from the Regional Council.

We really need to create active participation from this lectern. But that’s only going to increase if we reduce the amount of Regional Council motions coming forward, and get more and more coming back from Branches. Let me tell you because I actually looked and I analysed some of this. We’ve got approximately 220 Branches, that we have within the Union, within the seven Regions. Three Postal Branches and four Working Branches, that is all that actually put motions in. And we wonder why there’s only 15% turnout at elections. Around 3% of your Branches put
motions forward. Do we assume that the rest think everything in the garden’s rosy? That they come from a part of the country where they’re not under attack from the government or the employers are treating them really specially? Surely not, it’s down to apathy. Branches just don’t bother because we can take it along to Regional Council and get H to speak, and we get Raj, or Marilyn McCarthy, we’ll get somebody to get up and speak on it.

I’d be very surprised if this has anything to do with whether or not they knew how to formulate a motion. I really can’t believe that 217 Branches, sorry 214 Branches don’t know how to formulate a motion. No-one’s ever going to convince me of that. I know because I know the prominent activists who are sat in this room. I know that lots of Branches will be putting motions through their Regional Councils, but we still have two Regions within the Union that never put any motions in at all. Never, not from the Branch, and none even from their Regional Councils. So how do we square that circle? What has that got to do with formulating a motion? Things aren’t that good in those two particular areas where we don’t get one motion from either a Branch or from a Region. So we should be encouraging them to be putting things in that talk about the things that they see as problematic. Comrades, I really love the enthusiasm of the Mover, I think it’s fantastic, and fully understand what the aim of the Motion is. We have exactly the same aims and ambitions the people back here, to make sure the Conference is vibrant and capable of debating the issues that are important to the people that we represent. We recognise though it will not be done if there’s no motions, and so we need to aspire to the stuff that Raj was talking about before. Our only disagreement with you is how we achieve it. The Motion says it should be the responsibility of the Regional Organiser, we have clearly established that that is not the case, we don’t have one. We believe the Organisers should be out recruiting, getting new members, organising Branches, and building a strong base for the future. Not doing the work that should be delivered at course level, and delivered at Branch level by Branch Secretaries. We have to accept motions how they’re worded and not on what we’d like it to say, or what it meant to say, or what the spirit was. It’s actually what it says there is what we have to act on as a trade union. And to achieve that on that basis, we would ask you to oppose Motion 52.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right of reply. Okay, to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s lost, thank you. Okay, as you can see the next part of the agenda is based around health and safety and welfare. I wanted to make a few mentions before we get into that part of the Conference. First off I’d like to pay tribute and show my, ask Conference to show their appreciation for all the work that our recently retired Chairman did for us, Steve Greatwood, he did a fantastic job on our National Health and Safety Committee for many years, and I’m sure that Conference would like to offer a round of applause for all the work and effort that he put in over the years that he was our Chairman and wish him good luck in everything he does for the future.

[applause]

I’d also like to thank Adey Hyde who recently felt that he needed to have a bit of a break from the Health and Safety Committee, despite being a Barnsley fan, he does have some good qualities and I’d like to thank Adey Hyde and also Mike Smith for their efforts over the past 12 months on the Health and Safety Committee. I’d like to congratulate Vince Payne who’s around somewhere who was recently elected the Chairman of our Health and Safety Committee, and I’d like to thank obviously John Owens who’s been a loyal servant for the Health and Safety Committee for a number of years. I want to welcome Mark Brookes who’s going to be coming up representing Number 3, you’ve got a big act to follow but I’m sure you’re more than capable of representing Number 3 and I look forward to working with you in the say way that we work
with Steve. I’d like to obviously thank Keith Hutchinson who’s come back onto the National Health and Safety Committee, and Dermid Best, Dermid Best is a fantastic Health and Safety Representative in the North of Ireland, the role that he’s played on Health and Safety has been phenomenal. What he does over in Ireland in relation to health and safety and making sure that it’s a real high profile part of the trade union business that we do over there, I’d like to congratulate Dermid Best. Absolutely, and as the General Secretary has just reminded me we have put him forward for the TUC Award on Health and Safety, so obviously we wish him luck with that and we believe there isn’t a more deserving person than Dermid Best. And obviously I’d like to welcome Dai Mort from Wales who’s going to be coming down and sitting on the next Health and Safety meeting. So I’d like to thank all of those people that sit on our National Health and Safety Committee, thank them for their efforts and look forward to working with them over the next 12 months. Okay. General Secretary.

[applause]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Health and safety, I mean what more can I say, you know obviously a subject that’s been dear to my heart for a long time and you will know that the work that this Union put in to get Workers’ Memorial Day recognised by the government of this country after many years of trying, and it was down to the efforts of Branches, Shop Stewards, Health and Safety Reps, the National Committee and what, that we actually achieved it.

I think one of the things that is pleasurable to me is getting the opportunity, I know Ian had it also this year, is to, we get the opportunity on Workers’ Memorial Day, you’ll get invited to be a keynote speaker somewhere, and I’ve done Preston and well a number of places. But this year I was, it was my pleasure I actually got asked a year ago to do it, to go and speak at Hartlepool in the North East at their Workers’ Memorial Day. And it wasn’t just about addressing people in the Town Hall Square, although that did happen on the Saturday. On the Friday they asked me to address a gathering of students, these are the workers of tomorrow, and to explain to them how health and safety cuts are going to affect them and whatever. But one of the things that really impressed me, I’ve got to say I’ve never been anywhere on Workers’ Memorial Day, where they put so much effort into it, I’ve got to say it was absolutely stunning, I mean they made me really welcome and you know, you know I think you respond to those sort of things as well when you come to speak, they were absolutely fantastic. But one of the things that really impressed me was that they produced a video or a DVD, I don’t think it’s video any more is it? They produced a DVD to commemorate Workers’ Memorial Day, and the you know, special posters with the flower on which was done by one of these students in the College where I spoke. And what I did promise them is that I would before we start our Health and Safety debate, to remind all Delegates what Workers’ Memorial Day is about and to show that the effort that some people, trade unions and sympathetic councils, because this had a lot to do with Hartlepool Labour Council as well. To show what they feel about Workers’ Memorial Day and that they are committed to it. So I want to show this short DVD before we go into the Health and Safety. I think it is fitting, given the work that this Union’s done to get Workers’ Memorial Day accepted and I’ve got to say I was really proud to represent our Union, and a lot of members there as well in Hartlepool and I think it’s fantastic so can you show the DVD please.

[applause]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: And then there was me [laughter]. Are we coming back up? Go on, I’m feeling a bit lonely.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference we’ve got the nominations for the Substitutes, Executive Council....
Unidentified Speaker: Would you be able to make that available for sale because I’m sure a lot of people would buy it.

[applause]

Any profit made could go into the Strike Fund.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: What I’ll do I’ll ask the Hartlepool Trades Council, I’ll get Alan Milne to make contact with them to see if we can, but of course we don’t have copyright. I know what they did, they just give me a promotional copy to show you the sort of stuff that they were doing in Hartlepool, so I’ll ask the question Marilyn. If it is, well whether we put it in our Strike Fund or whether we actually do it to help Hartlepool Trades Council, you know, fund the issues that they’ve got up there, but I’ll most certainly ask the question.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, nominations, Executive Council Female Representative. Same as before if you’re withdrawing, shout withdraw. I’ll go through the names, Female Members, Mandy Mason, Kim Elvidge, withdrawn, Mina Kamal, withdrawn, Marilyn French, Marilyn McCarthy, Sarah Woolley, Janine Cokayne, Aisha French, was that a withdraw, yes? So Mandy Mason you’re it [laughter]. Okay.

[applause]


Region 1 Standing Orders Mo Singh, Hamid Lubega, is there a Hamid and an Ahmed? Is there a Hamid Lubega and an Ahmed Lubega? So we’ve got Mo Singh and Hamid Lubega Standing Orders Region 1. Region 2, John Harding, so he’s elected unopposed. Region 3 Standing Orders is Lee Pepper, George Tittensor, Hemant Shah. Region 4 Standing Orders Mandy Mason, John Williams. So elected as a Substitute for Standing Orders is John Williams in Region 4. Region 5, Keith Hutchinson, now Martin whatever you do don’t withdraw, because there’s only you, Martin Kelly, you’ve withdrawn? Alright, you were nearly giving us a problem there Martin. Region 6 David King unopposed. Region 7 (inaudible) Creaney unopposed.

Just going back to Region 4, the Executive, Mark Baker, Ian Gregory, and Seamus Farrelly will all go forward as there’s three Regional Executive Councils from Region 4 so there’s three Substitutes. Okay?

Okay, just to make you aware Motion 77, 78 and 79 have now been Composited and they will be Composite Two. Just before we get back onto the agenda, just to make you aware that I’ve had some information given to me, something at the break, Region 7 raffle tickets still to be claimed, 396 to 400 yellow, 256 to 260 pink, 311 to 315 pink. Other 56 to 60, which is pink, yellow 691 to 695, see Billy or Noel. Westfield Health, the prize draw winner Dimpney
Creaney, you can collect from the stand. It’s a party time with Jason and the Argonauts, and that’s at the Broxham Hotel, Shaftesbury Avenue, and that’s tomorrow night, it’s £2.50 a ticket, buffet and potcheen will be served to all [laughter], karaoke Thursday morning. You get your tickets I believe from Jason, Jason? No? It says plus karaoke singers at Southcliff pub, 9pm till 12 then Jason. So you get your tickets from Noel or Billy.

Okay. I’ve just been advised we still have to have an election in 3 and 4, on the basis that they have to be ranked in priority of who is the first Substitute, okay? And 5, it’s a new Rule that’s just come into force isn’t it. Come on, it’s the first time, apologies. Okay, am I back on the motions? I am aren’t I yes. What time is it? I tell you what we’ll; have a break for tea so I can remember where I am how’s that?

[cheers]

Fifteen minutes, ten past.

[tea break]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Delegates, if you can settle down. Okay? Mover of Motion 53 please. And just before, while you’re getting ready, John James.

Brother John James: Comrades, thank you for allowing me to address Conference, thanks Ian. Just to apologise to everybody for not being here in the presentation. I’d like to thank Region 7, they’ve been magnificent over the years, they’ve donated to our charities before, and really take my hat off. And being a Full Time Officer I’m proud to represent this Union, and I’m proud of the people that come here as Delegates. You’re generous beyond a fault, have a good laugh, and thank you very much. And thank you on behalf of Wooden Spoon.

[applause]

I have got some tickets left if anybody wants them they’re £3, cheers.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Motion 53.

53 No 3 Regional Council

Hepatitis B injections/First Aiders – That this Conference agrees that all companies should provide Hepatitis B injections for all First Aiders within their workforce. The Hepatitis B injection is a three jab course at £80 and would prevent First Aiders becoming infected or risk of infection being minimised. Hepatitis B is contracted through bodily fluids, ie blood, saliva, vomit etc, and once infected, it always remains within the system, and could possibly lead to ill health and death in the long term. All medical and emergency services are given these injections as norm under “Duty of Care”. Why should First Aiders in companies be treated differently? Injections are strongly recommended by medical bodies, environmental health groups. Anyone dealing with bodily fluids should be given this vaccine by their employers. In Europe, it is given free to everyone who is old enough to get this vaccination. We would ask if the costs to the companies would not outweigh the chance of catching this life threatening disease?

Unidentified Speaker: Morning Conference, Chair, Platform, Delegates, Motion 53. I would order Conference to support this Motion.

[applause]

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

Brother Scott Meadon – Branch 388: First time Delegate. I’m here today to support this Motion. I believe that this is a good idea because it would reduce the risk of possible contagion. As a
Union we are committed to health and safety of our members. This would be a major step forward in this commitment. Thank you. Please support.

[applause]

Sister Kim Elvidge – Branch 367: I’m here to support this Motion, having been a First Aider for about the last 20 years in the various companies I have worked for, at all the First Aid courses I have been on, whether it be through the Red Cross, St John’s Ambulance, Kays Medical at Work, the first and foremost thing we are taught is protect yourself. Whether it’s from attending a wound, putting the plastic gloves on, or if, to do mouth to mouth, putting the face shield on. In some instances this cannot always be true, if somebody takes ill in the middle of the car park, they collapse, they’re covered in vomit, blood, what do you do? Think well I’ve got to run back first to get my gloves and face shield? Or do you make the best of a bad situation? So in my opinion as First Aiders we do a valuable service to our company, our employers need us, they’re required by law to have a certain number per certain number of employees. So shouldn’t the companies then be seen to protect the First Aiders at all costs? Please support this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: I’m here also to support this Motion. Working for Greggs, I’m a shop manager, and one of my main roles is as the First Aider for my shop. Unfortunately I work in an area where I’ve got a lot of drunks, druggies, and for ever and a day they’re coming into my shop, normally falling over, and crashing out in my shop, to which I have to help them out. So for this Motion to be passed would be an absolute bonus because it is something which we are all concerned about, that we will get infected one day. So please support this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion. Any injections are good to me [laughter].

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Oh so much innuendo. And he knows I’m worried every time he comes down now doesn’t he? Conference we would ask you to support the Motion, and give a commitment that if you pass this Motion we will put it on the agenda of the National Health and Safety Committee. Obviously we ask Conference to support the Motion. Those in favour, anyone against? That’s carried. Fifty four.

54 No 5 Regional Council

That Conference supports more efforts to utilise trading with national companies for the benefit of members and the union itself ie stair lifts, disabled facilities etc.

Brother Duncan Dale – Branch 560: Morning Delegates. Chair, Platform, fellow Delegates. Very brief what’s in your agenda, the few words I’ve put because if I was to itemise everything we wouldn’t get away by Friday. It’s regarding disability. It seems to me that, have you heard Charlie gets disability? Oh does he? Oh fair enough. And that’s it. It seems to me we seem to be ignorant of a lot of things that are involved with disability. It has been edged on the John McDonnell yesterday and Doug Nicholls, it was mentioned once or twice. It keeps cropping up. What I want to put to this Hall today is one thing is, and I don’t make any apologies for saying this, is that the vast majority of us in this room, will at some time either personally or within the family will experience some form of disability. And there are so many, so many, it’s a minefield of how many sort of disabilities there are, even down to short-sightedness, hard of hearing, and the list goes endless. Not to count the guy that you know that’s on a scooter, a mobility scooter,
or the guy that’s on crutches with amputees. There are so many. Now what I want to put to the Hall today is I worked, I done six years, worked with Age Concern, voluntary on advice and information, so I’ve actually been on the front line and actually experienced so many things that I, never occurred to me that these things were about. And a colleague and I were invited to go round a distribution depot of disability equipment, and I just could not, the pair of us, we couldn’t believe, we just thought automatically have a scooter, a stair lift, a walk-in bath, wet rooms, things like that, that we were amazed. You may think a recliner chair, DFS, it’s a luxury, a pleasure, and that’s how they’re advertised. But recliner chairs what we saw at the disability centre, there must have been six different types, just because the hospital says oh when you go home, you could do with a recliner chair. Different disabilities need different types, the same with the beds, they show these reclining beds with a television at the end, for comfort and pleasure. But disability beds again, they did recline, but different ways, not just the automatic what you see on the television, but they were sideways, they were all sorts, there must have been four or five different types of disability bed. And it goes on to simple things like tin openers, for somebody that’s got Parkinson’s, and they can’t hold a cup of tea never mind a pint of beer. There are so many. Now what I’m putting to the Conference is that these companies, and I’ve learnt this through working at Age Concern, because they do a very similar system, and it could be invaluable to members, is that we contact these companies that do these, like we do other excellent services to the Bakers Union, they have excellent services, ie insurance, and various things as you all know. But we could bring this on board for our members and their families. And it’s what I would call, it’s, I don’t like the word no brainer, but I would call it win win win situation, the members would gain from it, the company who distribute, the families, and the company who distribute these things, they would be getting the custom, and also and it would apply, it would go the same way for the Union, is that Age Concern, for every stair lift or whatever it is, go through shower, whatever, whatever they supply, they give a commission to the organisation, ie, Union funds.

So as I say it’s not a big serious issue you go to TUC or to the government, lobbying MPs, this is something that’s beneficial to our own members, to our own people. Let’s do something for ourselves just for once. Please support this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Peter Barszczak – Branch 561: Here to second and support the Motion. We do all things, you know, it’d be nice to get these companies on board, because people have disabled families at home, and if they can get stuff cheaper. And also you need to get in it really quick because when Tories have finished raising the pension age rate up, you’ll need stair lifts and everything in the place of employment. Here to support.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion. We’ll get a stair lift in Manchester Office for Streeter.

[laughter]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Martin? I wasn’t sure if you were turning round then Martin.

Brother Martin Kelly – Branch 560: Up to support Duncan’s Resolution. Only thing I’m going to say is that I agree with everything that he said and also just to add, I keep on about Remploy. There’s some Remploy workers that’s unfortunately their factory shut down in York. And they’ve grouped together, there’s not a lot of them, just a few of them, and they make a lot of garden furniture and different things. I believe our Union contributed to help along with other unions to get them started and that, and I were talking to one of the Union men down at the
Disability Conference, and he said you’re able to go to the little factory, but unfortunately I haven’t got the phone number, but best to give them a ring and you can go and have a look round at, they have booklets and I haven’t got booklets, booklets which shows you what you can buy. There’s just little bird feeders and there’s some big things, chairs and everything. Think they’re reasonably priced, so please support these people, and also other companies. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes, just briefly Chair, to say yes we definitely want Conference to support the Motion. I’ve got to confess it was one of those motions when I read it, I wasn’t quite sure what was going to be said, it’s very hard to research how you’re going to give an answer. So I had to wait for Duncan to come down and tell me exactly what he was looking for. I’ve got to say the Executive Council’s always looking at ways that we can enhance the benefit structure that we have, as you saw when we launched the Pouring Pound scheme on Sunday. And I think, you know, when you think disability’s not just about somebody having, you know, walking differently, it can be visually impaired, hearing impaired, and all those sort of things so, first of all what we will do, we’ll speak to Rohan about what discounts we can get by going through maybe the likes of Vision Express and those you know, Optical Express and those type of companies. What discounts will be open to our members for those sort of things, and they also do hearing aids and stuff like that. So if we can get any help with stuff that falls outside of the National Health Service then we will definitely do that. The other thing we can do as well, and I’m actually passing the buck if you like a bit to Martin who sits on the TUC Disability Committee, is to maybe, you can get the contacts there Martin, and if there’s something you produce and send to me, I’ll make sure that that’s then distributed, or if you’re going to make contact, because the TUC with 6½ million members in it will have much more buying power and much more power to get discounts than we will as an organisation. So I think if we actually use the Disability Committee, and Martin’s good offices as being our elected representative on that, we should be able to get something out of the likes of Stannah and people like that. So I’m not sure of how we’re going to get the stair lift for Roy Streeter though, I mean, we’ve actually moved his office onto the bottom floor so he doesn’t have to, we may have to move the loo for him though. Okay please support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: To the vote, those in favour, against. That’s carried.

55 Branch 580 Greggs

That this Conference agrees to lobby this government to ensure all schools have a national accident reporting system just as in work places to help monitor accidents in schools.

Sister Sarah Woolley, Branch 580: I have a seven year old son, and I don’t know about anybody else, but if he falls over at school, it’s the end of the world. He hasn’t banged his leg, it’s broken, and he didn’t do anything wrong, it wasn’t his fault. You never truly get to the bottom of what’s happened. If I have an accident at work a report is filled in which is then used as a backbone for both sides if a claim is put in. What has a child got? A seven year old that has fallen off a piece of equipment, is it a one-off or is it in fact a faulty piece of equipment that 30 children have fallen off? But nothing’s been done because different people have dealt with each child. We need to protect our children, our future members, and the only way to do this is to monitor accidents at school so action can then be taken. Please support.
[applause]

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: I’m here to second this Motion. And when you look around at the government now, cutting, cutting, cutting, you know, building work, repairs, old schools, I’m sure if we start looking at statistics it will show how many schools now are falling down. We haven’t invested, we’re not investing in our future and our children. So we need to protect them, so please support.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: I’m also here to support this Motion. I live on a little street at the bottom of my street is a primary school. When the school kids do come between 9 and 3 it is like Piccadilly Circus down there. Fair does, there’s cars here there and everywhere. It is so dangerous there, it only needs a little kiddie to run out and get knocked over because they do come down there like absolute lunatics. The school which is by me has been doing works now for about a year on its building, never seems to be much done, there seems to be scaffolding, there seems to be pots of cement, mixers left about and everything. Accidents will happen with kids, and if we don’t stop these big companies leaving things like cement mixers and scaffolding up, then the kids are going to fall, trip, climb, everything over them. Please support this Motion, and let’s stop these big companies being just wasters. Thanks.

[applause]

Brother John Halliday – Branch 701: Here to support the Motion. But I want to tell you a story, because us back in Northern Ireland are a step ahead of the mainland. I don’t doubt that the government maybe holding it back, but what happened in my granddaughter’s playschool, she had an accident. I walked in to collect her and had to fill the forms in. Lo and behold when I’m coming out the door, there’s a whole raft of material on the wall, and it points out that school attendance who had set. I went to a course on modern accidents. It also had on the wall the whole raft, governing the protection of children in the school. Now I’m almost certain that out of all government didn’t do this at the drop of a hat, it had to come nationally, but I’m getting the school report a couple of weeks later, it said in the report that the inspectors had pointed out that modern accidents had not been happening, and they have informed the school that they had to make this a priority. So whether we’re advanced in Northern Ireland or you are behind, the legislation must be there in some form. The schools aren’t acting on it. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion. I’ve got two little granddaughters and you know, you’ve got to look after the little sweethearts.

[applause]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. Here also to support this Motion. I think anything that will assist health, safety and welfare of our people, our children, is a positive move. Unfortunately the reality is that with the government that’s here at this moment, the Conservatives and Lib Dems, all they seem to be doing is attacking and reducing the health and safety budgets etc. So I don’t know how far we’re going to get in terms of lobbying the government, but I think the sentiment behind the Motion I wholeheartedly agree with. Thank you.

[applause]

Sister Stacey Oakley – Branch 253: I’m also here to support this Motion. My mum works in a school and every day she comes back saying about some sort of accident that’s happened, and this has gone on and that’s gone on. And it all gets brushed under the carpet, because it makes the
school look better. So something clearly needs to be done to stop this happening. Please support.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Lobby the government. David Cameron, can't even remember he’s got a child with him, what chance have we got? And they’re making sure your children are safe, this government, absolutely none whatsoever. That’s why we have to go out day after day and campaign to make sure we remove them. And John McDonnell said that yesterday, he was right, and we have to make sure, whether it’s our children, whether it’s our workplaces, we make sure that we contact MPs, take to the streets, demand change [applause] and make sure that we bring this terrible, awful government down, because they are not going to protect your children in your schools, they are not going to protect the employees in their workplaces. They couldn’t care less, the only people that they’re concerned about is themselves and their rich friends. So I don’t think we should waste us time on lobbying the government to make the changes that we require, we should be on the streets demanding change and bringing the government down. That’s what we need to be doing [applause]. But obviously in preparation for this, I am reliably informed that before Gove got in, there is legislation there, and it’s called Safeguarding for Children, and apparently there is a duty placed on all schools nationally, they are expected to comply and they are expected to carry out risk assessments, and also comply with Riddor, there is no exceptions. But Conference support the Motion, but as for lobbying the government, take to the streets, demand the change that we require. That’s where we need to be, support the Motion.

[applause]

To the vote, those in favour, against. Carried. Fifty six.

56 No 3 Regional Council

*Employers using cheap companies to keep costs down when issuing footwear. It is up to our members to ensure footwear provided is suitable as per the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992. Conference agrees to conduct surveys across the Branches to evaluate and challenge employers as this is clearly a major issue in our industry.*

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** Chair, Platform, Conference. I mean the reality is we all work different hours, back in our workplaces. Imagine what it must be like when you’ve got no choice but to wear the (inaudible) or the shoe that’s not appropriate or suitable. There is legislation for our Health and Safety Reps, that that helps us if we want to use it, yes, to put pressure on employers and make sure and demand that the footwear that they provide is suitable. All these employers nowadays, all they seem to care about is cost and reducing cost, they’re out to save every penny at the expense of the shopfloor people.

We need to be more vigilant on site level, at Branches, and factories, shops, be more vigilant and ensure that our people have the right type of footwear. The National President last month has already sent an email out and started the national survey which I requested in this Motion. That’s actually in motion, can all Branches please make sure that you do print them off and you do make sure that your members fill them in and you return them to Regional Council. Please support this Motion, I move.

[applause]

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** I’ll second this Motion. I agree with the Motion. I mean nowadays companies, I mean, we had it as part of our pay rise, work boots. But they’re reneging on giving you proper work boots. You know, it’s all this cheap crap now, so I support the Motion. I did get Ronnie’s email and I’ve not replied, but I will be doing.
[applause]

**Brother David Suddards – Branch 561:** Yes I’m here to absolutely support this Motion. What, the first thing that these so-called Health and Safety Coordinators do, I don’t call them Coordinators I call them loss adjustors, the first thing they do now if anybody has a slip, trip or fall is look at their shoes. If the shoes aren’t adequate they will blame you, even though they’ve given you them in the first place. Support this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580:** I’m here to support this Motion, but I’m here to speak on behalf of the National Health and Safety Committee. I’ve only just returned and quite rightly, Eddie’s done an absolutely fantastic job while he were on, but if the information we ask for goes out, doesn’t come back, we can’t collate this. It’s a great Motion but just don’t leave it here, encourage people when they go back to the Branches, to fill the information in and get it sent back off. Help us, and support this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Andrew Dalby – Branch 3579:** I’m here to support this Motion also. In our particular workplace the rule is that we have steel toe-capped footwear for protection. With new starters and agency workers quite often we go on the shopfloor and find they’ve got inadequate footwear, they go down with their trainers. As a Health and Safety Reps we challenge these individuals as to why they haven’t got the correct footwear. We get either one of two responses, firstly that they’re not briefed correctly, that they need the footwear to carry out their work on the shopfloor. Secondly that they’ve been to the department that issues this footwear and that they’re not, they’re told that they’re not, especially agency workers that they’re not issued properly with these footwear, which is really scandalous. Being on the shopfloor and part of the proper procedure is to wear this footwear, so I’m 100% in support of this.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Pro-active aren’t I? I’ve got to say, National Health and Safety Committee was already on the ball with this, obviously thanks to the Committee, thanks in particular to Vince Payne for putting the questionnaire together, and obviously the Committee that took part in finalising that. It has been sent out to all Branches, if it hasn’t been sent out to all Branches, contact your Regional Office, and because we have sent copies to the Regional Office. We want to get as many of these surveys back as possible, to give us the best possible picture and to put forward a policy on safety footwear and give good guidance and advice to people. So we encourage people to contact their Offices, contact the Branch Secretaries, make sure these forms are filled in and we would like them back, we understand that we’ve put in the Foodworker because it’s there in the Foodworker if you haven’t seen it, so you can see what a questionnaire should look like. We would like these back for our July meeting to start going through them but we’re not saying that’s the end of it, but what we’re suggesting is that we’d like them back so we can start sifting through the surveys to see what sort of information we’re getting back. But obviously we’ve got to try and put it online as well, to make it as easy as possible for our members to be able to take part in, but if you could go back to your Branches from here and obviously we’re supporting it, because we’ve already done it. So we’d ask you to support it as well, otherwise I’ll have to do undo the Foodworker and Vince’ll have to take his shoe survey back and I might have a bit of a problem. So we’d ask you to support it, and fill them in and make sure we get the information back for July. Thank you.

[applause]

To the vote, those in favour, those against. Fifty seven.
57 Branch 390 Manor

That this Conference supports a Motion to lobby the government to review and revise the decision to cut the Health and Safety Executive budget by 35%. We currently are in receipt of 125,000 accidents and 900 deaths a year – actions undertaken to reverse this trend would be in the best interests of both employee and employer. We reject claims that Health and Safety is a burden on workplaces as there cannot be a price put on saving lives. Everyone should be entitled to the dignity of the safest workplace possible. I ask you to support the Motion.

Brother Warren Broomhall – Branch 390: Conference, EC, Chair, President, Delegates. First time speaker. This cut is to come into place and cost one more life than the current 900 deaths a year, this would be totally unacceptable. If anything an increase to this budget would be advisable. Please support, I move.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You seconding it Richard?

Brother Richard Wainwright – Branch 390: Comrades. I’m here to second this Motion so solidarity to Warren. A couple of things I want to get over really. We’re all obviously united in our hatred for this Tory government, and I want to support the President in what he’s saying that we do have to get to the streets, we’ve got to campaign to get rid of these bastards who are doing nothing but try and suppress the working class. My apologies. But we have, we really have got to do that. We have. We’ve also got to get, ensure that what we actually end up with is a solid Labour Party at the end of it. Return the Labour Party back to its Socialist roots. So this is my pledge to the Conference, when I return back to the Branch we’ve got a forthcoming Branch Meeting, I’ll be contacting the local Labour MPs asking them to come on site for the Branch Meeting, to promote membership within the Labour Party. I’ll also ask the LRC to attend as well so we can boost membership in that as well. Let’s get rid of this Tory scum.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion. If you read the Motion and you look at the Hartlepool DVD, it’s like you said, it speaks for itself.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes, President, the Executive Council would ask Conference to support Motion 57. I’m not sure exactly what benefit we’re going to get from lobbying the government, I think you’ve hit the nail on the head, they’re scum, they’re not interested, they don’t care. But there’s one thing for sure, we don’t have to wait for the Motion to be passed to determine what sort of action that this Union’s going to be taking on this issue. This Union’s been active on this issue for the last five or ten years, because it’s not just this government that’s cut Health and Safety Executive spending, it’s been subsequent governments. And that includes the Labour Party, a Labour government cut Health and Safety the same. The 35% cut to the Health and Safety Executive budget which is just a headline what Warren was explaining, the devil’s actually in the detail when you look through what’s there. It forms part of a systematic dismantling of the Health and Safety Executive. As I said, that’s being done by successive governments. And don’t forget the same cuts are being applied to Local Authority Inspectors as well, so shops will be as unlucky or will actually be unlucky if they’re inspected in the future. It’s said that the Health and Safety Executive was born to die, from its inception on the 1st January 1975, the belief has been that the more successful it became the less it would be needed. That is a Utopian based view that’s based on lessons taught, and teaching that’s being put into practice. Unfortunately reality is something different to the dream. That is the Health
and Safety Executive that we work with today. Removal of protective legislation, reduction in enforcement officers, and fewer and fewer prosecutions for health and safety breaches is the real world of health and safety that unions are operating in today. We all know that some of the unscrupulous employers, they’ll cut corners on health and safety to gain a competitive edge over somebody else. He’ll cut that budget so there’s more money than they can give away as a discount. It actually begs the question Delegates where would injury and illness statistics be if it wasn’t for the army of trade union Health and Safety Reps and the work that they do in the workplace to make sure people are kept safe? How many more deaths would we be mourning, and how many more families left to grieve at the loss of a loved one due to their work?

Workers have the right to return home as healthy as they left in the morning. They may be a little bit tired by their toil, but as healthy as they left their home in the morning. But the way Tweedle Cam and Tweedle Clegg and Emptyhead Grayling are trivialising health and safety, the inevitable consequences to the British workforce is that the statistics on death and illness will rise. Conker fights, donkey derbies, and all those are being used as examples by this government to trivialise health and safety. They’ve put it as a red tape burden on business and society in general and I’ve got to say some people actually believe that that’s true. It was little more than urban myths, used to help the misguided argument gain some credence within society. Conker fights, let me tell you, never killed anybody. But undermining health and safety legislation most certainly will. Trivialising protective legislation will encourage people to take their eye off the ball and that in itself will become a danger to British workers. Health and safety legislation is not a burden on business, it’s not a monster created to shackle employers, it’s an absolute life saver. It’s a pity this government didn’t put as much time and effort into prosecuting bankers who destroyed our economy as they’re doing to commissioning the Young and Jackson Reports. But why would they prosecute those who are a financial crutch to their party? The ConDems trivialise and treat health and safety and welfare with absolute utter contempt, and I hope John Millington’s listening now because we had a debate the other day, and I couldn’t remember the name of the guy and I told you I had it with me. But look, this is an example of how the Tories trivialise health and safety. A Tory councillor, Martin Cox, who is a councillor for West Horton which is near Bolton, compared the report of 171 deaths at work last year to 500,000 people who die in the UK anyway. And stated that it’s only .000002% as a statistic. He said that more people win £1 million on the Lottery than get killed at work. Of course his quotes don’t stand up to scrutiny. Like the Motion, the statistics are vastly understated. But what it does do he represents the true thinking of this Tory government. You’ll pay with your lives and your health, you’re expendable commodity and that’s how they view you. And they will never view working people as anything else. The real figures Comrades show that between 20 and 50,000 people die because of their work. Workplace cancers, suicides caused by workplace stress which we debated the other day, transport accidents which don’t go on the statistics, and soldiers who are killed on duty all contribute to this hidden sum – 1.9 million made ill by their work every year. At a cost to this economy of between £20 and £40 billion. This is when we’re running a deficit and the only answer is austerity. But if we make places safer then we actually help the economy in that way.

If the Tories want to boost the economy forget about 35% cuts and invest in stronger health and safety laws that will keep our people safe. If they’re safe at work, the financial burden on the economy will be eased, and they will have protected any governments greatest resources, and that is its people. The Tories are turning health and safety into a class issue. Their kids will become merchant bankers, they’ll become judges, diplomats or office-based members of the military, and they will remain safe. Protected by the silver spoon while our children who come to work and all aspects of industry will be exposed to the greatest risk faced in generations. Comrades, we have for years campaigned for greater funding for the Health and Safety Executive, and greater empowerment for them. This is not trade unionists looking after fellow
trade unionists. This is trade unionists looking to maximise the protection levels for working people in this country. We’ll continue to drive that message through the Parliamentary Group, and we will continue to harangue Ministers and push the TUC. We’ll continue to deliver stuff from our National Health and Safety Committee under the leadership of Ian. We don’t want to see the demise of protective legislation or the (inaudible) being conducted by the Health and Safety Executive getting rid of their website which is really helpful. All those sort of things that are happening now. But neither do we want to see inertia on health and safety. We want and should demand laws are strengthened and that enforcement is bolstered. I make no apology for repeating that health and safety has to become a manifesto issue. Not an empty pledge, but a cast iron guarantee, no ifs no buts. When MPs stand up for Parliament, wants to get in, and wants the support of the Trade Union Movement and us as individuals, then they’ve got to pledge that they are going to support our fight to make people in this country safe.

Support Motion 57, but more importantly, put your wishes into action. Remember the safest workplaces are places where we have committed employers working hand in hand with strong Health and Safety Reps. Please support the Motion.

[applause]

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

**Brother John Halliday – Branch 701:** It’s just on these ballot papers for the election of the Substitute Delegate. It doesn’t tell us on the sheet to be 1, 2, 3 or how many Delegates……… but if there’s three representatives on the NEC do we vote for one person to represent all three or do we vote for three to represent………?

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** No, you’ve got your vote. What we’ve done in the past is you vote, one vote, I know what you do, the person who gets the most votes becomes the first Substitute covering any of those, because they’re not District people, they’re Regional, so the person who gets the most votes will be the first Substitute, person who gets the second amount will be the second Substitute, and the one who’s third gets third Substitute. Where ………

**Brother John Halliday – Branch 701:** But it doesn’t tell us we need three.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** You don’t you just vote one. You vote one and then we’ll put it in order, we’ll announce the order.

**Brother John Halliday – Branch 701:** If I only vote for one on the sheet, then that person gets 100 votes, say he gets 100 votes, where’s the other votes going to be, the other…

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** There’s 171, 176 Delegates in the room. If you vote for one of those five, I mean I can’t even see which one it is, but if you vote for one of those five and six Delegates that are on there, who you want to be the Substitute, you’re voting for who you want to be the Substitute for that Region right? So what you do, because like in your Region you only have one Substitute, who you want to be the Substitute, you’re voting for who you want to be the Substitute for that Region right? So what you do, because like in your Region you only have one Substitute, you’ve only got one EC member, you can’t have two. What we do is if you all vote, the person that you want with one vote, what we’ll do then the Scrutineers will count them, and the person who gets the most votes out of all them will be the first Substitute. So in Number 5 Region it isn’t like you’ve marked the (inaudible) from Scotland, well if he doesn’t we get somebody else from Scotland to replace him, it could be that if it was, I don’t know, Helena England, I know it wont be her because she’s on the EC anyway, but that’s what happens, when Kevin Flood never turned up, Helena England was the first Substitute so she came. Now if Helena England hadn’t have gone, I don’t know who was second, but let’s say it was, it could have been Duncan Dale or anybody, but that’s how it works John. So the person that gets the most votes in this room, will become the first Substitute, the person who gets the second, doesn’t matter how big the gulf is they will be the second
Substitute, and that, it’s just fairer way of doing it. If you have 1, 2, 3 and we get the same one, if everyone voted for the same three people, we still wouldn’t know who is the first Substitute, who is the second and who was the third, we’d still have to do it that way.

Yes, okay, so’s the Liberal Democrats, they want that.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Motion 58.

58 **Branch 505 Northumberland & Durham**

_That this Conference opposes the government proposal to share NHS details with private companies._

**Brother Michael Lynch – Branch 505:** Conference this came about just before Christmas, it’s a crazy idea from one of the think tanks that the government’s putting up. I tell you what it is, if brains was a disease they’d be in the best of health these lot. Conference I do not want and I’m sure you don’t want any private details from the National Health or your doctors given to private companies. I think it’s a ridiculous thing, and what concerns me is that if private companies do get your details you’ll get badgered and everything. Now we think about those with long term illness, suffering, having to answer phones and all this call centre stuff, so I would ask you to support this. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253:** Here to second the Motion. Very much support this Motion, it’s bad enough at the moment when you phone your doctor’s surgery and reception says and what is the problem with you? Well that’s none of your bloody business to be fair, you’re not a doctor, I want to see the doctor. Let alone now, the NHS are intending to give our details over to private companies, I don’t know about you but I’ve been getting scam emails off every single thing going, it’s unbelievable the amount of little tablets I can get is unbelievable. I really do not want private companies knowing my private details, and I daresay you lot don’t either. Please support this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Is there any other speakers? Okay, Paul are you coming down to speak? Okay mate.

**Brother Paul Norris – Branch 189:** Chair, Platform, Delegates, I’m here to support this Motion. What we need to remember is it’s bad enough now with even information that is private being held by local authorities that is known to be sold to private companies and anybody else that’s willing to pay to get your details. If your National Health records go to a private company just think what it’s going to look like if companies, especially employers can get hold of that information by actually buying it from these companies, who would be more than willing to sell them. So I would say support this Motion, thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215:** Mr President, Delegates, Conference, support the Resolution. Our details on our health or anything else should remain with the Health Service and the doctors that serve us, support the Resolution.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** No other speakers? Vi.

**Sister Vi Carr , Female Rep – Branch 505:** Platform, Delegates and visitors. Responding on behalf of the EC to Motion 58. I for one don’t want my National Health details or medical records...
share with anyone, without my consent. This government is ruining our proud National Health Service and run it into the ground. Little by little, by cutting services and staff and now they are proposing to share our National Health Service details with private health companies. Comrades, once that is done there’ll be no more NHS, just private health services that we will have to pay for. Say no to the government proposals, once your National Health Service details are moved to private healthcare, companies, the transition will be complete. No more National Health as it is today, but private healthcare. Our free National Health Service gone. Free care from cradle to grave gone. Say no to the sell off of our National Health Service. Say no to the dismantling of our National Health Service, say no to this ConDem government and their cuts. We have to fight back and now please support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thanks Vi. To the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Fifty nine.

59 No 2 Regional Council

That this Conference says no to privatising our Health Service. Hands off Danny Boy. We are the biggest stakeholders in the Health Service. We must not let them take this away from us. Those who go abroad for operations and pay upfront and then bill the NHS is a form of queue jumping and must not be allowed, only the rich can afford this.

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates, Conference. Say no to privatisation of the Health Service. Our Health Service is between us and the Health Service. We are the biggest shareholders, or stakeholders in the Health Service, we pay into it, you pay, your employer pays, and the government spends about £120 billion on Health Service. Nearly £90 billion of that is paid by the people who work and pay National Insurance, and therefore to hand this over to privatisation, only the best bits are going to be handed over, the other will be left, it’s all done to make money-making profit out of the Health Service. Conference, I move, support this Resolution.

[applause]

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

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: We definitely need to support this Motion. Privatisation isn’t the way forward at all. The National Health Service do a fabulous job, by privatising it and letting even more fat cats get more money of us, it’s totally wrong. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion, there’s a fantastic advert on telly about politics doesn’t affect me. And then it goes on like schools, you know, I think that’s a good advert. And the trouble is here with involving like Richard wound me up, we’re involved in a class war here. And whatever we think, we’ve got two options. Labour, some people in this room might not be happy with Labour Party, but we’ve got to, you’ve got to join, and we’ve got to get together and fight this Tory government. It’s as simple as that. So support the Motion, join the Labour Party and let’s give them a run for their money.

[applause]

Brother Joseph McSherry, Branch 419: One of my big passions in my life is the National Health Service, and I think it’s been destroyed. I would actually, support the Motion, but I would actually take it further. We need to re-nationalise the National Health Service, because it’s already three quarters of the way been sneaked into privatisation. If you go to Christy’s in Manchester with a cancer patient you have to pay to park your car. And if you’re there every
day with somebody having chemo and radio treatment, it adds up over the week. We have a group in Salford, we used to have four hospitals, we’re now down to one hospital. When I walk into that hospital I think I’m walking into a bleeding supermarket like Morrisons or Sainsbury’s, because there’s more floor space taken up by dining rooms and shops and everything else, it’s an absolute disgrace. We’ve lost one of the finest children’s hospitals anywhere in the world in Salford, that was Pendlebury Children’s and kids from all over the world used to come there. That has now been put inside a general hospital. And the other thing when I say re-nationalise, a few years ago under the Tories, the hospitals were given the option to opt out and self-finance themselves, and ever since that day, that’s when they started turning into supermarkets, into cash making machines. I don’t want a doctor who’s sat down doing an accountant’s job, I want a doctor who’s in the operating theatre, operating on people and saving people’s lives. And that goes to the GPs as well. I don’t want the GPs to be running the finances. If I want a piece of woodwork doing, I go and hire a carpenter. If I want my sink fixed I go and hire a plumber. I don’t want my GP turned into a financial director, I want him there on the end of the phone, instead of the receptionist, so when we need medical care, these people are there to give us medical care, and not be financial directors. I ask you to support this Motion, thank you.

[applause]

Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109: Conference, Platform, Mr President, General Secretary.

Conference I’m here to support this Motion, and I want to encourage everyone of us to support this Motion proactively, in the sense that everyone of us has a need for services provided by the NHS in this country. I want to ask every one of us here, sincerely in your heart, how many of you here do not have a BUPA insurance? If you do not have a BUPA insurance, there’s so many of us here who have BUPA insurance, and we are still crying you want the NHS. How could you have an NHS when you already patronising the private hospitals. Which is part of which is encouraging the government to say well, if those who the NHS is meant for are now patronising most of the private insurance institutions or insurance hospitals, private hospitals, then who could imagine, could also work through the policy to privatise the NHS, so that everyone can have the opportunity to have choice. The essence of privatising the NHS is for giving people choice, okay choice, where you can spend your money and have the best treatment. But thing I want to assure you is that it’s not the NHS that has failed, it is the administrators of the NHS that has failed to run the institution the way it is meant to run. This is an institution that was created for the people of Britain, to build back the public health system for the British people. But along the line its system has been mismanaged. What do we mean by NHS? National Health Insurance, it’s for every one of us, it’s for us till we’re dead. It’s a good thing that Labour came up with this particular reform within the health sector, but along the lines, it has been mismanaged. All we need is to encourage Labour to come up, just like I said yesterday, they still lack a positive policy alternative approach to what the present government is challenging. We all need to encourage Labour to begin to work out a positive way of challenging this issue of privatising the NHS, and if we cannot, it will be very difficult to get out of this in this particular situation that we are in. Please I want to ask you as Union, as a unifying factor, to join hands with all the other members of the Union, the trade union nationwide, to go out on the streets, fight till we get what we want. The NHS must stay, the NHS must remain, the NHS is meant for us, and it will remain for us. Thank you very much.

[applause]

Sister Phyllis Hession – Branch 450: I’m here to say we let them ruin our National Health. If anyone of you in this room go abroad and you’re ill, you have to pay. Why didn’t they put the same rule on our National Health here where people could come from all over the world, wherever they were, and get free treatment? That’s where they went down the drain. They should have done the same here and worked the same rule. If you’re here and you get sick and you’re over from
abroad, you pay here and claim when you go home, that’s what all of us have to do if you go
Greece, Spain or anywhere. You get sick, you pay, and you claim when you come home. I
wanted to support this.

[applause]

**Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359:** Situation is this, they’re halfway through privatising the NHS
now. But I’ll tell you something about privatisation and I’ll tell you something about BUPA. I
don’t know how BUPA’s still in business with the lousy standard of service they give. But I’ll
tell you this, you can go along to a lot of private doctors and think oh yes, it’s private, so I’m
going to get Rolls Royce treatment, but quite frankly a lot of them, they’re not doctors, they’re
businessmen. I’ll tell you what you get, you want a Rolls Royce service at Bentley prices, what
you often get is a Skoda service at Rolls Royce prices. If we let these scrotes privatise our
National Health Service it’ll come down to well, I’m sorry, Mr So and So, can’t treat you.
Why’s that then? Well it’s these drugs, they’re expensive, you’re just not economically feasible.
The situation is not all of us have got massive cheque books, and the National Health Service
was set up expressly on the basis that you could go to a doctor, you would be treated on the
basis of need, no matter what it cost, if you needed it you got it. Not some bloody pen pusher
telling the doctor you can’t write a prescription for this, just let him die, because writing them
up for these cancer drugs is too expensive. Please support this Motion.

[applause]

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** Obviously up here to support this. I’m just going to tell you
a little story about a friend of mine who’s got neck and throat cancer. He’s had his tongue
removed, not a pretty sight, and currently apart from obviously this week I’m taking him down
to Christy’s every day for his therapies. Two weeks ago he put in a prescription at his doctor’s,
on the Wednesday, had to pick the drugs up Friday. Off he went Friday to pick his drugs up, the
doctor wouldn’t prescribe them because they’re too expensive. He had no drugs, he had to go
Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday Bank Holidays till he could see somebody at Christy’s
on the Wednesday to get his drugs. That’s not on, we’ve got to support this.

[applause]

**Sister Stacey Oakley – Branch 253:** I’m also here to support this. We have one of the best National
Health Service in the world, the nurses work really hard, and by privatising our NHS we’ve got
a duty of care over everyone who lives in the country, to give them what they need if they need
help. If they’re ill, if they need operations. People can’t afford these days to go shopping, how
they going to afford to pay for operations or pay for things if it’s privatised? We’d be
technically killing people. Please support.

[applause]

**Brother John Halliday – Branch 701:** Here to support. I’m just a wee bit worried about the Motion
when it says those who go abroad for operations and pay up front, and then bill the National
Health Service is a form of queue jumping. I’ve yet to see anybody that went abroad without the
NHS permission and paying up front got their money back. But I’ll go on. Recently my brother
needed a heart bypass operation, he was offered two chances of having this done, and this was
about 10 weeks after he was diagnosed. He had the choice to stay at home and wait for nearly
six months, or could have went to London and had the operation done, or he could have went to
Dublin. Right Dublin to me lies outside the realms of the UK, it’s a foreign country. So his wife
said he needs it done, he can’t, I’m not flying to London to have it done, I’ll go to Dublin, it’s
much nearer home. Him and her went to Dublin, she was put up in a hotel for the length of time
he was in hospital. His family then had a stressful time, his family found it very difficult to visit
him. My point is that the cost of that, the operation costs for his operation and the added cost of
putting his wife in a five star hotel, bed, breakfast, evening meal, was astronomical. That cost was added to that operation, and that was not the only operation from, in Northern Ireland it’s been outsourced. Eye surgery, and the average of something like 80 operations a week is sent to Liverpool. The cost of flying the patient and a dependant over to Liverpool and some cases having to stay one or two nights overnight, is an additional cost, so it’s not, the NHS is not to blame, as somebody already said, managers do their managing, the NHS, I believe we’re getting backhanders too. Service other parts of the National Health Service, why should we have to go abroad? I don’t know if the case would be in England, Scotland or Wales, that people would have to travel x amount of miles to get an operation done, and their family have to be paid to put up overnight to stay with them. The case is that the NHS is badly run, the costs go out on management, so I say, yes, let us get it back to what it used to be. Cleanliness, starting with the Ward Sister, which we done away with. How many times do you go to hospital, nurses, doctors, are running about in their ordinary footwear that they come in off the street in. So where’s the cleanliness? Let us take it back in the privatisation, let us get back to where it belongs. I support.

[applause]

Brother William Brennan – Branch 512: Good afternoon Conference. I’m living proof that the NHS works. Unfortunately a few years ago I was diagnosed with cancer, and it was only prompt action at the NHS, doctors and nurses, that allows me to be here today, and spare the NHS, and don’t let anybody take it from us, it’s ours and we must keep it. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Steve Miskelly – Branch 3579: Just apologies for before, failed to introduce myself. Just to say I support this Motion, and I have the, I don’t know, the unique right, I am a dual citizen of both Ireland and South Africa, and all I can say in those countries you pay for everything, medical included. We have one of the best systems in this world, let’s not abuse it, let’s look after it, let’s keep it free.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Just to clarify Godson, we misunderstood when you asked us about BUPA. I confirm me and Ronnie have definitely not got BUPA. Conference, the first thing I want to do is obviously condemn the BBC for failing to report fairly and giving a balanced view on the NHS. The BBC has a duty to the British people. The NHS is the centre piece of our Welfare State, it’s one of the most, and you can tell by the number of people that have been coming down here to talk about the NHS and the need to keep it a public health service, not a Tory/Liberal Democrat version which will turn it into a private health service. And we should condemn the BBC because their bias towards this government was nothing more than party political propaganda and we do not believe that a broadcasting company that’s funded by us, the British people, should be acting in a way that we would condemn a third world country or one of those countries maybe like Russia, or Iran, when they act in the same way over here. We should condemn them, and we’re right to condemn them, they have a duty to be balanced, they have a duty to be fair, they have a duty to report the facts, to leave it to You Tube and Twitter to point out that Andrew Lansley was chased out of a hospital is unbelievable. To fail to recognise that over 100,000 people had signed an online petition which the government put in place and said when you get 100,000 people to sign on our website we will debate it in Parliament, and then to ignore it and then to fail to report it, we should condemn it, the media’s wrong, and we should make sure that we don’t let them get away with it.

[applause]

And you know recently, Boris after his election, turned round, you know, that clown Boris in London, turned round and said the BBC needs to be run by a Tory because it’s biased, it’s got
left wing bias. Well Boris we know how spin works, we know Chris Patton is an ex-Tory, he was in the Thatcher government, he’s the Tory Chairman, he was over in Hong Kong working on behalf of the Tory Party, he was in the Cabinet, he is a Tory, the BBC is responsible to the British people, not the Tory Party, report the facts and make sure you report it fairly.

[applause]

Now one of the most pleasing aspects about the Labour Party recently is its commitment to return to the NHS. But there was a speaker that came down and said it’s already been partly privatised, it was partly privatised under Labour, and they were right. Absolutely right, which again, is why we need to be inside the Labour Party to make sure that not only do we return back the Lansley changes that’s recently been made, but we do re-nationalise the NHS, it’s the centre of the Welfare State, it’s the epitome of Socialism, it’s what we built and it’s why they want to destroy it. That’s why they want to destroy it, it’s because it shows that Socialism works, it’s a people’s, it’s a people’s health service. It’s our health service. We have to go out and we have to protect it. We have to make sure that the people in this country have a health service that they can be proud of, that we recognise, that we support. Not a health service that’s run like the Liberals and the Tories want us to have our health service, which is for private profit and private gain. We should never allow the Liberal Democrats to ever forget what they have done to our National Health Service. They should be taken apart, they should be held to account, they should never receive another single vote from any member in our membership. We should make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it. We have to make sure that we always remind our members of the destruction of our health service that was done because they had an opportunity of power, and they seized power, and they wanted to make sure they kept in power by supporting a ridiculous government, and keeping it in power to take our health service away. And we should never, ever forget it.

[applause]

To the vote, those in favour. Those against. Right we’ve got an organising meeting, I believe it’s going to be over there, and we’ve got Colin Burgon who’s up there, who’s going to be speaking at it. Obviously it’s sponsored by Thompsons and it’s also going to be used as the Thompsons’ meet and greet, rather than the (inaudible) so those people who had an invitation, that’s where Thompsons are going to be. Obviously we want to see as many of you attending that as possible, and 2 o’clock.

**Afternoon Session**

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Can we make sure the doors are shut please, everybody take their seats. General Secretary for the Roll Call.

[Roll Call taken]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** There’s 178 Delegates present.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference. First off, £158 was collected on behalf of the Asylum Aid, thanks to all those that donated, anyone who missed the collection but would still like to donate please see Vi Carr. There was, we’ve been able to secure some more
books, so they are, we’ve been able to get some more books because they’ve gone like wildfire, so if you see Vi Carr, they’re still at a bargain price of £9.99, and are well worth the money. They have, I thought that said never ending stories in them, they have stories from women who have seen and been abused, also poems, recipes and if you would like to buy one, for your Office or your Branch, yes okay, blackmailed, yes we’ll get one, so there’s only a couple left now. Olive Molloy.

Sister Olive Molloy – Branch 577: Conference, I’ve now got a rather unpleasant but necessary task to perform. A Delegate from the Number 5 Region has in my opinion severely and repeatedly breached Conference Rules. Tony Richardson from the Number 5 Region left Bridlington on Monday evening promising to return later the same evening and to attend Conference today. It now appears that he is not coming back today or tomorrow. This is not the first time that he has absented himself from elected positions and we feel that this is most unfair on nominees who just fail to get elected, and would dearly love to attend. I leave it to the EC to recover accommodation costs, but I as Chair of Standing Orders will be fining him for his Delegate’s fees for the appropriate days’ absences. I’m debarring him from next year’s Conference, as per Rule 22…..

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you Olive. Just to remind all the members of the new Standing Orders Committee, after the tea break if you could go upstairs to the Standing Orders. General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes thanks President. Just, again, it’s something I don’t like doing but I’ve got to say I’m very, very disappointed in Tony. And well you know that he never came to Conference last year, and I told everyone there was a bereavement, it was actually his dog had died. He then didn’t, he got elected by you to attend the TUC, and he didn’t turn up because he had no-one to mind his dog. He’s come this time, said he’s going to play low profile, he got himself elected to the TUC as Olive’s rightly said, and then he’s gone home because he’s got no-one to mind his dog. I’m sorry but, you know, these things should have been taken care of. There’s lots and lots of Delegates here who have dogs, and they’ve got kids, and they’ve got all different things that have got to be looked after. I think it’s shameful that he doesn’t attend Conference. I’ve got to say, whilst we can’t overturn a decision, or I can’t overturn a decision, I suppose Conference can do what it wants, but you can’t overturn a decision that was taken at this meeting. But I am going to be meeting with the Executive Council and we, you know, one of the things that would be open to us as an Executive Council, as a sanction, will be held under a disciplinary sanction, is that we could debar him from going to the TUC as a Delegate, even though you were the people that elected him.

[applause]

The reason I mention it to you, the reason, let me just finish Marilyn, because I think it’s important. I’ll let you make your point of information and I’ll………

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Think it was last year at Conference when there was something happen that you weren’t happy about, so we suspended Conference and then reinstated it because we couldn’t have changed something, so maybe we can do the same again this year? Maybe we can finish Conference and reinstate it, and take the decision.

[applause]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: I suggest that’s going to be down to the President and to Standing Orders, they’ll take that up. But the point I was making is that the new Executive are going to be meeting on Wednesday and as I say, one of the options that is open to that Executive is to look at the conduct of this member, and they may in their wisdom as one of the
sanctions, they may well decide that they don’t want that person to represent this Union at the TUC. So the only problem is that, and why I took legal advice at lunchtime is I didn’t want to get in to a situation where we get people from the floor saying hang on, we elect him, because you’re the supreme body of the Union, Annual Conference, but of course you only sit for four days, we didn’t want Conference Delegates saying right we’re saying you’ve got no right to overturn a decision that we took without consulting us. So that’s what I’m doing, I’m consulting you, I’m asking your permission that if the new Executive decide that that is the sanction that they want, that they don’t have to write out to everyone getting their approval, if I do it now, if you agree to that sanction if it is, I’m not pre-empting any Executive decision, but it is a potential sanction that we could take. Would that be endorsed by this Conference? Course you can, you can get up any time Tony.

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: I’m here to say, right, I spoke to Tony the other day, my mate Tony there, he’s just said to me, I think the lad’s going through a rough time, I think he’s suffering from some sort of depression and it’s easy to castigate people and say this is wrong, and that’s wrong [applause], but you know what I mean?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: I’m not castigating anyone, Sedge, at the end of the day you people put us in positions to help run an organisation in the best way for the members that we represent. If we’re going to elect people who don’t turn up, I mean, it’s like you, if you get elected to Conference and then don’t turn up, you’re not representing your members in the best way possible, for whatever reason it is. The fact is that the last TUC, he didn’t turn up. He actually told me on the Friday, we were going on the Saturday, he told me on the Friday he couldn’t get anyone to mind his dog and he wasn’t coming. Now, that cost the Union £550, besides anything that he’d spent on travel. So £550, we didn’t have a Delegate, I couldn’t get a Substitute, I couldn’t fill the hotel and therefore we paid it. That’s what it’s about, and at the end of the day, it was the same thing, you sat in this Hall, I’m not saying you elected him, but this Conference elected him to go to Conference last year, and he left it till the last minute before telling me that he couldn’t come. He didn’t tell me until the last day before Conference last year that he wasn’t coming. And he didn’t tell me, and he most certainly didn’t tell the President yesterday that he was going home. He went and just, he didn’t ask permission to go, he told the Chair of Standing Orders he was going, and that he would be back today, and he has not come back today, all we’ve had is the Full Time Official who’s sat down there, and I’ve seen the text, he sent a text yesterday saying, oh this morning at twenty past nine I think it was, saying that he was trying make alternative arrangements. He then sends another text basically saying he can’t get anybody to mind his dog and that’s it. But at the end of the day we’ve again, besides the £500, we’re paying £35 or £40 depending on the hotel he’s in, for every single night he’s not there. And I can’t fill the hotel with anybody. So it’s not about individually castigating anyone Tony, I’ve got no downer on Tony Richardson, but I’ve got a downer when somebody carries on doing exactly the same thing, and you know, they’re supposed to be representing you when we go to the TUC. And Tony, I remember him getting up and speaking yesterday about it, you know he said, I’m one of the ones who gets up and speaks at the TUC. I think Godson Azu mentioned about Tony speaking at the TUC, yes I’ve got absolutely no problem with that, I quite like, I do like Tony, but if he’s not going to be there, he’s going to be absolutely no use and I’ve got certainty he’s going to be there in September. That’s the problem I’ve got and that’s the only reason I’m saying, the Executive may take a decision that we don’t do anything, but what I’m saying is to look to see whether we have the authority so that that is one of the potential sanctions that may be taken by the new Executive. That’s all I’m asking for.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Come down, come down. What’s your point of order mate? No statement, no speech, just a point of order.
Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109: My point of order is that I’m so highly disappointed at what is going on right now because yesterday I spoke so glowing about Tony Richardson, believing in his personal conduct that he actually represent us, and speaks on our behalf at the TUC meetings. I’m only highly surprised to learn right now that he never turned up and he’s likely not to turn up for the coming one. I am so disappointed, I want this house to support the EC in making sure that.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I appreciate that, but that isn’t actually a point of order. I can understand your disappointment, I’m sure there’s a lot of disappointment here, that’s not actually a point of order Comrade. That’s not a point of order.

[applause]

I hope it’s a point of order, It’s a point of order isn’t it? That’s a statement, not a point of order.

Okay, I’m going to go to the vote. Those in, it was to support the statement yes?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: You want me to reiterate it again? Right what I’m saying is that when the Executive, Olive’s already told you the sanctions that Standing Orders are going to take which is within the Rule Book. That’s to claim his hotel back off him and to claim his expenses back off him, and they are going to debar him from Conference next year. That is the sanction that they are going to do. The Executive Council, because you took the decision, and if you think the Executive Council is only an extension of Annual Conference, except that it can sit at any time during the year, that because of that the Executive Council would want all sanctions open to them, and all it is is if that is the sanction that they take, which is to reverse your decision would that be acceptable to Conference. That’s all we’re asking, it may not even come to it, but if we, if the Executive decide that they want to overturn the Conference decision to send Tony Richardson to the TUC, would that be acceptable? That’s it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, everybody clear? Okay. Right. Okay. We’re basically asking you to give, if the Executive Council says that they want to overturn the Conference decision to send Tony as the Delegate to the TUC, that this Conference is okay with that decision. It’s not a personal attack on Tony Richardson, it’s about ensuring that the people that you elect to represent you are done so and will be going to represent you as you so wish, but feel that that hasn’t been done on this occasion. Not elaborating, it’s just about that. Are you okay? Right. To the vote, those in favour of the statement given by the General Secretary, please show. Okay, those against. That’s carried, thank you.

Conference, obviously some people have just met Colin, a lot of people have met Colin over the last 12 months. He came as a Venezuelan, we learnt he was a Yorkshireman, he’s been to Wales with us, he’s been to Birmingham with us, he obviously, it’s my pleasure to invite Colin Burgon to speak to Conference on a number of issues, please welcome a very good friend to this trade union, Colin Burgon.

[applause]

Colin Burgon: Thanks a lot, I’ve had a few jobs in previous life, 13 years as a Labour MP but also I was a schoolteacher at one point, not in a public school, I mean, not a private school, a pretty rough school in the east side of Leeds. And I’ve spoken to your technicians at the back, because I’m thinking does everybody know where Venezuela is, and I’ve got a strong, strong suspicion that at some point, hopefully a map of Latin America will maybe spin up on the place. Last year I came and I was delighted to be given the opportunity to speak to you about a country which, at that time probably not many of you’d heard about Venezuela, and I said it were distinguished by two things, number one it quite often wins the Miss World contest, and secondly it’s never qualified for the World Cup. And beyond that not many people know about it. But there’s a movement taking place in Venezuela and right across Latin America, which has connections
with you. Now there will be a few people who will turn off at this stage and think I’m not really interested in what happens outside of Britain. I’m not interested in what really happens outside of my city. Well I’ll tell you this, if you’re watching events around the world, what’s happening to working people in Spain, what’s happening to working people in Greece, what’s happening to working people even in the United States, then you understand the fate of working people around the world is incredibly linked together. And at this time of what can only be classed as a capitalist crisis, and I use that word, we’re not supposed to use the word capitalism any more, but I’ll use it because that’s the system we live under. Massive, massive capitalist crisis the like of which we’ve never seen since 1929/31, the big question is who is going to pay for the financial shambles that we’re in at the moment. And if the ruling class has their way, it’s like people like you who’s going to pay, and if we have our way, it’s them that’s going to pay. And that’s why we can learn from what’s happening around the world. We can tell people what we do but we can also learn from them. And when I came last year, I kind of broadly outlined what was happening in Venezuela under a bloke called Hugo Chavez, and put this date in your diary, I know you’ll have a fantastic social calendar most of you, but the first Sunday in October, if you can just vaguely think hang on a minute, didn’t that bloke say something’s happening on the first Sunday in October? There’s the elections in Venezuela where Hugo Chavez is standing to be the President yet again, and there’s a huge amount at stake, not only for working people in his country, working people across Latin America, but I believe working people like yourselves. Because some way and another most of us dimly recognise that when working people suffer a defeat in one country, somehow or another we’re beaten as well. So a victory for Chavez in Venezuela will be a victory for us all.

Now you might know, for those few people who follow it, that Chavez has had cancer for the last year or so and he’s treated in Cuba, and he’s treated in Cuba because the people who run the upper class health service in Venezuela quite frankly can’t be trusted with the life of the President. This is a country, Venezuela, that’s red with class divisions, so he has to go to Cuba to make sure he gets safe treatment. And at the moment, if you look at the polls in Cuba, Chavez is well in front, and this is not to everybody’s satisfaction. And I read a quote at the weekend from the Bank of America, Merrill Lynch, who looked at the polling figures and shook their heads, and they’ve told their investors that this support for Chavez limits the possibility of a change towards more market friendly policies in the near future. What does that mean? What it means is if Chavez wins it’s bad news for big business, that’s what it means. And in fact I was looking also on the May Day demonstrations, about 120 people in Leeds on the May Day demonstration, biggest for years. In Caracas there were nearly half a million people, which shows the kind of rival tempo of the class movements. But on that day Chavez from the very steps of the Presidential Palace announced a new labour law, and I listened to the debate this morning, I sat up at the back and I listened to the concerns that you were expressing, and I think it’s worth just reading through some of the legislation that Chavez and the Socialist Party and the trade unions were a party to in Venezuela and announced as law last May 1st. The first one was to bring in a maximum 48 hour working week. Secondly a guaranteed two days off for any worker in a seven day week. Post-natal maternity leave raised from 12 weeks to 20 weeks, the imposition of childcare provision in every workplace with more than 20 workers, they have to provide crèche and childcare facilities for children aged 3 months to 6 years. And there’s more, and mention was made today about Remploy, and I’ve just been down at the GMB Conference, and I’ll tell you what’s happening to Remploy workers is an absolute and utter disgrace, it really is.

[applause]

And I’m not going to take the easy option out on that and say it’s all to do with the Liberal Democrats, the Conservatives, I’m going to be quite hard about it because when I was in
Parliament I saw Labour in inverted commas, colleagues, Ministers, actually starting the process of privatisation and the winding up of Remploy. And we’ve got to consider why that is the case and I want to deal with that later in my speech. But back to disabled workers, in Venezuela there’s now an obligation on the State and private companies to promote and support employment for disabled people. There’s guaranteed social security including those people who are in the informal work sector, outsourcing, and agency working has been outlawed. Just think on that, that’s one of the key issues facing working people in Europe today, and here we have in Latin America a government, a Socialist government, that’s outsourcing agency working. Improved pensions, running contrary to what we’re experiencing here, and retirement bonuses have been brought in so when you retire you get a State bonus as well, and he’s even backdated it to 1997. And another key issue the right to strike and secondary legislation, secondary solidarity action has been confirmed in law. Now you just contrast that with what’s happening in Britain today. It is a different world, and why I highlight these to you, is to show in that classic phrase that another world is possible. And when you combine those new labour legislation laws that he passed last May, with mass support, and you combine it with the fact that he took the oil industry back under national ownership, nationalisation, and now the wealth of the oil industry is not being used for the elite to, most of them lived in Florida, it’s now being used for health service for the first time ever in Venezuela, where the vast majority of people never ever saw a doctor in their lives. It’s being used for education, every kid now in Venezuela goes to school, and this is a real slur on us, everybody who goes to university goes to university free. Free university education. And what Chavez is building in Venezuela is what we call socialism of the 21st Century. And I’ve just done a meeting up there, and I’ve done several meetings, Regional meetings with you, and that word socialism has disappeared out of our vocabulary. For the past 30 or 40 years we were told this idea of Socialism was absolutely dead, that the new system, neo-Liberalism let it rip market forces was the way ahead. And what we have to do, look after ourselves and beggar my neighbour. What I’m saying to you is this, that let’s gain hope from this, let’s gain inspiration from this, that the very essence of what many of us in this room believe, I wish it were everybody but you know, is that Socialism is back on the agenda. And as this capitalist crisis strikes hard at home, people are beginning for the first time ever to do kind of work with the GMB and various other trade unions, ordinary working people are for the first time ever in about 20, 30 years, starting to really question this system and what’s going to happen to them.

So that’s why I’m speaking on Venezuela today, but then I don’t want to leave Britain out of it. I listen very, very carefully today to the discussion that you were having on the floor and Delegates were raising, and I am, as several of us are, members of the Labour Party. And I would never ever say a simple slogan, join the Labour Party, I would qualify that slogan with join the Labour Party to change it. That is the key element.

[applause]

And there is a struggle going on within the Labour Party. Those people who really follow what’s going on in the trade unions, I was in Scarborough I think it was last week at the UCATT, the building workers’ Conference, and I don’t know whether trouble follows me around, but they passed a resolution against something, an organisation called Progress. Now who could object to progress? We’re all in favour of progress. There will be people in this room who know what I’m on about. But I’ll start from a position that many people are now saying what’s he on about? I’ll tell you what, this, Labour suffered its biggest defeat in its history in 2010, and there was a huge debate went off behind the scenes in the Labour Party. Why had we lost five million people who voted for us in 1997, and by the year 2010 had deserted us over several elections? Now. There was one group of people the Blairites who said the reason, it’s rather like a football manager, when his team gets beat, blaming the crowd. Because what they
said was this, it’s nothing that we did wrong, in fact, we weren’t New Labour enough, we should have appealed to people’s aspirations more than we did. We should have modernised our social services, and by the way, let’s get it straight, when they talk about modernising our social services, they’re talking about privatisation. Call it what it is. So those people took the view that Labour had lost because it didn’t occupy the middle ground, and it wasn’t Blairite enough. And I have to say, they’re the biggest group within the Labour Party. It’s quite sad in a way, it’s quite sad in a way, but there was a large group of us in several different kind of organisations who took an exactly opposite view. And I watched this as an MP from ’97 to 2010 when I retired. And I saw that over those years we were losing contact with ordinary working people. It’s true, we didn’t speak their language, we didn’t share their concerns. I remember raising the issue of agency workers with a Minister, and I have to say, I said let me say this to you, I won’t say her name, I’ll only just say it was a woman, I’ve narrowed it down for you, I said to her bleep, that were her name, I said, this issue of agency working and all it implies is killing us among working people. And she said what do you mean? I said well look, look, it’s a really bad dynamic because many agency workers are from other countries, so many of our people see the imposition of agency workers as the undermining of conditions and interpret it purely in a racist way. And then people, the very same people say Labour doesn’t care about us. I says and unless we actually get to grips with this issue of labour law, agency working and conditions at work, we are beginning to lose contact with our ordinary working people. And her answer to that was well I think it’s really good, this free movement of labour, this loosening up of the labour market, because now it’s so easy to get a Polish plumber in London. And I said is that what drives your politics? Because what I’m interested in is enhancing the terms and working conditions of ordinary people no matter where they come from, that’s the important point. And I saw in several other ways how the Labour Party was loosing the emotional contact with people like yourselves. They will be, I’ve got to say this to you, if we were honest there’d be a large section of people in this room who didn’t even vote Labour at the 2010 election. There’d be those who voted, did not vote Labour because Labour weren’t left wing enough, and there’d be others who voted who just think they’re a pissing waste of time. As simple as that, they’re all the same. The classic comment. So when that debate went off in the Labour Party many of us on the left said no, no, no, we have got to reconnect with those five million people, and most of those people are working class people. And somehow or another we’ve got to frame politics that bring those people back to the Labour Party. And the three key elements of this, understanding why we lost those five million people, and saying first of all we’ve got to make the world of work central to politics. So what you were talking about this morning and I was listening, which to most politicians is gibberish, seriously, they’re not interested in listening to the kind of nuts and bolts of your working day experiences, but that to you is really, really important, and that has got to be brought back centre stage, it really, really has. Labour has got to start talking the language and reflecting the experiences of working people, that’s number one. Secondly we must put an end to privatisation because privatisation no matter how you express it means worse terms and conditions for the people at work, and worse conditions for the people experiencing the service. It’s a fact of life. And we want good quality public services.

But the third element is where you come in. If you look at the social make up now of MPs, there’s about 556 MPs in Parliament. The latest figures show that just six of those come from a manual background. Now you just think that one through. You’ve gone on about legislation today, and the place that makes the legislation out of 600 or so people, six have had a life experience that can connect with you. And I say that’s wrong. And we’ve got to understand this, that the Labour Party didn’t drop from heaven, the Labour Party for those who know its history was founded in 1900 and it was set up by who? The trade unions. And it was set up by the trade unions to give them a political voice. I have to say increasingly although elements of the Labour Party are interested in doing, is taking your money but not giving you a voice. And that balance
has got to be dramatically restored. And I go on further than this. When I’ve gone round to several of your Regional Meetings and I’ve listened to people speaking, there are people in this room today who should be Members of Parliament. Who should be councillors, but somehow and another there’s something in our heads as working people that thinks no, we’re not, it’s for somebody else to do that job. We can moan about them, but we’re not the people who should be doing the job. I’m saying to you, and I’m saying to every union meeting I attend, that you’ve got to start thinking, you represent people in the best possible way at work, you’ve also got to start thinking that you should represent them in the political sphere as well. Have the confidence to say, and confidence to understand you are as good as all those women and men in grey suits, or whatever they wear. Remember that.

So a number of us came together and set up something called Winning Labour, if you ever go onto websites have a look at it. And those three things that I mentioned earlier are the three things that I think we’ve got to get, and we’ve got to generate to reclaim the Labour Party. And I hope the Bakers Union which has got a long proud history of involvement with the Labour Party is going to be part of that. And I know Ian attended one of our conferences in Donny.

And then thirdly I want to move on to the future. Because I think we face, and you face, and your kids face quite a chilling future. Now there’s two responses to that, it’s rather like when something comes on the telly you don’t like, you can turn it off, or sometimes you shout at it. Or you can try and do something about it. Now we cannot escape what’s going to happen, so all those people who study the workings of capitalism predict that the next ten, twelve years, is very much like we’re getting at the moment, if not worse. So we have a choice. Either we roll over and we accept it, or we begin the battle, the physical battle, and the mental battle to fight back against these ideas that weigh on us so heavily. And I believe that this is no greater place to start than the Trade Union Movement, because you understand what conflict is about, you understand what class is about, and you understand what capitalism’s about. And I’ll tell you this, unless you do it, nobody will. So we’ve a choice facing us, we either throw the towel in and accept everything that’s going to happen, or we step up to the plate, and I just use this simple analogy. My parents grew up in the golden age of the working class, from about 1945 to 1980. And they had this simple, my Dad was a cutter, he cut suits at Montague Burtons in Leeds. And he had this simple belief, and all his generation had it, based on their experiences of the Depression in the ‘30s and the Second World War, that a better world would come after the Second World War, and a better world did. And they had this simple idea, held by most working class people, that life was getting better and their children would have a better life than them. In your heart of hearts, this is the first time in decades and decades of our history, that we can’t put our hand on our hearts and say I tell you one thing, my kids’ll have a better life than we had. Because it’s not true. Where are the jobs coming from? Where is the future? We’ve got to fight for that future, and I say it’s up to you, and I’ll finish on these words, because this is a conflict of massive proportions. This is your chance to write yourself into the books of history. You know, not the monarchs, the kings and the queens, but working people, they’re the people who make history. And as Shelley said, great poet, when he was speaking to a group of radicals and revolutionaries, and I speak to the Bakers Union today full of radicals and revolutionaries, I say this to working people and I say it all round the place. What I say to you is this. As the battle looms I urge you to rise like lions from slumber, because we are many, they are few. The fight is on. Thanks for listening.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Conference I don’t know if you realise, Colin Burgon’s actually retired, so he doesn’t have to do any of this. But he chooses to because he believes in it. So Conference, obviously we’re going to give a presentation. Colin we thank you very, very much. We thank you for the work that you do, and the message that you’re giving to working
people. It’s essential and it’s essential people hear that message you’ve got to give. Colin Burgon.

[applause]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Conference, traditionally Colin we give people who speak at our Conference, we give them a baker, a pewter baker, but you’ve had one already so you’re not having another one [laughter]. So we’ve sort of scrambled around, we’ve got just a few gifts which I hope will, you will remember your visit to the Bakers Union, but I would endorse everything Ian said, I think besides coming here and speaking and giving your own time up, the fact that you’ve spoke at the Shop Stewards forums and I think the fact that you’ve spoke at the Shop Steward meeting in our Number 4 Region in Bolton, where I shared a platform with you last year, is admirable. Thank you very much for that. So on behalf of the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union I’ve got two gifts for you. I mean this is a pen and pen set off our Learning Service which is actually branded by the Bakers Union. But also they make, a pretty nice Parker pen as well so you can write your cheques whenever you want to send us a donation [laughter]. And made in Batley, yes, Yorkshire.

Colin Burgon: Thank you very much Comrades.

[applause]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** I’ve just received two photographs, they’ve been brought, Roy Streeter brought them over to me, and it’s from Swan House which is a children’s home in Bridlington, we, some of us went, it was years ago, can’t remember who went with me, but a gang of us went over and we donated, we sponsored a pool table for them because the great love these people have in this children’s home was playing pool. That’s a thing that they got, and they made us stay for about three hours, and had me playing pool, and whatever. I’ve got to say much better than the players I was playing in the pub over the road on Saturday. They’ve sent two photos but obviously you’re not going to be able to see them, so it’s Swan House in Victoria Road and you can see the cake that was produced by Park Cakes in Oldham, that’s where it went, so you know at least it went to a really good cause. So thank you Park Cake.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, Motion 60.

**60 No 2 Regional Council**

_This Conference supports the Shadow Secretary for Health. His anger at pay cuts from 30,000 nurses and demotions as hospitals try to fill a £30 billion hole in their finances. Just emerged._

**Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215:** Mr President, Delegates. The Health Secretary wrote in the press and he took it up in the House of Commons the state of what’s happening to the nurses. Demotions for 30,000 nurses in hospitals, district nurses and everything else. And the way to get around this is to change their staff, they changed their working conditions, and they then lowered their wages. That happened in the supermarkets, in Safeways, before it became Morrisons. The just took away their manager status, and replaced them with I don’t know their name, and they cut their wages by £60 a week. Now that is easy done, that is done here, and the reason for the massive amount of nurses to lose their money but the top didn’t but I won’t go on to the fat cats because that’s coming up later. Thirty thousand, £30 billion hole in the finances, and the nurses have to pay for that. Whether it’s mismanagement or whatever it is. Now Andy Burnham came to Bristol and he begged the people to go out and demonstrate and to send him...
in petitions by the hundreds. Now I come from Bristol and the five constituencies in Bristol, not one of them turned out to do anything about it. I never seen a forum for anything to do it, did you go round and get petitions and send them because he said the more petitions that came in would strengthen his hand in the House of Commons. Now if we’re not going to demonstrate and we’re not going to send in these petitions, you’re giving the Tories a right, because if we don’t want it, they’re going to do what they like with it, and we’re not doing what we should do. We’re not doing it. Now there was the same on the library in Fishponds. It was the library. They wouldn’t put out, there was a petition put out, one person took up the petitions and that was I. I took it up, I took them, and I went out and I was campaigning in the streets, and for two hours I had 15 names. I said this is hard work and I’m not getting enough. I dropped it and I went to the schools in the morning at nine o’clock and had a folding table with me and enough pencils and enough petition forms, and I got hundreds of names. I went round every school in the area to get them, because we wanted to get a new library, and we were fearing that the old one was being closed because it was in a terrible state. But we got a new library. But that’s not part of this Resolution. But that is what’s wrong, we are not, we are not doing what we should do about petitions. I brought it up at the Labour Party in Bristol, Bristol Labour Party which is the five constituencies. Now that should have hundreds of members at it. Forty members is all you get out of five constituencies. That’s not good enough and it’s not a representation of the people. Some years ago that place used to be full, and it all happened when they took the power away from the trade unions and they give trade union Delegates, were refused to have the membership at it. They had to have less than the constituencies, so that the constituencies held the power, and that ruined everything for us. And the disbanding of the Young Socialist was another nail in the Labour Party’s coffin. Because we disbanded the Young Socialists, we destroyed the seed of next year and the years to come by not allowing them to organise and to take over and be able to run the party. We had hundreds of them in Bristol, and we were always at the constituencies. They finished off the (inaudible). Conference I ask you to support this Resolution, although you will be taking it up again, take up the fat cats when we come to that, because that’s probably where the black hole comes from. Conference I move.

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: I’m here to second the Motion. My cousin works as a paediatric nurse in Birmingham, Heartlands Hospital in Birmingham. Just recently the nurses round by there, they’ve also had people with pay cuts and also the nurses have also had a few redundancies as well. This has caused my cousin to actually go out to different hospitals, not just Heartlands Hospital, but go out like as a supply nurse looking after other kids in other hospitals. This is wrong. We should have enough nurses in each hospital to make sure that everybody, especially our children who are the future of our country, that make sure that they have the necessary medical care which they deserve. I please urge you to support this Motion. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, Executive Council would ask you to support the Motion. Those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Motion 61.

61 Branch 450 Manchester

That this Conference agrees to lobby the Health Minister to scrap prescription charges for asthma sufferers. People should not have to pay for a condition such as asthma which is out of their control and needs regular treatment.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Can you note this one Ronnie, this has come from Branch 450. It’s not just about regular treatment, it’s lifelong treatment. Diabetic, I’m diabetic, free
prescriptions for life. My sister has thyroid problems, free prescriptions for life. It should be for asthma sufferers. Doesn’t go away. I ask you to support.

[applause]

Sister Phyllis Hession – Branch 450: I’m here to second this Motion because I know what it’s like to see somebody with an asthmatic attack. My granddaughter has asthma, and she’s bad when she has one. But what I would like to say, she’s a teenager but she’s now at university, which is handicapped because I mean they don’t get a lot of money but she still has to pay for her prescriptions which I mean, let’s face it, it’s a hell of a lot of money for a young kid to be paying. When (inaudible) you get them free, if you’re my age you get them free. It’s that group in the middle that they seem to forget all about. But they suffer just as much as anybody else. And I want to support this Motion, so please support.

[applause]

Brother Michael Lynch – Branch 505: Conference I declare an interest, I’m an asthma sufferer, have been for last ten years. Now I’m lucky in the sense that I’m past the age of retirement (inaudible), I have to rely on three maybe four of these items every day, you know. Paying for stuff these days, and I think the cost of a prescription, a single prescription is £7.60. It’s disgraceful that you know, I think it was a Labour government when they left it was 20p and when they come back in it was still 20p, and ever since then it’s went up. I took an as sufferer, have been for last ten years. Now I’m lucky in the sense that I’m past the age of retirement (inaudible), I have to rely on three maybe four of these items every day, you know. Paying for stuff these days, and I think the cost of a prescription, a single prescription is £7.60. It’s disgraceful that you know, I think it was a Labour government when they left it was 20p and when they come back in it was still 20p, and ever since then it’s went up. I took an asthma attack when I was at work, I was rushed to the General Hospital, they didn’t know what was happening because of the pains and the breathing and that. I was wired up for sound, I was halfway to heaven when the wife come down. She had the insurance papers in one hand and the Union pay in another, but then I was told it wasn’t a heart attack, it was asthma but still asthma is a fatal thing, it can kill, so please support.

[applause]

Brother Paul Norris – Branch 189: Chair, Platform, Delegates. I would say wholeheartedly support this Motion, but what I would say it doesn’t go far enough. It could have been condensed round to just plain and simple [applause] scrap prescription charges.

[cheers/applause]

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: I’ve got to wholeheartedly back what that previous speaker has said. I just can’t understand these people in government. You see being a simple man, I’m not one of these clever accountants, but one thing I do know, is if you have an asthma attack and you don’t get treatment, it can kill. And if it does that it costs a lot of money, because a simple inhaler costs a couple of quid, it doesn’t cost the £7.70, that’s just what they charge us. And there are a lot of other conditions and I’ve seen people that have been struggling and sometimes not collecting their prescriptions due to the fact they’ve got three or four items on the list, and they’re saying to themselves well which ones can I afford, which ones can’t I afford? Health shouldn’t be a lottery or a gamble. We need to get rid of these prescription charges. Please support this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates, Conference prescription charges do not bring in a massive amount of money to the National Health Service – £120 billion spent on the
Health Service in this country, these are the figures I’ve got. And less than £1 million is picked up off prescriptions but the point about prescriptions is if it’s £7 for a prescription and if the prescription you’re getting is only £1.50 it’s still charged at £7.50 to you. That’s very, very, very bad that that should not be. We should not have to pay for the prescriptions, we pay our contributions, we have done this all our lives, and we should be entitled to it. Conference, oppose this, sorry, sorry, that would be an awful, that would be a gross mistake [laughter]. Support the Motion, we all make mistakes sometimes. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: This doesn’t really affect me because I used to swim in canal when I were a kid, so I never get ill. But I want free prescriptions for everybody.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Delegates, the Executive Council would ask you to support the Motion. Just to say that when I used to do Health and Safety for the Union as part of the role I performed and I was instrumental, I was one of the people who was the author of the Asthma Charter, and I got somebody talking to me about what asthma was like, how it affected people. And the two descriptions I got was that it’s like an elephant standing on your chest at times, or you feel as though your lungs are filled with sand. Fortunately I’m not asthmatic. But I’ve got to say two weeks ago I was in Switzerland with Jackie Barnwell and Marilyn French and I did get bronchial asthma. I actually got an attack of it caused by a chest infection I had, and I got rushed to hospital. And after all the treatment I had to get two inhalers through their chemist, I had to go and buy them over the counter. Well if they’re only two quid Mick I’ll tell you what, they overcharged me because I got charged for two inhalers £107 in Switzerland, so that’s what it cost me for two inhalers that I had to have. Eh? Yes I’ll claim it back, if not I’m going to get one of the EC members to stand at the door with a bucket, how’s that? But can I say that the last time Delegates that this Motion appeared on the Conference floor was 2009, and I reminded the Delegates then that the founding principles of the NHS that was that the care of those who were in need should be free, and it should be free at the point of need. It wasn’t means tested, it, there was no class distinction on healthcare, and there was no medical differential.

Those principles are as true today as they were then. But successive governments have ensured that the concept of free care has been diminished, we’ve seen the disappearance of prescription glasses, we see the disappearance of free dental care, and of course, as the Secretary said before, the concept of prescriptions moving from 20p in 1979 when Margaret Thatcher came to power, to the present £7.65 as it is now. An increase of nearly 3800%, there’s absolutely nothing in society that has risen by 3800% in that period. In the same time as prescription charges have gone. And when you think prescription charges are about dealing with the people who are in need when they’re at their most vulnerable. And they’re the people that are being exploited by these. Always the rises are way above inflation, for absolutely no reason. If you go to your doctors and you need paracetamol it will cost you £7.65 if you get a prescription, and yet you can go to Tesco and get them for 16p, exactly the same tablets. So where is the logic in that? It’s absolutely horrendous.

Prescription charges I’ve got to say have been a cash cow for successive governments. They’ve seen it as a way of building revenue, it’s not just about enhancing the National Health Service, I think it’s actually gone into the Chancellor’s office. That’s where this money’s gone. Arguably all medicine should be free. Why should medicine be tested or means tested, or compartmentalised? It should be exactly how Aneurin Bevan put it, free at the point of need. Whilst wholeheartedly supporting the Motion as it’s written, I agree that we should look at other
areas within medicine that need free medicine. What is the distinction between diabetes, when if you’re lucky, my brother once told me you’re lucky to get diabetes because you get your medicine free, you don’t have to pay for it anymore. Well it’s some luck isn’t it to get diabetes just to get free prescriptions. But what about people who suffer with serious heart conditions? As Marilyn said before, people who’ve got cystic fibrosis? What about Aids? You know the list is endless. What about all those people? They’re all killers in their own right. I’ve never quite understood why if you’ve got diabetes you get it free and why if you have something else that’s life threatening you don’t, somebody could be able to explain it, but I don’t know it.

But the other thing is belonging to an industry that depending on what you read whether we’ve got the second highest rates of occupational asthma or the fourth rate, we never quite make number one. We’re always number two or number four, we’re never number one or number three. You can understand how much concern regarding the price of prescription medicines for asthmatics causes us, and it’s most certainly going to cause Ian when he’s on the Asthma Project Board. The food industry is not the highest paid industry in which to work and there’s no doubt that for some workers who are left with the stark choice between paying bills or buying medicine to make them better. It’s becoming more and more of a problem within society as unemployment rises, starts to soar, and people with life threatening illnesses find their health compromised because of a much needed medicine which are priced way beyond their affordability. That’s the reality of life.

We keep saying that’s the reality of life under the Tories, but that was also the reality of life under Labour as well. They did nothing to take medicine the other way. The problem is that wherever you move the threshold, there’ll always be someone who falls into the trap. So if you remove costs totally like Tony Sedgewick said, that’d be the preferred step. That’s where we should be going. If the principle is accepted, should we be calling for the employers who damage the health of our members through negligence to be liable for the cost of those medicines? The debate’s gone on long time with the Asthma Project Board and will continue until we win the argument for the benefit of our members. The fact that some damage, the health of our members using a foodstuff such as flour, amylase or proteins which we get in fish is academic. There’s a negligence causes occupational asthma then they should pay the price and not be left to the taxpayer. We should be mindful of the thousands of people who are born with asthma or are unfortunate enough to develop it through puberty. These people also suffer greatly and so we should be mindful not to look at the emotive cases of occupational asthma in determining what is free and what is not.

Convincing any government that free prescription medicine for asthmatics is an essential move to promoting better health, will be extremely difficult. As I said before, it’s a source of revenue. But nevertheless it’s a challenge that we will pursue, and we will be pursuing through our Parliamentary Group. He’s going to be busy this year isn’t he John McDonnell? We’ll push it through the TUC. I’m not saying it’ll be a motion to the TUC, that is something the Executive will look at, but it’s most certainly one of those things that is worthy enough to go there. But it will most certainly also be raised by the National President at the Asthma Project Board. These are the sorts of motions that could help re-elect a government. And it’s something that the Labour Party should be giving consideration to if they want our votes in the future. Delegates, please support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, those in favour, against. That’s carried. Motion 62.
Fat cats pay in the NHS – That this Conference condemns the huge payments given to consultants, doctors, health officials etc, while nurses face pay cut/pension increases that will cost them thousands of pounds in pay cuts.

Unidentified Speaker: Mr Chairman, members of platform, Delegates, visitors to Conference. I can speak on the North Staffordshire Hospital because figures I have for fat cats. And the way the money is used. And we know the hole is that big, it’s that big we don’t know what to put in it. Conference, new figures show 97 workers at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire were paid in excess of £150 to £250,000 in the year 2010/2011. With 31 being paid more than this, and over the last year, this hospital had an annual budget of more than £400 million. But the hospital’s Chief Executive Julia Bridgewater was paid between £260 and £370,000. It ensured, and this was published in July. And the consultant at the hospital had been paid £318,000 in the year 2009/2010. It makes him the ninth highest paid worker in this entire NHS. In the same year a radiologist put in a pay claim for £16,000 for carrying out work on a Bank Holiday. Conference at the top wage earners may only be senior doctors, it just shows what they negotiated for themselves under the new consultant contract. For doing work they previously did for nothing, now getting paid for. And GPs, this astounds me, doctors being paid £65 for each individual invisible patient at a cost of £162 million to the NHS. And the Trust that has paid 250 consultants £1000 a day on how to run their costs down. Conference the Health Secretary is out of touch with people. He appears to be from another planet, he is endangering our health by planning to slash the wages of nurses and paramedics. His postcode lottery will cut the salary of staff in the NHS, especially in the North Midlands, the South West and East Anglia, and this will drive many vital workers out of the NHS. Also, planning to cut my rights to have a decent health. The Department would also, likelihood, spare the top paid like medical consultants, chief executives, thus ensuring the cutting of the low paid staff. Conference every MP that has a seat in the North Midlands, South West and East Anglia should vote for a Tory salary cut in their earnings of at least 20% of their own £673 Parliamentary earnings to help fill this black hole that they have created. I ask you to support this Motion. I move.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Comrade can you just give your name, you forgot to give your name at the start. No I know, but can you just put it in there so we’ve got it for the record.

Brother George Tittensor – Branch 392.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded? [laughter] No I was just saying formally seconded. No speakers, okay. Conference, the Executive Council would ask you to support the Motion. Those in favour, against. Carried. Got a break for a brew, 20 past three, on the dot. It’s either that or you’ll be here till tea time tomorrow.

[tea break]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Delegates could I also remind you people are actually buying these then donating them to us back so we keep getting more of them. So thank you very much for your kind generosity, but every time you buy one and you give it us back, we just have to sell some more. So you have to keep with your generosity, it’s a bit like Live Aid, we want your money. Okay? I learnt my lesson on that. I’ve got to say, I heard this one about four skinheads right? But I’m not going to say it from the platform, I don’t know if you know anything about it?

Right Conference. You got to be really quick and if you’re really, really quick and you have a note in your possession. Allegedly it’s money, yes, if you’ve got a note in your possession and
in the serial number you’ve got three twos, in any sequence, they don’t have to be together. Anybody who’s got three twos on some paperwork with the Queen’s head on? Has anyone got one? Right well you have to come down here. We’ve got one here, and we’ve got one there, oh, that’s it, first two, got the colleague over there in the blue zip top and that was it, and a lad there, and a lad there. Thank you very much. I think that’s it is it Bill? You’re doing well look at that.


[applause]

Region 4 Mark Baker, Seamus Farrelly, Ian Gregory. So Mark will be the first Sub yes. Region 5, Keith Hutchinson 51, Craig Olley 27, Dave Lawrence 27, William Brennan 12. Therefore it’s all you, but obviously Keith Hutchinson is the first Substitute.

[applause]


Okay. Conference back to, okay. Also when we have the break so when you arrive to Conference in the mornings or during the afternoon if you’re visiting the stalls. The stallholders at their own expense put a lot of freebies out on the stalls and they’re there for people to take. What’s not there for people to take is the stuff that they haven’t put out on the stalls and the stuff that’s actually stored behind their stalls. And you know, we’d ask people to be you know considerate about the materials that people are holding behind their stalls, and wait until actually the stallholders have put them out before taking them [applause] to ensure that everybody has a fair opportunity, and to make sure, you know that we treat our stallholders and our guests with respect because they sponsor our Conference and we want to encourage them to keep coming back.

Okay. There is a box of pens that’s been taken from Thompsons, and if the person who’s got them would like to leave them somewhere and return them, at the end of Conference, we’d appreciate it, thank you very much.

[applause]

63 No 3 Regional Council

That this Conference agrees that the age of breast screening for women should be reduced from 50 years of age to possibly 35 years of age as it is the most common cause of cancer in women 35 years of age and under in the UK.

Sister Kim Elvidge – Branch 367: I’m actually here to move this Motion, it’s my Motion, I actually wrote it at Branch, and I wouldn’t have been able to do that without the help of the fantastic Willie Calhoun at Shop Stewards that I went on because he taught me how to do it so, from previous conversations, please see Willie and I’m sure he’ll help you out.
The question should be why do women have to wait till 50 years of age to be invited to breast screening in the UK? Breast cancer accounts for at least 15% of all cancers in women between the ages of 15 to 34 and rises significantly again between the ages of 35 to 49. Research shows that 40% of all years of life lost to breast cancer are at that age. The United States offer and recommend breast screening at the age of 40, and so does eight other European countries. It shouldn’t be a matter of further debate that younger women in the UK should be offered it, they should be. At present the only way younger women can have access to breast screening is to pay privately at a considerable cost to themselves. Breast cancer when detected at any early stages, as with any other cancer, gives the sufferer a far better chance of survival due to earlier treatment. Women under 50 should have just as much right to this early detection. It could be argued that it is all the more important for younger women, as they are a higher proportion of aggressive cancers, so therefore early detection is paramount. Please support this Motion, thank you.

Sister Claire Hinchcliffe – Branch 558: I’m here to formally second the Motion. Last year I was diagnosed with having a tumour in my chest, and I ended up having to have it removed. Luckily enough it wasn’t cancerous. At that time I was only 23 years old. Now personally I don’t believe that this Motion goes far enough. As Kim’s just touched on, it’s women a lot younger than 35 and I just believe that we should be screening younger women for this type of thing. Thank you.

Brother Michael Lynch – Branch 505: I certainly would echo the call of the last Delegate there in saying that I don’t think this goes far enough. We done a survey and we done resolutions in Newcastle Council last year and we put in for 20 to 25 years old. In my life outside of here I work for Cancer Macmillan Cancer Support and we meet people every day, we see people and we talk to people who have this you know, so please support it, and let’s get this put on the agenda. Thank you.

Brother Wayne Gammon – Branch 298: I would ask you to support this Motion. I have personally been involved in the fact that I know what devastation can be to women who have had breast cancer. My wife suffered this many years ago, and it’s the after effect that people don’t realise, it causes a lot of shall we say mental trauma and that can take as long as the cancer to get over. What we also need to remember, men also suffer breast cancer. Please pass this Motion.

Brother Jeffrey McCarthy – Branch 458: Up here to ask you to support this Motion. This is only the second time I’ve ever written anything down when I’ve come to the rostrum at Conference. That’s because the subject is very raw with me at the moment. I want you to support the Motion, wholeheartedly, I believe the Motion does not go far enough. All cancers should be screened for at the earliest possible stage as prevention is both better in terms of saving lives, and terms of saving money, when you screen at the earliest possible stage, and should be carried out. Cancer doesn’t choose gender, if you’re male or female, it will attack you, whether you’re young or old it will attack you. I’ve written this down because I knew I’d lose track. I lost my brother last year, at 51½ years of age. And why did I lose him? Because he hadn’t been screened for cancer. I ask you to support this Motion. Thank you.
Sister Sarah Woolley, Branch 580: Again, just repeating what everybody else has said. I support this Motion wholeheartedly. At 25 years of age I have to wait my lifespan again to be screened. Why should I? I’ve already had a scare, and told I was too young for breast cancer. It doesn’t matter what age you are, it’ll attack you anyway, it doesn’t care what colour you are, what age you are, what sex you are. We need to support this, it needs to be done, please support.

[applause]

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Platform, Delegates. With the changing lifestyles over the last few years and cancer being mentioned more than ever in the news with younger and younger sufferers I think it is important that the age for screening gets reduced from 50 to 35. My sister suffered from breast cancer, and thanks to the screening programme, and treatment she has thankfully been in remission for the last two years. Please support.

[applause]

Sister Julie Knight – Branch 105: First time speaker. Platform, Delegates. I’m here to support this. I turned 50 in 2000, knowing that you know, you get screened, and I went to my doctor, I asked about the screening and I was told that actually I’m not due to be screened until the end of this year. So in actual fact you don’t get screened at 50, I’ll be 52½ by the time I get screened. I had a very good friend, very good schoolfriend who died at 28 of this illness so you know, just support please.

[applause]

Brother Paul Norris – Branch 189: Chair, Platform, Delegates. I’m here to support this and I will tell you why. I have a 20 year old niece who went through months and months of chemo and eventually lost her breast and became suicidal. So I would urge you, support this Motion, as one of our friends said over there, it is not so much, it’s bad enough having this atrocious disease, the aftermath is worse.

[applause]

Brother Michael Bates – Branch 459: I suggest you all support this Motion. I’ve got a father who’s just had cancer, he was 73 and the man at the side of him in the next bed was 33. There’s no age.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion. You should support it, them women by God they’re a finest thing God ever put on earth [laughter].

[applause]

Sister Monica Currie – Branch 508: I’m also here to support this Motion. I’ve got four older sisters and one of them’s just diagnosed in December. My three other sisters who are over 50 got tested no problem at all, but because I’m under 50 I’ve got to wait and I’ve got to go through a process to my doctor, who’s got to get a consultant and six months later I’m still waiting for the first stage. So please get this age down because it will save lives.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Other speakers? Vi, on behalf of the Exec.

Sister Vi Carr – Branch 505: Responding on behalf of the EC and speaking in support of Motion 63, breast screening. I firmly believe that the age of breast screening for women should be reduced from 50 years of age as if detected early the diagnosis will not be so severe. It’s the most common cause of cancer in women, 35 years of age and under in the UK. I also believe that if
there is a history of breast cancer in the family there should be no restrictions on the age of young women to be screened. Please support. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Motion 64.

64 No 3 Regional Council

That this Conference agrees that the Aids Awareness Campaign that was last seen in the 1980s be brought back as at least 6,000 new cases of HIV are reported in the UK a year. The young and the old alike need to be made aware that this disease has not gone away.

Sister Kim Elvidge – Branch 367: I’m here again to move this Motion, it’s my Motion again, thanks to the help again of Willie. I’ve just got some statistics here that I’m fortunate enough to have, my eldest son is a health economist, he helped me out with the last thing, he does a lot of work and research on cancer and Aids and HIV. Around 86,500 people were living with HIV in the UK at the end of 2009. Of them a quarter were unaware of their infection. In 2010 there were 6,136 new diagnoses of HIV, contributing to a cumulative total of 114,766 cases reported by the end of December 2010. As of December 2010 which are the last actual statistics that are available there have been 26,791 diagnoses of Aids in the UK and 19,912 people diagnosed with HIV have died. Half, 50% of these people were diagnosed late. They was probably unaware of the fact that they might have Aids so at the time they was given treatment it was too late and half of them died. I would also just like to read a local snippet that was in our local paper, mine, actually Dave Murdoch’s home town of Hucknall in Nottingham. These was recent, dated February 24th 2012. The number of residents living with the HIV virus in Hucknall (inaudible) and the rest of the East Midlands is on the up. Figures show there are 2,650 patients in the region who have the illness while infection rates across the UK have trebled in the last 10 years. In a bid to help sufferers the green light has been given to a new drug. I think it’s called Etavirenz which combines three HIV medicines into a single tablet. As is stated with any illness, prevention is better than cure. We need the campaign back on the telly, on the billboards, we need the condom awareness back, it saves lives. Please support the Motion, thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? You’re secondering?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I’m here to second this. I don’t usually come up with big speeches but on this occasion I think it’s needed. This is an education issue so today I’m going to try and shed some light on the anomalies within the HIV and HIV Positive antibodies testing. If you were to test me for chicken pox I should test positive for antibodies because I’ve had chicken pox. It does not mean that I’ve got it, it means that I’ve had it and I’ve now got the antibodies. I’ve recently read a book and it’s called Are You Positive? It’s available free to download through your Kindle from Amazon. It transpires that people have been tested as positive for HIV antibodies, not HIV. When the result comes through they’re then put on the drug regime and within two years most of them were dead. The testing equipment and the drugs were both supplied by the major multi-national drug manufacturers. It was also carried out in mostly black areas of the USA and of course the continent of Africa. The question is is this an ethnic cleansing issue, and in my opinion yes it was. So for them, the drug companies, win win, for the poor unfortunate person who was believed to be HIV Positive, it was a death sentence. Read the book, be aware, spread the truth, but I do say support.

[applause]
Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Platform, Delegates. If HIV is detected early enough it’s not a death sentence, so people must be aware so they can go and be tested earlier. Please support.

[applause]

Sister Stacey Oakley – Branch 253: Again I’m here to support this Motion. I don’t know about you lot but I can’t sit down a pub on a Friday night or even sit on a bus without hearing young girls talking about who they’ve slept with, they haven’t used protection, and what they can do about it. Chlamydia gets mentioned, gonorrhoea gets mentioned, but Aids never gets mentioned. I think people have forgotten, there is a virus that is about, and again the wording seems to be put back that it’s there, it’s real and you can, it can happen to you. That’s all, please support.

[applause]

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: To die of Aids is a tragedy, even worse is to die of ignorance. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference the Executive would ask Conference to support the Motion, and the Mover’s right, far from it being a problem of the past it is an epidemic. The UK Aids statistics show that there are 91,500 people living with HIV in the UK. And the really worrying part of that statistic is that 24% of them don’t realise they have it. A recent report that was carried out by the House of Lords Select Committee into HIV and Aids in the UK noted despite a growing epidemic and increase in numbers of people in treatment aware of HIV and Aids in Britain has actually fallen off the public radar. More resources should be redirected towards HIV was their outcome. But before that report was concluded the government actually announced that it was cutting the budget by £28 million, and that’s why we say no to the cuts. Please support the Motion.

[applause]

To the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Olive?

Sister Olive Molloy – Branch 577: Turn to your agendas please to Motion 80, Motion 80 is withdrawn. The rest stand 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88 falls if 87 carries, 89 stands, and 90, 91 stands, 92 stands, 93 is withdrawn, 94 stands, 95 stands, 96 stands, 97 stands, 98 and 99 stand, and last of all we’ll be taking Emergency Motion Two. Thank you that’s the end of this report.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you Conference, do we accept that report? Yes? Anyone against? Thank you. Find me page now. Sixty five, Motion 65 thank you very much.

65 No 7 Regional Council

Conference agrees that where private cosmetic surgery has been undertaken the NHS should not have to pick up the bill if the said surgery goes wrong or found to be faulty.

Brother John Halliday – Branch 701: Chair, Platform, Delegates. Conference with cuts to NHS funding, the closure of A & E departments, ward closures because of a shortage of nurses, and waiting times getting longer, can it be right for the NHS to pick up the bill to put right mistakes made by these private companies? Conference if elective cosmetic surgery goes wrong, these private medical companies should be made accountable. Profits should not take priority over the duty of care and the NHS should not pick up the bill to rectify these mistakes. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: We had a big debate of this at Regional Council, and we left it open. Although I agree with a lot of the sentiments what John’s put, I mean these cosmetic surgery, I mean a lot of them’s young girls, you know, having breast implants and what have you, even had a young lad had foreskin surgery and that carry on. You know what I mean? It’s not something I agree with [laughter] but at the end of the day…..

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Standing Orders (laughter/applause).

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: What I’m trying to say to you, if it goes wrong then as the National Health Service you wouldn’t like to see your daughters struggling, you know, I mean, if the private clinics can pick up the bill, but if they can’t pick up the bill surely to God the NHS should sort them out.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Can Geoff Atkinson make sure he goes to Standing Orders please [laughter].

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: I actually oppose this, there was a lady in the local paper the other week that had been over to Tunisia and decided to go and get a breast enlargement. She travelled back over here and suddenly she was in the shower and an open wound. She went back to Tunisia, they attempted further remedial work and she came back over here. She then developed sepsicaemia, went to the NHS over here and was treated and has had three sets of further operations. Because she’d paid for the operation on her credit card, she’s now received some compensation back of £12,000 but I bet you she’s not going to give that back to the NHS.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Obviously part of that debate we’re not going to repeat but obviously Conference the Executive would ask the Conference to support the Motion. The Executive Council would ask Conference, I’ve lost my words, the Executive Council would ask Conference to support the Motion. I mean this is why we campaigned for an NHS isn’t it, I mean the private companies want to come in make billions out of you know people, and you know, charge us all sorts of astronomical amounts of prices but they don’t want to take any of the responsibility, so Conference we ask you to support the Motion.

[applause]

To the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Emergency Motion One.

Emergency Motion One

That this Conference calls for support for our brothers and sisters at RF Brookes Leicester who will be taking strike action for four days commencing this Thursday, defending their redundancy package.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Two Sisters acquired this company, purchasing it off Premier Foods. Since they’ve taken over there’s already been one massive round of redundancies, and they’ve already planned another two I believe later on this year. This Mr Boparan has walked in and realised that he’s going to be closing the site slowly clearing the place out so to speak. And suddenly its took a direct attack on the redundancy package. Where they had an enhanced package his aim is to implement and impose a Statutory redundancy package. I think it’s absolutely disgraceful the way he’s treating our people. He’s caused chaos on many, many different sites including Gunstones Corby. We’ve had issues with Corby while we were doing the recruitment, we, he tried to attack terms and conditions, and I think we need to send a clear message to Mr Boparan, that this Union will not tolerate bully boy tactics or intimidation on our members, and we will fight back. Thank you.
[applause]

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

**Brother David Suddards – Branch 561:** I’d ask you to support this Motion, being in a similar position a few years ago at Bradford where we had some 400 redundancies. Having said that though at Bradford they did get a reasonable redundancy package, makes all the difference to those who lose their jobs. Support the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Sedge I don’t know whether you wanted to speak on Emergency Motion Number One? I know you’ve been getting fined but we’ll give you two seconds, yes, yes, [laughter], I hope it was a heavy fine. Obviously this is the Emergency Motion in relation to the Two Sisters dispute.

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** I apologise to Conference for my discretion [laughter]. I want this Motion 100%, RF Brookes, let’s support them, and never mind, we have to have a collection fund, we’ll have a collection fund. Support them 100%.

[applause]

**Brother John Halliday – Branch 701:** I think Tony took part of mine away that our support should be seen as more than vocal, that we should have a door collection for these members who will suffer some hardships. Four days wages lost is a great deal of money, so I think we should have a door collection for them. I would move.

[applause]

**Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359:** I work in the factory next to RF Brookes. I know what those animals, I won’t call them bosses, call them animals what they are, are doing. It’s not even a hidden agenda. Now this strike it’s the last thing we wanted to, it’s the last thing they wanted to do, but the easiest analogy I can give you is that if you square up to a bully, and he’s a great big muscle guy and you ain’t so big, you might not win the fight, but you give him a bloody nose and a black eye, the next guy he tries pushing around, if he thinks hey, I might get a few licks here, he’ll think damn twice about doing that again. Here’s something else to consider. People are watching Brookes, they’re watching the Union, and if we hadn’t gone on strike, they’d turn round and say what’s the point of being with that lot? They’re toothless old dog, they’ve got no, all bark and no bite. Everyone realises that strike action hurts the members and it’s the last thing we want to do, but we’ve got no choice. Guess where I’m going to be later on this week? It’s going to be on that picket line with my brothers.

[applause]

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313:** Platform, Delegates. I’m in shock mode, I was expecting a lot of people to get up and have queues on both sides of the rostrum, on this Emergency Resolution. This is not an attack on one, this is an attack on all of us.

[applause]

Across the whole of our industry we have been tackled as a Union day on day, week on week, month on month and this is how we go about our National Annual Conference? I expected major lines, nevertheless, I still understand that we are passionate trade unionists, we are Bakers Union and we will support whatever site needs our support. But I want the majority of us to have one consideration, this is a four day strike, starting on Thursday, I will be heading straight to RF Brookes Thursday whatever time it may be because it’s an all dayer. If it’s at all possible, I know it’s a travelling day, if we can get the message down there and show our members our colleagues that we’re united and we can support them, because we’re all getting paid, but I
understand you know, if people, they’re travelling in the totally other direction and they’ve all got commitments, we understand but, we should have some form of support and whoever can [applause] should make the effort and go and stand on that picket line.

[applause]

Furthermore, I believe as a Union we are getting our basic principles totally, totally wrong, because if we just take Premier Foods who I work for, Hovis Birmingham, each and every Hovis site is getting attacked in one way, shape or other, but we are not coming together as a collective unit, you know, we are all doing our own little things, where we are letting ourselves and each other down, because I remember a National meeting of all Hovis sites not so long ago where we all made the commitment that we would stick together, where they attack one we will show them in force, and we’ll have some sort of uniform action and yet we are not doing it. We have Wigan being attacked, we have Birmingham being attacked, Nottingham being attacked, all of the Premier Hovis sites being attacked yet we all tackling them singly, and there is certain of our sites that are communicating with one another, but not all of us are doing that. So we are falling at the start, we need to be positive, we need to show them that we are united and we have got the strength so my basic word is let’s start on a positive, let’s show the brothers and sisters at RF Brookes that they have our support and if we can get down there, please get down there. Thank you.

[applause]

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Obviously I’m up here to support this. Don’t actually know what you’re looking for here H, but if it’s a bucket collection and people are going to give to the bucket collection, please don’t put 25 pence in, they’re going to be off work for four days. You need to dig a bit deeper, could be you tomorrow, could be you next week, get your money in properly. Ask you to support.

[applause]

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582: We’re all in the same position, each and every one of us that are here today are under threat. We need to stand for these people and help them. If we can get to their place of work, then get there, picket the line, do whatever we can, put money in a bucket, do what we have to do. I support.

[applause]

Brother Andrew Dalby – Branch 3579: Obviously I was at Gunstones, know exactly what you’re going through, I’ve been faced challenging times in the last four to five months. And I just want to come to the rostrum and basically wish our friends at RF Brookes in Leicester the best of luck in the next few days, and let’s stick together and show your unity and make sure these bullies aren’t going to get away with it.

[applause]

Brother Paul Crandon – Branch 256: You can rest assured that us brothers from Avana Bakeries will be calling in the way down on Tuesday, and we’ll look for everyone else to support us on the way down.

[cheers/applause]

Sister Shobhana Patel – Branch 347: First time speaker. I’m here to 100% support and ask you to support please. We are one family and when our family member is in trouble we should support and stand by them. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.
Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: First time ever that I’ve got up to Conference and asked Conference to support without first asking the Executive Council whether they’re going to support. I don’t think there’s a choice here, I don’t think anybody has a choice on whether we support these workers. But let’s look at the company we’re dealing with. I’ve made innuendo all the way through this Conference when I’ve talked about the companies who, or the company who are coming to take away terms and conditions from our members. Right across the company, right across the country. I think first of all it’s to salute the brave workers at RF Brookes, for a really brave decision [applause]. And think about it, what is potentially a massive sacrifice, because we know what type of employer we’re dealing with here. This is showing the folly of what TUPE’s about, the TUPE legislation is not worth a carrot, it’s not worth the paper it’s written on. Those people in RF Brookes just like in other parts of the Two Sisters, believe that they inherited a two and a half times Statutory redundancy. That’s what they got when they worked for Premier Foods, and that is what they should expect when their terms and conditions are transferred to Two Sisters. But this company’s got different ideas about that, they believe that they can just say well it wasn’t really an agreement, we never had nothing written down as an agreement, it was a policy. It was a Premier policy and of course that’s not Two Sisters’ policy. They think that that aggregates their decision.

This is a company who I’ve met about three times, I’ve met the top guy Ranjit Singh, I met him in Birmingham, and I spoke to him, I said look you know one thing we’re not going to do, we’re happy to sit down as a trade union, we’re happy to sit down and talk to you about anything, because that’s what you do. You can’t just talk about the things that we want, but not the things that they want. So we’re happy to sit down and talk I said, but I’ll tell you one thing that I’m not going to do, Unite can say what they want, and USDAW can say what they want, but I am not sitting down and dealing on a race to the bottom for our membership, wherever they may work within your group. And he looked back and he said no, he says, I’m not happy with that, he said, I want to be an employer with choice. He says I want to grow a £3 billion business and they’re very, very close, in fact after the purchase of RF Brookes, which I believe was £30 million, I know it was something that was really cheap, two huge factories plus Avana Cakes as well, he got it for nothing. But unfortunately the £3 billion business that he’s trying to build, he’s building it at your expense. Those people that work for Two Sisters in every single factory, without exception, are under attack. Every one of them, this guy is a friend of M&S, they love him. And why do they like him? Because he’ll give products to them cheap, he’ll give them the discounts that other people won’t. He’ll make sure that it’s delivered exactly when they want. And how do they do that? It’s not because he goes and sources cheaper ingredients, it’s not because he’s more efficient at delivering, it’s because he cuts the terms and conditions of the workers right throughout the group to make sure that then he’s got a pot of money that he can deliver in discounts. It smacks of what happened to Spillers in 1979, when they went out of business, we saw the consequence of that when thousands of bakers lost their jobs. RF Brookes, you may remember from I think from this rostrum last year, I spoke about the decision that Marks and Spencers had taken on RF Brookes, when they took away the pie business. And they didn’t take away the pie business because RF Brookes was no good, they took it away because Sanworth Brothers, a scab firm down the road, could make those pies a penny cheaper. That’s about profiteering, that’s got nothing to do with making them more competitive in the market, because I’ll tell you what the penny they made off Sanworth Brothers, there’s no way it would have been passed on to the consumer. And even if it was, I can understand when there’s a difference when somebody sees something a pound, and all of a sudden it’s 99p, we’re in a different lane aren’t we? But if it was 50p and now it’s going to be 49p it makes absolutely no damn difference to the consumer. This was purely about Marks and Spencers profiteering, and he is the friend of Marks and Spencers, they absolutely adore this man. Tesco love him, and the only reason they love him is because of the discounts that they give.
He told me you know that the businesses were struggling and his Human Resources director also told me, well the businesses are struggling. And what we do we buy these businesses up and we make them profitable and you know, it’s a real struggle, everything’s hard, everything’s tough, it doesn’t seem to be too tough at the top though, because Ranjit Singh and his wife both took £12 million out of the business. Now that’s not the action of a Chief Executive in a struggling company to take £12 million out, on top of any other bonuses and any other salaries, because I’ll bet you he wasn’t on £6.10 or £6.18 an hour. This is all on top, so that is the background that we’re dealing with, with Ranjit Singh. And we’ll continue to put pressure on him. What he doesn’t like though is when people stand up to him. And as the comrade just down here said, that is exactly what happened to Gunstones, and that’s exactly what I alluded to the other day. I’ll tell you, Gunstones would have been in exactly the same position as RF Brookes if they hadn’t have stood up to them. And I believe that those negotiations that are going on at RF Brookes eventually will bear fruit for us. Unless of course he has the master plan of closing the factory down. Because when we lost 200 jobs last year because of the Marks and Spencers thing and they were saying oh yes, we’re going to invest in a wood burning oven, that was a promise that was going to be there to keep the other 4 or 500 members we had in work. The reality is they took that much money out of the business, that there was no money to buy a wood burning oven, and so that’s not going to happen and so those jobs aren’t protected. And so now he probably sees that there is a redundancy situation going on, and he’s not worried about people on the dole, he’s worried about the personal cost to him, and that’s why he’s trying to reduce the cost of redundancy.

Comrades, when we talk about support, and we’re supporting the Motion, it isn’t just about delivering a policy to this Union. It’s about what we intend to deliver once we leave this room. Support has got to go just beyond putting your hand up and a big clap, and standing ovations and all those things, it’s got to go beyond that. Support first of all, and I’m talking directly to the companies who are within the Two Sisters group, all those companies represented here, and for those who aren’t like RF Brookes in Rogerstone Park, I asked the Official to make sure that when they go back to do it, is that we put a grievance in against this company for the actions they’re taking against the people at RF Brookes.

[applause]

If we build that solidarity right across the business, he’ll know he’s playing with fire, he’s not playing with one group of workers who he can pick off. If we all put a grievance in, and we all tell our members we’ve got to support these people, then I believe we can make this fellow bend a little. There’s got to be support from all Branches, if we can get all 220 Branches within this Union, we’ll most certainly be sending a letter of objection to him from the National Executive, but what importantly, we get Branches to write to Ranjit Singh and get his, I can’t give you the address at this moment, but you’ll get the address from Head Office. Write to him objecting to the way that he is treating working people, not just at RF Brookes, but right across the Two Sisters group. And maybe threaten that what we will do is we’ll start a campaign that says if you treat our members like this, we will seek to boycott your products when it goes on the shelves of Marks and Spencers.

[applause]

Support is about funding a picket line. We’re never, ever going to be in a position, in the Union of this size, of where you’re going to pay people full salary when they’re on strike, but we’ve got to make sure that the people have the ability to survive on that picket line. So make sure that people don’t lose interest, and that they can concentrate on what’s going on within that dispute. We’ve got to make sure that we can fund them and those people aren’t starved back to work. So any help that we can give them, we’ve got to make sure that we do it. And we will write to other
unions as well if this becomes a prolonged dispute. We’ll be asking for support right across the Trade Union Movement, and I’ll get that done through the Parliamentary Group as well.

Let’s not forget as I said before, that this is the same company that attacked Gunstones. It’s the same company that’s attacking Fox’s Biscuits in Batley and in Kirkham. It’s the same company who’s attacking terms and conditions in Pennine Foods. The same company who absolutely devastated the terms and conditions in Matthew Walker. It’s the same company who are coming for Avana Cakes in Wales. And it’s the same company who are making big, big threats at RF Brookes in Rotherstone Park. This guy lives on threats. And it isn’t just unique to our Union, he’s also attacking the companies within the poultry business that he has. We called a joint meeting which at our behest, our Union’s behest and we got all our Delegates and we allowed Unite to come to it and their officials. We got them there, the poultry, they’re under exactly the same attacks, the only ones who aren’t under attack are the ones who’ve already capitulated down the road. They’ve already done it so they’re already on minimalist terms and conditions.

This fellow is a chancer, this fellow is going to take everyone’s terms and conditions. Believe me, if we do nothing, everyone will end up on minimum terms and conditions within the business. And what will happen? He will end up being that much richer. He’s made it onto the big Rich List, whoopee do. He’s made that, not because of his own personal prowess, he’s done it on the back of workers who he’s exploited. Delegates remember support’s got to go beyond putting your hand up in this room, it’s got to be about practical support when we go back. Write to your MPs, let’s get the questions raised in the House of Commons about what this shyster’s doing to people. Please support the Emergency Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote, those in favour, against.

Unanimous. We’ve also had a gift card donated from Mark Baker, for a £20 Pizza Express which he wants to donate to any strike fund or raffle or anything that we’re doing so if anybody’s interested in buying a £20 gift voucher, the offers start, 20 quid, yes? So if you want to come and see, who shall we give it to? Mr Fox, if you want to come and see Mr Fox and put an offer on the table to him, if it’s a good offer he might take it. But it’s got to be over £20. Okay, that’s £40 thank you very much.

[applause]

We’re going to be doing a collection as you’re leaving the building tonight, so you are going to have an opportunity to donate generously. And don’t forget there is a gift voucher that you can buy. Okay Motion 66.

66 Branch 505 Northumberland & Durham

That this Conference calls for the Bank reforms to be implemented with immediate effect.

Brother Michael Lynch – Branch 505: Conference in light of the independent commission on Banking Reform chaired by Sir John Vickers, and the John Vickers is not our John Vickers, this is another guy altogether. The government says it will prevent British banks from paying extremely high salaries and awarding obscene bonuses to their top directors. It also says that it will create a firewall between your ordinary retail sales sides and casino like investment departments. But Conference however none of this will happen before 2019, we’ve a long while to wait. And only after much consultation. Conference why the huge delay? A delay that will only protect the fat cats while the ordinary working man and women, the low paid, the disabled, and elderly are having numerous benefits cut with immediate effect, without any form of consultation whatsoever. How can this be right and fair? I move, thank you.

[applause]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Here in support of the Motion. It’s unfortunate that if we go back a couple of years when the bankers were hammering this country, it was actually under a Labour government. The reality, it was all initiated through the Labour government while they were in charge, and unfortunately the Labour government just sat back and did nothing. Unfortunately now we’ve got a different kettle of fish where we’ve got the ConDems in on top, and all they seem to be caring about is screwing the working class. Taking care of the 1% and destroying the 99%, and I think we’re going to struggle trying to ever get back into a level pot until we get rid of this government. Please support this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates. Yes we’ll support, I’ll support the Motion, but the day we handed over the £174 billion to bail them out we should have asked for the keys and we didn’t. That’s where the mistake was made, it’ll be a long haul now because the Tories will see that their backers are alright in this, because all of these bankers back the Tory Party. You’re on an uphill fight, but we had the chance when we had the money in our pockets and we were handing it over to bail them out. We should have asked for the keys.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, eh? Okay Conference the Executive would ask you to support the Motion. Those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Sixty seven.

67 Branch 390 Manor

The Union calls for the government to forcibly nationalise the Banks.

Brother Warren Broomhall – Branch 390: Conference, EC, Chair, President, Delegates. Speaking on Motion 67. This Motion was brought to one of our Branch Meetings by one of our members. The aim of this Motion is to put in control this country’s hard earned money back in the hands of its people. As one of our Guest Speakers said the other day, the economic crisis we face now is not of our doing, yet we are the ones having to bail it out, bailing out these fat cat bankers. Let’s make them accountable to us, please support. I move.

[applause]

Brother Richard Wainwright – Branch 390: Conference, here to second this Motion. The entire monetary system is set up to rob the 99% which is us of our wealth, and enslave us all into endless debt, the entire purpose of it. So I support this Motion, wholeheartedly, but with a little bit of a caveat. Really, if and when it returns to the government it should be under a Labour government. Thank you, please support. I move.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: Here to support this Motion. I have never known so many banks charge the amount they do for when people go into overdrafts or anything like that. At the moment we’re in an absolute financial mess, and we really need to have our banks nationalised by a Labour government who will work for us. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President, yes the Executive Council would ask Conference to support it, and I’ve promised that we will do everything that we can. I
personally think that we’ve got a snowball’s chance in hell of success though, of getting this government in particular to nationalise banks. And we couldn’t even get the Labour Party to back the Wealth Tax and the Robin Hood Tax when John McDonnell put it forward. People would rather go home than vote, so what chance we’ve got I don’t know. But in essence you know, Pat’s right, we already have examples of nationalised banks, Northern Rock, Royal Bank of Scotland where we own 71% of it and Pat’s right, the day we put the money in, taxpayers’ money, is the day that we should have took the keys and made sure they stayed there until that money was paid back. But I take that a step further. Because the profits of these cash generators should be there to repay the taxpayer, to cut the deficit, to ease the burden on working people, but there’s absolutely no chance of that happening. I’ll tell you what’ll happen, they’ll be returned to profit, and then thanks to us, they’ll be sold on. And they won’t be sold on to shareholders who are workers, to be perfectly honest, I don’t think a Labour government would even keep hold of them as a nationalised bank, they’d be passed on to the rich, they’d be passed on to those who plundered us before. They’re all, the Tories are too wrapped up in appeasing middle England. Keeping the captains of industry sweet. Got to say it didn’t change under Labour last time, there’s absolutely no chance of it happening with this rag tied bunch of shysters. Believe me, Northern Rock will be sold off and it’ll be sold off at a knock down price, in exactly the same way as our gas, our electricity, our water, the building societies, our coal, our telephone, and our railway network were. They’ll be sold off in exactly the same way as they’re selling off the lucrative parts of our National Health Service. Unless of course we react to it. There’ll become assets of some multi-million pound donator, somebody probably who donates to the Tory Party, who will then hike the charges back up to us. That’s the way the Tories do things. I know we ran successful campaigns against the Pasty Tax, and I know people ran successful campaigns against the caravan tax, and against the buzzards being culled and all those sort of things that were happening down South. But this is about an organisation that offers billions, not millions, it’s not a revenue like VAT, this is massive, massive money. Every transaction that they do makes the bank money. Chris was right you know, they charge extortionate sums, and they charge them to you. They don’t charge them to the rich because of course they don’t go into overdraft like our people do. So you go a pound overdrawn you may get charged £27 for repaying it back. These banks are guaranteed cash cows for the Tory grandees, and they’ll find themselves on a board with a really nice salary for doing absolutely zilch. Yes, the Motion’s got very laudable aim, and I suppose it’s a laudable aim that we can all aspire to, but that’s exactly what we will be doing, we’ll be aspiring, because I think it’s not got a snowball’s hell in chance of being there. But we will support it, and we will take stuff through the Parliamentary Group, please support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried, 68.

68 Branch 331/392 Birmingham/West Midlands

‘British Troops out of Afghanistan’ – This Conference is mindful of the continued loss of life amongst British troops in Afghanistan. It would seem that government and military consider our troops to be expendable. This Conference agrees that this carnage must not be allowed to continue and calls for all British troops to be brought home within the next twelve months. Let the government do something the majority of British people want – BRING THEM HOME ALIVE, NOT IN COFFINS.

Brother William Bellamy – Branch 392: Mr President. This Motion I wrote it, I’ve followed it through. You may remember the Memorial Day bit they showed on the telly. The theme through it was remember the dead, fight for the living. I’m trying to do that, fight for the living. May
only be in a small way. I want to take you with me. We all know that our troops in Afghanistan are getting a right belting. Every week it’s on the telly, more troops killed, and as far as government’s concerned, they’re expendable, they couldn’t care less. Well I’m saying, this Resolution says, that’s enough, we’ve had enough of that, the carnage must stop. So fair does, if you agree with me and you will vote for this, you will join in the fight for the living. What we need is our troops to be brought home alive, not in coffins. That’s no good.

[applause]

Chair, I was a bit surprised when I had people living in my street, coming to me and asking me if they could vote on this. How the hell did they know? It’s my lads in the pub giving it plenty of that. Well fair does, I had to explain, no, you can’t vote on it, this is for our Annual Conference, I had to explain the system to them. Well can we come and vote? I said no I’m sorry, you can’t do that. Well they said see what you can do and when you come back come and tell us. Okay. So Delegates, I’m asking you please vote for this Resolution. Let’s be seen to be saying we do care about our troops and we do damn well support them. Bring them home. Please Conference.

[applause]

Thank you but it’s not me should applaud, it’s our bloody troops. Please vote for it, thank you.

[applause]

Brother George Tittensor – Branch 392: Here to second the Motion. As we all know we went to war on a promise. Somebody said something, and we upped and went. The war as we’ll never win, they’ve proved that we opened a tin of worms, and we couldn’t even cure it. They’re hoping now to pull out, pull out? They’re too late. The bodies that we’ve lost we’ve seen brought home in coffins, but there’s others as were maimed, as were never recognised, and those that commit suicide, that’s where our damage has been incurred by the troops that went into Afghanistan. I second.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion, like he said, it’s not a political statement or anything like that. You see these young lads and like I said yesterday, they’re from (inaudible) in Birmingham, Bethnal Green London, Salford, Scholes, Bolton and Liverpool. They’re not from Knightsbridge, Mayfair and I’ll tell you what I’m sick of, seeing bonny young lads, pictures of them, coming back in coffins in this country. I’ve had enough.

[applause]

Brother Michael Redshaw – Branch 459: Just like to support the Motion and to support our heroes.

[applause]

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: Here to support this Motion. We’ve had some heavy losses in West Yorkshire and all, just recently, Tony, it’s wrong. They told us that they went to war for homeland security, let’s bring them back and let’s secure them on the borders, not out there in Afghanistan.

[applause]

Brother Duncan Dale – Branch 560: I’m here to strongly support it, as a lot of you in here know that couple of years ago the Union and other people raised over £1000 for Help for Heroes. The only thing is that it’s a little bit frustrating when we’re all here, supporting, and we do support it, we want the lads back, but if you speak to relatives of the lads that are out there, the officers, some of the officers, they’re actually saying we’ve gone out there to do a job, we want to finish the job. They’re all for finishing the job they’ve gone out to do, and I still support what this
Resolution’s about, we do want our lads back and as relatives and friends we want them back, and our countrymen, but let’s bear in mind that they are insistent that they finish the job they’ve gone out to do. Please support, thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Michael Lynch – Branch 505:** Conference it’s time they did come home. There’s 400 and odd been killed in Afghanistan. I remember reading when they first went in, said I hope there’s nobody killed here, 414 lives lost needlessly. And the cost, £20 billion at the moment. I stood here a few years ago condemning the war in Iraq, a war that two people should have been took to court under the Human Rights rule, Blair and Brown, war for oil and (inaudible). We talk about what’s happening in Syria, the conflicts around the world, and there was a lad on the television just a few weeks ago, saying why is nobody interfering in Syria? Because there’s no bloody oil there or nothing. Please support.

[applause]

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** Yes, bring them home, the thing is they shouldn’t be there in the first place. We’re not the policemen of the world, I’m getting sick of saying this. Why have we not gone into Syria? There’s no oil. Why have we never gone and sorted Zimbabwe out? There’s no oil. We’re not the policemen of the world, it’s got to stop. Support it.

[applause]

**Brother Scott Meadon – Branch 388:** Conference, basically I’m just, I strongly support this Motion. I’m just sick of turning the telly on, news, all the time, another British troop’s been killed like. At the end of the day they should take them out the carnage and bring them home, safe, as soon as possible. Thank you, please support.

[applause]

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** I’m going to sit on the fence, but I just want to give you a few thoughts on this, and raise a few comments on the wording of this Resolution. You talk about loss of life, of the innocent, what about the innocent millions and millions of people we’ve dropped bombs on and killed? Can anyone think, and, you know, you’re talking about 450 odd number, you’ve killed thousands and thousands, banging bomb after bomb. I work in a bakery because I choose to work in a bakery. People who work in the armed forces choose to do precisely that. Unfortunately the government are the ones to blame behind all this. They went in with ulterior motives, they went in with the excuse of Bin Laden, yes? That wasn’t, they weren’t after Bin Laden they wanted to cause chaos and the reality is it’s cost this country an absolute extortionate amount. We’re talking about carnage, carnage? Some of the photos that you see on TV, that’s what I call carnage. What about the abuse of the prisoners that took place from British troops as well as American? Yes? So you’re quick enough, you don’t, you have to consider all these things, it’s not just about our troops, we have to consider some of the chaos that they’ve caused. Thank you.

[applause]

**Unidentified Speaker:** Mr Chairman, members of the audience, and comrades. I fully support this Motion, but I add a little bit more to that. When the troops come back, then if there’s a need to carry on fighting, then all the Members of Parliament and the people in the House of Lords should go out and carry on (inaudible) the fight.

[applause]

And the military should be headed by Tony Blair, he should be the Commander in Chief. Thank you very much.
Brother Steve Miskelly – Branch 3579: I served 13 years with Her Majesty’s forces and very proud to do so and I was engaged in two legitimate conflicts, I lost a few friends then, and this war that we’re on with now it’s totally illegitimate, illegal, illegitimate. It’s an American driven thing, if the Americans want to do it, let them do it. Britain, NATO, pull them out, bring troops home. Thank you very much.

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates. This war in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq were illegal wars. We were forced into the Iraq War by the Americans, and blew the country to pieces. But one thing was protected in Iraq was the oil refineries, they wasn’t blown to pieces, because Dick Chaney was the biggest shareholder in them, all our young soldiers rushed to it, was out there protecting his interests. In Afghanistan, we went, these people that sent the soldiers there, they sent arms, they trained the people that they’re fighting now when the Russians was there. These people are, I don’t know what to call them, they don’t mind, they don’t go, they send the soldiers but they don’t go, they don’t do no fighting. The truth is why did we send them there in the first place? But, we had no say in that, that’s the Army that’s what it is, you’re a soldier they send you, and that’s what happens in war. War is just legal murder that’s all it is. Conference I support the Resolution, but these people that sent them there have a lot to answer for. They have a lot to answer for, they train these people in Afghanistan to fight the Russians, and then when the Russians left they had to go in and fight these people that they already trained. They must be stupid some of them in the way that they carry on, but I support the Resolution.

Brother John Halliday – Branch 701: Here to support the Motion. I support the Motion from the point of view that in all conflicts you have to have a resolution. We faced in Northern Ireland, we faced 30 years of war. We were told repeatedly that the only way forward was dialogue. The war wasn’t won by either side, dialogue won the war, but the problem in Afghanistan is that the Russians couldn’t win the war. Whilst we were supplying arms to the Taliban, to fight the Russians, the Russians got out. We’re in the position now that there’s no dialogue in Afghanistan. You have the Taliban on one side and the Republican forces on the other. The Taliban’s never going to talk. They want to win a now great victory. So it’s best to get the troops out and let them get on with it. I support the Motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay? Joe? On behalf of the EC?

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566: Originally I weren’t coming down as, for my Branch, but I’ve been asked to ask for your support for this from the EC. Dave mentioned earlier about the five lads from the West Yorkshire, but they were from the regiment that I served some years with during the ‘70s. It’s now called the Yorkshire Regiment, but it was called the Duke of Wellington Regiment when I served. Yes it’s a sad thing when people, when we keep seeing them coming home in coffins. Obviously the Executive Council would ask you to support. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you Conference, to the vote. Those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Okay you can close your agendas for today. We’re going to move to one of the most important parts of Conference, where we recognise achievements by individuals so I’m going to hand over now to the General Secretary. While we’re preparing can I also make a
public apology, because obviously I’ve been made aware that in the Foodworker we’ve made an awful error, and we actually transferred somebody’s employment without actually consulting his current employer. And I would like to obviously make a formal retraction and hope and beg forgiveness from Jane Booker from MWR because quite clearly MWR has an employee called Sadiq and Thompsons do not, so I humbly beg your forgiveness Jane. Am I forgiven? Thank you very much.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Right thank you. Normally we do this on the last day but we still do have 26 motions so we’re going to get some of the awards out of the way today. I think there’s five awards we’re going to make today in total. I think first of all while I’m here I’ll actually do the Organising Gold Awards that we’ve got which are presented to members who we think have done you know, above and beyond the call of duty as lay members in the Organising field. And it’s to recognise them by the Executive Council, and we even put them in, they’re not real gold as you can see, but we put them in a frame and that. So the first award I’ve got is to Brother Paul Simpson, so if Paul can come down, I believe he is at Conference, he is.

[applause]

Can I say I did a fair bit of work at Corby with Paul so I know what he’s like, he’s, people don’t get past him without signing a card so, Paul, on behalf of the National Executive I’d like you to accept this Gold certificate and thank you for all your efforts. Hope you don’t go anywhere because we’re just waiting for the photographer to arrive. Oh we’ve got a photographer here, so, did you get one yes? Okay? Did you want to say a word.

**Brother Paul Simpson – Branch 356:** I’d just like to say thank you to George Atwall and Tony Lewis and a few other friends, Pauline Nazir, Geoff Atkinson, John Higgins, Alan Milne, and General Secretary, National President, for a warm welcome when I worked with them. Thank you very much.

[applause]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** The President’s already intimated you know, this culminated in a successful campaign at Solway Foods, which incidentally is part of Two Sisters which is Ranjit Singh’s company, so he didn’t like the fact that we got in, but we’re there and thanks to people like Paul. And also Colin Curtis who works for Solway doesn’t he? Can somebody just come up and pick it up on his behalf? And take it back to him? Okay Richard.

[applause]

Right which one are we going to do first? We’re going to do, is it the Organising one you’ve got Maria? Right, what, we have three awards again that are picked by the Executive Council every year. Two of which are sponsored by Thompsons, and one that’s sponsored by Molloy Whittle Robinson, but this is actually the first one that we ever did. Ever since I can remember, Thompsons have sponsored an Organising Award, and can I say that, again the person who’s this year’s recipient, I’ve known for many years, but I know, God love us, he works damn hard for this Union, I don’t know how he does it. He puts as much time in as anybody into recruiting members, and every single campaign that I’ve been on recruiting, this person’s been there. So I’m going to introduce Maria Nolan to present this year’s Organising Award, the Thompsons Trophy to Richard Wainwright.

[applause]

**Maria Nolan:** Good Afternoon Conference. Richard, on behalf of Thompsons I’m delighted to present you with the Organiser of the Year Award for the tremendous work that you’ve done in Region 3, as Regional President, Branch Secretary and we wish you the very best of luck in your new position on the EC. So well done.
Brother Richard Wainwright – Branch 390: I’ll be very, very quick, I just want to say a massive thank you to all the FTOs in Region 3. In particular Mr George Atwall who’s sheer passion and determination for recruiting and organising has been absolutely inspiring. There’s a couple of reasons why we’re committed to organising. One it’s for the life’s blood of this trade union, without it, we’ll wither and die. But the other one, the more personal reason for me, is we get access to those people out there who are in need of our services. Every one of us in this room does good work that makes a difference to people’s lives, and we have to remember that. There’s people out there being bullied, harassed every day, and we’ve got to get at them. We’ve got to form new Branches, and improve their working conditions, organise, organise, organise.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: To break it up a bit there, the second award is one that we haven’t had for many years, but we’ve had many people doing tremendous work for many years, probably going back to when the Union was first founded in 1847, and that’s the work in the field of health and safety. We’ve got a tremendous record as a Union, I mean we really do punch above our weight at all levels, whether it be at local level or it being TUC, GFTU or the TUCG. We really are recognised at the tops of the health and safety tree, and that being there is not just about the people who actually are selected to go to those meetings. It’s about the work that’s done on the shopfloor and recognised by the amount the way statistics dropped on accidents within the workplace in particular within our industry, and since the recipe for safety came in. Can I say, you know, there’s so many people who you could give this award to, who are doing tremendous work in health and safety in the Branches. But this year’s recipient is going to be presented with the Health and Safety Award which is sponsored by Molloy Whittle Robinsons. This year’s recipient Wayne Gammon to come down please.

Unidentified Speaker: It’s a pleasure to present the award to someone who has helped the Union keep health and safety at the top of the agenda, like so many of you have. Congratulations Wayne.

Brother Wayne Gammon – Branch 298: Thank you Delegates. Really all it is is just being there in the trenches, putting your head above the top and doing what’s required of us, making sure that all my members get what’s required. Thank you very much.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Last but by no means least, we have the Youth Award which again is sponsored by Thompsons. I don’t know whether it’s just us, I think the Trade Union Movement for many many years has took its eye off the ball as far as young people go. You know we talk about men in grey suits running the Labour Party, and that’s because we allowed it to. But there’s too many men in grey suits, sometimes darker suits, who, at the forefront of the Trade Union Movement and I, you know, it’s great to see young people coming through, they really can make a difference. I say this year’s going to be a major challenge for the young people within our industry, we’ve got for the first time ever, you know, for this Union, we’re going to have a Youth Executive Council member, and I think that puts an awful lot of weight on Rachel Mullen’s shoulders but it’s not going to be left just to Rachel because you know, you see all the young people around the room, who really contributed fantastically to this year’s Conference and we know will be contributing fantastically within their Regions and within their Branches. So they have a major, major role to play within this, to ensure that we bring new lifeblood, more young people into the organisation. I say every year we recognise
somebody who’s done you know, exceptional work and as I say, as a young person, we haven’t
got that many, we haven’t got enough young people who are activists, and it’s sometimes very
difficult to get somebody to come forward. But we did have a stand out candidate this year to
receive the Youth Award, so I’ll first of all ask the oldest solicitor we could possibly get to
award it [laughter], John Cartaigne, I’ll tell you John, he’s me mate, he’s me mate. Can I ask
John Cartaigne from Thompsons to come forward and present this year’s Youth Award to Sarah
Woolley.

[applause]

**John Cartaigne:** Just as Sarah’s making her way down, I had a chat with her yesterday and Sarah’s
from Greggs in Region 5, and I asked her what she sees as her role really, and she said that it’s
representing and supporting the members, and seeing that they’re settled. Quite apart from being
involved in organising and anything else that may go with the position she holds. And yesterday
there was reference to concerns about the advancing age of Union Officers and the future of the
Movement. Well following my short conversation with Sarah I was left with the deep seated
feeling of confidence, not only in the future of the Union, but also in her vision, her dedication,
and her ability. So it's a great pleasure for me to present this award to Sarah Woolley.

[applause]

**Sister Sarah Woolley, Branch 580:** I’d just like to thank Linda who is my first point of call if ever
I’m not sure of anything, bless her, Keith and my Branch, Angie, Ruth, you’re sat up there, Ian
our FTO, but also to Lizzie Dinning and her Branch because she sits on our company meetings
with us. I wasn’t really sure what to expect when I became a Union Steward, I thought I might
get a little Branch and walk around, you know, but it’s amazing and this is just the tip of the
iceberg coming to the Conference and finding out it’s so much more. So thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, you’ve got to exit by that door, dig
deep, remember what you’re supporting. I would take it with you because I don’t know what
they’re doing here when we’ve gone. All right okay, you can leave your stuff. Dig deep, half
past nine in the morning.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Can I just say there was a complaint made last night
after we left here by the neighbours over the road, about foul and abusive language. I’d say, can
I just say if you are going to the pub and you’re outside, you know, keep the noise down Ian.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Half past nine in the morning. Pete Barszczak, I believe
I’m seeing you somewhere, I don’t know where you are. You’re there. Don’t forget there’s a
gift card that we’re going to the highest bidder, see Mr Fox.
Wednesday 13 June 2012

Morning Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay we’ve got a two minute warning, and I think most of you are here anyway. John’s going to announce some winners in a second, but I’ve got a couple of winners in front of me. Obviously Frank Loveday was obviously out last night and obviously bought the right person a drink. It wasn’t me. But he’s won on the Westfield Health and so has Steph Irish, so obviously if you pick it up at break, I’m not sure what you’ve won.

Unidentified Speaker: Morning Delegates, winners of Learning Services quiz is Shobhana Patel, Number 3 Region, Imran Hussain, Number 3 Region, and G Halliday, Number 5 Region.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: In Yorkshire G is a J [laughter]. He told me that, you said J. And I listened as I always do. You ain’t got no orders to point Comrade, you ain’t got no order to point. You want a point of order? Well let’s hope it’s not being recorded. There’s no foul and abusive language, there’s definitely no singing, you know on Sunday we was prepared to put you up to sing The Red Flag but we heard you last night, you’ve got no chance [laughter].

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Conference, it was pointed out yesterday, I mean, I took my medicine like a proper lad, you know what I mean? But it has been pointed out to me last night that certain words in the English dictionary should be used at this Conference and I shouldn’t be fined. And I’ve looked a couple up [laughter].

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Just remember, they may be in the dictionary but it doesn’t mean we recognise them on the Conference floor mate.

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Clitoris, part of the female genitalia.

[applause]

Foreskin, part of the male genitalia. Conference I want my two quid back.

[cheers/applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It’s a good job Conference hadn’t started otherwise you’d be up at Standing Orders again, and it wouldn’t be two pound Comrade, it’d be ten, but it would be going to a good cause because it’d be going to our Strike Fund for the people at RF Brookes.

[applause]

And maybe tomorrow when you go home you would be that little bit more sober. If that’s at all possible. General Secretary, Roll Call.

[Roll Call taken]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: And again 100%, 173 Delegates present. Well done.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference obviously last night we took a collection on the door, and we pointed out the other day the generosity was fantastic. I’ve got to say your generosity and your solidarity to the people of RF Brookes was absolutely amazing, the final total on the collection was £1042.50.

[applause]

Absolutely fantastic.
Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Did you say Marilyn, which is really strange, she actually won a quiz last night, but the prize is 20 quid so she’s also donated that to it, cheers Marilyn. No the team, the team yes.

[applause]

All with their iPhones and all that.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: That’s £1062.50.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Can I make a suggestion that the EC match that money for RF Brookes?

[applause]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Can I make a suggestion that I take it to the EC first? You’ve got a new EC now.

Brother Martin Kelly – Branch 560: Just a little information for a lot of Delegates. It’s against the rules to ask Executive to double things and that, although as Ronnie’s pointed out, you’ll have to ask the Executive away from here. Okay.

[applause]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Martin’s right, and obviously that’s why I never say yes before, but the one thing I would say is that if we end up with the long protracted strike I would hope that the Executive Council does more than just double it.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Think you passed a Motion to make sure we did. Okay, Conference obviously we’ve got a busy morning, and I know a lot of people are looking forward to this evening and the fantastic dos that I know are going to be going on at Manchester with that famous singer from Waterloo, Las Vegas, although I’ve looked on the map and I can’t find it. But I’m sure they’re a star from somewhere Roy? I often go to the shop and can’t find my way back. And obviously the fantastic evening that’s going to be held at Ireland, and congratulations to the people who held all the events last night, especially to those in Wales, and obviously you know, well done to Watkins and Gunn for hosting that evening, what a fantastic evening, I think everybody enjoyed themselves, especially the people from Blackpool, and obviously we’ve now got a female Delegate from Number 4 who’s been christened a new Tony Sedgewick, so [laughter], I don’t know what that means but, you know, but absolutely fantastic and thank you for the invitation last night to Number 2, that was brilliant, Number 70. Sorry, 69, just testing you, you’re awake.

69 No 2 Regional Council

That this Conference supports that we should all share the belief that Occupy Bristol and St Paul’s London is a force for good as it expresses common hopes and dreams of us all, fairness for all in society. A more just world.

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates. Delegates the camp in Bristol and other cities around the world, London, many other cities in this country. Conference it was a great success because they did what we wasn’t able to do, because they organised themselves to get out. And the camp in Bristol, if we had to live in the same conditions as they had to in that protest in the middle of winter, and the rain pouring down on them, couple of inches of water on the ground around them. I joined the camp as soon as it started, and my job was to cook food and take it to them. And I did that for every week that they were there until the very end, and I
must say I was very grateful when the Union gave it, our Union gave it a grant, and Dave Dash
was a part of that, and also it was great. I must thank the Union greatly for it because I had
already spent £60 of my own money cooking great big curries, pots of rice, the kind of food that
people when they’re hungry will eat, and that’s what I did.

[applause]

And also, yes, Comrades, if I were a chef I would never cook for the rich to see them, they’re
spitting food out and throwing it round. Them people don’t know what it is to be hungry, they
don’t know what it is to be ready for a meal. But when you cook for people who was in the
camp, you could see how they enjoyed what they got. And they did, and I was pleased to be
doing it. The conditions were awful, hygiene and health and safety was deplorable. It was
deplorable, but this is the actions you have to do when you’re put to it. Yes they could say
you’ve no need to be there, nobody put you there, yes, these rich people put us there, that’s why
we were there. A just world is what we want, we’re not asking for to destroy them or anything
else. A just and fair world, that’s what we’re asking for. Well we, Dave and I, thing, got a
barbecue and brought it them, Dave brought food from Bristol, and we also brought them a bit
of Christmas. Janine made a fabulous cake and brought it and set it up, and Dave brought
sausages and rolls and helped me. We did our bit in Bristol. Comrades, for Christmas we got
them a huge big chocolate gateau and mince pies and we brought that to them on Boxing Day so
we were always engaged with them. People say I’m all this up here, but I can tell you, when
there’s a need for me I’m where it is needed, and I would be out there on the streets all the time.
I attended the marches in London, Manchester and Bristol. Comrades, there’s not much that you
can vote on now, because it is over, but I brought it here just to tell you what is happening and
what we have to do to get our rights. Conference I move the Motion, but it’s up to you people.
Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded. The Executive Council
would ask Conference to support the Motion. But not just support it, to actually go out and
actively be involved in it. I mean, Pat’s right, you know, the Occupy Movement is an absolutely
fantastic Movement. It’s brought the attention and shown light onto all the injustice is going on,
you know, not just in our country, but all round the world. The excesses of the bankers, I mean,
talk about poverty, I was reading this morning that in one particular club in London they
actually have cocktails on sale for £6,500. Six thousand five hundred pounds, that’s more than
some people earn in a year, you know, and they buy a drink at £6,500. You know but it’s not
just the people from Occupy that have shone a light onto the injustices in the world. But look at
what UK Uncut have done in exposing the £6 million owed by Vodaphone. These organisations
have really shone the light onto what’s really happening, and the inequality in society. So we
ask Conference to support the Motion, but not just to say we support it by our hands, we want to
encourage Conference to get involved, if there’s an Occupy round in your area of the country,
go down and support it. If the police are being moved in to move it, surround it, support them,
ensure that those people are protected. They’re there fighting for the good of the country, and
the good of the people, and that’s what we want. We want a people’s Movement, we want a
people’s country. And Pat was unbelievable, down in Bristol, going down, cooking curries, at
80, is it, are you still in your 80s or have you gone passed your 80s now? You gone past your
80s, you’re nearly 90 now aren’t you. Each year I make you older, and but I’ll tell you what, he
acts more like a 21 year old when it comes down to going out and being actively involved. And
he’s, I’ll tell you what, what a fantastic bloke, what an absolute fantastic bloke.

[applause]
You know, and we’ve got to make sure that only is, have we had Pat Rowley in this Union, but
we have hundreds and thousands of Pat Rowleys in this Union, you’re the future, you’ve got
your inspiration, that man was unbelievable during his time with the Bakers Food and Allied
Workers’ Union and still is. Look at him, see what you can achieve, see how he helps people.
Go out there, support the Motion, get actively involved with it. Support the Motion.

[applause]

To the vote, those in favour, against. Carried. Seventy.

70 No 2 Regional Council

That this Conference agrees that Whitehall’s catalogue of excess spending on government
credit cards must stop. Spending as high as £25 million in a year is excess spending, despite
orders to tighten their belts and cut budgets.

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates, this Resolution I support is the cause
why we had the camps in Bristol and other cities. Conference, it’s a terrible shame to see that
the government is spending on government credit cards now, they’re all allowed credit cards
and they can spend. I won’t spend too long on it. Spending as high as £25 million a year is
excess spending, despite the order to tighten their belts. Comrades you can see we’re not all in it
together, I move.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: I’m here to second this Motion. In work I have a, there’s a
thing, if I ever have to go out and get any sort of products, whether it be washing up liquid or
anything like that, I have to get permission of my Area Manager, permission off technical
department, everything, there’s a process for it. These government officials who’ve got credit
cards seem to think they can go out and spend whatever they bloody well like on our taxpayers’
money. It’s not on. I read in the paper the other day allegedly Baroness Warsi decided to take
her friend to Pakistan. Pakistan! Are you having a laugh? This is our money, let’s use it on
things which are right for us, not going on holidays. Thank you.

[applause]

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Platform, Delegates. Who does government think they are spending
like this? They should try to live on the money that we live on. Take the credit cards off them,
please support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: The Executive Council would ask Conference to support.
Those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Motion 71.

71 No 2 Regional Council

That this Conference agrees that New Labour fed the greed of the fat cats. For example,
boardroom salaries have risen 500% since the 1980s when average pay has risen three fold.
These salaries didn’t start rocketing in May of last year. They took off in the first decade of
this century under a party called New Labour. Company bosses now take home 145 times the
average wage in his company. What a scandal!

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates. I would have nothing to say to the
Labour Party if they a) controlled what these people were doing or allowed our wages to follow
suit. As long as you have money you don’t give a damn if a loaf is £10, if you have the £10. But
they have the money, we haven’t. They never, they’ve not suffered now under this recession, they’re quite happy, but we aren’t. Conference support this Resolution.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: Morning again. I’m here to support this Motion. Yesterday it come out that the fat cats had last year on average a 12% increase in wages. On average us workers only had a 1% increase in wages. It’s disgusting. This Tory government, it’s just totally wrong, totally, totally wrong. However I also believe the last Labour government, the Blairites, did not help themselves at all, because they also helped feed the fat cats. They didn’t do much about the banking reforms or anything like that. We need to support this Motion, and let’s get our Labour back to being a Labour Party for us.

[applause]

Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109: Good morning Conference. Mr President, Platform, I’m here to support this Motion. In supporting this Motion I just have one or two things to add to it. First of all I’d like to ask everyone of us here in this Conference, how many of us here own just one property belonging to us? How many of us here owns just one property to your name? In a core Socialist environment you are entitled to own just one thing to your name, one house, one car, nothing else. Maximum rate of income, and most of us in this house will own beyond three houses, which means you’ve already had an accumulated wealth, you’re moving beyond the working class construction in real terms. So don’t let us deceive ourselves. We are what we are not, we pretend to be what we are, but we are not. That’s the problem we’re having. We tend to call ourselves working class, but we own more than what the working class should own, and we call ourselves working class. It’s a big problem, it’s a big, big problem even within the Labour Party. We look back to the days of Harold Wilson after the World War, the Second World War, when he came up with the social constructiveness. He began the social reality, engineering public society, giving them hope, giving them life, giving them what they really intend to have. But this changed with time, coming back to the period of Tony Blair. When he felt that the circumstances surrounding the social constructiveness of Harold Wilson’s leadership was not what is necessary to move the British people forward beyond their limited capacity of thinking, and he came up with this issue of Third Way agenda, he (inaudible) over from the Conservative philosophy. The new liberal economic principles. And then by doing this he, re-engineering, empowering of the society, creating wealth, creating opportunities. But this was misused and for the first time in the first five years of Labour leadership in Tony Blair, there was the major increase in economic growth in the British system, and this was misused. For the five years that as I’ve seen. What we need for Labour to move on is not new Liberalism, but a Socialist constructed market economy. What we need for Labour is not competitive ownership, but co-operative ownership. What we need from you for the next Labour is not class society, but a strong workers’ right. What we need from the next Labour is not neo-Conservatism, but social democratic system. And so we need to be able to re-engineer what we really need for Labour to move forward from New Labour to what? What do we want after New Labour? We have not been able to construct what we need from New Labour, and so we’re able to find out what next we need from New Labour, then we’ll be able to understand. If, really, we want to build the new society on the grounds of socialist agenda, or we still going to remain, planning, working and constructively rebuilding a new Conservative ideology in the next Labour. Thank you very much.

[applause]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. We all agree New Labour did very little for the working class, if anything, they’ve helped feed the bankers, caused a lot of chaos in terms of the financial chaos that we’re all facing at present. But the reality is we really
need to ask ourselves who is to blame? And as far as I’m concerned, we’ve got to blame ourselves. Why? The reason why is we’ve all been cooped up and caught up in this capitalism. We forgot our Socialist values. We no longer get involved with constituencies, trade councils, yes? So I urge this group, this Conference that we go back and try and get involved within our communities. Try and join the Labour Party, try and get involved with the trade councils etc, and try and push and reclaim the party that was formed by the working class for the working class.

[applause]

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: You know, looking at the, what the bosses are on these days, I don’t know how the poor beggars manage. But one thing I do know, some people would say that there’s working class, we’ve got to tailor our aspirations, and I shouldn’t make, maybe I shouldn’t be wearing a shirt like this because I’m a worker. Or maybe I shouldn’t have more than one car, which I have got, old cars granted, but I’ve got more than one car. But I tell you what, I work bloody hard for them. And if they need any repair, maintenance, tax, insurance and the rest of it, it’s me that pays for it.

[applause]

The simple fact is, the bosses will often have an executive car, if it goes wrong it’s all right, you pay for it, it comes out of company money. You have a car, you pay for it. It would be nice to go back to the old days when everyone went to work on a bicycle, and it’s not going to happen, even in China, the aspirations of the people said they had to go forward and their dreams had to become more than every Chinaman will own a watch, a refrigerator and a TV, oh and a bicycle. The simple fact is don’t let any of those so and sos tell you that you can’t have something, because you’re working class. Because you’ve damn well gone out and earned it. On the other hand, you’ve got bosses, President rightly pointed out, spending £6,500 on a cocktail, that is obscene. You want to know what £6,500 buys in one lump? It can buy you a cocktail. Tell you what though, three quid in certain countries will buy the kit to do someone an eye operation to cure blindness from cataracts. And leprosy which has been wiped out in this country, but is still prevalent in lots of parts of the world, can be cured by one of the sulphurs, and if you were to go to the manufacturer and get it at the rate they produce it, last time I looked, a course of (inaudible) was 40 pence. And then they go on about £6,500 for a cocktail is reasonable. Support this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion. I think he’s an excellent speaker, he’s just got me going. Like he said, there’s nobody gives us anything, we work hard for what we get. I mean first time I left school when I was 16, I bought myself a pair of underpants, I’d never seen them, fantastic [laughter]. We work for what we’ve got, and like he said, nobody’s ever give us nothing. They don’t give us company cars, etc, support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Sixteen? I say that conjures up all sorts of pictures doesn’t it eh? Delegates, Conference, I’d ask you to support. I’m a bit confused because I don’t think it was really a Motion as such, it was more a political statement, but it’s one of those things that allows you to vent your spleen and to get out and do something about it. Because whether Conference agrees it or doesn’t agree it, we don’t have the power to change facts. And it’s a fact that Labour did nothing to stem corporate greed. I don’t 100% agree that Labour did nothing for working people. We may not have done enough, but I mean the Minimum Wage affected over a million people. The Social Charter which gave us the right to limit hours on
night work and all that, the Working Time regulations came as a direct result of a Labour
government, and of course the right to recognition for trade unions, which they don’t even enjoy
in Southern Ireland now and we’re in the year 2012. So we have got some things that we can
thank Labour for and many things that we can criticise them for.

The other fact is that there’s no relationship, no direct relationship between the boardroom and
the workplace. In many we’ve gone back to the master and servant sort of viewpoint, and that’s
how people are treated when it comes to things. The other fact is that this is a national scandal.
It’s a national scandal that’s been going on for years, and it’s not that it’s improving, it’s one that
is actually getting worse as time goes on. The question Comrades is what do we do to change
that situation? Governments that are complicit in the scandal are not going to change, it’s going
to be turkeys voting for Christmas. That is not going to change anything. They have exacerbated
the scandal to promote the demands of the people who support their parties, the people who are
the big donors.

I doubt that we’re going to get any employer who’s going to put their hands up to take
substantial pay cuts. As we’re told, and these made me laugh, that we need to pay high salaries
to encourage the very best people. And yet when it comes to the people who make the profits,
we’ve got to cut the wages of the workers so we can make them better to sell in the, out in the
field. Where does that, I mean, you know how do you square that circle? More for a director to
be competitive, to be, you know, able to come, and less for a worker to make the company more
demandable.

The other thing that really puzzles me and it’s something that’s raised its head recently, is this
question of regional pay. Where did that come from? They want regional pay for health
workers, they want regional pay for directors, these are all noises that are coming out of
Whitehall. And yet there’s no mention of regional pay for an MP. MPs’ll be paid exactly the
same salary band whether they live in John O’Groats or Lands End, or indeed in the capital.
Delegates this is one, the reality of this is that nothing is going to change without legislative
change.

Either an elected party has to be brave enough to put forward a multiplier which says how much
the top person in the company can be paid more than the lowest paid worker. I suspect though
that that’s going to be quite a long time in coming. I don’t believe that a Labour government
will change that. The other legislative route is to make it compulsory to have worker directors
on the board. And as I said yesterday, that’ll be a great move forward, the fact is though we will
never get enough for them to have an influence on that board, we’ll still be out-voted, even if we
have got full rights. And what we need is the full rights and also the power of veto.

The problem, Comrades, unless we get these conditions, we’ll be for the first time boardrooms
would then have real democracy. And the worker directors would be voted out before that ever
happens. Until that day comes, we have to rely on our power to negotiate, and if it isn’t
successful then the ultimate fallback of industrial action. That’s what we have to rely on if we
want to get things done. I’m sure it’s going to be one of those things that John McDonnell will
find very, very interesting as a core subject, to take forward, and I pledge that we will take it
through the Parliamentary Group, TUC and TUCG. I believe that all other unions are arguing
about exactly the same things, a fact put forward in the Motion, and I would ask Conference to
support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: To the vote, those in favour, against. That’s carried.
Seventy two.
Branch 580 Greggs

That this Conference lobby this government to ensure supermarkets’ profits are monitored to ensure our bakery industry is not forced to close due to supermarket price wars.

Sister Sarah Woolley, Branch 580: The profits supermarkets are raking in for selling under-priced bakery goods is crippling our industry and putting our members’ livelihoods at risk. They’re wrapped up in price wars, lowering and lowering their prices which we cannot match without putting our businesses and our jobs again at risk. These profits need to be monitored and possibly go as far as capping them to ensure our members are protected. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Keith Hutchinson – Branch 580: I’m here to second this Motion, and I remember going back, and our aged Delegation will tell us exactly when. When you came up to this Conference rostrum and said watch out, cut price bread’ll ruin this industry. We haven’t, it’s got in, and you know, when you look around, how many people in this Hall have had their terms and conditions smashed because Tesco want to make the most money? We support, and Ian’s doing an absolutely fantastic job, different marches. How about this time having a march to support the bakers, to protect their terms and conditions? And you know, it might sound radical, how about in the long run, having a one day general strike against people that attacks our terms and conditions for a change?

[applause]

Brother Jeffrey McCarthy – Branch 458: Asking you to support this Resolution. But I’d take it a step further. In the early 1970s the Labour government set up the Prices and Incomes Board. Now over the years there’s been a lot of these boards set up like Ofcom and Oftel and such, all toothless tigers. Why are they toothless tigers? Because they’re still in force today. The one society or group or whatever you call it, that actually did its job, was the Prices and Incomes Board, and that is why in 1979 when Margaret Thatcher got into power it was the first thing she scrapped. I think we need to reorganise and get back into the Prices and Incomes Board and then we can control the supermarkets. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: Here to support this Motion. Yes, the farmers did it, the farmers campaigned about milk and the price of milk. They picketed and they got a change, they got supermarkets to put the price of milk, they can do it, we can do it.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Conference, support the Resolution. These supermarkets can put you out of business. They can put you on the dole. Because I worked in Tesco, people say there’s loss leaders in the supermarkets. There is no loss leader in a supermarket, it’s there to make a profit. And that’s what it does, because I spoke to the manager about it. He said to me, he said, there is no loss leaders out there, he said, if a loaf of bread is at 10 pence, 15 pence, or 20 pence or 40 pence, he said we get our 20%. Now that’s what it is. That’s why I say we support this Resolution. Supermarkets have put many businesses out of market, I seen once in the press where a company that was bagging the potatoes, you know, the pre-packed potatoes, they took the business of them overnight, and because he had all his business with Tesco, shut in the morning. Conference support the Resolution, they should not be allowed to get it away with this.

[applause]
Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to support the Motion.

The only concern that I’ve got is that what the Resolution’s asking for is asking for this government, to lobby this government. Let’s look at the realities, this government, they’re not out for the working class, they’ve already destroyed, they’re taking their tax on the working class, destroying the pensions, making people work longer, destroyed, or trying to destroy employment rights, destroying, the cuts in the NHS, sorry the health and safety budgets. Let’s be very clear, this government is not out to help any one of us, let alone being interested in showing any concern to the baking industry. The Parliamentary Group we’ve got set up is doing a lot of work on powers on the supermarket, which I think is the right way to go, but more importantly it’s each and every one of us again, we need to get into our constituencies, write to our local MPs etc, and raise the profile of the potentials of their profits, potentially what is going to have the impact on our industry. That’s where we need to go. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President. Executive Council would ask Conference to support the Motion. And I’m pleased to say, as John McDonnell said the other day, that this is one of the subjects that this Union really does take the lead in the Trade Union Movement on, the campaign against supermarkets. We started with the argument about below cost selling. I’ve got to say, and that was brilliantly led by Joe Marino, and ably supported by the rest of the Parliamentary Group. We then moved on to the realms of discounting, which is extended to the power of the supermarkets, and it’s something that you know, this debate is going to grow and grow like a snowball coming downhill. And now we have, and we’ve started and we’ve pushed the thing about the discussion on the supermarket ombudsman. I say, you saw most of that on Sunday so I’m not going to go through it. Every single action that’s taken by a supermarket seems to have a detrimental effect on manufacturing industry. Dave’s not quite right about what happened with milk, you’re right, milk did have a pricing policy in the past, that’s now gone. And I’ll tell you how we know that because we’re in league with the National Farmers Union which seems to be quite, you know, strange bedfellows for us, but you’ll see why we’re talking to them. We’ve had supermarkets like Farm Foods who were using bread as a loss leader, putting their bread at the back, you walk past, you buy your eggs, your frozen chops all that, so you get the two Hovis loaves for a pound, they’ve actually increased the price now, but it worked, they were selling Hovis two for a pound. I’m not suggesting for one minute that Hovis was selling the bread at this price, but I’ll tell you what, I’ll bet you they were making a significant financial contribution to that discount that was going in, and that in itself had an effect on the businesses.

And likewise when it comes to businesses tendering for business. Blind bidding on the Internet, it’s one of the most heinous things that has ever happened. Sealed envelope bidding. Financial inducements to encourage supermarkets to buy your product. This is going on, it sounds corrupt, and it is corrupt, but it’s going on, this is the reality. All of which has a detrimental effect on the profitability of companies. And when there’s an effect on profitability like that, inevitably it has a devastating effect on the workforce. And all the time while this is happening, the supermarket profits spiral upwards and upwards and upwards, we’ve seen this morning that Sainsbury’s have announced a 1.4% real term increase in profits. Well good for Sainsbury’s, but think about all the people who’ve lost their jobs, making sure that you make that 1.4%.

The sad reality Comrades is that manufacturing industry can’t operate a Cartel. Hovis and Allied and Warburtons can’t get together and decide what, you know, price fixing. Or even to decide they’re going to take the supermarkets on because it’s a Cartel, it’s a restrictive practice. But I’ll tell you what they could do, and it never happens, why can’t they use their trade union
which is the Federation of Bakers to get to meet with supermarkets? When Channel 4 wanted to do a programme on supermarket discounting, the effect on workers, they phoned me and I said yes I’ll take part in the programme. And they said can you get a baker to come. I said absolutely not, there’s no way in the world that Allied or Warburtons or Hovis are going to stand up and say, you know, bastards in the supermarket are really screwing us. I said but what you should do is you should be approaching the Federation of Bakers, that is their union. And they should be standing up for the industry like we stand up for the members that work in that industry. But there’s nothing of it. It’s a situation that’s going to last forever if the Federation of Bakers have their way. If things don’t change, then I’m afraid they are going to stay the same. Without doubt, we’ll see one of the major baking companies, one of the three that I’ve just mentioned, and I don’t believe it’ll be Warburtons, one of them will go out of business. It’ll be just like Spillers was in 1979, discounting caused the destruction of a major company and the loss of a thousand jobs. Discount has become the nemesis of our industry. A Chinese water torture of decline, it’s drip feeding demise and despair amongst the people who work in the industry. I can remember, and Dick Punshon’ll remember it years ago, when we were on the Executive, when a guy called Mike Farrell who was a director of Associated Family Loaf Bakers came along and preached to us we’re looking at, don’t worry too much about discounts because it’s like that, you have these sort of loops, like a graph, it goes like that, and sometimes the supermarkets are on top, and then sometimes they sink to the bottom and the manufacturer goes to the top. Well I’ll tell you what I’ve been waiting since, I came off the Executive in 1987, and I’m still waiting for the time when the manufacturer has the upper hand within the discounted thing. It’s exploitation, exploitation, exploitation. And the fact that Mike Farrell was saying it gives it less credibility because Associated Family Loaf Bakers went bust. They’re not here any more, so that shows what discount does. It was garbage then and it’s garbage now.

What happens, competitors build bigger plants, better technology, and need fewer people to do that. And what they do with the money is they invest it in discounts. What’s it do to profitability? Well, very little, as I said, all the money that was made was ploughed back into the greedy grabbing hands of the supermarkets. I’ve got to say, I’m not Luddite, I’m not against change, I think it’s good sometimes that we get bigger more efficient plants, I think it’s good that we have profitability within business because that is good for employment and continued employment. But I do object to companies like Hovis and Allied and Warburtons committing economic suicide by offering discounts that really aren’t there, discounts that they can’t afford to give. Playing Russian Roulette with people’s jobs, and that is what it boils down to. In the past governments have been reticent to legislate against supermarkets, as they always saw it to be anti-competition, and anti-consumer. But now thanks to the work that we’ve done as a trade union, and the work of our Parliamentary Group, we’re seeing just that little chink of light. Our initial meetings under the last Labour government were with Hilary Benn, and I’ve got to say, they were quite positive, we think that we were actually going somewhere, but of course Labour lost the election, and with that Hilary Benn lost the secretarial position. But now following a great deal of pressure, you know, and I’ve got to say, I can’t thank John McDonnell, I keep saying this, but I can’t thank John McDonnell enough for the work that he does on that Parliamentary Group and the work that the likes of Dave Crosby does and Linda O’Reardon. They do a fantastic job in Parliament and they put so much pressure on that we now hear in the Queen’s Speech, we actually got it in the Queen’s Speech, that we’re going to get the supermarket ombudsman. It’s an excellent start but let’s not crack the champagne until we know exactly what that means to us. The supermarkets as you would imagine clearly don’t want any regulation, other than self-regulation. They want to say oh what a good boy are we, and let’s carry on the same and you know, we’ll carry on screwing whoever we want.
But I’ve got to say what we’ve done as a trade union and through the Parliamentary Group, we’ve got together a pretty close coalition of ourselves. A pretty close alliance with the people who can make a difference, and this coalition doesn’t just involve bakeries, it involves charities, the likes of War on Want, Action Aid, who deal with actual poverty out in the communities and what unemployment brings to people. We’ve forged together with the Federation of Convenience Stores, because they’re getting battered, the High Street convenience store is getting battered by the big supermarkets who in themselves are opening their own convenience stores on garage forecourts, and in airports and whatever. And of course, the strangest one, we’ve formed an alliance with the National Farmers Union, as far as I’m concerned, a right wing organisation, that are Tory supporters, you know, a lot of hooray henrys, but I’ll tell you what, they’re 100% behind us because of their members who produce milk, who produce meat, who produce grain, are all getting battered by the supermarkets that ply on them.

Comrades we face a real war with these mega retail organisations, if we’re going to protect our members’ jobs. We have to use whatever means is open to us to combat their competitive rhetoric. We continue to put pressure on the government to give the ombudsman teeth, and independence, rather than a cushy well paid job for one of their mates who does and says even less. This is one of the most important motions on the agenda because it probably affects every single person in this room. It’s how to operate now, and if we have a future, how we will operate then. Please support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay to the vote, those in favour, against. That’s carried.

Motion 74.

74 Branch 450 Manchester

That this Conference agrees to ask the government and all local councils to review the astronomical cost of funerals. The North West of England has the highest rate of “paupers” funerals in the UK due in no small part to the inability of remaining loved ones to pay. This issue is a sadly overlooked national disgrace and needs to be addressed. No one losing a family member should ever be worried about whether or not they can afford to pay for the funeral.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Nothing is what it cost my Mum and Dad to get me here. Why should it cost my family about £3,000 to give me the send off? It shouldn’t and it’s not going to because for one thing it’s going to be a do it yourselfer. I won’t be doing it because I won’t be here. I’ve asked my son in law to make me a coffin out of chipboard and MDF. He said he’d be absolutely delighted to do it (laughter/applause). He also said he’d be proud to drive one of his work’s vans to get me down to the crem. If they’re going to spend £3,000 on my send off, spend it on Guinness. I ask you to support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Phyllis? Phyllis is seconding it.

Sister Phyllis Hession – Branch 450: I’m here to support this. I think what she said is quite true, I think where I’m concerned I don’t care where they put me so long as I’m not there to see it. But it is very expensive, and you get them all advertising pay this much, pay that much and you get so much. Well if you get to a certain age, it’s not worth it, so I mean you go to do them (inaudible) you can pay back every week, and have it sat there like a club if you want. But I mean it’s not everybody can do that. I had a daughter a few years ago who died, she were only 24. I couldn’t insure her because she was disabled. Still when I went to get help because I had nobody else, I were told, she had a flat of her own, don’t get me wrong, she didn’t live at home,
but I went to ask for some help towards the funeral I were told because I was her mother I would have to pay. And I worried myself sick how I were going to pay this money, until I come to an arrangement with the undertaker. He said don’t worry about it, we’ll sort it out. But they’re not all like that, and in this day and age they don’t care what it’s costing. And it costs a hell of a lot of money, so please support this. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359:** Unfortunately having been a biker in the past I’ve been to all too many funerals, and about a couple of months back it was my sad job to go to a funeral of a good friend who had one of these pauper funerals. And all I can say, if they gave me a funeral like that I’ll come back and haunt the so and sos. And they charged well over £3,500 which council picked up, I think it’s simply a case of right, council’s paying, we’ll inflate the price. I don’t want to upset Marilyn McCarthy, boy you don’t want to upset her, but all coffins are chipboard, they just iron some veneer on that’s thinner than a Tory smile, and then that’s it, you think you’re getting oak coffin or a this coffin. I stopped and went for a cycle ride the other day with my son, and I got a bit short of breath, and I stopped by what you would call a Memorial Mason, does headstones. The headstones in there ranged from £2,500 up. Now I know what a piece of stone costs, and I know what the carving costs, and we’re not talking about your £2,500, you didn’t get some marble angel with, that was just your basic jobby. But that paupers funeral, I went back after they’d finished, and they put a miserable little, about the size of your hand, wooden council marker with a simple plaque, brass plaque on it. So I went and spoke to the widow and says look, I’ve got a nice piece of slate about two inch thick, yea big by yea big, I’ll dress it up you can have it, put the plaque to it, we can mount it, you can get through all the council regulations. Because then you worry they’ve even got regulations now as for mounting headstones. The thing is is that a lot of the funeral costs are massively artificially inflated, the one time when you really need it. They shouldn’t be kicking a family when they’re down. I ask this Conference to support.

[applause]

**Brother Scott Meadon – Branch 388:** Platform, Delegates, good morning. Earlier this year I lost my auntie and my uncle was left with the cost of the funeral. Three months later I lost my 23 year old cousin and again my uncle was left with the expenses again. That’s three months later like, he had double expenses. At the end of the day my uncle’s lost his wife and his son. Like to say my family have supported best we can but the prices of these funerals these days, just a joke. Please support.

[applause]

**Sister Stacey Oakley – Branch 253:** I’m also here to support this Motion. Everyone wants the best for their relatives, and usually money’s no object when it comes to a relative’s funeral or a friend’s funeral. Nobody wants to see their relatives in the back garden because they can’t afford to pay for the costs. My Nan’s 77 and for the last ten years she’s been saving up her pension to save for her funeral. How can that be right? She should be enjoying her pension and enjoying herself in her older age, and not worrying about how her family are going to be worried about paying for her funeral. Please support.

[applause]

**Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253:** I’m also here to support this Motion. I totally agree with what Stacey has just said there. I am fed up of TV adverts now turning round and saying let’s save for our funeral costs. Think of our family members and let’s save for our funeral costs. This day and age we’re lucky to save for ourselves let alone for anything else. So how on earth can you start saving for funeral costs? This isn’t right. As Stacey said funerals should, you want
the best for your family at all times, but while we’re on this earth we should be enjoying our lives, not having to worry about what happens when we pass. Please support this Motion.

[applause]

Sister Lynda Hellowell – Branch 580: First time Delegate. I urge the Conference to support this Motion. Not so long ago I lost my 17 year old niece to a brain tumour. Sorry. My sister was a single parent and had to give up work to look after her full time, which in turn affected her ability to pay the full cost of the funeral. I helped her fill in the random forms to apply to the government for the help, and her first correspondence when she had another form with a list of some family names and she had to give reasons why each and every one of us could not pay the full cost of the funeral. How did they get our names? The fact is they actually employ somebody to go through the obituaries to target your family. How callous and disgusting, they feel they have the right to be so unsympathetic and add to someone else’s grief. If they change prices that reflect the level of our wages, we wouldn’t have to ask for help. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Paul Norris – Branch 189: Chairman, Platform, Delegates, I’m here to support this Motion. Over the last 12 months we’ve had six bereavements within my family and my in-laws, and we’re well aware of what the situation’s like out there. In fact it got to the stage with my wife’s impending birthday that came up earlier this year, and I said to her what do you want? And she said to me, well I know it sounds morbid but because of the situation we had, I think we should prepare for a funeral. I perfectly agreed, so I went out and actually pre-planned it, when I got back and done it all, in actual fact this was last year, so we’re talking this year now, and she said to me what are you getting me for my birthday this year? I said I’m not getting you anything. She said why’s that? I said because you didn’t use what I got you last year [laughter]. Joking aside, it is a very serious matter, and as you’ve probably seen by the adverts on the TV there are certain insurance companies that are jumping on the bandwagon on this, where they say plan for your funeral now. In a way they’re right, because the one certainty in life is that one day we’re not going to be here. But it’s got to be realistic, and in these times, people cannot afford where it’s one business that is not going into decline, they are not suffering through a recession, but they are cashing in on other people’s misery. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to support this Motion, I think it’s a trend what’s going on now, I mean we was unfortunate enough a few weeks ago to bury one of our lads from work, and he didn’t go in church. Now I don’t know why he didn’t go in church, it might have been the expense or whatever, so support the Motion. And always, I was talking to wife the other day, she said where do you want to be buried Anthony? I said over the top of thee [laughter].

[applause]

Sister Carol White – Branch 582: Can I say I was unfortunate enough to lose my husband six months ago, and it is horrendous the funeral costs are absolutely appalling. I don’t think you realise until it actually comes to you, and when there’s no insurance involved, it’s horrendous. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Young lad. Not worried about going yet. But Conference it’s sad to see in a Resolution paupers in England. It is, that’s sad. That’s why we were on the camp, for a fairer and a just society. And why have we, why have we poverty down the centuries. We have poverty because you can’t have riches without poverty, and that is what that is, and that’s
why families, it’s sad to see a family put into debt for years to come after their loved ones die. That’s not a nice way to have to live. Conference support this Resolution.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, the Executive would ask you to support the Motion, and in doing so we will get our Parliamentary Group aware of the situation that’s been raised at Conference. But we’d also encourage Delegates to go, when they go back to their Branches, to ensure that they write to their local councils as well to make them aware of the expense, and the ability of people in low paid jobs such as ours, because we are, we’re in low paid jobs, to be able to afford the extortionate prices that they charge. To the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Motion 75.

### 75 No 3 Regional Council

*That this Conference agrees that any persons who are caught in the act of rioting are detained for a minimum of seven days. We strongly believe that these acts deter peaceful protestors going about, highlighting their issues in a civilised manner.*

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313:** Good Morning Platform, Delegates. What this does it deters peaceful protestors like our good selves, going about our lives being concerned in a civilised manner. What happens is the media when reporting or conveying the issues that peaceful protestors go about, they turn their attention to these troublemakers and that’s the highlight of the whole story, and they take up the perception that the real thing of why the people are protesting, but they go and concentrate on all these people that cause this trouble. What this does is it mars the good work of peaceful protestors like all the unions. We have to get back a message and ask the likes of the current government, like we work through the duration of this Conference that we need to go out there in our constituencies, in our Branches, in our local areas, in our cities, and make sure that our voices are heard in the right manner. We get the people on the bandwagon, we definitely need to do something to get rid of the ConDems as a bare minimum. We have to make sure that the pressure is applied to cleanse our streets of these thugs, so that we can get back to the protests in a democratic and a peaceful manner. I urge each and every one of you to support this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

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

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here to strongly oppose this Motion. Riots, it was Martin Luther King who said it was the language of the unheard. What construes, or the trouble with this Motion, who decides who’s been involved in a riot? I mean, the word riot is civil disorder, it doesn’t say anything about people. I’ll tell you who will be detained for seven days, if we pass motions like this, they’ll be lads from Wigan. And you know this Motion, very well meaning, very dangerous Motion. I strongly oppose it.

[applause]

**Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253:** I’m not really sure whether to support or oppose this Motion. I just want to put my point across. Last year in 2011 we saw some of the worst riots ever in the United Kingdom. My father works for West Midlands Police. Where cuts have been made in their offices, his office has gone from 19 officers down to six members of staff in his office. He’s still working through the load of cases from the rioters, they can’t find proper CCTV evidence, or anything like that, to actually prosecute the thing. The riots also caused in my home town of Birmingham three people to die due to the riots. This is an absolute disgrace. Peaceful protesting is right, rioting is not. Thank you.
Sister Stacey Oakley – Branch 253: I’m also here to support this Motion. There’s been a lot of protests in Bristol over the last year, and my shop faces out onto the street where a lot of the protestors come through, and the amount of people out shopping with their friends to cause trouble is ridiculous. What’s the point? Not only does it damage businesses, it takes our jobs, because people can’t afford then to replace a £20,000 window that’s been broken for no reason, in a business that’s not even involved in the protesting. What’s the point? Please support.

Brother Jeffrey McCarthy – Branch 458: Up here to ask every single person in this room to go against this Motion. Why do I ask that? Not because I don’t believe in crime and punishment, because I do. Just for example a few years ago here, we passed a Motion about mobile phones. How many people are still driving using mobile phones when driving. I’d throw the buggers in prison for 12 months me, but when we come to the term riot we’re talking completely different ballgame. Tony asked the question who decides what riot is? I’ll tell you who decides what riot is, the Tories, it’s been in the Statute Book now for almost 300 years. For all of those of you who are computer literate put the term Riot Act in there and see what it does. If you think the current laws regarding terrorism are restrictive, trust me, the Riot Act laws are 100% beyond that. I give you a couple of examples. Who’s heard of the Peterloo Massacre in Manchester, the town where I’m from? The people who were killed in the Peterloo Massacre were ordinary working class people fighting for their rights. They were slaughtered because they were read the Riot Act. The last time the Riot Act was used uniformly in this country was in 1926 during the General Strike, when on the road across where I was born, from the docks in Salford, we had troops with bayonets on rifles, we had machine gun posts set up and we had dockers being surpassed by the army unloading ships. The term riot is very dangerous. And let me just tell you about the powers of it. A few years back I was at the TUC Conference in Liverpool and I spoke to a convenor who’d worked at Cammel Lairds. During the days of it winding down, the last contract was for a navy supply ship. They went on strike and they boarded themselves in. After about 10 days or so, the SAS turned up and started doing manoeuvres on platoons in front of the ship. Then a spook turned up in a suit, he called the leaders together and he said to them, tonight some of my men are going to die, and so are some of your men going to die. With that they went back, spoke and they came out and they surrendered the strike down. The leaders of that strike were thrown into Walton Prison for 28 days, no-one ever knows who charged them, or no charges were ever raised against them. To this day, there’s people who have never worked who was in charge of that strike, and they’ve never got to the bottom. So when we use the term riot, let’s be very careful and think what we’re doing. Thank you.

Brother Peter Barszczak – Branch 561: I’m here to strongly oppose this, really strongly. I’ve been on a march, and that march, when a peaceful protestor and a group of them get kettled by the police, they scam them up. And if a policeman’s helmet falls off, or they push one into someone else, they could then charge everybody there with rioting, and arrest the whole peaceful protest for rioting. Wrong. Please oppose.

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: Here to oppose this Motion. Same as what Peter said, the marches, those who were there last year in London, and I didn’t go to the others, but they were there, started peaceful marches, I was really surprised, I had a great day, it was a carnival atmosphere, and then I got home, and there it were, we were all branded as rioters and thugs. I mean if those who were rioting, had have run in to the middle of that march, we’d have all been branded as the same as rioters and trouble causers, when in actual fact it was a peaceful march.
Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529: I’m here to oppose the Motion. Obviously last year’s summer riots shocked the country and I don’t for a minute condemn what happened, I don’t agree with it. But then there was a lot, a good proportion of those young people, and it’s this government having screwed over the people, and have mass youth unemployment, highest ever, they wouldn’t be so frustrated that they had to feel like they had to give the government a message. Oppose.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Conference it’s alright to talk about picking these people up and jailing them. We must first know the cause of what brought them there. The cause that brought women years ago to burn the mailboxes, and burn everything round them to get rights. Were they wrong to do that? No they were right to do that. The Afrikaner people, or the coloured black people in America, they had riots around Parliament, around their own neighbourhoods, but they got nowhere because nobody cared whether they burned Harlem or not. But when they took the fires down to the Hollywood Boulevard, then they got action, then they backed down, and then the give the black people more rights than they ever had before. Sometimes this has to happen, and we would be wrong not to do so. We would be wrong. Did the miners, look at the way they were smashed up, that was legal, that was legal, legal, because Maggie paid the army and the police to go out and smash them up. They were smashed up in their coaches, miles away from their work. Wasn’t that rioting against the public who were only looking for a right? Conference I don’t think you should support this Resolution.

[applause]

Brother John Halliday – Branch 701: Conference, Delegates, there’s nobody knows more about rioting, I mean, I’ve spent 30 odd years watching riots going on. And why does a riot start? It only starts with a small number of agitators. The theme of the riot is, as previous speaker said, is very hard, but over them 30 years we have developed a system where we don’t detain anybody. They safeguard the policeman, he’s not allowed to make a smash and grab rule. We depend entirely on CCTV. If it can be clearly proven that you were taking part in a riot and showing on camera, then you’re charged. Detaining people doesn’t work. The only time you have positive proof is through CCTV camera, not a policeman, rushing in, who himself probably ends up with more injury than the rioter. I ask you to oppose.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference, the Executive would ask Conference to oppose the Motion. Tony set the standard this morning for interpretations of the dictionary, so here’s one for you. A violent public disorder caused by a group of persons as by a crowd protesting against another group, a government policy, etc, in the streets. Definition in a dictionary, in law, a disturbance of the public peace by three or more people acting together in disruption, a tumultuous, whatever that word is, manner in carrying out their private purposes. Violence or wild disorder of confusion. A brilliant display, a riot of colour. Or Tony, who’s a riot at a party and a riot at our Conference. And obviously some times may want to detain him, but wouldn’t our Conference be boring without him?

[applause]

So, to take part in a riot, or a disorderly outbreak, to live in a loose and wanton manner. To indulge in unrestrained revelry. Many of the Roman emperors rioted notoriously. And we encourage everybody on the 20th October to take to the streets, to make sure that we are, obviously not taking part in a riot, but demanding change in this country. Could you imagine arriving down there if we pass this Motion, and because there was more than three of us, to be
locked up for having the audacity to say that we don’t believe that this government’s policies are right? Because if you pass this Motion, that’s what you would be saying.

[applause]

That’s what you would be saying. So Conference, everything that’s been said, and Jeff, absolutely stupendous, made sure that I didn’t have to say too much. Conference we ask you to oppose the Motion.

[applause]

Right of reply?

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Basically I understand what all the Delegates have said, understand what the Platform is saying, respect each and every person that has come up. However, this, it’s about interpretation, and we thought that we had covered it up that this doesn’t apply to peaceful protestors, but in this day of technology and age, I mean, I’ve looked something up and in there it says riots, and this is Wikipedia yes? Riots (inaudible) for vandalism and destruction of private property to be target, where is, depending on the riot and the inclination of those involved. Targets can include shops, cars, restaurants, payphone, institutions and religious buildings. And the Motion was taken to Regional Council of Region 3 and passed then, vote here on the back of the recent actions where, as an example, in Birmingham when the troubles escalated, there’s a particular group of rioters within a specific area of Birmingham known as Aston whereby these rioters, after they’re finishing looting the shops, they were basically going round looting, when they got challenged by the police they come out with ammunition and they started firing bullets at police helicopters and the police. Fortunately there was no injuries or life-threatening injuries, and as a consequence these people have, were detained, all the evidence was collected, gathered and since that time and that, there were six individuals, they have all been jailed for minimum terms of six years to a maximum term of 30 years as individuals. So there were six people that’s been jailed, one was jailed for six years, and others, they all ranged up to a maximum of 30 years. And we need something like this, maybe this particular wording on this Motion, but I think we’ll as a Region, we’ll work out another Motion next year and get the wording 100% safe. But I thought it was quite clear. But we are where we are, and after hearing the speeches, I’m in two minds which way to go. I’m going to sit on the fence on this one. Still going to vote yes for it, because that’s what we decided as a Region. But you have got us thinking, you have definitely got me thinking, and we will be re-looking at it next year.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: The power of debate Comrades, and that’s what it’s about. To the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s lost. Seventy six.

76 No 7 Regional Council

Labour Party – Conference agrees that we should withdraw our support for the party given that it failed when last in power to revoke anti-trade union laws and has said that it is highly unlikely to alter any of the present rules that the present coalition government has recently introduced.

Brother John Halliday – Branch 701: Here to propose the Motion. Platform, Delegates. I’m barred from joining the Party, but I never stop anybody else from joining. I have a passion for the Labour Party, because I believe it was a true voice, it was the only voice that could be used by the trade unions, and the working classes. I was never convinced that New Labour from Tony Blair down, held true Socialist beliefs. Since he left office his trips around the world, making millions, and after dinner speeches have hardened that conviction. Delegates in his speech to
Conference, John McDonnell said that it’s right for us to regain the Party, he rightly said that Tony Blair and his cronies changed the traditional values of the Party. Were we so vain that we allowed him to just to get elected? Delegates, we took our foot off the ball, and now we are paying the price. All the blame cannot solely be put on bankers. Tony Blair praised his then Chancellor, Gordon Brown, repeatedly said that the country was safe in his hands. But all the time he was robbing the national assets. Delegates he also removed tax benefit on people’s pensions, reducing the value of them. We listened to Colin Burgon’s speech urging us to take up the fight to regain Labour values, but in doing so we must make sure that the message that gets across, that our support is not unconditional. Many other trade unions are voicing their concern. On Monday morning The Star had a headline – the Labour Party should shape up. The GMB Union actually had a Motion to their Conference this week, to de-affiliate from the Labour Party. Many trade unionists are now voicing their concern and disgust at the Party, they feel frustrated and let down by the antics of the Party in Opposition. They failed to change anti-trade union laws when last in power, openly stated that it is highly unlikely that they would rescind or alter changes made by the Tory/Lib Dem coalition. Delegates this shows the utter contempt that the present Party holds the views of the working classes. Most of us are utterly frustrated and disgusted by present Labour MPs, although there are a few whose voices and our support, are all too readily ridiculed by the Shadow Cabinet. Outspoken MPs who stand up for us are pushed further down the pecking order in the Party.

Delegates, we must regain the moral ground. We should make sure that future Labour candidates hold Socialist principles. Too many come straight from university and have no knowledge of the trials and tribulations of the working classes at the coal face. Never mind the missing two million votes, six million votes lost would make them sit up and take notice. Withdrawing our support is only a tool to make them sit up and take notice. They must be made to see that we are a force to be reckoned with. The fight to do this starts now. We must have fire in our bellies, we must not compromise, we must be steadfast in our desire for change. Delegates, the Party must lose its tie of New Labour, we want to demand that the Party is returned to the working classes from which it was founded, and the fight starts now. Not tomorrow, but now. I ask you to support.

[applause]

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

 Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Here to strongly oppose this Motion. I don’t see why we should agree to withdraw our support to the Labour Party. I think in this day and age we should be more supporting the Labour Party and getting more people involved in the Labour Party. Conference I ask you to oppose this Motion.

[applause]

 Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109: Mr President, I would like to strongly oppose this Motion and I want Conference to also strongly oppose this Motion. Why? Because it is now or never for us to belong to the Labour Party with a strong mind and a strong faith, and we do need the Party. We have to remember within to fight for the (inaudible) of the Labour Party. It has been said here before by John McDonnell, various speakers who have spoken here during the Conference period, that it is time we begin to look inward, into what we can do to rebuild the Labour Party. Now we draw on our support and looking at the context of the Motion, to me it seems like playing on anti-Party principle within the Party system. We are part and parcel of the Labour Party. The Labour Party was formed back in 1920 for the purpose of representing, agitating and protecting the interests of the working people of Great Britain, and that must be the focus, and that must be the objective of our members here within the Labour Party. If by any chance there has been a drift from the original context of this Party’s principles it is left for us here now, for
the future of the Party, to reconvene and hold our faith together and fight for the greater
bitterness of the Party and its unity. We cannot call ourselves Labour, Labour in the sense that
we are workers and as such have the Party platform created to protect our interests, and our
hope and our future, for us now and for our children, and for the generations to come. And yet
we tend to freeze out from that by lapsing membership to withdraw support to the Labour Party.
There is going to be a change. I am an apostle of change, but one thing you have to understand
is that change itself has its limitations, either in long term or short term, but what’s all about we
do to bring about change, we need to change ourselves. We need to confront the right things that
we need to do to bring about the greatness of Labour Party, as it’s going around now in the
world. You got France, you go to Germany, it is the strength of the working people within these
nations that are holding forth the challenges that needed to be done within the political system
of these places. Why not here? Please, support, as I oppose this Motion I would ask that you
oppose this Motion, and as much as we can continue to support the Labour Party for its
bitterness for Great Britain, thank you.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: I’m also here to strongly oppose this. This Tory/Lib Dem
government have done absolutely nothing for us, totally nothing at all. The Labour Party when
it was last in government, yes, I agree with what our General Secretary said earlier it did do a
few good things, but it didn’t do enough. We need it to do more for us, for us working people.
The only way we’re going to do that, like Colin Burgon said yesterday, like John McDonnell
said a couple of days ago, is that if we join them we shape the Labour Party, we don’t let any
more Blairites in, we don’t support fat cats, we get back to our roots, we get back to the trade
union which we all are, and let’s get our Labour Party to where it should be. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Paul Norris – Branch 189: Chairman, Platform, Delegates. A short time ago I would have
supported everything that was mentioned in this Motion. And by a short time ago, I mean before
we had our Parliamentary MP up there putting across a very valid point, and that is, yes, the
Labour Party did more or less turn against the unions. It does need to be changed, but I
vehemently feel the only way that change is going to be brought about is from the inside. How
can you change something if you don’t belong to it? So I would say, support, no I wouldn’t, I
would [laughter] say, don’t support this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: You’re probably wondering about the headwear, I like the fact
that Raj and Godson wear a hat, so I decided to wear two hats [laughter]. Serious business. I’m
here to strongly oppose this Motion. The Labour Party is our Party, it was set up by trade
unionists for trade unionists. Let’s get away from New Labour, reclaim Old Labour, and
everything it stood for. We don’t want to be part of New Labour, we want a Labour Party that
represents the Labour Movement. Please oppose.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Janine, I think I picked up that somebody’s been in a
debate with Tony Sedgewick last night, and that was very clever [laughter]. Not like Tony.

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates. John, if we support this Resolution and
we leave the Labour Party where do we go? It’s like knocking down your own house, and living
on the street. Without the Labour Party we won’t get anywhere and I believe that some of the
big trade unions too sold out now and again. They didn’t always do what they should do. The
Party now is only about 150,000 members when we should have way in the millions. We pay a
huge sum to the Labour Party, the Trade Union Movement as a whole, we should turn that into
membership. Some one way or another so that we have a round about 8 million members. I have
seen no reason why every one of them should not be part of the Labour Party, but we’re not, and for whatever reason. New Labour was not a Labour Party, it was not a Labour Party, it was Mark 2 Tory Party, that’s what it was. They had no interest in the working people, they had no interest in the trade unions, that’s why he went after Murdoch to get money from Murdoch so that he can tell unions get out of the road. Comrades we must not let them get away with that, we must join the Party, we must change the Party from within. Obviously things will get out of hand now and again, but it’s up to us to bring it about. Look at the changes you bring here on this Union, if you didn’t come here every year and try to make changes, this Union would become a very, very funny organisation. When I came back in ’74 I think to my first Conference, the General Secretary of the Union then lifted your agenda, held it up in the air and said pass everything in this and make this Union a recipient for rubbish. Was he a democratic unionist? He wasn’t, he wasn’t, and these are the things, but that’s what we have to do. We are only a few people in here, but we’re millions outside, and we must turn round and try to carry this Party the way we want it, to work for the people, not, a fair and just society as they said in the campaign, we don’t want everything, we just want a fair and just society, and if we get that, there won’t be paupers in the North East, there will be decent people with decent wages and able to live a good life. I oppose the Resolution.

[Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: You know my opinion on the Labour Party, I told it you the other day so obviously I’m up here to support. I’ll just tell you a little story about last year when I was at the TUC Conference with Ronnie and Marilyn French. And we went to a fringe meeting where Matt Wrack, the leader of the Fire Brigades’ Union said it’s about the way we’re electing the leader of the Labour Party. These people now are professional politicians, and I see absolutely no reason why the next Leader of the Labour Party couldn’t be a baker. Well I agree with him, and when it happens I’ll join the Labour Party. I do support this Motion.

[applause]

[Brother Michael Lynch – Branch 505: Conference the Labour Party lost its way a number of years ago. We had a notice of Motion here I think maybe last year, the year before on restoring Clause 4 Part 4, constitution, that’s when we lost it, when the Labour Party done away with Clause 4 Part 4 for the Labour Party. You want to have it in your power if you’re in the Labour Party, to attend the meetings, and ask your MP how they stand on the trade union laws. If they don’t agree with you, and you cannot get any support for them, de-select them, and put people in their place. Simple as that. De-select your MPs if they’re right wing, get people in and when I look around and when I’ve seen here this week Comrades, with our young people, I think our young people want to get on to the political ladder if they’re not already there. They want to get out in their councils, get onto the list for Parliament, stand for Parliament. Let us get the working people back in Parliament [applause] and represent us. Thank you.

[applause]

[Sister Stacey Oakley – Branch 253: I’m also here to strongly oppose this Motion. I mean I understand people’s frustrations that the Labour Party, gone a bit wayward in the past and lost their way, but let’s face it, how many of us growing up lost our way, and had someone to put us back on the straight and narrow? That’s our job, to put the Labour Party back on the straight and narrow, to bring it back to how it was, bring back Old Labour and remember our roots. Please support.

[applause]

[Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to oppose the Motion, strongly oppose the Motion. There is no issue with the Labour Party, their values etc. The issue
we’ve got is that we’ve allowed them to divert our values, the Socialist, strong Socialist values, the right to work, the right to a fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work, but that’s our doing because we’ve just let them, knowing full well for the last ten, fifteen years while they were in government, do very little for the working class. Regardless, the Resolution states that the government has done very little to repel anti-trade union laws. Let’s be very real, there’s a lot more to do in government when you are in government, that worry about specific, just anti-trade union laws. And the only way we’re going to ever have any influence in trying to change anti-trade union laws is if we get involved with local councils, and if we want to get our hands dirty and get. Because that’s the only way to change the Party. Changing direction and supporting another Party that’s not going to resolve anything, because we’re still going to be in the same predicament. Same as when we’re back at our Branches, and the union, the Bakers Union had a ballot for one thing or another and people are unhappy with the pay rise for example. What do you do? You don’t start running after GMB and the T&G, because if you not happy with what it is, you come forward at the next election and you try and vote yourself in as a Union Rep. Because that’s the only way you’re going to get change, it’s to get involved, get your hands dirty. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference the Executive would ask the Conference to oppose the Motion. I mean John you mentioned in moving it that by withdrawing from the Labour Party that would somehow give us an ability to help with the selection of MPs. You have the right to reply after I’ve finished yes, course you do, absolutely. But in reality the fact of the matter is this, you know, if a non-Union member came here and told us what to do at our Conference we’d say not interested and quite rightly so. And I would imagine the Labour Party would take the same position.

[phone ringing/boos/applause/cheers]

I was getting worried then, I thought I’d said something wrong [laughter]. I was thinking have we really moved to the right [laughter], and if a non-Union member come here we’d listen to them. Surely not. Conference, if we walk away, where do we go? The last election, now I heard a lot of our members say we should be going to Liberal Party, more left than the Labour Party. Reality is says, you know, when they get a sniff of power they’re as right wing as any Tory Party that’s ever been in the history of the Tory Party. There was Thatcherite and there’s, absolutely power hungry as every other Tory Conservative government that we’ve ever, ever had. So where do we go? UKIP? We go to one of the Socialist parties, Respect? Does anybody believe Respect’s going to win a General Election? Of course they’re not going to win a General Election. And you know, many people have come to the rostrum and said well actually you know, John McDonnell has swayed my opinion on the Labour Party, and quite rightly so, because while there are people inside the Labour Party like John McDonnell, this Trade Union should never, ever walk away from the Labour Party. Absolutely not.

[applause]

And many, many Delegates have come down and said the unions created the Labour Party because we needed a political voice, absolutely 100% correct. And by walking away from the Labour Party and deciding to go and take our voice where I don’t know, will not give us any ability to mobilise, to get support for any of the issues that we believe that we face in our industry. Look at the support on all issues that we’ve had over the last 12 months. Take the Sayers issue, when they shut Peter Hunts and Sayers, if it wasn’t for people within the Labour Party supporting us, how would we have been able to achieve some of the successes that we achieved for those people that worked there?

[applause]
We wouldn’t have achieved it. We recognise that the Labour Party didn’t help us in government in the way that we wanted them to, but that was a lot to do with our fault. That was a lot to do with the fact that we don’t attend meetings. A lot of people walked away, thinking that by going and setting up a Socialist Labour Party, joining some other political party somehow that would enable us to move forward with this Movement. It doesn’t work. All it does is divide us, we have to unite, we have to unite as one, because our enemies are many. We are the majority but divided we cannot fight. We have to unite, we have to make sure that our voices are heard. We have to ensure that the Labour Party once again does represent the aspirations of working people. And the Labour Party needs to understand that we will come home to the Labour Party, and we demand that the Labour Party as a priority makes a commitment to return this country to full employment. That’s what we demand of the Labour Party. There should be no blank cheques, the Conference is absolutely right, but we don’t walk away. We fight. We fight from the inside, we demand the changes that the Labour Party needs to make, but we do that by being active. We would ask Conference to oppose the Motion, we would ask Conference to get involved with the Labour Party, we would ask Conference, we’ve sent out the information during the week to join the Labour Party, get inside it, fight for it, and by the way, when it announced about our successful councillors the other day, I’ve got to say one of our ex-employees who is now the Sheriff of Nottingham, Merlita Bryan, and I want to congratulate her on her recent election as well. Somebody from this Trade Union that is a leader in her constituency. Marilyn, if you want to see people from this Union there, we’ve got to be inside it, we’ve got to make sure we support them, we got out, we fight for them. That’s what we have to do, it’s important we’re there.

[applause]

We’ve got to be on the inside. Conference we’d ask you to oppose the Motion. Right to reply.

Brother John Halliday – Branch 701: Mr President. Conference read the Motion. It asks to withdraw support not today, not tomorrow. We have to decide a date. But I haven’t, the message coming from this Conference, that if they don’t take notice. We’re not going to leave the Labour Party, but we need a threat to be there that they sit up and take notice, because in 10 and 12 years, they haven’t taken any notice. We can continually talk, we have people on strike, what will happen when people go on strike, the talks have broken down, nobody’s getting anywhere, do we continually talk? We need a threat to make these people sit up and take notice, because in 10 years continually talking to them has done very little.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s lost. Comrades please make sure you fill in those forms and get them sent off. We need you inside the Party fighting. We’re going to stop for a break. And half past, because obviously what we want to try and do, we probably might work through dinner, to enable us to get finished as………

[boos]

Of course, John James told me that.

[tea break]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference during the break Gulli give us a quick bell, just to let us know what was going on. I’ve passed on obviously the information from yesterday’s debate about obviously the grievances that have got to go throughout Two Sisters in disgust at how they’ve been treated. I’ve also passed on the information about the collection. To say that he was overwhelmed would be an understatement, he asked me to pass on his gratitude and this thanks for your solidarity and support.
Okay Conference, I believe we are at Composite Two.

**Composite Two**

*The Union calls for the government to first nationalise then regulate the energy companies, and put a stop to the ridiculous price hikes.*

**Brother Richard Wainwright – Branch 390:** The message of this really is your central heating at home, it’s getting so expensive now, it’s becoming a luxury. And what makes it worse is that every year we actually suffer loss of life through our elderly people because they can’t afford to have the central heating on. It’s absolutely diabolical and we need to do something about it. Please support.

[applause]

**Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582:** Here to formally second this Motion and offer support to Richard. We continue to see failure rewarded to directors of many of the utility companies. We continue to hear the same excuses why prices are hitting record highs, and again when they remain high, when reductions are not passed down, to hard pressed householders. So we ask for your support Delegates. Demand that these services are re-nationalised and regulated fairly for each and every one of us. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here to support this Motion. I’m lucky enough to still have my old girl, she’s 75 years of age, and she’s frightened of putting the central heating on. It’s like Richard said, and it’s true, it’s becoming a luxury. This is wrong, this is wrong, we should look after our old people, and make, they shouldn’t even have to pay for energy to me, re-nationalise them, support the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253:** I’m also here to support this Motion. My Nan is 89 this year. She has a three bedroomed house, I have a three bedroomed house. Her bill each month is £60 more than what mine is, each month, I think that is an absolute disgrace. I phoned up Scottish Power to get my gas and electric. I said how much, what is the cheapest you could do me? They give me my quote, I said yes okay. It’s all over the Internet, I asked them how much would it be if they sent me paper bills out every single month instead of over Internet, how much would it be if they’re sending paper bills out? They wanted an extra £40 a month just because I asked for a paper bill. I did tell them where to politely go. This is wrong as well, it does not cost £40 for a First Class stamp and for somebody to print off my bill. Please support this Motion.

[applause]

**Sister Vi Carr, Female Rep – Branch 505:** Platform, Delegates, speaking in support of Composite Motion Two. Conference, 2011 saw the reduction of Winter Fuel Allowance by this government. Something they said they wouldn’t do, when they got into office. The increase in energy prices by the big five energy companies in the last two years is absolute robbery. Conference many, many people are struggling to pay their energy bills, and the most vulnerable people such as pensioners and disabled people, and people with children, are in the situation of what to do, especially in the winter months, either to eat or to heat their homes. Many pensioners go to bed early to save on their energy bills, or sit around in their dressing gowns or a blanket to stay warm. They would rather put extra coverings on the bed than turn up the heating. This government would do better to tackle the energy companies who charge exorbitant
prices and make huge profits. These profits should be used to reduce the energy bills for the
consumers. Everything seems to be on the increase, except pensions, wages, family allowance
and fuel allowance etc. Please support.

[applause]

**Brother Duncan Dale – Branch 560:** Chair, Platform, fellow Delegates, I can only sort of, Vi’s more
or less said it all, but I did say, and I don’t want to dwell on it, but I was a good many years with
Age Concern, so again like I said the other day, I’ve been on the front line, and seen this, the
time, similar to what Vi’s just said, where people are having to go to bed and sit with mittens
on, and wear an extra cardigan and two pairs of socks, all the rest of it, it’s all wrong, it’s all out
of order, please support.

[applause]

**Brother Peter Barszczak – Branch 561:** I remember when the electricity big sell off by Maggie
Thatcher was initiated. She created a load of capitalists all running off to buy these shares for
£60 and then most of them sold them to these French companies at a quick buck. Let me tell
you, I want my company back, and my money. Thank you, please support.

[applause]

**Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215:** Conference, privatisation started with Maggie, and it was carried
on with Blair. Sometimes you would wonder why these things happen and I have to say it’s no
wonder that John Halliday brought the Resolution he did bring, because he didn’t see no future
in the thing. Conference, these services should never have been under the privatisation, they
should never have been there, they’re vital services for the country and they should be under the
government control. As was the banks when they were free, then given freedom, look what they
done. Conference we have the only way we can change this is to change the Labour Party
because this will not happen in the next two years, we’ll have more of this in the next two years.
That’s what they will have. But until we get a Labour government that does what we want it to
do, then these things we’ve got under control. I support.

[applause]

**Sister Phyllis Hession – Branch 450:** I’m here to support this. Now I went on a card (inaudible) the
meters, the card, so as I wouldn’t have bills coming in. But it ends up you pay more for your gas
and your electricity through this because I don’t know why they charge more, you don’t get any
more power. So I think it’s about time something were done about it, and to bring down the
price of stuff. It’s absolutely ridiculous, please support.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** John Fox for the EC.

**Brother John Fox – Branch 417:** Speaking on behalf of the Executive Council. Comrades, with the
unemployment at its highest and the punishing policies this government are invoking on the
population, the main targets are the elderly and the lower income families. We find that the
average profits of the big six gas and electric companies is reported at an astounding £2.4
billion. Probably most of the money went to the fat cats in bonuses, and the shareholders in
these companies. Without an interjection from the government, we find ourselves spiralling into
fuel poverty. Fuel poverty and cold housing not only has a direct impact on health but has wider
effects on wellbeing and life opportunities. Fuel poverty is a blight on society, which has now
grown to encompass one in four pensioner households. Older people are struggling on a daily
basis with the rising cost of living, leading to real hardship, and the amount of elderly dying
each year is increasing at an alarming rate, with a reported nine elderly dying every hour with a
cold-related illness in 2010. And it’s rising. It is also reported that the United Kingdom has the
highest winter death rate in Northern Europe, including colder climate countries like Sweden and Finland. There is proof that cold housing effects children’s emotional wellbeing and educational attainment. Children who live in cold homes are far more likely to suffer respiratory problems than in heated homes, and also suffer a concentration disability having a direct effect on their learning. These winter death figures are a disgrace to the government who are supposed to be there to protect the most vulnerable in society. While millions are struggling to make ends meet, these companies are making these massive profits. Eventually gas and electric will become a great luxury as Richard said. Preying not only on the vulnerable but everyday people will no longer be able to afford. With government intervention fuel poverty is avoidable. With this the Executive Council asks you to support this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Motion 81.

81 No 5 Regional Council

NEETs/Not in education, employment or training – That Conference agrees to campaign against the record number of young people leaving school and education with no employment future and demand that both employers and the State create systems to address the scandal.

Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582: Mr President, Platform, Delegates, this Motion concentrates on the millions of 16 and 17 year olds throughout the UK that find themselves each year without any future. Classed as having no status, stigmatised and called yobs and teenage dropouts. And as Colin Burgon said yesterday, that our kids really do face a chilling future. I originally intended to provide some figures to support this Motion, but there are many methods and excuses used to hide the true scandal of the problem, so I will leave them out. We have seen several schemes over the years from government, like the Education Maintenance Allowance, a means tested weekly payment to encourage many kids who have struggled through their secondary education to a further year or two of failure, only to them to be faced with the prospect of temporary work through an agency, with very little prospect of permanent employment and working on pay that does not provide a living wage. Government schemes are not solving the problem, they are a token gesture to gain a few extra votes. Policies put in place by government to hide from their responsibilities. To hide from the fact that capitalism will never provide a society that treats every individual as equal, but instead provides only for the elite few.

What is needed is for government to return the apprenticeship programme back to what it was 40 and 50 years ago. It needs to re-nationalise parts of our manufacturing sector to boost employment throughout the UK, and it should be an obligation of every employer to employ and fully train school leavers. And to do this we need a SocialistLabour government back in power to give every young child a future, and every opportunity in life. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Dave are you coming down to second it?

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: Here to second this Motion. Just one thing he missed out on there, this government need to lower the pension age. When I started I was going to be a pensioner at 65, it now looks like I might be working while 70. There’s none of the jobs’ll be released for these kids while we’re working into us 70s and 80s. Support the Motion.

[applause]
**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here to support this Motion, I agree with Dave wholeheartedly. We should take the pension age down. What about these young kids? Like you said there’s young kids here and we wonder why they’re involved in this and that, there’s no future for them. Like Colin Burgon said yesterday, it’s the first time in a generation when you can’t see any future, you know, my old chap (inaudible) he wanted me to do better than him. I can’t honestly think that my grandchildren are going to do better than me, because there’s nothing for them. Support the Motion.

[applause]

**Sister Kim Elvidge – Branch 367:** I’m here to support this Motion, I feel sorry for the young people of today. I can remember when I left school, just before you left school we had managers of companies coming in and inviting you to go and work for their company. We want them days back, the days where you can go into one job, come back out, step into another one, we need those days back, please support.

[applause]

**Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215:** Conference, we’ve got to support this Resolution because the way the education is set up today with these free schools and these academies and all of this, the State education, there was nothing to beat comprehensive education, you had lifelong learning. You don’t have that now, and you have to pay to go to college now, it’s in a terrible state. This again will have to be a Resolution for a Labour government, you won’t get this from the Tories, but because it’s like rich and poor. Rich love poverty because it makes them better off, and uneducated people makes, those that pay for their education, dead certs to get all the good jobs. And that’s why we should support this Resolution. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother John Halliday – Branch 701:** Here to support the Motion. Delegates, Conference, Platform. We have to remember that the Tories were doing us a favour, they proposed thousands of new apprenticeships, but what they forgot to tell us was there was no manufacturing base for them apprenticeships to start with. The last Labour government damaged the workers in Derbyshire, they give an order to give rolling stock to Germany, when it was brought up by the Lib Dems and Conservatives, the deal had already been done, we couldn’t reverse it. We have sold our manufacturing base over the last 20 years. The jobs aren’t there, we have to create new manufacturing, we have to be protectionist, we have to hold on to our manufacturing base if we are going to have jobs for our children. I support.

[applause]

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313:** Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to obviously support the Motion. Young people, we’ve heard said during this week at Conference are the future. Not only for this Union, but for this country, and if people are not going to be allowed the opportunity and if only the rich will be able to afford education for their children, what is the future for our kids? The reality is the future is crime, most people will turn to crime, drugs, selling drugs, on drugs, yes? And the reality is all you’re doing, the class divide is just getting bigger and bigger and bigger. So please support this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Conference the Executive would ask Conference to support the Motion, because the Motion’s right, it’s a scandal. It’s also a tragedy, 22% youth unemployment and 38% under 25s, a wasted generation. And the last election was cruel to them, the Fib Dems made a point of engaging with young people, offering a new start and new hope, but given a sniff of power, sold them out as part of the deal for the seat at the Tory table.
And politicians ask why young people feel politics isn’t for them. The problem is the betrayal of students, by politicians like Pinocchio Clegg. It plays into the hands of the establishment if they don’t want people to be involved, because young people don’t feel part of the system so they feel they have to walk away from the system. And that’s what they want to happen, and this is the result of young people not being part of the system. So it’s important that Trade Unions seize their opportunity to make sure we give young people a voice, and that’s why the Executive welcomes this Motion, and asks the Conference to support. Please support the Motion.

[applause]
To the vote, those in favour, against. Carried.

Unidentified Speaker: We had a, think about mobile phones, and a certain person was pulled up this week about it, which is Mr Draper. Now he’s been on the phone for the last 15 minutes, I don’t know what he’s doing, he’s there like that Mr Draper. Let’s face it, if it’s good for us, it’s just as good for him, and he should be fined the same as anybody else.

[applause]
(inaudible) so can we have Mr Draper pay a fine please.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I’d like to have Mr Draper pay a fine, but to be fair to him, and in his defence, what he’s been looking at is an email from Tony Lewis about the times of the strike action that’s taking place at RF Brookes in Leicester. But you’re right we should fine him anyway, just because he’s a Scouser. And how many times has he mentioned Liverpool so that’s good enough for me. But to be fair to him, that’s the reason why he’s been looking at his phone because obviously he’s had to answer back in relation to the industrial action that starts tomorrow.

Unidentified Speaker: Why doesn’t he go off the Platform to do it?

[applause]
(inaudible) if it’s any of these people out here and they’re seen using their mobile phones, they will be fined and there’s no problem about it. Let’s have fair dos all round.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I think you’d find that we’d only take them to Standing Orders if the phone was going off and they started answering it. We wouldn’t take them to Standing Orders if we see them, because believe you me, we see people all the time, don’t we Mr Sedgewick, and he never got taken to Standing Orders. So I’ve got to be fair and I’ve got to say, I’ve got to say, we don’t, and to be fair, we have to keep in touch with the situation as well, because, I know we’re running Conference but we also have a responsibility to other members who aren’t here. And as long as we’re not answering phones, if he was answering phones up here, I accept your point of order. But I’ve got to say we are in a dispute and it’s important we understand what’s going on in that dispute. So on this occasion, I don’t think it would be fair [applause] to send him to Standing Orders, but I accept you have a right to put your point of order.

Unidentified Speaker: If you were driving with a mobile phone against your ear, and you were pulled up, you’d be fined, because for the simple reason is, you cannot concentrate on what’s being said on that phone and what you’re actually supposed to be doing. There’s no way in the world you can listen to a conversation and listen to what’s going on here.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: But it wasn’t his turn to respond, it was mine [laughter]. Absolutely no problem, and you’re absolutely right to raise the point. Absolutely right because there shouldn’t be two rules, there should only be one, but sometimes as we accept, that sometimes people have to go out because they’ve got business and they come and ask us.
Sometimes we have to conduct our business as well, because we’ve still got a job to do even, as well as running Conference. So I would ask Conference not to send him to Standing Orders but make sure he buys you a pint tonight instead.

[applause/shouts/laughter]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** I’d have to send everybody now wouldn’t I Tony?

[applause]

As the General Secretary’s just pointed out he’s certainly not driving at the moment. Where am I [laughter], 82.

---

**82 Branch 390 Manor**

*That this Conference calls on the government to raise Dyslexia awareness in the UK and better support for those affected, particularly in schools. Dyslexia is classed as a disability in the Equality Act 2010. There are eight different types of Dyslexia and ten percent of the UK population suffer – 4% severely. As a hidden difficulty, a large percentage of the UK still does not understand what Dyslexia is. Many are severely disadvantaged in life as a result of this condition. Please support this Motion.*

**Brother Stuart Bailey – Branch 390:** First time Delegate. For the last two days I’ve been thinking long and hard about what to say when I get up here. Should I read them the Motion word for word, or shall I tell a room of people why I really support this Motion. I decided on the latter. When I was 12 years old I was fortunate enough, a teacher at school spotted a series of reoccurring errors in my school work. This led to the discovery that I had Dyslexia. However it wasn’t until I became a ULR and gained more information on Dyslexia that I told anybody outside my family. I am now a Shop Steward and a ULR, and I’m not ashamed to say I’m Dyslexic, and I’m proud of what I’ve achieved in this Union.

[applause]

Please support this Motion, I move.

[applause]

**Brother Warren Broomhall – Branch 390:** Conference, EC, Chair, President. Here to second this Motion. First of all I’d like to congratulate Stuart for getting up. Just to reiterate what Stuart said, I think the earlier that this can be spotted in schools the better opportunities these people with this disability can have better opportunities in life. We’ve been using our ULR centre to raise awareness, I think the government should do the same. Thank you.

[applause]

**Sister Debra Chappell – Branch 459:** First time speaker. I’d just like to say as a mother of two children with Dyslexia, is that it’s an uphill battle. My daughter eight years ago was diagnosed with Dyslexia, I first heard about it from school. I was took to one side and whispered in my ear by the teacher, your daughter’s got the D word. D word? Didn’t know what the D word was, and it was quite taboo in Oldham. For the last couple of years it’s becoming quite open and honest. I’m proud of my children, they don’t hide the fact that they’ve got Dyslexia, they speak up about it. I can’t write perfect English, my words are all muddled up, but you know what I’m saying. They’re on MSN, and hotmail, they’re Blackberrying all the time, the words are all jumbled, but we know what she’s saying. I support this Motion.

[applause]
Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to obviously support this Motion wholeheartedly. The only concern I’ve got is that the Motion asks for the government, I think they would be probably more appropriate to lobby the TUC or something like that. Thank you very much.

[applause]

Brother William Brennan – Branch 512: Conference, Chairman. Dyslexia, Dyslexia’s not new thing. Dyslexia’s been around for a long, long while and there’s two prominent people, three I can name, Sir Jackie Stewart, racing driver, Stephanie Beacham, actress, and Demi Moore, actress. They’ve got Dyslexia, that young lady there has been more or less kicked aside and said that your child’s got a problem. Well your child’s got a problem, your child has just got something that God gave it, and do you know if we don’t raise awareness, or the government doesn’t raise awareness then people are no going to get on in life. I don’t like the wording (inaudible), just get on with it. Dyslexia? It’s just a word.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference the Executive would ask, the Executive Council would ask Conference to support the Motion. Thank you. Those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Eighty three.

83 Executive Council

National Vocational Qualifications – That this Conference agrees that we demand that this Conservative government reverses its decision to get rid of many of the National Vocational Qualification Courses.

Brother John Fox – Branch 417: Speaking on behalf of the Executive Council. Conference we have to think of the children who cannot deal with the pressure of exams, otherwise they will be left out in the cold, no qualifications, no job prospects, apart from the menial low paid jobs. Children deserve a good education, and they should have a good education. Whatever that may entail. Some children are able to demonstrate their ability outside that of exams, and by using knowledge based portfolios it means they have a reference to assist them in the future. In NVQs you’re assessed on the knowledge that you’ve attained over the years in education, and it helps them with the knowledge that they need out in the workplace. Another name for these are modern apprenticeships, which they can only get from firms that uses them as slave labour, paying them at low rate, so that they can make more profit, as well as getting grants from the government with our taxes. So it needs the Education Department to continue with these qualifications so that our children and our future generations will have the knowledge that they need when they take their first steps into the workplace. I move.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded.

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: We are very fortunate in my division of Greggs that we’ve been given the opportunity as part of our training to also do National Vocational Qualifications, NVQs. I’ve been very fortunate over the last four years I’ve been able to do three NVQs whilst still in my employment with Greggs. I’ve done Stage 2 and Stage 3 of Food Manufacturing, and Stage 3 of Team Leading. This has helped me tremendously. It just gives you a different perspective on what happens in different sort of manufacturing, as well as the bakers, and it also makes you aware of a lot of different options. The Executive Council there is right, it does bring together years of your own personal education, and it makes you think, it makes you really think and I suggest that if any of these opportunities comes to you now, please, please take these
opportunities on. Because it just makes you more motivated and more positive in your roles as managers, and as line leaders and anything like that. Thank you very much.

[Sister Stacey Oakley – Branch 253: I’m also here to support this Motion. I myself did an NVQ with the National Association of Master Bakers a few years ago. I don’t think I’d be where I am today without it. We’ve already seen that children and people coming out of school have already got enough taken away from them, NVQs gives some of them a sense of purpose and a sense of belonging where schools sometimes have failed by taking this away, further damaging their future. Please support.

[Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: Bit muddled about this one because I believe a replacement has been put in place and it is a relatively new qualification. The Training Manager has mentioned to us at Park Cake that they are removing the NVQs but it’s being replaced by an IPQ. Do apologise for the abbreviation because it’s only been mentioned to me in passing, and I can’t tell you what it stands for. But I’ll make sure it’s taken again. But apparently there is a qualification that can be done on site, and there’s different modules of it where you can be tested on piping, sieving, mixing, there’s something for absolutely everybody. So I do believe I’m being told it’s been replaced by the IPQs. Thank you.

[Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference the Executive would ask you to support the Motion. Those in favour, against. That’s carried. Motion 84.

84 No 5 Regional Council

*Social Housing – That Conference agrees to lobby the government to build more council homes to alleviate the shortage.*

[Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582: Our homes are more than just a roof over our heads, they make an extremely important impact to our health and wellbeing, and provide security and privacy. But Delegates there is simply not enough social housing available throughout the UK. And there are many who desperately need it. The figures I have are from 2009, but they’re not in their thousands, or hundreds of thousands, but in millions. Millions currently waiting for a decent home. And millions now being joined by thousands more who are finding it a constant struggle. A struggle to find ways of paying their rent and mortgage during this recession. Swelling the numbers even further after having lost their jobs, and having their homes repossessed. As many Delegates have been saying this week, we need a Labour government back in power. A Labour government prepared to listen to the concerns of those they represent. And as John McDonnell said the other day, we’ve all got to lead, and we all need to make sure that the leaders of the Labour government give us their full support, and fully represent us. Delegates please give your support in demanding that government provide far more social housing so that each and every one of us has access to a decent and affordable home. Thank you.

[Brother Peter Barszczak – Branch 561: Well I’m here actually to oppose this.....

[Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Whoa, Peter, I didn’t realise, I thought you were seconding it. Sorry mate. Formally seconded? Is it seconded, formally seconded. Okay Peter.
Brother Peter Barszczak – Branch 561: I’m here to actually oppose this, but it’s not for building the social housing, it’s to lobby this government because if they built more social housing they’d build them and then they’d sell them off, and the idea is, with the Labour Party, would build them and they would remain council houses. Because last year, I got a text off the MP up here, that he would abolish the right to buy. This was after last year’s Conference, you wanted to increase the right to buy. So on the grounds that it’s this government building social housing is why I oppose it. Thank you.

[applause]

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Platform, Delegates, in today’s paper it does say about, I’ve lost it now sorry, that there’d be an extra million people under 30 will be priced out of the housing market by the year 2020. I have a 21 year old who lives at home, with his girlfriend, he’s never ever going to be able to afford a mortgage on his wages. We do need more social housing, so he can move out of home, and stop living off the back of Mum and Dad. Please support.

[applause]

Sister Kim Elvidge – Branch 367: I’m here to support the Motion. Housing is an issue that affects every one of us. We all know how important having a decent home is from our health and emotional wellbeing. Building new homes, well that solves two problems, they build homes, it makes jobs, creates jobs, gives people somewhere to live. I have some statistics here which I actually got off the Internet this morning, so they are quite new, they’re from Shelter, the housing charity for the homeless. This is, they’re saying there’s over 1.7 million, this is householders, currently on the local authority waiting list, that’s people that have homes but they might be losing them through repossession, the houses aren’t big enough, various other reasons. The coalition government plans to build some new homes, but it’s a downright disgrace, they plan to build 150,000 over four years. That’s less than a third of what’s needed. So this will leave most families stuck in limbo on housing waiting lists, living in cramped, poor private, I’ve lost my words now, well housing, and the worst extreme, living on the streets. I should know from experience, I was repossessed two years ago and it ain’t nice. Please support this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, obviously the General Secretary in his opening address covered this subject in great detail, so the Executive Council position is quite clearly to support the Motion. So we’d ask Conference to support. Having said that, there is a right to reply, I forgot, do you want? Right okay. To the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Eighty five.

85 No 5 Regional Council

Council Care Workers – That this Conference put pressure on this Lib Tory government to stop the cuts in council care both in council run homes and care homes and give back some dignity to our pensioners.

Brother David Suddards – Branch 561: I brought a Motion very similar to this last year, so this is more of an update on it, things are getting worse for the council workers, council care workers should I say. My wife’s a care worker in Leeds. They’ve changed how that format’s worked by the council, your independent care workers are, your carers, used to be allotted times, they’re now allotted times on the council. And they’re cutting them times down, and they have a thing called rehabilitation. Half of these people who they’re sending out to be rehabilitated in their own homes should be in homes, and looked after. My wife comes home with horror stories. She told me only three or four months ago, she’s in a house, she’s supposed to finish work at half
past eight at night. She’s in a house a ten o’clock with a doctor, an ambulance and herself, arguing where this old person is meant to be going. It should be, the ambulance service is saying no it’s not our problem, the doctor’s saying well it is your problem, the wife’s saying he should be taken into a home, and all the time the guy’s on the floor, it’s absolute disgrace. Support this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: Seconding the Motion. I don’t know what it says about it, but my wife’s a care worker too, so and when she went for jobs, have you had any experience, she says I’ve lived with him for 10 years [laughter]. There you go. Council care workers they work hard, they’re cutting back services, and I don’t think it’s fair. Support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Christopher Lay – Branch 253: I’m also here to support the Motion. Last year unfortunately my Nan suffered a stroke. Subsequently four months later she passed away from it. However when she originally had her stroke, there was also an ambulance there, a doctor there, and my mother and father was at the house. They couldn’t decide what hospital it was best to go to, not medical reasons, it was because of whether they would be able to care for my Nan. It is absolutely totally wrong. She was put in City Road Hospital in Birmingham, instead of the QE Hospital. She was at City Road Hospital for two weeks, then she got told well to get her the best operation which she could have possibly had because there was something wrong with her brain, that she’d have to go to the QE. So they transferred her to the QE Hospital. Then because they didn’t have any beds there, they transferred her back to City Road Hospital after her operation. It was absolutely chaos. She then went into a home where subsequently the, due to the cuts in the council care homes, unfortunately they just didn’t have the time to give her the necessary care or treatment. Some days she wasn’t even able to get out of bed because they did not have the staff to get my Nan out of bed. It is an absolute shocking disgrace. They fought for us in the war, they fought for our freedom, and this is the way we’re treating them. It is shocking. Please support this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President. We’d ask Conference to support the Motion. Another glaring example of how this coalition will damage public services in, just in the single minded quest to cut a deficit that we never created. It’s another example how evil policies target the most vulnerable in our society. They have an absolute devil may care attitude towards the needs of the sick and the elderly. They’re well documented, but little is mentioned about the devastating, the devastation their attitude causes in the realms of healthcare. We had a good debate I believe last year on what was going on and we talked about Southern Cross and what that was going to go on. But the thing that we’ve got to stress is with care work, it isn’t just a job. It isn’t the last resort, these people are actually dedicated. Everybody’s dedicated in some way to their job, but care workers, probably the lowest of the low paid people in this country, it’s a vocation for them. These people do it because they believe, I’ve got to say, it’s a job that I could never do. Think about it, would a care worker walk away from an elderly or disabled person? Or a disabled child in their care because the clock ticked to their finishing hour? I think not. That’s the type of people that we’re talking about. But still this government continues to undermine our social services, that for decades has been one of the cornerstones of our Welfare State. Their aim is for more people to be treated at home as Dave said. And why’s that? It’s got nothing to do with they think they’ll get better care within the realms of their own family, it’s because it’s a damn cheaper option, that’s why the government want to change it. Paying Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance is a much cheaper option than
supplying care homes and care workers, and they see that as the all and end all when we come to talk about this subject. Cheaper always wins when it cuts the deficit or when it allows you to pay tax cuts to your friends.

Our Social Services within the UK are near to breaking point, in particular since the demise of Southern Cross last year. And this government allowed it to happen, that’s a national scandal that affects probably most old people as they reach the twilight of their lives. They allowed thousands of care workers to be thrown onto the dole queues, and more than that, they allowed many patients to be left without the help that they desperately needed. Private nursing and care homes flourished under the Tory government last time, because we had an ageing population, but also it became a cash cow for them, and that was why people went into healthcare. We’ve got an ageing population which puts much more demands on local authority care. But these care homes in the past were a licence to print money. Companies like Southern Cross flourished under this policy and they made absolutely millions out of local authorities. It was great at the time of boom economics, but not such a great time when we’re in a time of bust. Southern Cross proved that and they went bust. And of course the same question has to be asked, who pays for the demise of places like Southern Cross? It’s an exactly the same way as we saw the demise of the banks, it’s you that pays, it’s the taxpayer. We bailed out the banks, and we’ll be expected to show that the burden for the greed of these entrepreneurs who run these homes, and of course the inactivity of the rag tag coalition that we have at the moment.

The government cuts have inevitably led to a decline in the standards of care that is given to our elderly and to our disabled. At a time when life expectancy’s extended, and people should be looking forward to the best care in their twilight years, the Tories have responded by cutting pensions and cutting funding for the local authorities to provide care. Thus forcing families to care for elderly relatives in the home, and that is a scandal. I said last year that there are hundreds of nursing homes out there, not all of them are good ones. When I said last year that if you go into a place and it smells of pee, it isn’t because of any incontinence in the place, it’s because they’re not clean, it’s because they’re cutting corners, and that’s what happens. When demand outstrips availability, corners get cut. And when corners get cut, standards start to drop. And this government is 100% to blame for what is happening now in council care homes. Delegates support the Motion, and support the most vulnerable in our society.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, to the vote, those in favour, against. That’s carried. Eighty six.

86 **No 3 Regional Council**

*That this Conference agrees to support putting an end to the shameful treatment and care of the elderly in today’s society.*

**Brother George Tittensor – Branch 392:** Mr Chairman, members of the Platform, and Delegates. I bring this because I was ashamed of what I seen on the telly and how they’ve been treating the elderly people and the care people. Conference around 15 to 20 years ago child abuse was carried out largely unnoticed in society. I feel like exactly the same thing is happening to the elderly. Now in care homes, not even enough care systems. We know the care system’s underfunded, and the only way to fix it is to introduce new reforms and put money in. This government must respond to the care funding, we need a current, enough money in the system. But we have to invest now, and not cut corners, if we don’t, if this doesn’t happen we are bound to continue to hear about poor practices. Conference all care home staff need to be trained on how to provide a good quality of care. And we must make sure that all our needs are met. And the local authorities must set stronger recommendations for the elderly care. We also know that
the elderly people are victims of crime in their own homes. This current system of regulations are not working, we need a more comprehensive system to be reintroduced by the Care Quality Commission. Only then relatives can be assured that their loved ones get the care they deserve in the decent (inaudible). Lay inspectors could also have a role to play, we need to encourage this government to look at it. This option, families and their loved ones deserve the best care possible. The care of the elderly people are given today makes me hang my head in shame, that such a country allows the most elderly in our society to be sitting like this. And some treatment is criminal by some carers.

I know it makes you ask this, wealthy country to get providing for the elderly. Provide care for the elderly, keep their dignity in their final years. Conference only too often our society looks at a person and only sees the age. And just in the age of the person, and in 10 or 20 years time we will probably be that person, sitting in a care home, defined simply as old. It is not a problem, it’s a massive problem, and it will get bigger as we live longer. I ask Conference to support this Motion.

[applause]

Unidentified Speaker: I’ll happily second this Motion. The fact is if it wasn’t for the old people in this country, we wouldn’t have a Welfare State, we wouldn’t have strong unions, we wouldn’t have decent education. One thing has been brought up that hasn’t been brought up, and that’s this. If you’re an old person today and they shove you in a home, and the home has got shocking standards, don’t get the idea that that home is cheap because it’s not. You can do your research, I have, it currently runs, a lot of these homes currently run at around £20,000 a year, that’s what it costs. You might think well that’s alright I’m not a rich man, I haven’t got that money. What you, let me tell you what happened to my grandmother a number of years ago. She’d gone through the 30s, the War, the rest of it, bought a house in ’29, paid it on a mortgage all her life. End of her life she’d got a little nest egg, not much, she’d saved for it. Ended up going into a home due to dementia. No choice, family, when it’s that bad, you need professional care. Council come along, right, oh my word, you’ve got some money in the bank, right you can pay x amount, and then when it drops your money below a certain figure, you will consider paying something towards your care. Then, oh, wait a minute, you’ve got a house. Well that’s, under our rules, that’s classed as income, and this is happening still now, because I know people that it’s happened to. And what happens is they put what a solicitor would term a charge or a second charge on that house, and they will run, they will gobble up your money, and then when they’re finished, the house will be forcibly sold, does it improve the standard of care? No, because you’re in a situation that you can’t get out of. If something isn’t done about this, well I’ll leave it to you to work out the consequences. I ask you to strongly support this Motion.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates, yes it’s a crime the, what’s going on in the care homes, because these are people that are passed being able to handle themselves at home, and they were put into these places. You all saw in the papers the beautiful new care home in Bristol, it’s outside of Bristol, it’s in South Gloucester, but it’s a wonderful home, purpose built for that, but the people that were put in to run it and work in it were not fit for purpose. That is a fact of life. Doctors, the doctors in the local practitioners they do their best to keep people in their own homes, for as long as they can, they send in care people to look after them and get them put to bed because all the people, when they come to that age, they’re more happier in their own home, and when you put them into institutions they don’t last very long. But the scandal that happened in Bristol should never be allowed to happen again, and the people that were in there should be charged with the crimes they committed against people. Please support the Resolution.
Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Obviously up here to support this. Something that Ronnie said about Southern Cross, when that closed down last year, that was definitely one of the happier days of my life. The last 10 years of her life my Mum had Alzheimer’s. She was in a Southern Cross home and myself and my youngest daughter did a surprise visit one Sunday. All the staff that were on were agency. We got me Mum up out of her chair, and she was wet from her bra to her knees. She had an incontinence pad on, so God knows how long she’d been sat there. And when I flagged it up with the manager he said oh dear. So we sent the letter off to Southern Cross and said this is not good enough, and the reply we got back, and my sister still has this letter, said we have stressed the importance of changing clients on a regular basis so as to protect our furniture. You’ve got to support this.

Sister Stacey Oakley – Branch 253: Again I’m also here to support this Motion although I really don’t think it goes far enough. It shouldn’t just be the elderly but also the vulnerable that need to be helped. But anyway, going back to the Motion, forgotten what I was going to say now. Time and time again you’re hearing in the paper about elderly that are committing suicide because they’re fed up of living the life they’re living, they’re being bullied in their homes. This has got to stop. These people, magnificent people, helped bring Britain to how it is today. They rebuilt it after the war, they fought in the war, and they need to be helped and supported till the end. That’s all. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, we’d ask, the Executive would ask Conference to support. Clearly as the previous Motion was outlined by the General Secretary, so Conference to the vote, those in favour, those against. And there you go, everybody can forget what they’re about to say. What we’re going to do, is we’re going to break for 45 minutes, as it was rightly pointed out to me there are medical reasons why I shouldn’t keep you all in here and restrict you from having your dinner so, everybody okay with 45 minutes? Yes?

Afternoon Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: If they’re not in the room, oh, it’s alright the General Secretary’s here. Shame. Point of information, more than welcome. Mr Sedgewick.

Brother George Tittensor – Branch 392: As I’ve just moved Motion 86, I am now astounded to find that this Conference Hall has barred the disabled from using the toilets during our break. I escorted the woman in, and she said, sorry it’s a private function. Bloody disgusting.

What I’m saying is a disabled person has tried to struggle in the toilets, and you know the size of the toilets and how they (inaudible). I said excuse me duck, there’s disabled toilets across the road which gives you more room, that your carer can go in and undress you in decency.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right, okay, we’ll raise it.

Jan is Kieran in? When he comes in just tell him I want to see him will you? Just give us a nod. General Secretary Roll Call.
[Roll Call taken]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** At the moment there is 167, but we expect some of our ships to arrive. If they come in late they go to Standing Orders yes. Will the Officials on the door make sure that they go to Standing Orders if anyone comes in late?

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference Motion 87 has been withdrawn, Motion 88.

### 88 No 5 Regional Council

*I ask that this Conference lobby the government to lower the age of retirement to 60 for all so that it may open jobs up for the younger generation to step into.*

**Sister Helena England – Branch 568:** Speaking on behalf of the Executive Council. Motion 88. I brought this Motion in and I put the age up to 60 because of women used to be able to retire at 60, and men at 65, so I thought it were fair to bring the men down to be equal to the women. Now I’m not asking you to lobby the government to make this legal, I’m asking for it to be made that everybody has the choice to retire at 60 while they’re fit and well enough to enjoy their retirement. When you’ve worked for maybe 40, 50 years, you might only live another 20 years, so you’ve only 20 years to enjoy a pension that you paid into for 50 odd years, what this government has took off you. This government is nothing but a bunch of legalised bullies and thieves, and that’s what they’re doing to every one of us here. We are bullied into working longer in the hope that you’ll drop dead so you won’t claim no benefits. We’re going to end up with a society where we’re going to have people that are living in poverty in their old age, and we’re going to have younger generation that have had no ethics in their life at all because they have not been educated to go out to work because there’s been no jobs for them, they’ve not been able to educate themselves any further. This government wants us to end up back into the days of where the masters and slaves, and you can guess who the slaves are going to be. It’s going to be us, it won’t be them. They’re a bunch of millionaires that do not know what the working class want or need. I’ve heard loads of motions today that I could bring into this because this covers everything. It covers the poverty that you’ve been talking about, that people are going to be living in their pension age, it covers the younger generation that’s having no work ethics because there’s no work for them to go to, it even covers the young men that are going to Afghanistan in war, because we’ll not need them to go to war, we’ll have a war on our streets, we’ll have civil war. All the protests, all the petitions we do, and all the marches we do, we’ll not get heard because they don’t give a, can I say toss, they don’t give a toss about us. They’ve said it up here right, they’ve said it right, you need to get it through the Labour Party. The young ‘uns, I’ve heard people here today that’s quite capable of running this country a lot better than these millionaires are. We need to get in there, we need to do it from within, we need to fight and give the working class a better say in what goes on in our lives. You all work in industries where probably about time if you have to work till you’re 75, you’ll be too old to enjoy your retirement. We need to make a change, and the only way we’ll do it will be through getting in from the Labour Party. Get it through and get some of our people into government, to have a voice. We need a voice for the working class people and we haven’t got one in this Labour government, but we need to get one. The young ‘uns here are quite capable of doing that. They’re quite capable of doing it, I ask you to support this.

[applause]

**Sister Sheila Hyman – Branch 582:** I’m here to second that Motion. On the Tonight programme last week it was said that the older workers were needed to work longer because they have the experience. I say pass that experience on to the young people who want to work. Please support.
[applause]

**Brother Michael Lynch – Branch 505:** Conference I was sitting watching the Parliament Channel one day and a Tory MP chatting on saying he thought it was okay to work to 70. Was okay for that fat bastard sitting in the House of Commons with his feet on the bench. You know, sure, they’re talking about raising the retirement age, it should be brought down. We need it to be brought down to 60 so we can get people, young people into the workplace, instead of having the young people leave the shores of this country to go to work other places because they can’t find work here.

[applause]

**Brother David Suddards – Branch 561:** Yes as I said in an earlier motion, we’ve got to start and free up jobs for these kids otherwise we’re going to have a generation what doesn’t know what work is or how to work, and don’t want to work. And by just making us work longer it’s either dole, pension, the government needs to make a decision and make a decision the right way. Either this government or the next Labour government, and lower the age to 60. Support the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566:** I’m here to support this Motion. Why are we expected to work longer and longer when there’s a whole generation of young people leaving school with no jobs to go to? I know you won’t believe this because of me boyish good looks but I left school at 15, that’s 41 years ago, and I’ve worked all my life since leaving school, and I tell you it’s, Comrades, now I’m ready for a rest. Support.

[applause]

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Here to support this Motion. I’ve been absolutely made up with the young people who’s got up to this rostrum [applause] this week, and put their points of view across. Absolutely fantastic, it’s been a pleasure to watch them. But I will ask the top table a question. Is it only Tony Sedgewick gets fined for swearing on the rostrum [laughter]?

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Yes. Especially when you’re making a lot of money out of it [laughter].

**Sister Marilyn French – Branch 529:** Asking you to support this Motion. I’m appalled at the fact that I’ve worked for the last 45 years and now been told I’ve got to work another 5½ years before I can claim my pension. The government’s robbing me of thousands of pounds. We’ve paid into pensions for years and years and years, worked hard all our lives, and now they’re saying we can’t get our pension at 60. They should be bringing men down to 60 and make us all the same, equality, stop the government robbing us of our deferred pension, savings we put in, and campaign to get it returned to 60 years for all. We deserve it, thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay the Executive would ask you to support the Motion. Those in favour, against. That’s carried. Eighty nine.

89 Branch 215 South Western

*That this Conference agrees that Francis Maude MP and his Tory mates who are ruthlessly slashing the pensions of millions of public sector workers but all the while are set to receive a gold plated pension for themselves. These hypocrites need to be told that we are not all in this together.*
Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Conference we went through a lot about the fat cats all morning, so we won’t delay too long on this so we get the Resolution through. Conference Frances Maud and all his Tory mate that slashed all the pensions of the public workers, even your own Union, their pensions are destroyed. And paying more, working longer, and getting less. But they have gold plated pensions. Conference we’re not all in this together, and something has to be sorted out somewhere. If not a Labour government should do it for us. Conference I move the Resolution. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded. Okay, Conference we’d ask you to support the Motion. Those in favour, against. That’s carried. Motion 90. Motion 90? Number 3 Regional Council? No? Going once, going twice. Withdraw, okay, fair enough. Motion 91.

91 Branch 390 Manor

That this Conference supports the continued fight for an International Labour Law and the use of boycotts on multi-national corporations who fail to acknowledge the legitimate right of workers to form and/or join trade unions. All over the world, online pressure groups such as Labour Start, IUF and the International Federation of Trade Unions bring to our attention brothers and sisters who support trade unions face blackmail, threats, loss of jobs and even death to either form part of a trade union group or set one up. Please support the Motion.

Brother Richard Wainwright – Branch 390: Comrades, here to move Motion 91. I won’t really waffle on about this, all I’ll add is that all Conference we’ve shown solidarity to all our members across the nation. And all we’re asking for here is that we show the same solidarity to all those struggling members around the world who are looking to get their own Trade Unions set up, and we need to ensure and do all we can, that we do get the International Labour Law introduced. Please support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded. Just waiting for John to get down. Understand David Cameron’s obviously made an issue about the Scouse accent today in Parliament, so obviously apparently he’s suggested that Scousers need reading and language lessons.

Unidentified Speaker: A point of order, I think the Chairman should go to Standing Orders for that………..

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: So do I, discrimination.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Excuse me, it’s a point of information for you. John, I think Cameron was wrong for doing it because I perfectly understand all of you Scousers.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes, I object to that as well. Can I just point out that yesterday when the President was reading out the nomination forms, it was a Scouser who had to tell him how to pronounce the names?

[laughter]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I was pointing out to the Conference how Cameron has insulted the nation of Scouse.
Unidentified Speaker: Can I ask Conference whether you agree? [cheers] Calm down, I’m getting discriminated against. Conference I’d ask you to support this Resolution. I’ve spoke on this before, there’s a leaflet being given out in every pack, I’d like to, if you haven’t read it that you read it before you leave Conference. It’s got almost 3,000 Shop Stewards killed in Colombia, and it’s not just the Shop Stewards that get killed, it’s their wives and children, but there’s still Stewards following in their footsteps, which is what it’s all about, solidarity, and we should have them in our hearts as well. It’s got a list of loads of names that have died, and it’s got an unmarked grave there with the 3,000 in next to a military base. These people are just taken off the streets, and they’re never seen of again, all families, all communities, all villages, because they’re trade unionists. In Colombia a few years ago there was actually a leader of a major union, and they sent a car to his house to pick him up. All his family told him not to go there, and he said no, we’ve got to move forward, so we’ve got to go. So he went, they fed and dined him and everything and as he was leaving the house they shot him in the back of the head. They agreed to all his conditions and everything, but they killed him before he left the building. This is going on worldwide, and the biggest one of all, it’s not just big corporations, it’s countries, America is the worst one of all. They incorporate death squads in South America and everywhere else. President Obama, we thought he was the greatest thing that ever happened to us. He said he was going to get rid of Guantanamo Bay, get all the prisoners either sentenced or released. Guantanamo Bay is still there, and he’s standing for re-election which is wrong. He made a statement that he was going to get rid of it and move forward. America and Canada are the only two countries in the G8 summit, they’re the only two countries opposing that Cuba sit on it, and a lot of countries are now refusing to sit on it if it carries on. So we should support anything that our Comrades nationwide, countries, no matter what they do, we’re all Comrades, and I urge you to support this. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. So we’re just looking for some money, Vi have you got the money? Have you got the collection? Got some more money to put in it. Okay, panic over, 92.

92 Branch 215 South Western

Anti-Slavery Day October 2012 – That this Conference agrees that when the Anti-Slavery Day comes around each year it possibly involves more people than the African slave trade of the 1600s and 1700s. We as a Union and a nation need to stand up and oppose this vile trade.

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Mr President, Delegates, Delegates and Comrades last year we took a similar Resolution to this on the slavery trade, the sex trade, that was happening around the world which involved a lot of people. But the slavery we’re going to talk about today covers millions of young people around the world, and in this country as well. People are forced to work in countries, in camps, in China and places, they’re forced to work seven days a week, they don’t get home, they get like two days a month off, they get very little money, but the goods they produce, this is the hell of it. It’s terrible abuse of a human being but it’s also abuse of our rights, because these goods cross the world at a very cheap price, and people with not great wages are forced to buy these. Big companies like Tesco were caught buying cheap goods from India which were made by child labour. The big furniture company here in this country, Ikea, they were banned in Europe, they were banned in their own country, for having goods that was made in China and different countries across the world. We also have sweat shops here in this very country, where people work. And you know what come up lately? This government talking about young people have to go to work, and work to prove themselves that they’re actually fit for a job. That is a scandal that it should be attacked at all ends, nobody should have to go to work on them conditions, you’ve got to work and you’re trained for your job for what
you have to do. There is a responsibility to do so, Conference I move this Resolution. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconder, you’re seconding.

**Brother John Fox – Branch 417:** I wholeheartedly support and behind this. Yes, but what we need to do is to get it into Trades Councils and our Labour Party meetings, yes? And get it out there and get the rights, it’s just one of the other things that we need to do. I support this, thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** No other speakers? General Secretary.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** The Executive Council would ask Conference to support the Motion. And again it’s one of those really important motions you know, that seems to slip by year on year. In history slavery, you know, really was an evil trade and whilst the trading in humans may have been outlawed many years ago, the actual traffic of humans is still a thriving business throughout the world now. Where there’s an opportunity to make big money, people will always be ready to exploit. I’ll just give a quote, and I’m not really one for quotes, but in 1785 an English poet called William Cowper wrote we have no slaves at home, then why abroad? Slaves cannot breathe in England, if their lungs receive our air at that moment they are free. They touch our country, and their shackles fall. Do you know it’s a pity isn’t it that those sentiments from 1785 aren’t true today? Because the reality in this country, and this may well shock a lot of people, the actual reality is that slavery only became illegal in the UK on the 6th April 2010. That’s when slavery was abolished in Britain. The 1833 Slavery Abolition Act made slavery illegal. In stages throughout the British Empire, but the status of slave had never existed under common law, therefore since slaves did not legally exist in the country, owning a slave was never made specifically illegal until 2010. Labour made slavery illegal and the Tories tried to reintroduce it in the workplace. We have a government, and we deal with employers on a daily basis who try to simulate a form of legalised slavery by constantly eroding workers’ rights and driving down conditions. Section 71 of the Coroners’ Injustice Act, blimey, have a field day with these, 2009 makes it an offence in the UK to hold a person in slavery or servitude or require a person to perform forced or compulsory labour. Breaches carry a maximum penalty between 7 and 14 years, modern anti-slavery campaigners say that at this moment in time there are currently 27 million slaves worldwide in various categories. And the use of undocumented migrants as forced labour is absolutely common in Britain.

It doesn’t sound like a trade from the past when you read these sort of statistics. Women from Eastern Europe and the Far East brought to the UK with the promise of riches only to be sold to the sex trade. Working in brothels, forced into the pornography industry, passports confiscated, supposedly working for their ticket home. The problem is that the ticket never ever shows up. Held captive against their wishes and horribly exploited. But the slavery in this trade isn’t just about sex trade. We’ve seen high profile cases where young people were sold into service, it’s a sort of Upstairs Downstairs setting, but with young people working for slave wages. What about illegal immigrants, smuggled into the country to become the cheap labour of the gang masters. The cockle pickers, that wants some saying after a pint of cider I’ll tell you, killed at Morecambe Bay, where they not exposed to slavery? I hear a phone………I hear another one.

[cheers/applause]

Standing Orders. Olive Molloy wants to see you. Yes, they were exposed to slavery just, you know, it was under a different guise. Loads of human beings now, working the land in the likes of Norwich and Norfolk and all that, working in restaurants, illegally employed and illegally exploited. Yes, despite what William Cowper said back in 1785, slavery is still a thriving trade.
It mightn’t have the same profile, we might not find people living in the big houses that used to live in Toxteth, but it’s still around. Apartheid for South Africa and the US glorified slavery. Despite the furore from the rest of the world. Do you know, Pat’s right, it’s a vile trade, it’s propagated by vile people, and as decent human beings we have an obligation to ensure that it’s eradicated. As trade unionists the very morals by which we stand demand that we’re against the exploitation of one human being by another. And if it wasn’t for the genuine voice of protest, then slavery would once again become a booming trade.

Pat we’ll do whatever we can as an Executive to get Anti-Slavery Day publicised. But you know what’d be really good? If I get a real good activist like you maybe to write a piece for us that goes in the Foodworker. Something that really expresses the views of an activist within the trade union who’s been around a long time, and that’d be great, if you could do that for me, do me an article, I’ll guarantee it’ll go in the Foodworker next time, and it’ll be in time for October and therefore we can by the good deeds of you, make sure that it is publicised. Delegates it’s important that we raise our voice against all forms of exploitation, and this is one of the very, very worst. Please support.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** To the vote, those in favour, against. That’s carried.

Ninety four.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Chair can I just say while the Mover of 94 is coming down. I’ve just been approached by Colin Morgan and Branch 238 which is Burtons Biscuits in Llantarnam have donated £100 to the Strike Fund. Thanks very much.

[applause]

Please thank the Comrades back at Llantarnam for their generous donation.

---

**94 Branch 450 Manchester**

*That this Conference agrees that various conferences such as black workers, trans-gender and women’s should be scrapped as they are divisive and as a trade union we should not be supporting these.*

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** If I brought a Motion forward asking for a white women’s Conference, people would be up in arms. So I’m just saying, the only way for us to be on a level playing field is for us to be on a level playing field. I ask you to support.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconder? Formally seconded. Any speakers? Okay, Marilyn on behalf of the Executive Council.

**Sister Marilyn French – Branch 529:** Speaking on behalf of the Executive Council. And we ask Delegates to oppose Motion 94, and this is the reason why. Surely we should be proud, proud that our Conference can support and highlight the issues of members in other Conferences. Proud that our young members get the opportunity to meet at the Youth Conferences and address the issues that will encourage and help develop these very important sections of our Union. We need more young people to be involved. We should be proud that our members get the opportunity to attend and debate issues for the black workers, again this is a very important section of our Union, and we need to encourage and support this section to grow and become more active within our Union. And I’m proud, proud to have represented our Union at the Women’s Conference, and I can never accept that I may be excluded for attending the Women’s Conference in the future. Attending the Women’s Conference made a real difference to me, it had a huge effect, listening to the struggles and abuses that our sisters have faced on a regular
basis just strengthens the need to continue to support these Conferences. These Conferences aren’t divisive, they are the opposite, they are enabling, they’re supporting and they’re empowering and they’re given under represented sections of the Union a way forward. And that makes me and our Union feel proud. Making a contribution to a better standard of life for all those who are disempowered and disadvantaged, all those who need our support. Please oppose, thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Pat, sorry, that was, she was responding on behalf of the Executive. I asked if there was any speakers. Okay, to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s lost. Motion 95.

95 Branch 450 Manchester

That this Conference agrees that National Officers’ expenses be more transparent to members.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Sorry about this I’ve got all the page, that’s not my fault I didn’t put the agenda together. Now I’m not expecting them to suddenly start doing a spreadsheet saying £1.99 in MacDonalds and £2 in Boots the Chemist. A lot of what their expenses paid at the moment are via a credit card so you just get the end figure. We’re just asking for it to be more transparent. I ask you to support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are you seconding? Seconder. Formally seconded.

Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417: This was one that our Regional Council, what we left open, and I’m not here to support it or oppose it. What I will say is under Mr Hodson, I have noticed that the expenses, what we was incurring, in our Hovis meetings have gone down a lot. I’m not paying £200 now to go to London, we’re in Birmingham, if we’re in the car with Geoff, each seat’s a quarter of cost, so really I’ve not got an issue, I think in my experience, in the last couple of years, these guys are trying to save money, and I applaud it.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: Conference, how, what way do Full Time Officers have to make their expenses more transparent? If there’s a need for (inaudible) it should be here, why it is, I don’t know what to say on this Resolution, you’ll have to make your minds up when you come to vote, as to what to do with the National Officers’ expenses. We do get the expenses written out sometimes, you can question the National Officers’ expenses on the page 19 on your Treasurer’s Report. Conference do what you can with it when you come to vote, I’m not telling you which way to vote.

[applause]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference. I think the previous speaker made it very, quite clear, the point I wanted to make, it’s already in the Treasurer’s Report. So if people wish to challenge that, the figures and stuff, they can ask. The only time we’ve got to worry is when Ronnie Draper walks in here with a wig [laughter].

[applause]

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

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: And I was modelling myself on you as well H. I’ll tell you what [laughter]. The Executive Council would ask Conference to support the Motion. Be
crazy not to ask you to support it. But we’re pretty unsure of what’s meant by transparency. There’s one thing for sure Marilyn, you ain’t going to find on my expense anywhere £1.99 spent in MacDonalds, I don’t eat the crap. Right okay, so there we go, so you’re not going to find MacDonalds. So far as working expenses are concerned, there are, I’ve got to say, National Officers you know expenses are subject to triple checks, besides the fact what the past two speakers have said, they appear in the National Accounts, yes, you don’t get an itemised breakdown but who does get an itemised breakdown? I’ve got to say if the bankers had been subject to the same checks that us two are subject to, we would never have had a financial crisis in the first place because we’d have found all the things out they were doing wrong. Let me tell you where the checks come from. First of all any Executive Council member can check our accounts at any time, and we do publish on a monthly basis a list of everything that’s been spent. Our Finance Officer goes through everything with a fine toothed comb before the accountants have a go. So there’s two checks that we get straight away. And just when you think that everyone’s sorted through it and you’ve had a good pick at it then we get twice a year, we get the Inland Revenue coming in. And when they come in they inspect all the books, but one thing they do do, they actually target the National Officers’ expense accounts. So they look at those things. If the mover’s on about every penny that’s spent by a National Officer, for every transaction, then we’re going to need to produce them on a roll of toilet paper, because all your expenses are paid through us. If people need a hotel while they’re here, then I would pay that, whether that’s by cheque or by credit card. When we go to the TUC they would be on my credit card, at the Labour Party they would be on Ian’s credit card, so we have Delegates there who know the sort of things that we’re spending anyway. And as I say then they come back to the Executive Council. If we do small property repairs at Head Office then that goes on our expenses. We don’t necessarily sign a cheque if we’re going to get, you know, buy a new toilet roll holder, we’ll just go and buy it and then we’ll put it through as an expense. Stamps, toilet rolls, catering for meetings, cleaning materials etc, they all show on a National Officer’s account. So whilst I’m always supporting the need for transparency it’s difficult to understand what the mover wants or how we it transparent to members, other than producing our accounts. The National Accounts are a matter of public record, and they’re already transparent to you. We had independent auditors, if I’m not mistaken it was Lennie Williams and Don Ruffle who were the last ones that I can recall, and they were elected from Conference to come down and they would sort it, and they would go through them like a fine toothed comb. And then the decision was taken to get rid of them, well the decision wasn’t my decision, it wasn’t Joe Marino’s decision, it was actually Conference’s decision to take away the expense of using them because when they came down and looked through it, if they didn’t know what they were looking for then they wouldn’t find anything. You’d hide it, if you were going to hide something you’d hide it where they couldn’t find it in the first place. So there’s no ifs, there’s no buts about transparency, we will do whatever’s needed on transparency. But we’re not going to publish individually to members financial accounts, it would be far too costly. A common sense approach to achieve an end but also a realistic approach that can be delivered. So we ask you to support the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay to the vote, those in favour, nobody opposed you, no he didn’t, he didn’t tell you which way to vote Marilyn. You’ve got no right of reply sorry. He sat on the fence. As long as it’s a point of order. That’s alright. No he’s the General Secretary, I’m National President. No it was me, he’s a Scouser, got a Scouse accent.

**Unidentified Speaker:** Point of order, I think both crap and MacDonalds are foul language, can we have someone going up to pay the fines please?
Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: If MacDonalds is foul language, then I’ll take your wife with me, she was the one who introduced it.

[cheers]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: To the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Okay, Motion 96.

96 Branch 450 Manchester

That this Conference agrees that elected Delegates to our Conference, the TUC Conference, the Labour Party Conference etc must attend and stay to the close of Conference unless there are genuine emergency reasons to do otherwise. If the Delegate should not fulfil their obligations, they should be unable to be considered for next year.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Not sure whether this is just a General Motion or whether it needs to be brought back next year as a Rule change. Either way I’m quite happy to do that. If I put my name down for the TUC Conference and I’m elected, and I don’t turn up I’ve stopped you going.

[applause]

Somebody else could have gone in that place, it’s not fair. It needs addressing, we’ve seen an example of it this week. But it needs to be a Rule change, I’m quite happy to bring it back next year. I ask you to support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It would be helpful Marilyn, because quite clearly it’s not under Rule change, it’s not a Rule change. It doesn’t suggest it’s a Rule change because of the way it’s worded. You can leave it as a Motion, people’ll debate it but obviously that’ll be it, it’s not a Rule change. If you was to withdraw the Motion, yes, and bring it back next year as a Rule change, and put it in place to say, and obviously get the assistance if you’re not sure.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Right if that’s the better way to do it then I’m more than happy.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: If you say it’s withdrawn.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Can we have the debate and then withdraw it or do you want me to withdraw it before……..

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Well what’s the point of having a debate if you’re going to withdraw it?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Alright, sorry, withdrawn.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Withdrawn okay.

[applause]

Motion 97. You stay there Marilyn. Do you want a seat?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Why? They can’t see me now.

97 Branch 450 Manchester

That this Conference agrees that the subject of Full Time Officials being reimbursed for broadband be addressed. This is not trying to say we should not be paying this. This is to say we should be paying a competitive amount per month not top rate.
Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: If my gas bill goes up with the company I’m using I swap to a cheaper one. If my electric bill goes up with the company I’m using I swap to a cheaper one. I came away from Virgin I went over to Sky. That’s what you do at home, that’s what I’m asking for with our subs, that we use a cheaper one, not necessarily the dearest one. I’m asking you to support.

[applause]

Brother John Fox: Seconder?

Sister Phyllis Hession – Branch 450: I’m here to support Marilyn. I think it’s a good plan what she’s got, so please support.

Brother John Fox: Speakers?

Brother Mark Baker – Branch 452: Marilyn, cheaper is not always better. Please oppose.

[applause]

Brother Seamus Farrelly – Branch 466: This has been discussed at Regional Council for the last four years, because of an admin error. It must have been discussed at our Regional Council at least ten times, feels like flogging a dead horse really. I’ve had to bring it before the EC on two occasions over the last four years. It’s been investigated and it’s been improved. And now it’s here at Conference. Hopefully to put an end to it. Good housekeeping is good common sense, I don’t disagree. Now Brothers and Sisters, from time to time we fall out with each other, it’s human nature. But what we should not do is bring a vendetta to this Conference Hall and to this podium, and bully people who are in this Hall and unable to get up here and defend themselves.

[applause]

What I would say, leave your vendettas at home, if you can’t, stay at home with them. Don’t bring them here. If you read the Motion it says, you got to agree with what it says on the tin. If you don’t like what’s in the tin, oppose this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

Brother Paul Norris – Branch 189: Chair, Platform, Delegates. I would say to you really we need to oppose this Motion. I can understand the reasoning behind it, but you think of the time and possible additional cost if every five minutes because a better offer came around the corner, that they kept switching networks. That’s how mistakes happen, that’s how you would lose communication, and also it’s not necessarily cheaper because most of these so-called cheaper options are advertising gimmicks. I know that first hand when my wife kept swapping telecoms companies, gas, electric, within three or four months you end up paying more than what you originally started with. And if you’ve got a system that works I would say it’s best to keep it that way, unless it goes absolutely ridiculously high cost, but it’d cost more in the long run to keep chopping and changing. I would say oppose it, thank you.

Brother Jeffrey McCarthy – Branch 458: Up here to ask you to support the Motion. I don’t know how many times in the last 20 years I’ve heard from up there we need to save money because of loss of people in our Trade Union, and loss of money for this and loss of money for the other. We’re not asking to give up the Broadband, we want to be on the Broadband, but you know, why should we pay top notch money for, you don’t get a good service because you pay top notch, you get a good service when you investigate yes? If I want to buy something, I’ll go out and I’ll do my own work on it. And that’s all we’re asking them to do, do your homework and get the best value for money deal you can get, and don’t be paying top notch. It’s completely, I’m so angry at what was said a few minutes ago. I’m sorry, I just take a breath. You don’t
always get the best, like when you ask a quote of a builder, the cheapest price isn’t always the lowest thing to pay. I ask you to support the Motion, thank you.

[applause]

Brother Pat Rowley – Branch 215: I have to ask the question what are Full Time Officials getting reimbursed? As far as I know our Full Time Officials in Number 2 Region don’t get reimbursed for, at all, so I don’t know, it should be in the form, what we, why we get, where this reimbursement comes out of, as far as I know we start in Bristol in the Number 2 Region.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No other speakers okay? General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Can I first of all say that the Executive Council would support it, and in line with what Jeff was saying, we’re always looking at how we save money. But don’t compare gas and electricity with Broadband connections, they’re totally different. If you change your gas supplier, guess what it comes down the same gas pipes. If you change your electricity supplier, it comes through the same meter, comes down the same wires. If you change your Internet provider, it doesn’t necessarily. If you go on to Virgin, having been on BT then you have to have a whole new installation. So there is a difference. But I’ve got to say, you know I’m really glad what Seamus said, even though he sort of left the thing open whether we support or whether we don’t. Because this seems to be one of those subjects that every time I go in a Regional Council at Number 4, seems to appear there. And I know because I spoke to Joe Marino last week when he seen the agenda, and he thought it was absolutely crazy that this was appearing before Conference, he just couldn’t believe it after all the arguments that have gone in Number 4. And I know Ian’s behind me, but I’m sure that Ian’s nodding in agreement that this is you know something that we’ve discussed at length.

We used to talk about it at Head Office after meetings where it did almost at times, it sounded as though there was an element of harassment, without the finger being pointed. It seemed to be that there was a motive there. And we remedied that problem, the Executive remedied it, and that’s why you don’t see it on every Full Time Official’s bill because most now are paid from Head Office, we pay the bills, and we do monitor what’s going on. Ironically the official, where this all started, now has one of the cheaper bills throughout the Union, because they’re changes that we made. We’re glad that the Motion’s not seeking to stop us paying Broadband as it’s a key factor in our communications network. It used to be that we had pages, and people used to have to go and find 10p to put in the phone if somebody wanted them. Now we can communicate directly with Officials both at home, and by phone. Let me say before continuing that irrespective of whether or not this Motion’s carried, the Executive will continue to look at the cost of Broadband or any other cost that’s incurred by the organisation. That’s what Executives do, that’s why you elect them to do the job that they do. But one consideration that has to be taken into account is what carrier the FTO has in their home, BT, Virgin, Sky, or a host of others, if they have a BT connection in their home, neither the Executive, the President or myself has the authority to make that Official change their supplier because one is cheaper than another. It’s their home, we can’t tell them what they can have in their home. We have two arrangements for paying Broadband. If they have BT then what we do we piggy back their line and make sure that they have unlimited Broadband. We have it appear on the bill as the way it does at Head Office. The advantage of this is that when we, the way we pay the bill, so anything goes wrong, we can instigate reparation. If you don’t get it right, we can terminate that contract with BT with a month’s notice. The other system is when the BT, the FTO doesn’t have a BT line, so they’ve got Virgin or they’ve got Sky and so we reimburse the cost direct to the Full Time Official. This varies depending on the supplier, but has the added disadvantage of when something goes wrong that it’s down to the individual to sort out, we have absolutely no say in
reparation from our office. I was asking our Financial Controller, Adrian Stewart to look at the variances across the Broadband market and one thing was apparent, and Mark Baker hit the nail on the head, the old saying that you get what you pay for applies in the Broadband market. Yes there’s cheaper options available out there, but many of them come with monthly download limits. If we opted for some of these choices then we could find Officials in a position where they could not access the Internet for a period of time once they’d reach the allocated download limit. Or find themselves paying considerably more, and with that the Union paying more. Having said that, I reiterate that we will continue to monitor the cost of Broadband to the Organisation, and on that basis we would ask Conference to support the Motion.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote, those in favour, he says he left it open, did you oppose Mark? Okay, I’m sorry.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I know the Rules anyway.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It’s alright, I was in the bathroom.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Exercising me right to reply on this one. Over and over again I did bring this up at Regional Council, but deliberately they kept missing the point. They kept saying I was trying to get somebody’s Broadband stopped. That was never the issue. I know that the Full Time Officials need the Internet connection, not the issue. The issue was the price we were paying for it, which is why it kept bouncing back and forward. What the next one that they did was, took it away from Regional Council, and put it so that it was then debated at Executive Council. So then we then had no say over it. One of the things that were said to me is how come you only flag it up at Number 4 Regional Council? Well I’m sure you all know the answer to that one. Because I don’t go to Number 3’s, Number 2’s, or anybody elses. I only go to Number 4. I’m still asking for your support.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Ninety nine, no it’s not is it? Ninety eight, sorry.

98 Branch 450 Manchester

That this Conference agrees for the Executive Council to consider the implementation of a one off payment in terms of BFAWU contributions for retired members to cover their membership indefinitely. Retired members could then be given the option of whether or not they want to be informed of quarterly branch meetings. This may significantly reduce the administration cost of writing to retired members to ask them for 56p in contributions. Unions such as Unison have implemented this with great success.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I don’t need a chair, you can’t see me. Right this is, I’m bringing this forward on somebody else’s behalf so please don’t question me on this. You can only have what it says on the tin. I ask you to support.

[applause]

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

General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you Marilyn, we’re going to support the Motion. There’s both positives and negatives to implement such a change. One of the obvious positives is the saving on postage and we know what the government have proposed on increases to postal charges. If you think about, you know, sending out summonses to retired members now,
you actually would use virtually all their contributions on giving them reminders that they have to send their contributions to us, and that’s absolutely crazy. Coupled with the administration charges on our staff, for printing and paper and all that, it becomes an attraction to us. The potential downside to it is though that there is the chance that we could lose touch with many of our elder activists who play a very very important role within the Union. How would we inform them of Branch Meetings if we’re not going to write to them, unless of course, they’re on email and we had their email addresses ready. Obviously we’re going to write to them, then that one-off payment doesn’t reflect the amount of money that we would need to raise from them. If we have those email addresses, then we can overcome all those difficulties. I can’t really comment on the success such as the policy that Unison has and I know the GMB definitely have a motion like this. But I really can see the attraction for retired members and the Union alike in doing that. If you support the Motion we will ask other unions how they operate the systems, what level they set it at because it’d be very dangerous to pluck a figure out of the air, it would have to be something that isn’t too expensive for the member, but also something that has some financial viability for the organisation, and it would then seem sensible at either a Branch or the Executive would bring a definite motion, it may well be Marilyn if we have the discussion during the year, if we look at it, is maybe your Branch could volunteer to bring a Motion back to Conference that looks to set a, you know, says that we should set a level, and then the Executive would do that, but we’d decide that maybe beforehand.

Presumably we’d have to run a dual contribution because we’ve got people who are already retired who are paying, and they may not want to then pay a one-off fee on top of that. So, but it’s not an insurmountable problem to overcome and on that we say support the Motion and we’ll see what we can do for next year’s Conference.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** To the vote, those in favour, against. That’s carried.

Ninety nine.

### 99 No 5 Regional Council

**Legal Aid – Conference we ask your support in lobbying government to protect the Legal Aid allowances.**

**Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582:** Mr President, Platform, Delegates. Motion 99. Legal Aid. This Motion was proposed by my Branch Secretary Pauline McCarthy, angry at the controversial Legal Aid cuts and its consequence on actually creating great inequality for many people. Labour have estimated that three quarters of £15 billion made in spending cuts since 2010 have fallen on women’s shoulders. That’s three quarters. And although it is a legal necessity for the government to determine the effects of proposals before legislating them, it clearly appears that this government has set aside Equality Legislation in a rush to push cuts through to the Legal Aid allowance. So please Delegates give your support.

[applause]

**Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582:** Ask you to support this, I believe it’s an important Motion, and I’d like your support. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** General Secretary.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Delegates, I’m not going to speak too long on this. I mean the fact is the legislation has gone through and there’s only some minor changes. But it’s not going to change the way that Legal Aid affects us. Of course we will continue through the
Parliamentary Group to put pressure where we can put pressure, and of course when we get the return of a Labour government, to put pressure there.

Reason I’m not going to say too much about it is we’ve got a meeting that’s scheduled for later on today with all our lawyers to see what is the way forward. I mean it isn’t just about the money that comes into the organisation, it’s about the protections that we get from the CCFA money, that helps us fund cases where we lose. And that’s going to be the thing, you know, to check where we are with taking cases in future, what the viability of it is, so the whole thing’s up in the air at the moment because of the way the government have treated us. It was a deliberate ploy by the government, there’s absolutely no doubt about it, to reduce the access to justice of working people, and that’s what it’s about. It’ll be interesting to see if one of these top lawyers where, one of these top Ministers and all that, when they go along to Leveson, they have a whole team of lawyers, and I bet you it’s not coming out their pockets, themselves. But we have got meetings set up with our lawyers after Conference finishes today, after our Executive, and that will be to look at ways in which we fund legal claims in the future so, we’d ask Conference to support and we will undoubtedly continue to campaign to make sure that we’ve got a Legal Aid system in place, and that we get the return of what we’ve lost under the Tory government when we get the next Labour government. So support the Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried.

Does all the Delegates have Emergency Motion Two? You do? Just the Executive hasn’t. Okay Emergency Motion Two.

**Emergency Motion Two**

**Brother David Suddards – Branch 561:** I’m here to ask you support this Motion. Sadly two days before we came to Conference, one of my most active Shop Stewards was dismissed. This Shop Steward in my mind, he’s been active for a good 10 to 12 years, actually before me in the BFAWU, I aspired to this guy. Sharp tongue with everybody, if you were wrong, he’d tell you you were wrong, and if you were right, he’d tell you you were right. But the one thing about this guy, and I can honestly stand here, and we stand in front of our employers every day, and the lie through their teeth, and we know they lie through their teeth. This guy never lies, I’ve never, I can stand here, and tell you this guy has never told a lie in my, in the time I’ve known him. As for members, I’ve 180, roughly 180, 190 members at Hovis Bradford. We’ve got the despatch, this guy’s a despatch worker, and we’re from manufacturing. They would come from everywhere from the hygiene, from the manufacturing, if they had a problem, they would search this guy out, because he was good, he was good at what he did, and this is why the management didn’t like him. He’s also a bit of a nuisance with the ones who dodged on health and safety. If a manager walked passed and they were doing something wrong, the managers wouldn’t say anything, this guy would pull them. In fact they wouldn’t say a manager’s coming, better not do that. They’d do it, if Pete, shouldn’t say the name anyway. If this guy came past they would stop doing what they were doing, because they knew it was wrong. The company has actively in my opinion, has actively chased this guy, his case has gone on for nearly 18 months, and it’s had more U turns than the, more U turns than I can think of anyway, and they’ve actively chased him, they’ve done everything they can to dismiss him and finally they have dismissed him. Yes if you read their notes again, a little what do you call it, they’ll have their opinion and everything else. To me, all they’ve done is gone out to stop an activist within this Union. I must admit our legal services, Thompsons, have been absolutely fantastic, they’ve give us direction, they’ve helped us along with it, and you know, they’ve absolutely been fantastic. Same with Ian
up there, he’s been brought up to date with it as it’s gone along but he didn’t know that ultimately they have sacked this guy. It’s an absolute travesty, it’s disgusting. And it also sent out fear within our workplace and I think within other workplaces round here, that you know, no matter, we may think we’re safe but we aren’t safe, in fact I feel as though I’ve an X on my back now. It needs something doing. We said yesterday with RF Brookes, and I 100% support what we’ve done with RF Brookes and what we’re going to do, we put in grievances back, in at their workplace. I would ask Hovis sites to go back and do exactly the same at the disgust at sacking this activist. Support this Motion.

[applause]

**Brother Tony Sedgewick – Branch 417:** Absolutely 100% disgusted in this, and I’ll tell you why.

I’ve took me jacket off. This is a watershed moment for me, and for Hovis. This guy here is a sweetheart, he’s served his members, he’s looked after his members, he’s represented his members, he’s done nothing wrong. It’s put up job, they’ve got shut of him because he’s an activist. We need to react, and we need to react now.

[applause]

**Brother Peter Barszczak – Branch 561:** I am that Steward. Let me tell you about Premier Foods, the way we operate. They divide and conquer, they have done it systematically through each site, and still doing it and getting away with it. And why should they change? It’s successful, they’re lowering T and Cs on one site, and then they threaten the other site and they lower it on that site. Let me tell you about Bradford. Bradford shuts, and despatch did an absolutely fantastic job with their negotiations, we get very well paid. Manufacturing came back again, and they were on the lowest T and Cs within Premier Foods. Both me and Dave made a commitment to them that we would try to raise their standards, not straight away, but our aim was to raise their standards up to the despatch workers. And that’s what we’ve continued to do. If they ever try to lower anybody’s T and Cs, we will be there to fight them. I’d no aspirations to be a Branch Sec, and FTO or up there. I enjoy what I do as a Union Rep. I’m not all over going in a packing bread, but I love going in there to represent people when they’re wronged, I pay £2.60 a week for that privilege and I don’t mind.

The final nail in the coffin, I’m going to explain to you what I believe it is to be, they’re bringing flexibility in to one plant. We had Branch Meetings regularly, more than a quarter, soon as there’s something wrong we have a Branch Meeting, because both me and Dave we believe it’s them Branch members that have the right to know what’s going on, they have the right to decide what is happening. Not me and Dave, well if it’s a £1 million a week we would recommend it but we wouldn’t decide it. And what they wanted to do, they wanted to lower the ts and cs, call it flexibility on one plant, 19 members. Them 19 members came to Branch and said they didn’t want it, didn’t want it. And what I believe is, (inaudible) strength in unity, the company wanted these 19 members single them out, and ballot on their own. Not while I’m there they won’t. If they don’t want it we ballot it as a site, because Bradford is a site, despite Premier Foods wanting to split it and divide and conquer, manufacturing and despatch. So we balloted at the site, it got rejected as a site, and we would fight it as a site. Then what happened was, I’d been poorly and everything through all this, I was away. They started after the first accusations, after I’d balloted as a site, there were ructions. These were called, my Head Office. It doesn’t affect despatch, it doesn’t it, it only affects them on that plant. If they’re lowering ts and cs on one plant it’s affecting everybody I believe.

And then, now I’d been off, they have reintroduced another thing and for some reason it got balloted as a plant, despite Branch Meetings saying they want to ballot as a site. It got, they balloted it, it got rejected as a plant, but they were on their own, they feels as they’re on the their own. Sorry. I’m not one for calling strikes or ought, I believe your job should be protected,
action needs to be taken sometimes, but it’s a last resort. I frustrate managers, I stand up to managers, I’ve had managers want to pull me across the desk and thump me, not because I’m angry, it’s because I’m good. I didn’t know I were that good that they wanted to lie and sack me. I frustrate my FTO, I know I do, but I stand up for my members. I frustrate these, all through the closure I’ve frustrated Joe Marino, I stand up to them.

But I have now been dismissed, I’ve got my appeal, but this is not about me, Peter Barszczak. There are other Shop Stewards that’s put their head above the parapet for their members, and I don’t want them getting shot down as well. This is your opportunity to protect yourselves, you need to make such a shout that they will not dare do this to another one. It might be too late to save me, but don’t lose yourselves. Please support.

[applause]

**Brother Carlton Thorne – Branch 543:** If my wife could get up here, I have trouble speaking, but my wife who I’d never get up here, but when she talks about being a Shop Steward. I worked for a company called *Reita Automotives* some 13 years ago, and doing union activities, cost me my job. Now when I went back to my wife with no job, and frustrated, nearly caused a divorce, but we stuck together. So 13 years later I joined the baking industry and I was asked to be a Shop Steward and because of the bullying at work took the role on. But when I went home and told my wife I could not tell you the arguments that we had. You know. And people that are Branch Secretaries and Shop Stewards, they are the target. I didn’t get the support first time round, so I’m asking you to support this Motion. To give all Shop Stewards and Branch Secretaries in this Union the support they need because when you’ve lost your job, you’ve had a breakdown, it’s bad. I ask you to support this Motion. Thank you.

[applause]

**Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201:** I’m actually here to oppose this Motion on the wording. The sentiment is spot on, but it says and it’s very clear if the Union Official is dismissed at the end of the day why do we think it’s appropriate to defend the indefensible. I know Shop Stewards who’ve been dismissed for racism, dismissed for stealing, you can’t defend people like that. At the end of the day we should be 100% behind Pete, I’m not saying no different, but the wording that’s the issue I’ve got.

[applause]

**Brother Jeffrey McCarthy – Branch 458:** I thought I was going to be only one coming up here who would be unpopular. My heart goes out to my Brother but I have to say as a Shop Steward of many years now, why should a Shop Steward or a Health and Safety Rep or a Branch Secretary get any different treatment from the people on the shopfloor? When somebody’s sacked we need to use the might of the Branch and the might of the Union to defend that person or get him his job back to the best of our abilities. But that’s an equal playing field for everyone and we can’t just single out Shop Stewards or Officials for special treatment. We treat everybody exactly the same.

[applause]

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** Sorry Bro, I’m also up here to oppose this and I’ll tell you why. Three people live in my house, we’re all members of the Bakers Union. One’s a Shop Steward, one’s a retired member, and the other one is my daughter. She actually pays more Union subs than I do, but you’re saying that if anything happens to a Shop Steward that we get all the guns out and fire all the guns, but she’s not going to get that sort of treatment. That’s not fair, we should go in there and fight the good fight for every member that’s in trouble. We do not [applause] defend anybody, we’re not here to defend people, we’re here to represent, that’s what we do, we represent them. The other thing is Julie Summersgill works at Park Cake
Oldham, so does her son. Julie is a good girl, she’s never late for work, she don’t have silly time off, she does what she’s supposed to do. So if she’s upset somebody, shoved somebody’s nose out of joint, they go after her son. Now we won’t throw all the guns for him would we? Well maybe we should be doing. So I am sorry Brother that I can’t support you on this, I do support you, but on this I’m having to say please oppose it.

[applause]

Brother Duncan Dale – Branch 560: Chair, Platform, Delegates. I support this, and what, on reflection what Marilyn’s just said, which is a very good point, all it does me, it has brought something to light has this. It sort of enlightened us about the situation. So basically all I’ve got to say is as well as the Officials, as Marilyn says to everybody, but this has actually brought it to light to look into and probably put more thought into it and more effort to help our Brothers and Sisters through, actually look it says, this is actually brought it up. Thank you. Support please.

[applause]

Brother Tharlochan Lal – Branch 566: First time speaker. I am here to support this Motion. Our motto is Strength in Unity, let’s show it, please support everybody. Like our friends in Leicester, our friend at Bradford. Please support, thank you very much.

[applause]

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: I’m going to sit on the fence on this one. Plain and simple, we’ve got a procedure in place at Park that enables any Shop Steward at any time, to have representation by the Branch Secretary or the Full Time Official. Should I do anything amiss, and I’d be investigated and then disciplined, my FTO would be in there with me because I see him as the next step up as I’m Branch Secretary. If I’m then dismissed, I would be expecting one of these guys to come in because that’s the process, the appeal stage. Any member on my site that is actually dismissed, we have the Full Time Official in at the appeal stage, the Shop Steward won’t go in, they get the Full Time Official. So I’m sitting on the fence.

[applause]

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582: I’m up here to support, and it’s simply because I read this Resolution as simple as back me because I need support. I’ve been sacked and that’s what we do for every single member of this Union. We back them because with the process, the disciplinary procedure, and the managers come in, supervisors come in and then we get the top bananas in and we go for it. And that’s what you have to do, and I believe that’s all Pete’s asking for at his Branch, is our support.

[applause]

Brother Tony Hardy – Branch 367: I also work for Premier Foods, and I think the sentiment behind this Resolution is that we need to be sending Premier Foods a message that if you take one of us on you take us all on. That’s exactly what we want to do.

[applause]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313: Chair, Platform, Conference, here to support the Motion. I think big employer like Premier Foods get a kick out of attacking our Officials on site, especially those who cause trouble, and we need to send a message, same as the previous speaker, we need to spend a clear message that we will not tolerate this type of stuff. The other thing, if they get away with it in Bradford you can bet your bottom dollar they’ll be doing the same thing elsewhere, yes? And that’s one of their concerns, because if the Brother remains dismissed after an appeal, the reality is that Branch will automatically weaken, the people in that Branch would automatically feel fear and others who hear about it will automatically, whether
we like to accept it or not, automatically be reserved when we fight for our members and represent our people [applause], and that’s not what we’re about. That is not what we’re about.

I’ve been a Union Rep now for 12 years and I think Peter Barszczak has been around a similar type of time, and we’ve always stood up for what we believe in, and we always should. And if people here in this room are here doing their jobs, but are basically scared because they feel intimidated, it needs to follow a process, yes? What you don’t do is panic and start doing, yes, yes, whatever you want Mr Manager, yes? You should do your job with dignity and pride and be proud to be Bakers Union Reps.

[applause]

Brother Godson Azu – Branch 109: (singing) Solidarity for ever, solidarity for ever, solidarity for ever, in this we shall stand for ever.

What am I saying? [applause] What am I saying? We keep coming here to shout solidarity for ever and we are divided in an opinion of protection, of guiding, of supporting one another. This is what we stand for, fighting. Fighting for injustice, fighting for inequality, fighting for unfair treatment. Solidarity is for us to fight, when anyone is shot, every one of us is shot together with it. If we allow management, Platform, President, Conference if one of us is shot in the foot, every one of us is shot along. If we allow the management to treat our Shop Stewards, our Branch Secretaries any way they like, it’s an act of intimidation. If they feel that they can sack any one of us unfairly, it’s to tell the rest, if we sack your Shop Steward, we can equally sack you. You have to fight [applause] from the head, you have to fight from the head. If you don’t fight from the head, if you lose your head, you will become headless [laughter]. If you, it’s a simple fact, we keep talking about everyone, we are all leaders, we are all leaders, the blind does not lead the blind. We need somebody to have an open and the strength to lead the weak. If you lose your Shop Stewards through an unfair treatment, and this goes to all Full Time Officers, we must not compromise the right of the workers. We must not compromise the right of the workers. If any member is treated unfairly we must stand behind them and fight for their justice. We must not compromise anything for the sake of maintaining rights, places, with the companies. I am supporting this. I, Brothers, Sisters, who are suffering this injustice in their workplace, I call upon every one of us, please, don’t let us sing solidarity, solidarity, solidarity like women in the market places, without no fearing actions on it. We need to sing it will full strength, with power, with energy, with zealness, in order to get what we want. We all have to get what we want as a Union, and we have to get it together. And together we shall all do it. Come on let’s go.

[cheers/applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Solidarity, support the Motion. That was absolutely, how do I follow that? [[laughter]

Obviously just before I put that to the vote, because I ain’t even going to try and follow that at all. I would just say, you know, we would ask all the Hovis and Premier Branches to go back to the Branch and put in a grievance about the way that Peter Barszczak at his place of work has been treated. And the other factor of this is, although the Motion is about a Shop Steward, and Godson was 100% right, you know, there was another individual who was unfortunate to actually be a witness, who’s been also dismissed, so when we stand up for Peter, we won’t just be standing up for Peter, we’ll be standing up for the member as well. So what we’ve got to make sure, you have got a right to reply, but what we’ve got to make sure is that the Premier and the Hovis Branches go out and support Peter, that’s critical to this. Absolutely critical. Because we cannot allow an employer to persecute a Shop Steward or the member, and we would stand up for both. I don’t believe the Motion is asking that we say that one has got a...
priority over the other, I think it’s saying that one of ours has been injured and we need to rally round and support. I think that is the message of the Motion.

[applause]

I understand that people don’t see us as anything more than workers’ representatives, because that’s what we are. But we’re workers first, representatives second, we come from the workforce, and we stand up and sometimes they persecute us for that. So when they do injure one, it is an injury to all. You have the right of reply Dave.

**Brother David Suddards – Branch 561:** Yes, I hang my head in shame because in this Motion we should have mentioned the member, yes a member has been sacked as collateral damage for Pete. Just a brief, I don’t want to go on, he had an accident, and this sends out massive connotations to everybody in this room, just not Hovis, everybody. Peter had an accident, he reported an accident. The guy walked in behind a door, a door hit him, he watched this, he witnessed the accident. They literally tried to sack him for irresponsible behaviour, they said he wasn’t aware of his surroundings and everything. I got him off on that. That wasn’t good enough for Hovis, they then went for well actually we believe the accident never happened. Yet, one manager, absolutely it did happen, irresponsible behaviour. So what they thought, well we’ll get two birds with one stone and all. And they sacked the witnessed and they’ve sacked Peter. It’s an absolute fiasco, it has been for 18 months, and it’s a disgrace. And yes, I am sorry, I hang my head in shame that I forgot that member, but yes we are campaigning for two here. Thank you.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference to the vote, those in favour, those against. That’s carried. Do you want to get back up and sing again? We’ve got three singers at The Red Flag, I think you should get up and make it four, Godson. And where were you last night? We had to put up with Tony Sedgewick singing.

Conference we’ve actually come to the end of the Motions. What can I say? What a fantastic agenda, and right. Obviously we’ve had a Guest to Conference all week and I’m sure most people in the room already know who the EC Guest to Conference is. Now when he arrived on Friday, and we were sat across the road in the pub, he was saying to me, he was saying you know, obviously, he’s really proud because he’s been really proud to be a member of our Trade Union for many, many, many years, but he said but one of the things that I’m also really looking forward to being about the Guest to Conference is, is that I have got so much information on the General Secretary. And I couldn’t wait to hear his Conference speech. And obviously I’m laying down that, obviously I would ask Dick Punshon to be very liberal in any comments that he’s prepared to make about the General Secretary. Conference, General Secretary.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** It’s not because of what he said, it was arranged that I was actually going to introduce Dick, and he wanted to get in this dig. Can I just say something about Dick Punshon? I’ve known Dick many, many years from when I was a Shop Steward at Scotts Bakery in Liverpool, and out of all the people that I met, him and Wally Ormish who are probably the two who took me under their wing from a very young age, and when I eventually got elected onto the NJC of the Union, the National Joint Committee when we had a Federation Agreement, the first person to come and congratulate me was Dick Punshon, and he said right well you know, we’ve got a meeting on Wednesday, I’m going to take you, you know, I’ll look after you, I’ll make sure you’re alright. Never had a clue what he was saying like, but he said I’ll look after you when we get down to London. And I met him in a pub that we used to go, and used to have a game of darts didn’t we Dick? In a pub called The Boot, and I got sat next to Dick it was, you know, first time as an NJC member with one of the elder statesmen of the
Union at the time, and he spoke to me all night in this really broad Geordie accent, and I never had a clue what he was talking about. Not one thing, the only thing when he grabbed me, or he went like that, I knew that he meant did I want a drink? He served for many, many years on the Executive Council and I’ve got to say quite a lot of those years as the Vice President of the Union, a job that he really took on really well. And he was fortunate enough I suppose to represent the Union on a number of tours abroad, and the one story that stands out that people tell me that I’ve been regaled about Dick as a Vice President, is they were in Albania, and they were in a bus going somewhere, and there was a guy riding a donkey with all bags and all that. And his wife was about ten paces behind him walking. And Merlita Bryan, who Ian introduced this morning as being the new Sheriff of Nottingham, she’s not got a bow and arrow by the way, but Merlita Bryan said to Dick Punshon, she says how come that bloke’s riding a donkey and his wife’s walking behind? He said it’s easy isn’t it lass, he said, she hasn’t got a donkey [laughter].

I, when we were buying the Seaham Office in Newcastle, Dick and I were the two who got sent up to have a look at it, and see if it was worth buying. And it was on May 1st, I remember that because it was my birthday, I remember it particularly because I went to Dick’s house and fell over on the ice outside, it must be the coldest place in the world, Seaham Harbour where he lives. And we went in, he was doing some DIY and he said to me, (inaudible) Not a clue, you’d better write that one down, I thought it he’d been on Linguaphone or something. And he was actually asking me to pass him a hammer [laughter].

What I would say about Dick Punshon though and what a lot of people won’t know, I think he’s had two heart attacks, two major heart attacks, he’s suffered lots of ill health, he’s got bad knees, he’s had them replaced, he still keeps going, he still comes for a game of snooker every year at Conference with me, it’s a tradition now and has been for many, many years. He doesn’t suffer fools as an individual, never did as an Executive Council member. He calls a spade a spade, you just may never know he said that because you’ll never understand him [laughter]. Best of luck with his speech.

[applause]

Conference please welcome Dick Punshon.

Brother Dick Punshon: Ronnie’s quite right, I’ve been in this Union probably about 53 years. There’s a good looking woman down there even beat me, Gloria Martin, she’s about a year in front of us. But to get onto probably why I’m here, years ago, it were a few year back, you couldn’t get down that aisle for people waiting to speak, you only got halfway through your agenda, used to have to leave the rest to the EC to sort out, because there’s that many crushing down to bloody speak. This year I’m quite surprised really at how many women’s getting up, talk about women’s rights, this is it, the women’s getting up and telling us what do and where their problems are, and I’m over the moon with it to be quite honest. Because one time it was very seldom a woman got up.

As Ronnie just said I was on the European Committee for quite a few years, and had some funny dos out there to be quite honest. I remember one I think was in Brussels. I went to sign out this hotel and I expected just to sign out and that was it, and she said you haven’t paid your bill. And I said well I haven’t got any money to pay the bill [laughter]. I says here we are love, ring this number, I says, and they’ll be straight on to it. I says I’ll wait in the lounge, picked me case up, through the lounge, out the back door into a taxi and the airport [laughter]. I couldn’t pay the bill so it was no good hanging around [laughter]. I don’t know if the bill got paid or not to be quite honest.

We’re on about the Labour Party. I hope they get back but I hope they tell us the truth for a start. When we’re going to get a referendum on Europe, yes, everybody’ll get a vote. Neither

Wednesday June 13 afternoon: motions 88 – 99
one party or the other one’s give us a vote, because I think they know they’ll lose, we’ll get the hell out of Europe and be British again.

They’re not notes, I don’t make them. There’s a collection for them that’s on strike today, I think it was absolutely fantastic to get £1000 out of less than 200 Delegates for our members that’s on the gates, that is good.

[applause]

There’s one time I was in Norway, the meeting across there, and took me to have a look round this bakery, and to be quite honest when I went in I expected all first class equipment, you know. When I went in, God, I says it’s as bad as when I started in the bakery business, I said it’s absolute rubbish you know? And they was still working, the manager says have a good look round, I said yes, I says it’s not too bad. I says the belts where the bread goes along, he says yes, I says, there a bit slow. Well he says if you speed it up they let them drop off the end. I says I’ll have to take that one back home and slow my belts down where I work. Wasn’t where I worked because I wasn’t often there. I was always away on Union business. The manager said once when I was at work, he says, will you be in next week? I says you’ll have to see, look at me diary. I went and had a look, I said I’ll be in on Wednesday. He says put me down for a meeting [laughter]. Paid us every week so I’d nothing to lose you know.

What I’d like to do really, I should imagine people’ll think you know, another scrounger. I’ll tell you something before that, I went to Paris for a conference, and I says to Joe, I says, put us on the train, I’ve never been through the Tunnel. So he put us on the train, I went through the Tunnel, got picked up in Paris and took me to the hotel. This young girl says I’ve got to look after you for a week, I said Oh that’s good. Just run us to conference and one thing and another. And she’d done a good job, took us out on nights, on the pub and one thing and another, and she’d come in on the Thursday, she says you’re wanted on the phone. I said okay, picked the phone up, was Joe Marino, how you doing? I says alright, I says, we’re going down the Seine tomorrow night on the boat, I says they’ve got the beer on and a few sandwiches. He says well you’ll have to miss it I want you home straight the way. So I went and telled her, she rung the station, got a train through, got the train to Kings Cross, down to Newcastle. I got in about half eleven at night when I got home. And the wife says what’s the matter, you’re early, I says aye, I said I don’t know what’s the matter. And you know, getting me breakfast on the morning, phone went again, she says Joe’s on the phone. I says hello Joe, how you going, he says oh you’re back, I says yes. He says good he says, pack your bag and go out to Newcastle tomorrow, you’re wanted in Albania. Takes you half an hour to get your mind round it, you know, just what to say to the wife. Lucky I had a good wife like that, she never saw us.

I tell you what I would like to do last, I think it was last year, I asked for a collection for an hotel up the street here, I think it belongs to the British Legion, but they send veterans there for a free holiday, lads that’s coming back from Afghanistan, they look after them. Personally I think they do a bloody marvellous job, because this government has certainly not looked after our troops, and the likes of the British Legion and that, will look after them, because the government’ll not, they’re sacking them right left and bloody centre for a start. I only wish they had some sons to send out there, because it would do them the world of good, they’d probably stop poking in other countries’ business and sending our troops there. I think the troops should be home, where they belong, in England, not wandering about.

[applause]

I only done two year in the forces, I was National Service, I was lucky to be quite honest because I got a good post in Gibraltar. But we had one lad up here, Don Ruffle, God bless him, he’s dead now, but he got sent to Korea and they said to him get my car out and run this American soldier, officer, up the front line to see what’s going on. So he took him up there and
he said he thought it was John Wayne, he says he’s got this gun, he’s going bloody mad. He said, the only problem was, he says, when the other ones run away he pointed down on the ground and pulled the trigger and shot Don in the foot [laughter]. That’s, at least you’ve been wounded in the war Don. But I would ask you to put some money in, it doesn’t matter how much, or how little, it’s going to a good cause looking after troops that’s coming back. In the First War, and the Second World War, they go there, and the lads that’s coming back, they go there. Thank you very much.

[applause]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Dick I’d like to make a presentation on behalf of the Executive Council and of course the members here. The pewter baker, and I know that it will take pride of place in your house. No-one buys them up there, there’s lead in that. And of course a tin of biscuits and thank you for being our Guest this year to Conference.

[applause]

**Brother Dick Punshon:** I thought I was getting a tip.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Conference, I’d like to say thank you very much to the Standing Orders, for the way that they’ve made sure that this Conference has run to rule. I’d like to thank everybody who takes part in that committee, and welcome everybody who recently got elected who may be new to that Standing Orders Committee for next year. I’d like to thank John Fox who’s acted as our Vice President for this Conference, who’s made sure you had your brews, if it wasn’t for John you wouldn’t have got any. So I’d like to thank John Fox for doing a fantastic job and making sure these people were actually looked after and thought of.

[applause]

I’d like to thank the Scrutineers for assisting and making sure that the elections were done fairly, consistently and obviously thoroughly. I’d like to thank all the FTOs because throughout the year they do a fantastic job, we get an opportunity at Conference to obviously buy them a drink and say thank you. I’d like to thank them for obviously running the doors for us, making sure obviously the Delegates got here in the morning, and obviously for everything that they do throughout the year. Please, Full Time Officers.

[applause]

And obviously I know most of them are obviously up late at night making sure they escort you to your bedrooms safely.

And of course, you know, Conference runs smoothly and you get your paperwork and you know, the work that Jan puts in is absolutely unbelievable and this year, you know, she’s been beavering away from I think it’s, is she working till 5 o’clock in the morning now? Yes, definitely working till 5 o’clock in the morning last night so she could get in here and make everything prepared for your entry this morning I believe. And I believe some of the Delegation from Wales and Number 4 was assisting her as well, and making sure that she knew exactly what was going to be happening today. So we’d like to thank Jan, thank you for everything you do, and obviously throughout the year, you know, everything that you do to make me and him look very professional, we appreciate all the hard work and effort that you put in for us, as we do for all of our staff throughout the country. Those people are absolutely the backbone of what enables most Full Time Officials and National Officers normally look professional and good, so I’d like to ask Conference to show appreciation for all of our office staff throughout the country for all their time, work and effort.

[applause]
Okay. Obviously the Powerpoint successes, you know, I mean obviously I know that John Vickers spends nights doing the Powerpoint presentation before Conference, and I know that obviously when he comes here that the Powerpoint, the success of the Powerpoint, making sure you know where we are, and obviously shouting over to me to remind me where I am, is critical for Conference to run smoothly and I’d like to thank John for everything he’s done, and obviously the people who assist him with the Powerpoint success. I think it’s Noel and Seamus, and I’d like to thank them for obviously the preparation that John puts into it, and the hard work and effort that he does for us at Conference.

[applause]

I’d also like to thank those EC members that are either not standing again or you know unfortunately we’re not successful. Do you want to?

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Yes, it’s just we’ve got one of the biggest changes we’ve had in many years, so just to personally thank, because I’ve worked with all these people for a lot of years. First of all Dave Murdoch who’s been on the Executive Council for 15 years, a real no-nonsense, EC member, really a great guy, might support the wrong football team, but what can I say? But a story about Dave we went to Egypt, he’s a big beer drinker, I don’t mean he drinks too much, he can put it away, I wouldn’t like to keep up with him of a night. But we were in Egypt and we were going to (inaudible) driving along the road, and he’d been drinking the Egyptian Stella and he hated it, while we were in Cairo. So we drove seven hours across the desert and we’re driving into (inaudible) and we see this pub called O’Reilly’s. So he’s gone we’re going there tonight, that’s where we’re going, we’re going there. So we had a sandwich in the hotel and we took the interpreter, we were going to let the interpreter you know experience Irish hospitality, to let him know how great it was. And so we went to this, well we couldn’t get through the front door it was shut, we had to go through a papyrus shop and the fella was trying to sell us all sorts of gear before we got in the pub, and we eventually get in, and Dave sits down with the interpreter. He went yes. Yes, like that. I said what are you having Dave? He says I’ll one of them, pint of Guinness. So I walked over to the fella, says pint of Guinness please, and the Egyptian behind the counter says oh we don’t have Guinness sir. I says well, no, no we don’t have Guinness. So I said Dave will Caffrey’s do, he says yes give us a Caffreys so. No Caffreys. Well what about Smithwycks? No Smithwycks. I said what have you got, he says we’ve got Stella [laughter]. So I said okay, okay, we’re going to let the interpreter at least experience this Irish hospitality, so I asked him, I says you know, you’ve got Irish Stew and soda bread up there, can we have some of that? He says we don’t do that sir. I said well what do you do? He says we do meze. Right okay, forget it, we don’t want that. So then I said well I’ll tell you, just to make it feel at home, put some diddlee dee music on, he says diddlee dee music? I said, you know, diddlee dee music, what they have in Ireland. Don’t know what you mean he said, we’ve got some (inaudible) music, so we’d gone in this Irish pub called O’Really’s, and I said to him is that really O’Really’s. On the way back anyway we went to a brewery and we got 24 bottles of proper beer didn’t we. Dave being the biggest confiscated 23 of them and made sure he drank them before we got back on the plane. He’s got lots of experience and we really are going to miss you Dave on the Executive Council, you’ve been a great character, thank you for your service.

[applause]

Next, Seamus Farrelly who’s at the back there, only been with us four years on the Executive, but again he’s a no-nonsense EC member, he’s not afraid to take on a challenge, he’s quite outspoken on there. And we have some good banter with him. In particular we used to have it about Manchester United and Liverpool, of course that stopped in May when Manchester United won nothing and we’d won a cup. He’s gone a little quiet since then so what he’s done
now, he’s done exactly the same and I think he’s enlisted H to slagging my haircut. That’s what he does now, he slags my haircut because he can’t slag my football team. Clearly the Elvis look is back in town anyway so I thank him for his service, but also I’m going to just present him with a 20 Year Badge, he’s also done 20 years with the Union, so thank you Seamus.

[applause]

Right who’s next? Eddie Burke, another four year member, another great guy, he’s, I don’t know, I suppose he typifies the Southern Irish spirit, he’s great company, he’s a good singer, he doesn’t smoke, he doesn’t drink, he’s a clean living guy, something like myself. What? Again he’s an uncompromising EC member who’s friendly comradeship will be missed by everyone on the Executive Council. But Eddie I know you’ve not been enjoying the best of health, good luck in the future pal.

[applause]

And then the longest serving one on the Executive Council, I’m not quite sure, no I was on the Executive when you were, Vi Carr, who’s down there, who’s been the, you know, on the Executive for 20 years, both as Northumberland and County Durham Rep, and also as the Female Rep. She’s championed many causes both at the Executive Council and from this lectern as those experienced Conference Delegates will know. She’s furthered the causes of both charities and campaigns on behalf of the most vulnerable in our society. Again, on a different visit I attended Egypt with Vi and Marilyn, both Geordie girls, and I speak little bits of languages, I’m okay with English [laughter], thank you Jeff, I speak a bit of French, I speak a bit of Spanish, I speak a bit of Russian, but not as much as I don’t you know, I don’t struggle as much as the interpreters in Egypt struggled with those two. I was the interpreter, because I had to interpret Geordie into English, and then tell the interpreter what it was so Scouse is much more understandable than Geordie. She’s been an absolute great Executive Council member, a credit to all the women that she represents, she really is a hard-working Executive member, thank you Vi for all your service.

[applause]

And next to her is Marilyn French, 14 years I think Marilyn? Probably the Executive Council member who I’ve worked closest with since you know becoming National President, and subsequently as General Secretary. She sits on the Greggs GNC and she has done for many years, she’s got a great understanding of both their agreement, but also the interpretations of that agreement, and she’s been a great help to me as one of the senior negotiators on the Greggs committee. She’s done, undertaken lots and lots of organising on behalf of the Union, as a secondee, which has been quite a few years, and she’s made many hundreds of members within the Greggs organisation. Internationally Marilyn is a very, very well respected, and she’s represented the Union and still does represent the Union on the European Foodworkers’ Executive as well as on the IUF Delegation, which is the World, the International Union of Foodworkers, which is a world group. Latterly she’s been effective, elected as the Female Representative on the General Federation of Trade Union’s Executive, and I’m in my first year, I’ve just finished my first year on that Executive, and I’ve got to say that I’ve depended on Marilyn in many cases for the experience and knowledge that she’s got of the GFTU and the agreements they have. So thank you for that Marilyn, and on the National Executive she’s always been an extremely vocal member, that doesn’t mean she’s got a big mouth, I mean she’s vocal, she’s, there’s no subject that she’s not prepared to tackle. Marilyn thank you for your service.

[applause]
Can I just say that also Number 5 Region have got a presentation to make to you so, Sam Vickers is just going to, he’s not going to be saying lots of words, because we want to go home. Good lad, what a good lad.

**Brother Sam Vickers:** Chair, Delegates I just want to explain this award, it’s the John Memorial Trophy, John Maloney Memorial Trophy, which we’ve been awarding since 2002. Now that, it used to be for the South Yorkshire District, last year we decided to open it up for the Region, so this year, and I must admit it’s been very difficult a decision to make, but we choose Marilyn to receive this award for the John Memorial Trophy.

[applause]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Last but by no means least, the last retiring Full Time Official unfortunately is not here. And that’s Kevin Flood who was the Vice President, he was actually a member of the Executive for 10 years, but the Vice President, I’ve got to say over the years I’ve become very, very friendly with Kevin. Whilst not here, and not involved with the Executive over the last nine months or so, what we should do is recognise the role that Kevin has played within the organisation, he’s done some sterling work over those years. He did manage our Learning Service in Scotland for a while, but the most memorable things that I always remember Kevin for is that he was a walking disaster. It didn’t matter where you’d go, something went wrong. He, jogging along the side of a pool in a spa at the Dead Sea, where the water’s poisonous if you drink it, and I was in the pool with two old ladies, and they were asking me why I was there, I said it was part of the peace process that the Trade Union Movement, and then it went dark, I never had my glasses on, and I can’t see a thing when I’ve not got my glasses on, and it went dark as somebody moved across the light. And it was Kevin Flood, but he was doing, you know the cool jog like that, and he slipped and he landed in the middle of this jacuzzi with these two old ladies in, I mean besides the fact that he nearly killed them, he nearly drowned them, and they had all the stuff in their eyes and everything. And the other one was when we were in Israel and we were on a bus, he was sat sidesaddle, he was sat with his back to the window, and his girlfriend Laura Graham phoned him, so he goes in his jeans like that to get at the front pocket of his jeans to get his phone and he leaned back and the window fell out the bus [laughter] on a motorway. So he was an absolute disaster, I don’t know we ever got a peace process, with Kevin involved. But a great lad. What I would say, the one thing about the Union is Kevin found love in, you know, through Conference, him and Laura met, and those of you who know Laura Graham, who works for our Learning Services in Northern Ireland and they’re a fantastic couple and they’ve just had a baby recently, well Kevin never, Laura did. But I’m sure you will join me in sending our best wishes to both Kevin, Laura and I think the baby’s called Amy isn’t it? Yes? So Kevin, Laura and Amy. Thank you Kevin.

[applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** We’d also like to thank Paul Roggerman and Kieran Lowry, plus all the Bridlington staff, bars, the tea room, those who set obviously everything up for us in the Hall, the people who do our lighting and filming, we’d like to thank you for obviously making sure that we’ve got recording of the events that we’ve run so we can always look back on the successful debates that have taken place, and the contributions that you make which goes down in history. So thank you for recording that, and don’t forget the deal’s the same as last year, you have to take the ones where I’ve made the mistake out, and put me looking good in them. It might just look the same, I might have the same tie on a lot. Obviously we’d like to thank our sponsors, Warburtons, Fox’s Biscuits, MWR, Thompsons, Watkins and Gunn.

[applause]
We’d like to thank all those stallholders that have been there and hopefully you’ve got a lot of freebies and a lot of gifts to take back, obviously saving you money to go and spend in the Manchester hotel tonight, or the Irish hotel tonight. We’d like to thank obviously the Credit Union, the Learning Union Fund, Westfield, MWR, Watkins and Gunn, Thompsons Solicitors, Northern College, GM Freeze, the LRC, for all of the information that they’ve provided us during the week, so thank you very much for that.

[applause]

And of course Conference, you know we’d like to thank you for your tolerance. Obviously you’ve been very forgiving of me, and very tolerant and I appreciate that. And I also appreciate the fact that you keep forgetting to remind me of the mistakes I make, which is very, very nice of you. So on that, somebody who never makes a mistake because obviously if they did, we’d have a problem. Please, please welcome for final time at Conference this year, to give a final address, Olive Molloy.

[Sister Olive Molloy – Branch 577: Mr President, Platform, Delegates I offer the thanks of all the Standing Orders Committee to Ian and to Ronnie for the excellent way they’ve steered us through this Conference. I would also thank them for their help and support throughout the year. They’ve delivered rousing speeches this week, and I for one think they have made a terrific partnership. Long may they reign.

[applause]

I will second Ian’s thanks to Jan, to Karen, and the helpers up in the office, this has been an extremely busy year for them, with endless copying and typing but they’ve got through it all with their usual efficiency and pleasant attitude. Thanks to the Scrutineers who have done a great job with the sorting and counting the hundreds of papers, which have made up this year’s elections. Well done to you all. The members of the Standing Orders Committee also deserve a great vote of thanks, every one of them has worked so well together, and all have had a constructive input into our discussions and decisions. We’ve tried to be fair but firm. Thank you to all who have come to ask me if I’m okay after I foolishly missed the bottom step and fell coming into the Hall yesterday.

Fines this year total £62 [applause]. Thanks mainly to mobile phones. Five pounds of this was donated voluntarily by Sam Vickers whose phone went off through Conference, I didn’t know, I was up in the eagle’s nest, I didn’t know it had gone off. I’m also told that our National President’s phone went off, the early days of Conference, before the dispute situation arose, and I wonder if he would be as honest?

[cheers/applause]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: It didn’t go off.

Sister Olive Molloy – Branch 577: Sincere thanks to all of you, for making this a great Conference, with a full agenda, rousing speeches, and marvellous camaraderie. The agenda this year has been long and varied, giving rise to good and meaningful speeches, and it’s good to see first time speakers feeling strongly enough about a Motion to come up to the rostrum and make their points known, proving to me that our Union is still alive and kicking. The motions have covered such a broad spectrum, showing that we care deeply, not only for our colleagues, but also for the under-privileged, the sick and disabled, and for the senior citizens, this is something to be proud of. We’re living through hard times, and David Cameron’s slogan of We are all in it together, makes me see red. I think that the word it is two letters short, because the it that we’re in certainly doesn’t smell very nice to me.
And it’s set fair to smell worse as the time goes on. These men whose salaries are like telephone numbers, whose pension figures are something we can only dream about, and whose expense accounts are obscene dare to tell the working man and woman that they should be able to live on part time wages, or the basis Minimum Wage, or no job at all and have to rely on benefits. A loaf of bread costs the working man just as much as it does to the millionaire. They tell us that we have to work longer, pay more into the fund, and draw less when retirement eventually comes. These men, the Camerons, the Cleggs, the Osbornes and the like, who put their children’s names down for public schools the moment that they’re born, and yet make it so hard for any working class youngsters to have a university education, because of the massive fees involved, creating a debt that they will carry for many, many years. I urge you to do your utmost to recruit new members wherever and whenever you can, to ensure that our Union has a strong voice against injustice. Keep stoking the fires of Trade Unionism by adding as many recruits as you can. Carry the passion that has been demonstrated in this Hall this week back to your workplace, and let us let David Cameron know that we don’t want to be in it with him, I for one would rather stick with the Green Flag slogan, we may not be the biggest but by jingo we’re determined to be the best.

Help us each and every one of you, help us to be the best. Thank you for listening and I wish you all a safe journey home. And as usual, may God by whatever name you know him, bless you all. Thank you.

Sorry, I forgot to mention that the Committee have decided, is this to go in here, that fines now, what did I say there were, sixty what? Sixty two are now £67 and we would like to donate to the Number 3 Strike Fund bucket.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Conference, what can I say about the guy I’m going to introduce? Very little, because obviously he’s a fantastic guy, he’s suave, he’s sophisticated, you know, you’ll never find a better guy, he’s debonair, you know, he’s an unbelievable character. I’ve got to say everything I know I’ve learnt from him, any mistakes I may have made obviously weren’t down to him or any advice that he may have given me. I’ve got to say that obviously I’ve been working with Ronnie for a little while now, I don’t know if I’ve had an influence on him, but he’s certainly had an influence on me. And it’s my absolute pleasure to welcome our General Secretary Ronnie Draper.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you Ian, just for the first part of what he said there, he was bullshitting, is that a fiver? Here are, here’s a fiver, put it in the thing. Conference it’s been an absolutely fantastic Conference, I’ve got to say it’s one of the best that I’ve had the pleasure of fronting, you know as General Secretary and as National President. It’s been full of sort of highs and lows, it’s been a great week hasn’t it. And lots and lots of laughs, and along the way, some of the debate there’s been some tears as well. But I want to start I think with the laughs, I think we, you know, I’ve had a really great time, you know, I’ve laughed so much this week and talking of laughs, I went in the pub last night in the Southcliff over here, and Tony Sedgewick was sat on his own, he was just sat there, and he was roaring laughing, absolutely roaring, so I thought, I said Tony what you laughing at? Well he said that joke, he said, Ian told on Sunday in his Opening Address, oh God. I said did you find it that funny you’re
still laughing now? He said no I’ve only just got it [laughter]. Funny guy all the time, you know Sedge, always makes me laugh. One of the stories you know that I’ve, I suppose I could dine out on but I’ve used it a number of occasions was when they were having a discussion in a boozar and Tony’s boy a professional boxer, and they were talking about David Beckham’s kid called Brooklyn, and how this boy, you know how they got to come up with this name, Brooklyn, rather than Roger or Jimmy or John or whatever. And they decided that he was called Brooklyn because he was conceived in Brooklyn. So his lad who’s a boxer said eh Dad, he says, if you’d named me after where I was conceived, he said, what would me name be? And he said Canal Bank Sedgewick (laughter/applause). Good story. Probably was, it was probably a park bench, not really, but it sounds better.

It’s been a, well it always is, it’s a Conference of many characters, it’s made up of you know, obviously many different varieties of speaker and you know, lots and lots of themes, but like every year, you know, I’ve got to mention Pat Rowley I think he’s, you know I think he is not just a Conference speaker, he’s 365 days commitment to the Union, and I’ve got to say I look forward to seeing you every year Pat, and long may I continue to see you. Coming to Conference and coming down to the rostrum. I think it’s also been great though the double act we’ve had over here, Raj Hussain and Haroon Rashid, they’ve done a fantastic job, not just on the Conference floor, I’ve said it before, but their contribution to making sure that after they went on a course they got out organising and they looked to how they could change things within the Union, and they actually brought lots and lots of motions, I mean, phenomenal amount of motions, came from their Branch, although they did put them through Regional Council, and I think it’s been fantastic what they’ve contributed to the debates and to the motions. There’s been some fantastic oratories, you know, by all the Guest Speakers I mean we really do go out and try and get some class people when we’re speaking. But you know, we’ve got class speakers in this room, although they did put them through Regional Council, and I think it’s been fantastic what they’ve contributed to the debates and to the motions. There’s been some of course Marilyn and Jeff McCarthy, like Kevin and Laura Graham, love blossomed for them at Conference, they both came as two Delegates and they got married shortly after. Now they used to sing to each other but now they practice speeches on each other I believe. There’s no hairbrush for those two. We don’t mind, some of us don’t need them do we Jeff?

Just say about Jeff, you know, great admirer, a great contribution but he was on question time, I don’t know how many of you saw him the other week when one of the panellists was making a town halls of a question about pensions, and Jeff must have had his hand up and he, I was just saying to Sharon I says, Jeff McCarthy’s on Question Time tonight in the audience, I wonder if we’ll get to see him, next minute, gentleman up there in the pink shirt, and it was Jeff McCarthy. I tell you what, asked a really poignant question that the fellow was dithering about, honestly they just didn’t know the answer, it was probably one of the best, you know, inputs at Question Time that I’ve heard from an audience member for a long time. John Halliday Junior, a, sorry John Halliday Senior, John Halliday Junior does a good job as well, but John Halliday Senior, a lifetime of defending the rights of workers as a Full Time Official, and now making a fantastic input as a Delegate although he’s retired. He could have put his feet up but he’s still here, planning a trail, making sure that he gets the opinions across.

Another high has been the participation of young members, Chris Lay, Sarah Woolley and Rachel Mullen. You know they’re the future of this organisation and judging by what I saw of them this week, you know, our future’s assured, absolutely fantastic input they had to Conference. But we’ve got to become more dependent on them in the future, not just because
they’re the people who are going to be paying my pension in a few years, we depend on young people to be the disciples of the Trade Union Movement, the people who can go out and encourage younger people to come within our realms, just like Olive said before. And we’ve took the groundbreaking step of electing an Executive Council member to represent young people, it’s going to be a massive job, absolutely huge job, but one that I’m sure Rachel Mullen will be able to stand up, and I know she’ll do a great job because I see the work that she does as a, on courses, you know, and she’s doing fantastic stuff within Greggs.

It’s been a Conference of great statements, you do get them from time to time, statements come out. The President’s call which made the press, he called for the resignation of David Cameron, I get that, absolutely 100% get it. And then we had John Halliday this morning called for us to leave the Labour Party. I don’t agree with it but I get it. But there was one statement last night which really puzzled me, and that was Clive Thomas, the solicitor from, senior partner from Watkins and Gunn, he was talking in the hotel last night and he said he killed a deer in his car. Well first of all why would you have a deer in your car? And secondly what the hell were you doing to kill it?

It’s been a Conference where we’ve seen great technological change as well. Years ago we used to have flipcharts to describe stuff and now we have John Vickers to do a Powerpoint, it’s absolutely fantastic. We used to have videos, we used to shove them into a machine, and now we have DVDs, HD DVDs, that we can just throw into a computer and you know, we hear it all round the room. We used to have paper for speeches, and progress was changing the colour of the paper that you used. But now we have Janine using an Ipad for her speeches, no Tony that’s not an eye patch, an Ipad, it’s a different thing.

But on Sunday morning, I’ve got to say, you see the two screens at the end here, they weren’t on and I thought bloody hell, we’ve got autocue, but how the hell am I going to see them, and then I realised that they were just televisions so we can see what you see up there as well. Above all, it’s been one of the best Conferences. I’d like to personally thank my secretary, Jan for the work that she’s done for Conference, I know what she has had to go through. She had no practice at this, it wasn’t something that she’s done year in year out, the actual planning of the Conference, but I’m sure you will agree that everything’s run like clockwork, it’s been absolutely brilliant, and I do thank everyone who’s helped her, I know Adrian gave her a great deal of help at the office, but you can see that we’ve come through with flying colours, so cheers Jan, thank you.

[applause]

We’ve had some really great speeches and I don’t want to embarrass anyone, we’ve had a massive spectrum of subjects, politics at the heart of all of them. Whether it was law, care homes, the withdrawal of our troops from Afghanistan, they all political speeches. Education, crime, social housing, or health and safety legislation, all political. Fuel poverty, banking, Aids awareness or NHS, they’re all political. All credible political issues from a Trade Union perspective. Our only downfall is the lack of credible politicians to carry them out on our behalf. We don’t just need a political will that delivers our aspirations, we need a total overhaul of the political system that delivers working class politicians. Politicians who’ve walked the walk, politicians who know what it’s like to struggle in life, politicians who mirror our beliefs. We need active trade unionists to get involved in local politics, we need trade unionists to rise like the phoenix and take back our Party. We allowed it to be hijacked by the men in grey suits, now we want it back.

President I want to finish shortly by talking about the need to organise, and we had a fantastic meeting yesterday and I congratulate you on putting that together. Organising is the life blood of our organisation. It’s the thing that makes the difference between independence and
amalgamation, that’s the stark reality of the need to organise. This Executive, and I’m sure the new Executive, which I’ll be meeting in a few minutes time, will be committed to growth. We’re committed to giving the resources to assist in organising, but financial resources are finite, we’re running a deficit at the moment, we need to be careful with the purse strings. So unlike the big so-called super unions, we can’t employ hundreds of people as part of an organising team. When we need extra people to run a campaign, we depend upon you, we depend upon people like Richard Wainwright and his team from Manor in Stoke to do the jobs that they did at Solway Foods. We depend upon the people like the Greggs team in Leeds to subsidise the work that our Full Time Officials carry out, and what a remarkable job they do. We depend on the likes of Marcin Hinz, Raj Hussain and Haroon Rashid, Daniel Patak and a plethora of other people who help us with translation, but also help us out there, getting their hands dirty, organising, making sure that they give invaluable assistance to our Executive members. We need you, we need activists who are committed to the future success and future independence of our Union. I set a challenge to everybody in this room. We have 170 plus Delegates. If everyone takes on board to leave this room and over the coming 12 months before we come to Conference next year, to make ten members, it’s not a major want, it can be achieved, we can all do it. Ten members, then we get around 1,700 extra members, given that we’ll get some to leave. That brings in a revenue at today’s rates of £229,000. Comrades, I wouldn’t be talking to you about a deficit of £119,000, I’d be talking to you about a surplus of £100,000 if that’s achieved. It is a challenge that I set and I hope people take that on rigorously when they leave. I can’t stress enough the need to organise, organise, and organise some more.

Finally President, I congratulate you on getting through a really busy and long agenda. We have run a little bit later than normal but that’s to be expected when you’ve got about 40 extra motions. But one of the unfortunate things of this week, is the amount of Delegates who’ve withdrawn over the past week. No notice, no opportunity to cancel rooms, and no opportunity to save on charges. More than £5,000 we’ve thrown down the drain this week by Delegates just not turning up to Conference in the last week. Comrades, when you from here, make sure that the people that you elect to come to Conference next year will absolutely represent the Branches, that they’ll turn up, and do the job that you want. Remember though, finally, remember the debates of this week, remember the votes that you’ve carried, and the way you’ve clapped and cast your vote. Remember how you’ve been requested to address the issues of injustice and the protection of the vulnerable. Comrades, organise, fight and win.

[applause]

Brother John Fox: Conference may I ask Brother Ian Hodson to make his final address to Conference, thank you.

[applause]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Sharon I’ve got to thank you for feeding me all sorts of alcoholic drinks last night that prevented me from obviously making too lengthy a speech today, and I’m sure the Delegates in the room will thank you too.

[applause]

Obviously Conference I mean, to endorse what the General Secretary said and you know, the people who’ve contributed to this Conference you know, you’ve absolutely been magnificent. I mean I think Olive touched on it previously, she said about it’s not the size of the Union and you prove it, year on year, our members prove that it’s not the size that matters, it’s what we do, and it’s the impact that we have. And you are making an impact, you really, really are. And I want to congratulate everybody, the General Secretary mentioned lots and lots of people in his speech, and every single one of you in this room should deserve a mention, but then that would
extend my speech, so I want to congratulate you all, and on behalf of the Executive Council thank you very much for your contributions this week.

[applause]

And when anybody says it’s size that matters, or it’s size that determines the strength, you can tell them, we’re the Bakers Union and it’s absolutely garbage. Do you know, the government is talking about legislation that will reduce wages, reduce terms and conditions, and that was in 1381 at the Statute of Labour. And we had a peasants’ revolt, well guess what the peasants are revolting and we’re coming for you. We’re going to stand up and we’re going to fight, we’re going to fight for our rights, and on October 20th, I keep saying it to you, and I’m not going to move away from it, on October 20th we need you on the streets. We need to make sure that we’re there, we want a voice, because size isn’t important, but turning out is. And you are the people we need to turn out. We want you on the streets to support that demonstration, because it’s no good coming to Conference and saying yes we support you, yes we’re behind you, and then don’t turn up. We need you there, we need you to fight. It’s so important that this government gets the message, the working people in this country know we’re in a class war, we’re prepared to join it, we’re prepared to stand up, and we’re prepared to fight. We’ll never back down and we’ll never surrender. We’re going on, the working class people know exactly what this government is up to, it wants to make the poor and those who are on low pay and those that are vulnerable, pick up the price for their crisis. And we say no more. No more should the vulnerable be made to pay, no more should working people have their terms and conditions slashed, absolutely no way are we going to support any more cuts to our services. No way should we accept that we should pay the price, when the bankers make the bonuses. Let’s put it this way, you go rob a bank, they’ll put you in prison. When they rob us, they give them bonuses. Absolutely out of order. We shouldn’t stand for it [applause], we shouldn’t stand by, and let’s make sure on October 20th we send that message to them.

Now Conference this week we’ve debated many motions. We’ve debated on issues of pensions, look at what Hollande’s just announced, no, no, no they’re not going to go at 68, they’re not going to go at 62 either, they’re going to go at 60, and that’s why we’ve passed a motion today that says when we get to 60, we’re going to move over and let the young people who need jobs come and take those jobs over [applause] because that’s right and that’s what we should be doing. At the end of the day when people have worked all their lives, they have a right and an entitlement to retire. It’s an absolute right. Why is it after all those years of loyal service to the employer that they should have their rights and their pay taken away from them. It’s wrong, and let’s make it also clear, there is no division between the private sector and the public sector, absolutely none. We stand together in solidarity with our comrades in the public sector who deliver us a service which is second to none, which we should be proud of and we should be on the streets to fight and support, every time they ask us to, and when they take action, we should be there to support them, we should never let them down, because those are our educators, those are our doctors, those are our health service people, those are the people that clean our schools, those are the people that make it safe, the police offers, the fire brigade, we need to stand up and we need to fight for them. And we should never, ever forget that those are part of the Welfare State that this Trade Union and every Trade Union in the country, through the creation of the Labour Party, created, and we should be proud of that, and we should fight for it. Never, ever allow them to say Socialism is a bad word, or something we shouldn’t be proud of. Socialism is about people, it’s about you. And you are special people, and you should never forget how special you are. Every speaker we’ve had has told you how special you are, and I can’t tell you enough, you’re my inspiration, you may me feel proud every morning when I get up to go into work, to work on your behalf, to build our membership, to work with our Full Time Officials, to make sure that you and all the people that have the opportunity to join us understand how
important the Trade Union Movement is. You’re an absolute inspiration, and your aspirations shouldn’t be tainted by any government. The working class people in this country should not bear the price, while the landed gentry live in luxury. It’s time the government realised they have to play fair, there should be a Wealth Tax, and it could wipe out the deficit, it could wipe out the deficit immediately. A one-off 20% Wealth Tax on the top 10% would pay off the deficit and you know what? Within five years they’d probably have all their money back because interest rates would have to go up and instead of the government putting all that money into the bank to buy government debt, which by the way was equivalent to giving you £10,000, every single household and family in this country could have been given £10,000 but we gave it to the banks so they could continue to pay the bonuses. It’s wrong, absolutely immoral. Your tax money, and you’re paying with your services, and we shouldn’t stand by. We have to make sure we’re out on the streets, we have to make sure we demand a change. We have to make sure that on October 20th, we’re there to support one another, we’re there to say that the Bakers Food and Allied Workers’ Union is proud to stand with those public sector workers, we’re there to say that we’re going to stand up for our members, and all of those workers in our workplaces that we work alongside. We’re proud to stand for the Trade Union Movement, we’re proud to stand up for Socialism, we’re proud to stand up for our class, and we’ll fight for it, and solidarity. Thank you for listening to me. Thank you for tolerating me all week.

[applause]

Okay, we’ve got Sam Vickers, Craig Rogers, Clive Thomas and I’m sure there was a fourth? Godson Azu, I knew there was another. Could you please come down to the rostrum, yes?

Okay, everybody stood up standing. Let Bridlington hear us, we’re proud, we’re Socialists. The Red Flag comrades.

[The Red Flag was sung]

[cheers/applause]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, all join hands. Auld Lang Syne, you know the words don’t you. I know you’ll know it Roger, Hogmanay.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Do you know while we had us hands up we should have sang You’ll Never Walk Alone shouldn’t we?

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Whoa, whoa.

[Auld Lang Syne was sung]

[cheers/applause’

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Comrades……...

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Used to being drunk when I sing that.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Thank you very much, end of Conference. All the new Executive members we’re meeting upstairs. Please have a safe journey home. Enjoy the evening. Remember tomorrow when you’re travelling home make sure you’re sober.

[end of Conference]