

Decisions of the Unite - Amicus Section Policy Conference 2007



Fighting Global Exploitation

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NEC Statement No 1 - Trident

Amicus is opposed to the retention of nuclear weapons and believes that their continued existence makes the world less safe, rather than safer.

The huge cost of a replacement Trident system, running up to potentially £65 billion over the life of the system, cannot be justified at a time of cuts and spending restrictions in other areas of the economy, and at a time when we had hoped to benefit from the peace dividend.

In principle, therefore, Amicus cannot support a replacement of Trident.

However, we recognise that many Amicus members and other workers rely on Trident for their jobs and for the retention and development of skills, across many sectors. These include shipbuilding, electronics & IT, and the MoD. We cannot support a policy that would see these jobs and skills lost, without a clear and unambiguous strategy for re-employment or redeployment elsewhere on terms and conditions comparable or in advance of the defence industry. Therefore we call upon the Defence Diversification Agency to provide realistic proposals that will protect the jobs of our members and we resolve to campaign vigorously to this end.

Until we receive a firm commitment to this end and a clear indication of how it will be achieved, we will continue to support our members and their employment in skilled jobs in these sectors.

NEC Statement No 2 - Environment

The NEC notes the current debate on a range of issues arising from global emissions of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases. Climate change and environmental destruction are key issues that will impact on the union's membership and their families across all sectors throughout this century and beyond according to the vast majority of scientific opinion. The NEC welcomes the broad approach of government on these issues as outlined in the Climate Change Bill published earlier this year recognising as it does that tackling climate change can only be successful if undertaken in co-operation and collaboration with our European and global partners.

The NEC recognises that climate change and energy consumption is overwhelmingly being caused by the richest 10% of the world and is reinforcing and accelerating the vast inequalities that exist on this planet. The G8 countries alone produce over 50% of the world's carbon emissions but 95% of those who will suffer flooding, famine, drought and other climate change related disasters will be the global poor. Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans has illustrated that this will be equally true within developed countries as between them.

The NEC further notes with serious concern that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) set up by the United Nations has suggested there could be up to 150 million environmental refugees by 2050.

The NEC notes that last year CO₂ emissions in the UK increased by 1.15% which means that Britain's emissions are now at the highest level since Labour came to power a decade ago, nearly 3 per cent above 1997. Carbon trading schemes are not enough to significantly cut carbon emissions and equitable systems of incentives, legislation and measurable targets

need to be put in place to make sure that the government achieves its stated aims. Britain should be a global example to those countries that are dragging their feet on climate change and it is the Labour party that should be leading the debate on this.

The NEC therefore resolves to pursue policies which are capable of delivering sustainable solutions that aim to address these injustices through placing the onus of change on the wealthy who are causing climate change. The NEC agrees to work with a broad coalition of trade unions, environmental organisations, employers and the government on issues where Amicus members' interests coincide in order to develop a concerted trade union response to the biggest challenge of the 21st century.

The NEC also resolves to work in solidarity with our brother and sister trade unionists and working people worldwide struggling against the horror of climate change.

As part of our own approach to the environment, the NEC reiterates the union's commitment to a balanced energy policy, including nuclear power, as part of its policy to address the issue of sustainability and the delivery of energy to domestic and industrial/commercial users at an affordable price. By 2015, due to decommissioning of current nuclear facilities and coal plants, we face a predicted 20% gap between peak demand and capacity. The NEC believes that anything that should be done to reduce this demand, should be done, where it is practicable to do so, The NEC believes that there is too much at stake to do otherwise.

However, the NEC acknowledges that a balanced energy policy on its own cannot address all the issues necessary to tackle the potential environmental impact of a modern global economy and is committed to the union developing a wide range of environmental policies and strategies designed to promote such issues in the workplace and in the community at large.

As part of this process the NEC will set out the union's view on the impact of transport and housing needs for the future taking account of both the economic and environmental needs of the union's membership and existing policy of individual sectors. Social policy arising from this approach will seek to address equality issues such as ensuring that affordable housing is constructed in a carbon neutral and sustainable way reducing the financial burden of energy consumption on vulnerable sections of society. The NEC will also support members in manufacturing to contribute to positive steps in their workplaces which develop sustainable policies whilst at the same time ensuring that their industries are able to compete on a level playing field in the global economy.

The NEC will also utilise the union's publications and web site to keep members informed of developments and policy initiatives undertaken by Amicus members in the workplace and the community in pursuance of sustainable objectives.

The NEC recognises that in some workplaces the work necessary to develop the union's profile in dealing with environmental issues may require workplace representatives to be appointed with a specific remit in this field. The union through its existing training policy will continue to provide and support appropriate training for such representatives whilst recognising that environmental issues are an integral part of the collective bargaining agenda.

The NEC will review the union's current practices in house with a view to ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to introduce protocols which contribute to the overall policy of the union in respect of environmental issues focusing in particular on waste reduction and travel. The NEC note the advice of the TUC in its published document "Greening the Workplace" and will take into account the recommendations contained therein.

NEC Statement No 3 - Pensions

State Pension

The NEC believes that State Pension provision needs to be revitalised and extended so that it makes a more substantial contribution towards ensuring that all employees secure a decent income in retirement.

The position of the Basic State Pension is fundamental as it is the only pension scheme which is progressive and redistributive in providing a flat-rate pension income to meet basic needs whilst relating contributions collected through National Insurance to employees' level of earnings.

The NEC welcomes the Government commitment to restore the earnings-link for the Basic Pension but believes that this should be implemented immediately, rather than being delayed until 2012. Pensioners should share fully in the growth of national income.

Arresting the decline in the Basic Pension should only be the first step in a programme designed to restore the ground lost in the quarter century when it has only increased in line with prices and to raise it beyond that so as to eliminate the need for means-tested benefits for pensioners.

The NEC recognises that this will require a general increase in the level of National Insurance, which could be phased in over a period of years, and some further supplementation from progressive taxation. The union has called for an open debate on the future options for the Basic Pension and on its financing and believes that public support can be won for this programme.

While the Basic Pension should lift all pensioners out of poverty, the NEC would look to second-tier pensions to achieve incomes in retirement for employees which represent a good proportion of their income in work.

The NEC believes the State Second Pension, (S2P) a defined benefit provided through the State system, should play a continuing major role in this, especially as more and more of our members are likely to be in defined contribution pensions and contracted-in to State Second Pension. To this end the NEC is committed to campaign for:

- Linking S2P to earnings in payment, as well as in accrual so its value does not decline during retirement. This is particularly significant for women. At present the declining value of S2P after retirement will mean older pensioners slipping below the poverty threshold.
- Improve the targeting and performance of S2P, to give greater benefit to parents, carers and the low paid so that everyone can achieve an adequate income in retirement.

The NEC opposes the evolution of Second State Pension to a flat-rate benefit and believes its present earnings-related basis should be maintained and extended. Improvement in the Basic Pension should not in any way be financed through the down-grading of State Second Pension.

Women & Pensions

The NEC recognises the particular importance of the Basic Pension for women, who fare so badly in building up occupational and private pensions due to their interrupted work patterns and their concentration in lower paid work and in jobs where occupational pensions are often not provided. These issues have been highlighted in reports by the Pensions Commission

and the Department of Work and Pensions, and what is needed now is action to address them.

The NEC notes that 25% of all women aged 45 to 64 are carers, with 25% also caring for children. The numbers of women who are saving for retirement halves when they have a baby while the figure for men remains unchanged when they become new fathers.

The NEC supports the Government proposals to reduce the qualifying conditions for achieving full Basic Pension and believes that they should be further extended to help those in low-paid employments and with caring responsibilities. State pension income should reward fully contributions to society made by carers. Whilst the Pensions Bill does include measures to improve crediting for carers, the definition that has been adopted will still leave a number of carers who are not certificated and remain outside the system. This gap in provision needs to be addressed.

As with the Basic Pension the NEC welcomes Government proposals to credit carers with State Second Pension benefits and it also values the enhanced basis of accrual established for low earners when State Second Pension was evolved from SERPS.

The NEC is committed to campaign for women's pension provision to be addressed as a matter of priority and to this end will:

- Campaign for a reduction in the lower earnings level for national insurance contributions.
- Argue for combined earnings from several different sources of employment to be able to count towards the lower earnings limit in order to accrue state pensions.
- Seek greater support for the over 45s who are still at risk of not getting even a full BSP in their own right by perhaps backdating some of the changes to ensure that over 45's benefit from the reforms, extending it to all women, including those already retired or introducing the reduction in qualifying years to 30 before 2010.

National Pensions Savings Scheme (NPSS)

The union has campaigned for all employers and employees to be compelled to contribute to work-based pension schemes. The NEC has noted the Government proposals for the establishment of the National Pensions Savings Scheme as a welcome step in this direction. However the NEC believes that these proposals need to be further amended and improved. In particular it believes that employers should always be compelled to make contributions, whether their employees opt-out or not, and that employers should be required to contribute at a higher percentage than employees. The NEC reaffirms its view that the proposed level of compulsory contributions should be lifted to a level which provides a living income for pensioners.

An improved State Second Pension and the NPSS would achieve an objective of universalising a quality second-tier pension for those many employees, disproportionately women, whose employers have refused to make any voluntary pension contribution.

The NEC is opposed to any increase in the State Pension Age beyond the age of 65. This would impact most heavily on those whose other pension resources are limited, who are least able to continue working and who have lower life expectancy, and for who state pension age is most crucial in determining their ability to retire. It would also encourage further moves by employers to raise retirement ages in company schemes.

Public Sector Pensions

The Government plays a major role as employer of millions of workers in the public sector and the NEC welcomes the Government's commitment to consult on and negotiate changes

in those schemes and its commitment to maintain the major schemes on a defined benefit basis for both existing and new employees.

The NEC notes the Public Sector Forum agreement negotiated under TUC auspices which the public sector Trade Unions accepted and which retained a normal retirement age of 60 for existing staff, whilst establishing a retirement age of 65 for new starters. In the LGPS, where normal pension age was already 65 and age discrimination legislation forced amendment of the early retirement terms (the Rule of 85) the union continues to press for improved transitional protection for existing members..

The NEC welcomes the negotiation of improved terms of accrual of pensions and other beneficial changes applying to new starters in the NHS, and to all members of the LGPS, which go some way towards offsetting the disadvantage of the higher normal pension age.

NEC Statement No. 4 - Remploy and Disability Discrimination.

The NEC recognising the disproportionate impact on employment opportunities that people with disabilities face, deplors the announcement made by Remploy on 22nd May this year that 45 sites, including manufacturing, assembly and print related sites, are to be closed resulting in over 2300 disabled persons facing redundancy along with other non-disabled employees of Remploy.

The NEC notes that Remploy proposes to find redundant disabled workers supported work in mainstream employment and that workers will remain on Remploy terms and conditions (including their pension) for this.

The NEC supports our members' view that this proposal is unacceptable and unworkable and that many disabled workers will be condemned to remain at home until suitable employment is found.

For many disabled Remploy workers attending their employment and interaction with co-workers on a daily basis is essential for their long term well being.

The NEC is also concerned to note that there are many Unite (Amicus Section) members who work for Remploy who are non disabled workers and that these members, for whom there are no guarantees, will be dealt with as in a normal redundancy situation and may face compulsory redundancy.

The NEC rejects the company plan for factory mergers as unlikely to provide suitable alternative employment for many disabled workers as distances between factories and public transport facilities will mitigate against the feasibility of this aspect of the plan.

Some of the factories which are fully loaded are earmarked for closure and others for merging. This highlights the flaws in Remploy's proposals.

In many instances highly skilled workers are being displaced and at best will be offered alternative employment in less skilled occupations.

The NEC fully supports the alternative business plan put forward by the Remploy Consortium of Trade Unions, but rejected by the company, and will support Unite (Amicus Section) members in defending their jobs by whatever means are at their disposal, industrially and politically.

To this end the NEC supports the call for a ballot for industrial action of all union members in Remploy to defend our members' jobs. We will also campaign with our political department and parliamentary colleagues to oppose the closures and defend supported employment.

Unite (Amicus Section) will defend the right of disabled workers to exercise the choice of their working environment.

The NEC is dismayed that some charities established to look after the interests of disabled people have associated themselves with Rempoy's proposals and the closure programme resulting in the displacement of thousands of disabled workers.

In 2007 whilst 80% of the general working population are in employment, only 51% of disabled people are in employment, whilst only 20% of those with learning difficulties or mental health illness are in employment.

Rempoy was established in 1945 to provide direct employment in manufacturing and service businesses and has subsequently developed its role in providing employment services to enable disabled people to obtain work in sustainable employment.

The NEC, believes that Rempoy must place equal weight on the retention and maintenance of direct employment for disabled people as well as developing employment opportunities in the mainstream.

The NEC pledges its support to work with Rempoy workplace representatives in their campaign to defend jobs and oppose the closure of the 45 sites.

The NEC's support for Rempoy workers is consistent with the union's equality strategy adopted by the NEC following a wide ranging consultation across the union during the past 12 months. The NEC is committed to campaign for the duty to promote equality across all strands to be extended to the private and voluntary and not for profit sectors. This has also been reflected in a number of union submissions to government departments and agencies over the past 2 years.

The NEC recognises that current UK employment law does not positively protect disabled workers already in employment and will campaign for a single equality act that recognises that positive action is required if discriminatory barriers to employment for disabled people are to be removed. This campaign will include the right to disability leave. The NEC is mindful that positive action is different from positive discrimination, in that it is action that can recognise the particular barriers in access to work by a disabled worker, and enable an employer to act to remove or address those particular barriers.

The NEC is committed to campaign to ensure positive action can be taken by employers to enable them to recognise the discrimination faced by disabled workers in access to the labour market and make reasonable adjustments in relation to job security including specific positive action to find alternative jobs within the company.

The NEC also re-affirms the union's policy to seek mandatory equal pay audits, and for these to include disability pay, and for an enforceable right to re-instatement and re-engagement orders for workers where this is directed by an employment tribunal in line with the Warwick Agreement and TUC policy, and to ensure that disability access issues are not a barrier to reinstatement and re-engagement of people who have so won these orders through DDA cases.

The NEC supports the raising of compensation levels for all workers unfairly dismissed from their work and the raising of statutory redundancy payments.

The NEC invites Conference to adopt this statement of the union's intent to support Rempoy workers in their current struggle and to continue to campaign for positive and improved employment rights for all workers with disabilities.

NEC Statement No 5 - Rail Industry

The NEC believes that the botched privatisation of the UK rail industry has created a structure with inherent weaknesses which continue to be a massive drain on the taxpayer, without delivering the required standard of service to the travelling public.

The NEC believes that in order to move the industry forward and provide the best value to both the taxpayer and passenger, the Government must move away from its rigid adherence to the failed privatised model. It is clear that across the majority of the rail network there is little or no competition and the NEC believes that the private sector is taking only a marginal amount of the risks involved in both running and investing in the network infrastructure. The private sector is entirely confident in the fact that the Government cannot allow any part of the passenger rail network to fail and therefore has a limited commitment in terms of long term investment in the industry.

The NEC further asserts that rail procurement must provide maximum benefit to the UK train build and supply chain industry.

The NEC calls upon the government in its forthcoming statement on strategy and investment in the rail industry to address the need for an expanded rail network.

The NEC calls for the Government to assume control initially of a single franchise, which would be developed into the industry benchmark franchise.

The NEC believes that the vertical re-integration of track and rail must take place and that Unite should lead the way in engaging with Government, fellow Rail Unions and Industry Stakeholders to achieve this aim.

The NEC is therefore calling for the Parliamentary All Party Committee for the Rail Industry to engage with all the rail unions and to provide a platform upon which the following key issues can be discussed:

- A review of the existing franchise strategy described by the Transport select Committee as ““a complex, fragmented and costly muddle””.
- A root and branch review of health and safety culture
- The establishment of a strategic Rolling Stock Procurement Policy to moderate, or remove, peaks and troughs in new rolling stock orders. The benefits of this would ensure greater efficiency, greater reliability and lower costs.
- Enhancement of the rail network which will cater for longer and heavier trains to help address the better use of rail for freight transport.
- Address the need for increased network capacity.
- A review of the current train leasing arrangements.

COMPOSITES

Composite 1 - Manufacturing

This Conference brings to the attention of the NEC the decline in the manufacturing sector that is leaving the UK economy with a major balance of payment deficit. Manufacturing generates 20% of the UK's GDP, employs 14% of the UK's entire workforce and accounts for £150 billion in exports yet many UK manufacturing companies are operating on the borderline with a direct effect on their hard working employees.

Conference acknowledges the government's successful achievements in delivering low inflation and low unemployment. Nevertheless recognising the importance of the manufacturing sector to the UK economy, conference is increasingly concerned for the future of manufacturing generally with employment opportunities and the transfer of company operations to locations outside the UK, a clear indication of the sector being in decline. Britain cannot sustain or afford to lose its manufacturing base if it's to compete in a global economy.

The UK economy has also seen a decline in full time skilled employment, and many of those jobs have been replaced with low skilled and low paid jobs.

Conference notes that the drive to offshore manufacturing is leading to the deskilling and widespread underemployment of manufacturing workers in part time temporary work.

Conference believes that the UK Government must recognise the impact of the "flexible economy" is having in the haemorrhaging of support for Labour in the heartlands.

Conference is concerned that the wide spread job insecurity related to the decline in manufacturing is causing division in our communities.

Conference believes that Black and minority ethnic manufacturing workers are bearing the brunt of a rise in racism through racist attacks.

A successful modern industrial economy must have a prosperous and productive manufacturing sector based on high skills, high productivity and high pay.

The Conference is concerned with regard to the rising energy costs, both electricity and gas and the impact these cost have on competitiveness.

The rising costs of energy coupled with the climate change levy is having a dramatic influence on employment, security and the ability of companies to invest in training and technology that our members require to secure their future.

One factor is the costs of energy, particularly gas, which has increased from November 2005 to January 2006 by 123%. Electricity has also increased during the same period of time by 77%. We know that in Europe their energy costs are subsidised by their Governments and so can plan their manufacturing levels well in advance knowing that their energy costs will not increase in the short term.

The continuing decline of the UK manufacturing base and the tens of thousands of skilled jobs lost each year cannot be replaced with an economy based upon the service sector alone.

The Manufacturing sector has lost over one million jobs since Labour came to government in 1997, whole communities have been devastated and it can't be wholly blamed on the globalisation process.

All too often the first action of Ministers when possible plant closures are announced, is that they will set up a task force, not that they will fight to prevent the closure.

The rights for job protection and information and consultation afforded to UK workers in comparison to those of our European competitor nations are weaker, making it easier, quicker and cheaper to close British factories and make their workforce redundant.

Exit costs are far too low in this country, not enough attention is paid to using the public procurement process to assist and sustain manufacturing, not only do UK tax payers have to pay for goods from abroad but they also have to pay the benefits of those who lose their jobs.

Conference agrees that this area of trade requires a minister for manufacturing now to stop avoidable decline in this sector and also to attract new investment opportunities and initiatives in manufacturing and export.

Manufacturing must be supported to ensure improvements are also made in our public services. A minister for manufacturing could provide extra support to industry by ensuring that public procurement policy clearly favours domestic manufacturers wherever practical as part of a national job security strategy.

Conference believes that the Government procurement policy with regards to manufacturing and in particular the Olympic delivery authority should be also be drawn up to defend UK manufacturing skills, jobs, fair wages and production, requiring companies to sign a social clause within contracts at the tendering stage that they will promote equality at work. Conference believes such a procurement policy is in line with European procurement legislation.

In order to halt the deepening depression in the manufacturing sector we need this Government to increase its efforts to bring about the equal playing field that is vital not only to the success of the manufacturing sector but also to the economy of the country.

We believe that successful economies have their foundation in a strong manufacturing base and that urgent action is needed if this trend is to be reversed.

This Conference welcomes the Amicus campaign to 'rebuild UK manufacturing' and calls on the NEC to:

1. campaign with the Amicus Parliamentary Committee to urge the Government to pass legislation to bring about parity with our European Partners.
2. demand a Government initiative that clearly gives industrial support and improved employment rights and raise the profile and importance of manufacturing in the United Kingdom.
3. call upon the Government to widen the scope of the defence industrial strategy to include metals and accept and acknowledge that manufacturing is the major artery of the UK economy and requires more assistance.
4. re-enforce our demands for the implementation of Warwick to appoint a Minister for Manufacturing to promote this important sector and halt the dramatic slide of closures, redundancies and the transfer of jobs to other countries and also to attract new investment opportunities and initiatives in manufacturing and export.
5. campaign to defend manufacturing jobs whilst recognising the need to build solidarity with workers on a global and European basis through core standards agreements between unions.

6. campaign for a Government procurement policy for all Government departments that reflects the social need to defend employment in the UK in line with European legislation.
7. commit to a campaign to prevent companies outsourcing and relocating its business overseas.
8. encourage the Labour government and industry to act urgently to save Britain's manufacturing industry.
9. mount an Amicus initiative for the entire trade union movement to campaign for the future of manufacturing.
10. expand on its campaign to defend manufacturing and the motor industry in the UK by pressing the government to work with the employers to develop high-tech innovations such as fuel cell engines, various solar power to lead the world.
11. lobby Government to support a reduction in the cost of energy that will create a level playing field with our European colleagues.
12. campaign against racism in our communities as an integral part of our campaign to defend manufacturing.

Composite 2 - Outsourcing And Offshoring

Conference welcomes the stance adopted by Amicus on outsourcing and offshoring. It notes, however, that the growth of outsourcing and offshoring continues to pose a threat to the jobs, skills and careers of members at all levels in both manufacturing and services.

There has over the last few years been an increase in outsourcing and off-shoring by UK companies. Both of these are promoted by employers as a way of reducing the cost. This invariably results in job losses and worse working conditions for those who remain employed.

Conference calls on Amicus to organise a campaign against outsourcing and offshoring involving union organisation at all levels and to expand its message beyond financial services and to include all areas of UK Industry which are currently under threat from this practice.

This campaign should have two goals:

- a) pressure on the Government to make it more difficult to outsource and offshore jobs by measures such as increasing notice period and consultation;
- b) ensure that whenever the issue comes up with a specific employer, our members are provided with the full support and encouragement of the Union.

This Conference therefore calls on the NEC to:

1. continue to campaign against the growth of outsourcing and offshoring through all available and appropriate means;
2. negotiate with employers to safeguard and protect the jobs, skills and careers of members;
3. press the Government and the EU to take action to ensure a level playing field to regulate in this area and ensure that British workers are no longer the least protected in the Western World, and the employers are required to give clear regard to corporate social responsibility, data protection and international labour standards.
4. strengthen links with independent Trade Unions in receiving countries and foster the development and organisation of such unions in the sectors and companies where they do not exist;
5. apply pressure to the Government of the day to make it far harder to outsource and off-shore jobs by measures such as increasing notice periods and consultation times and giving working councils veto rights over such actions;
6. insist that whenever this issue arises with a specific employer, members are provided with the full support of and encouragement from the union to resist any threat of job losses rather than giving up and entering into redundancy negotiations;
7. campaign and sponsor within the European Union for legislation to safeguard against off shoring and outsourcing;
8. use whatever means necessary in stopping the outsourcing and relocation of manufacturing and aircraft maintenance operations to Eastern Bloc and Asia Pacific countries.

Composite 3 - Employment Legislation

This Conference recalls that over 100 years ago, under powers derived from the Taff Vale judgement, railway employers sued the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants for £23,000 for taking industrial action. Conference notes the subsequent 1906 Trades Disputes Act removed trade union liability for damages caused by strike action. Conference reiterates its policy of repealing the anti-trade union laws and on the reintroduction of laws to prevent any trade union taking industrial action.

Whilst the Labour Party has enjoyed three consecutive election victories, with the support of the Trade Unions almost certainly crucially last time, and has been able to make significant and pleasing progress in areas such as Health, Education and Low Pay, there has been no change whatsoever to the Tories Industrial Relations Law. It is high time that some of the worst excesses of the anti-union legislation were addressed.

Conference notes that the 2005 Labour Party Conference voted 70:30 in favour of a motion that would, amongst other things, give Unions the right to take solidarity action, without the threat of legal proceedings by employers, protection against dismissal for workers who go on strike and the barring of replacement workers being drafted in by companies during disputes.

Conference calls for the NEC to actively campaign for the simplification of the Industrial Action ballot procedure. Conference accepts that under current circumstances the NEC may have to act to avoid possible sequestration of funds as a result of unofficial industrial action, but notes that members in dispute have the right to refuse to work collectively with no legal action being taken against them.

It is a national scandal that company managements can, almost instantly, do whatever they choose in making changes to working conditions or dismissing employees, while Trade Union members in the establishments concerned must trudge through legal minefields before they are able to react.

'Status Quo' should hold whenever there is failure to agree between management and the membership. We should not be forced into fighting rearguard actions whenever there is a dispute.

Conference requests the Union to campaign and lobby the Government to prevent the Government from watering down European legislation which is for the good of the British worker and to ensure that employees are not treated less favourably under UK employment law than under employment law in other European Union Countries.

Conference calls upon the NEC to recognise the importance that equality issues play in building up trade union organisation and membership. The range of issues surrounding equalities: gender, disabilities, work-life balance, race pay gaps, LGBT, work against bullying and harassment can help develop and strengthen our union movement.

Conference instructs Amicus to prioritise the equalities agenda. This must begin with a strong campaign to secure statutory legislation and rights for Trade Union Equality Representatives. Only by ensuring these rights and legislation, will the full potential of the Equality Representative be utilised.

Conference fully supports the terms of the 2005 Trades Union Congress Composite Resolution 1: Fairness at work. The Motion calls for the repeal of the anti-union laws and their replacement with a framework of positive rights in accordance with minimum ILO standards:

- i. giving unions the right to organise industrial action, including solidarity action, without the threat of legal proceedings by employers and for workers taking lawful industrial action to be protected from dismissal;
- ii. providing employment rights from day one of employment;
- iii. allowing every worker to be represented individually and collectively by a trade union on any issue;
- iv. extending paid time off for all family - friendly leave provided by statute;
- v. allowing unions to trigger statutory equal pay audits and appoint equality reps with statutory rights on a par with these for workplace, safety and learning reps;
- vi. allowing unions to choose to conduct workplace ballots;
- vii. the abolition of restrictive balloting and industrial action notice procedures;
- viii. the right to strike and the right to automatic reinstatement for taking lawful industrial action;
- ix. the freedom to take solidarity action for workers who are in dispute;
- x. strengthening unfair dismissal legislation, ensuring an enforceable right to reinstatement;
- xi. improving time off and facilities for union reps and lay officials;
- xii. strengthening protection against exploitation and discrimination of migrant, agency, temporary workers, women, black, disabled, young and LGBT workers and those in smaller firms;
- xiii. ensuring workers receive proper compensation when their employer is declared bankrupt;
- xiv. ensuring pensions, training and equality are included as issues on which collective bargaining must take place when statutory recognition is awarded, and
- xv. Statutory sectoral forums to establish minimum terms and conditions.

Conference calls on the NEC, the industrial sector committees, the equalities committees, and regional councils to initiate campaigning activities in support of these policies. Conference calls for the campaign to be supported, in cooperation with other unions, by a national march, rally and lobby of Parliament.

Conference instructs the NEC to raise this policy forcefully with the Amicus Parliamentary Group.

In particular, the Parliamentary Group should be asked to oppose the statement made by counsel representing the British Government in the European Court of Justice on January 7, 2007, that the right to strike was not 'a fundamental social right'. Conference notes that the British Government was the only European Government to make this claim.

Conference agrees that 100 years after the introduction of the Trades Disputes Act of 1906; it should be policy of Amicus to campaign for the full repeal of all the Anti-trade union laws to be replaced with a Trade Union Freedom Bill.

Composite 4 - Unfair Dismissal

This Conference is appalled at the ability of Rolls Royce to ignore the decision of the Employment Tribunal to reinstate Jerry Hicks despite a fantastic campaign by Amicus who were unsuccessful in overturning the employers decision.

Conference calls for the Government to amend current legislation and strengthen the assurances given under the Warwick Agreement to ensure that those employers which are advised by Employment Tribunals to reinstate previously dismissed workers do so. Employers should have to produce evidence to justify and substantiate their decisions in the use of discipline up to and including dismissal of their employees.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

1. lobby MPs to introduce legislation to make these decisions legally binding;
2. in similar circumstances instruct the appropriate National Sector to call an emergency meeting of Reps on the National Sector Committee to agree a strategy for defending our union;
3. campaign to change the current employment law regarding employers only having to have a reasonable belief, in order to undertake discipline or dismissal of an employee;
4. employers should have to produce evidence to justify and substantiate their decisions in the use of discipline up to and including dismissal;
5. campaign for the rights for workers not to be unfairly dismissed from their employment after they have completed 13 weeks service as opposed to the current situation where, with the exception of discrimination cases, employees are required to have worked 52 weeks before having the right to be treated fairly and reasonably by their employer.

Composite 5 - Redundancy

This Conference recognises that workers in the United Kingdom are at a distinct disadvantage in comparison with their counterparts within the EU. Multi-national employers find it quicker, easier and cheaper to dismiss British Workers. It is becoming apparent that our workplace representatives are now faced with a problem with regard to the regulations on ageism. Hard fought for collective agreements are now potentially illegal and our members are faced with the possibility of a reduced financial package.

Multi-national companies across all sectors of the economy close sites in the UK even when those sites are more profitable and productive. We believe this can only be the result of low closure costs and redundancy payments in the UK.

Consultation in circumstances of proposed redundancies should always have a minimum of 90 days before the first redundancy with the need for an agreement to be reached; further the levels of compensation payable should be increased to become a substantial figure that will compel employers to seek alternatives.

Conference calls on the General Secretary and the NEC to use all of the political influence at the disposal of Amicus:

1. to campaign for an increase in the statutory redundancy payments to include a social package attached to redundancy pay that betters our best European counterparts and amendment of the redundancy regulations to ensure the protection of negotiated agreements when faced with redundancy.
2. to pressurise this Government to make improvements in the statutory redundancy pay so that a “weeks pay” should mean “a weeks actual pay” inclusive of shift premium, bonus and overtime earnings with no monetary limits, and remove the limit on service; and
3. to campaign for improved statutory redundancy rights through both consultation and in relation to the level of compensation.

Composite 6- EU Services Directive

Conference fully supports the campaign by Amicus to oppose the proposed EU Services Directive in its current form.

Conference believes that this will have an adverse effect on jobs in the UK with companies being permitted to import labour to the UK and rates of pay to these workers at a level as the country of origin. We believe this will effect the local economy in many regions with the bulk of the little money these exploited workers earn going back home and not helping to support local businesses.

Conference does not accept the view being promoted by Government ministers that the Services Directive will create over 600,000 new jobs.

Conference is of the view that the opposite will happen, with well paid, secure employment being substituted by low paid insecure jobs in some sectors.

Furthermore the introduction of the Services Directive will dilute and destroy the role of the trade union movement in companies and in addition have a harmful effect on health and safety.

The country of origin proposals will mean that UK employers could start up companies in many of the newly emerging EU countries and transpose working practices from those countries to the UK and Ireland.

This Conference calls upon the National Executive Committee to:

1. oppose the Services Directive in its current form
2. explain to the membership the dangers of the Services Directive
3. ensure that Amicus MPs and MEPs are made aware of the opposition to the Services Directive.

Composite 7 - 35 Hour Week and Working Time Directive

Conference notes that UK Workers still work the longest hours in Europe and often do additional hours for no pay. The world of manufacturing is rapidly changing, where annualised hours, flexibility and a need to increase productivity, are rapidly becoming the everyday norm. But as for basic hours of work, they still remain the same at 37 hours, and in some workplaces 38 or 39 hours are not uncommon. Many employers are seeking to extend the working week.

We are now seeing throughout Europe changes of a similar nature, but the big difference being that, the working week has been reduced to the basic 35 or 36 hours. This in turn would give the employees more time with their families and also a better way of life to bring up and support their families! In return the employer would reap the benefits, as productivity would be seen to improve and they would also see a more content, less tired and stressed workforce.

Government reports have highlighted the fact that the reduction in the working week from a 39 hour to a 37 hour week created jobs in manufacturing.

This Conference expresses its serious concerns at the Labour Government's opposition to the full implementation of the working time directive especially the maximum 48 hour working week in the United Kingdom. It is the policy of Amicus to campaign on Health and Safety issues and highlight the problems of working in excess of 48 hours which can result in deterioration in the quality of human life by the fulfilment of a social need for adults to spend more time enjoying life for themselves and their children.

Many union members are employed by companies that fail to provide the option of flexible employment. Recognising that family friendly employment is still a key priority Amicus needs to campaign to ensure all workers have the option of a better work life balance.

Conference calls on the National Executive:

1. to revitalise and reinstate the campaign to reduce the working week to 35 hours. The campaign to be fully funded by the CSEU 35 hour week fund within the terms that the fund was established under and continue the campaign to reduce the working week to 35 hours.
2. to campaign for a 35 hour week in the Public Sector.
3. to campaign to ensure all workers have the option of a better work life balance and vigorously work for the full implementation of the working time directive and compliance with a maximum 48 hour working week.
4. to use all its influence with National and European Government to urgently resolve these matters regarding Government's opposition to the removal of the individual opt-out and the reluctance of Government to provide legal protection against long working hours for workers not covered by the Working Time Directive.

Composite 8 - Formed Royal Mail Privatisation And Regulation

This Conference reaffirms its opposition to the privatisation of Royal Mail and the strategy developed to undermine the role of trade unions in the workplace.

Conference also recognises the recent activity by the Group Chairman could lead to such strategies, which are related to the future ownership of Royal Mail, being further developed and progressed in the future. Conference objects to this activity by Royal Mail.

Conference notes the effect that Regulation is having on the future employment prospects of our members in Royal Mail and condemns Postcomm for having liberalised the market in the UK in advance of the requirements of the European Commission.

Conference expresses concern that Postcomm is too focused on competition at the expense of the USO and urges them to review their position to enable Royal Mail to compete equally, thereby protecting and placing more emphasis on the universal service. Failure to secure the future of the USO could result in a deterioration of the service provided to the public, which ultimately could result in the universal service being abandoned.

Equally, conference expresses concern that Postcomm places artificial barriers before Royal Mail and reduces its ability to respond positively to customer needs. Postcomm does this by insisting that an express requirement in Royal Mail providing a service to one customer to be available to all debars Royal Mail from responding positively to customers needs.

Conference calls upon Postcomm to allow Royal Mail to compete on a level playing field and to be able to respond to specific customers needs through a commercial approach but without any anti competitive activities.

Conference instructs the NSC (National Sector Committee) to initiate a campaign - and to make use of all resources within Amicus to undertake campaigning activity - which highlights and challenges each and every unacceptable policy development or initiative that has the potential to weaken collective bargaining and industrial relations within the workplace.

This is to include,

- Use of the political office and its links with Parliament where necessary;
- Use Amicus resource to raise issues at TUC and Labour Party conferences;
- To develop a press strategy which highlights these issues and ensures that the Amicus position is given appropriate publicity.

Composite 9 - Equal Pay

This Conference notes with alarm that the United Kingdom is amongst the worst performing European member states in equal and fair pay for women and urges the NEC to vigorously increase the level of campaigning to redress the balance. After the First World War the 1919 Treaty of Versailles under the Article 427 stated that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.

It is over 30 years since the introduction of the equal pay legislation, but there are still massive inequalities that must be addressed. Women have been waiting since 1975 for the effective right to have equal pay for work of equal value. The young women of today cannot afford to wait a further thirty years for equal pay to be universally accepted as a right.

Conference welcomes the work to date carried out by Amicus and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions in Ireland in highlighting the gender pay gap.

Conference believes insufficient action is being taken by Governments and employers in addressing unequal pay; the voluntary approach to solve this issue is not working.

Conference notes that trade unions, relative authorities and surveys have reported slow progress on equal pay reviews. The majority of organisations have no plans to do so.

Conference believes that Governments need to address this issue now. It is vital that there is support to the individual through collective bargaining to address equal pay. This requires a strengthening of equal pay legislation.

Conference welcomes that the majority of finance sector companies have carried out equal pay audits and are committed to carrying audits out on a regular basis.

However, Amicus is concerned about the lack of action that is being taken on the results of the equal pay audits of all sectors. We continue to face the injustices of gender pay discrimination in the UK. The Finance Sector has the largest gender pay gap of any sector and should take action on all the major causes of the pay gap in the sector - pay discrimination, the glass ceiling, the unequal impact of caring responsibilities and the long hours' culture.

Additionally, it is vital that audits cover, age, disability and race to work towards equality for all.

All sectors need to work in partnership to take action on equality to bring about real change in the workplace. Most organisations have not carried out an equal pay audit and have no plans to do so.

Conference calls on:

1. the NEC to develop and monitor action plans to work towards gender equality. These should include:
 - a) action to encourage more flexible working practice;
 - b) targets for more managerial and technical roles to be carried out on a part-time, or job-share basis;
 - c) action to address any pay discrimination revealed by the audits;
 - d) a review or the introduction of equality training to ensure that all staff are made aware of the importance of equality and diversity to the organization;
 - e) equal pay audits to cover gender, age, disability and race;
 - f) lobby the government to endorse compulsory pay and audits.

2. Amicus, the TUC and the ICTU to strengthen its campaign and to call on the Governments:

- a) to introduce mandatory equal pay audits for all employers in the UK and that employers should take and report action on equal pay in their annual reports;
- b) to ensure that funding of carrying out and implementing equal audits are not met at the cost of jobs;
- c) for equal pay in both the public and private sector.
- d) to extend the duty to promote equality to all sectors;
- e) to introduce the right for trade unions to take class actions on behalf of a group of members;
- f) to lead on tackling equal pay through public procurement.

Further, Conference instructs the NEC to place Amicus (or its successor union) as the lead union in organising a Trade Union campaign and working with the TUC to establish a national "Equal Pay Day" which would eventually be recognised by the general public alongside other national days.

On this day, rallies could be organised, Government departments questioned, union recruitment promoted, equal pay agreements applauded, bad employers shamed and the general question of equal pay would receive national media attention and general public debate.

Composite 10 - Minimum Wage

This Conference believes that the national minimum wage is set at too low a level for someone to live on and is split into levels giving young workers a particularly poor deal.

Conference welcomes the improvements to the National Minimum Wage that became law in October 2005. However, we feel that there are still loopholes for unscrupulous employers to take advantage of workers i.e. bogus self employed and trainees on fixed term contracts who are not classed as employees.

We therefore urge our union to seek to amend the law and clearly define who are employees and their rights.

Conference calls upon Amicus to :

1. campaign for an increase in the national minimum wage to the European Decency threshold (of approximately £8 per hour at 2005 rates) with no exemptions or lower rates for young workers.
2. put pressure on the Government to ensure that the minimum wage applies to all workers from the age of 16.

Composite 11 - Dignity At Work

This conference notes that bullying is a widespread problem that none of us can afford to ignore. It can lead to terrible consequences for employees, organisations and the economy as a whole.

The largest UK study of workplace bullying was carried out by the University of Manchester in 2000. It found that -

- a) 1 in 10 workers had been bullied in the last 6 months
- b) 1 in 4 had been bullied within the previous 5 years
- c) Almost half of workers had witnessed bullying at work
- d) Slightly more women - 12% than men - 10% said they had been bullied
- e) And very interestingly, while the people doing the bullying were most likely to be managers, managers were just as likely as any other worker to be bullied.

Bullying in the workplace can take many forms.

Bullies in a position of authority may subject their subordinates to humiliation and ridicule. In some cases, they may remove employee's responsibility, refuse requests for leave and training and block promotion.

However, as the University of Manchester study shows, bullying is not confined to managers and supervisors.

Employees may bully a colleague on the same grade and groups of employees can victimise an individual.

A TUC survey of 5,300 public, private and voluntary sector employees that suggested workplace bullying contributes to the loss of 18 million working days ever year.

Conference notes the Dignity at Work Project that Amicus is heading up with financial support from the DTI. This project aims to encourage trade union representatives and employers to build cultures in which respect for individuals is regarded as an essential part of the conduct of all those who work in the organisation. The project will also increase awareness and knowledge of 'dignity at work' issues, and encourage the development of partnership working in the workplace through the promotion of joint working on dignity at work.

Conference believes that bullying in the workplace is and continues to be an area of major concern, both for those members who suffer as a result of it and for Amicus representatives who attempt to offer support.

In many organisations there is a distinct lack of corporate acknowledgement of this issue. In those organisations where there is a willingness to deal with it, this is usually on the basis of a token gesture. The vast majority of complaints and grievances brought on the grounds of bullying are very rarely upheld.

Globalisation and restructuring within all sectors of industry has lead to a 'get the job done at all costs' attitude, which includes the bullying and intimidation of staff. Amicus has done some really useful work in the past in this area but sadly this hasn't been enough as the problem persists.

Conference notes that in spite of campaigns against bullying & harassment in the workplace and negotiated agreements on Dignity at Work, there are still employers who do not take this issue seriously.

Conference notes that this issue affects all workers but there are specific areas of employment, where women workers are particularly vulnerable, as well as specific issues which affect only women workers.

Conference commends the work of Amicus in making this a high profile negotiating issue but notes that there remains a considerable gap between policy & practice.

Conference therefore:

1. calls on Amicus to lobby Government to fully promote and implement the Dignity at Work Bill as a matter of urgency and at the earliest opportunity.
2. urges the NEC and Negotiators to:
 - a) continue to highlight this issue with employers.
 - b) provide training and campaign materials for reps and members.
3. resolves to :
 - a) ensure all members are aware of the problems of bullying and harassment and that they have clear guidelines to advise them what to do if someone brings a bullying case to them in the workplace.
 - b) initiate an anti-bullying campaign to include raising awareness of its prevalence, guidance on what bullying is, and materials to allow reps to raise awareness of the issue in the workplace e.g. posters, stickers, surveys, leaflets and meetings.
 - c) campaign for the introduction of company dignity at work policies which are fully integrated into company structures.
 - d) campaign to ensure that all Dignity at Work policies in workplaces are effectively communicated to every single employee, The best policy is not worth the paper it is written on if it is not backed up with accessible grievance procedures that employees have faith in.
 - e) sign up companies in the sector to the Amicus Dignity at Work campaign - www.dignityatwork.org .

Composite 12 - Organising, Recruitment And Retention

Conference recognises recruiting and organising new members is now a major priority for Amicus - in particular in the growing sectors of the economy including Construction, IT, Media, Communications, Finance, Community sector, Services etc.

In order to increase membership and increase Amicus' industrial and political strength we will need to ensure we build organisation and recruitment work into all of the union's activities.

Priorities for the union should be developing and training more lay-activists, union reps, health and safety reps, life long learning reps, equality reps and environmental reps to recruit and organise in their workplaces. This should include building into training courses an organising and recruitment module.

In order to assist all future engagements of full time officials, they must have a good working knowledge of the industry and must have had employment within the industry. This is vital if Amicus is serious about recruitment, retention and organisation.

Conference calls upon the NEC to:

1. focus a campaign aimed at youth and especially school - leavers.

Such a campaign should be supported by professionally designed materials to encourage the youth of the UK to consider the benefits of a strong indigenous manufacturing industry and the major part Amicus has to play in creating those benefits.

Amicus should also consider utilising resources and affiliations with organisations such as schools, youth organisations, colleges etc to ensure the broadest possible awareness of the campaign. Conference believes that our young members committee have a vibrant role to play in developing this campaign and also providing a voice for young people at regional councils.

2. support the national young members committee in their campaign.
 - a) to deliver apprentice reps in all workplaces;
 - b) to promote Amicus involvement in local youth centres;
 - c) for decent wages for young workers;
 - d) against age discrimination and bullying of apprentices at work.
3. organise training courses for full time officers to assist lay reps to undertake organising work and for full time officers to recruit and organise in "greenfield" sites.
4. make organisation and recruitment a priority for all Amicus meetings at branch, region and sector level and develop organising material aimed at specific sectors and companies where appropriate.
5. include recruitment, organising and recognition success stories in all Amicus magazines and on the web site.
6. ensure specific training is available for officers and reps around recruiting and retraining disabled members.
7. organise a recruitment campaign of disabled workers and workers in disability organisations.

Composite 13 - Migrant Workers And Asylum Seekers

This Conference notes that there are around 4 million migrant workers and a number of asylum seekers in the UK.

Conference notes that the issues which cause people to flee persecution and seek asylum are different to the issues that encourage migration for work.

Many migrant workers are settled UK citizens who have contributed to the economy. However, a significant minority have uncertain immigration status and are particularly vulnerable due to the way the media tends to portray the negative aspects of migrant workers and asylum seekers. In particular, we call on the Government to end all bans on asylum seekers being employed, a ban which forces many into the black economy.

Migrant Workers and / or Asylum Seekers have:

1. A considerable lack of information on rights at work
2. Encounter hostility and/or racism from workmates, employers and even from the media
3. Poor quality housing and open to exploitation.

Migrant workers and asylum seekers demand the support of the Trade Union movement. It is essential that migrant workers are convinced to join Trade Unions.

Conference notes that women who claim asylum are often fleeing persecution for reasons that are not included in the Geneva Convention and that are particular to women including rape and public humiliation.

Conference notes that there are many vulnerable workers and children that are brought to the UK or trafficked within the UK with the promise of work and find themselves forced in to prostitution and virtual slavery.

Conference believes that the Government should implement effective regulation of employment agencies, day one rights for temporary workers and enforcement of employment law.

Conference further believes that the Government must address the situation of undocumented workers and effective enforcement of the national minimum wage.

Conference welcomes migrant workers to the UK to work, live and become part of our communities and encourages migrant workers to join amicus.

Conference, however, welcomes all moves to allow the free migration of working people. Just as we believe in international trade union cooperation, we believe there should be no barriers based on national origin within the trade union movement.

Conference calls for the ending of laws that inhibit migrant workers from playing a full and active role in the trade union movement and which encourage employers to force down wages and conditions.

Conference calls on the Union's executive to use all its influence to ensure that migrant workers that come to the UK are treated with equality especially with regard to pay and conditions.

As the UK needs to augment the skills required to fulfil projects in the Construction and Shipbuilding sectors employers must be made to pay these workers union negotiated rates for the job and if need be legislation must be introduced to do so.

To this end this Conference welcomes the move to bring about a National Rate of Pay and Conditions for the Engineering Sector.

Conference asks that Amicus campaigns for the implementation of the posted workers directive to defend the terms and conditions of members and ultimately that migrant workers should not be seen as a back door solution for the Government to plug the national skills shortage at a minimum cost.

Conference congratulates the National Officer for the innovative approach of issuing a poster in Polish. We call upon the Union to build on this initiative by developing a focused recruitment campaign with recruitment, campaigning and information material provided in all languages necessary to ensure a wide coverage within the industries we organise for migrant workers taking into consideration that workers now come from Portugal, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Ukraine, Russia and the Czech Republic. Many of these workers are on three month agency contracts and we ask the NEC to give consideration to reduced or free membership for migrant workers for a limited period to aid recruitment.

Conference is concerned that many migrant workers may not hold compliant qualifications within Electrical Trades that would meet UK standards. We therefore call upon the union to highlight the Health and Safety issues involved and we request Amicus initiate a publicity campaign to promote the potential dangers to employers and employees that exist if under qualified workers are employed on Electrical Installation or Electrical Maintenance.

Conference instructs the Amicus leadership, and requires the Amicus leadership in Ireland, to:-

- a) Initiate a campaign to raise awareness amongst Amicus members of the importance of asylum seekers and migrant workers and their rights.
- b) Educate asylum seekers and migrant workers on the benefits derived from being a member of the Union.
- c) Recruit and organise asylum seeker and migrant workers to join Amicus.
- d) support the campaign for a UN office for women's issues and calls on the NEC to campaign for the Government to change the Geneva Convention to allow women who have suffered violence as a war crime to claim asylum.
- e) Continue its campaign to support vulnerable workers.

Composite 14 - Apprentices

This Conference deplores the lack of young and adult apprenticeships across all sectors. We believe that, unless the trend is reversed, this will have lasting, long term effects on British industry and consequently the UK economy.

This conference regrets the failure of many organisations, both Public and Private, to support modern apprenticeships and to provide adequate and ongoing training to their employees.

Conference demands that high skill levels are maintained by ensuring that terms and conditions remain attractive including pension arrangements and are not eroded by non-investment and neglecting the industry's needs. By maintaining good pay levels, good working conditions and an investment into the training of apprentices and adults, Britain can face a future based on a balanced full economy rather than relying on foreign imports and cheap labour with low skills.

While this Conference recognises that a number of skilled base modern apprentices have been created in a number of Industry Sectors, concern remains in the Engineering Sector where the growth of Apprenticeship positions remains static.

Further we recognise that both Adult Apprentices and influx of European Skilled Labour are important tools in providing employers with up-dated skills to compete in very difficult markets we must not forget the importance of attracting the youth into engineering and other industry sectors.

Conference therefore, calls upon the NEC to:

1. mount a campaign to lobby the Government and industry to address the problems of skill shortages in the UK and increase the number of apprenticeships, with a view to making both apprenticeships and training compulsory;
2. call on the government to support the training of craft apprentices by providing more direct funding, consider an employer wide training levy and seek financial subsidy and investment from Government in support of employers, who actively engage in offering employed status apprentice training systems;
3. produce an information pack, to encourage workplace reps to have apprenticeships on the agenda when negotiating with employers and identifying sources of funding and help available to companies through the modern apprenticeship scheme;
4. encourage the Government to be flexible on the entry age into apprenticeships and to change the funding criteria for training to put in place funding for adult trainees;
5. make full use of our political connections to improve and incorporate the presentation to the apprenticeship scheme on a National Level as a matter of urgency;
6. name and shame companies who do not have adequate training programmes in place and encourage major employers with local agencies to increase their intake of apprentices;
7. ensure that employers recognise the importance of modern apprenticeships in engineering, to encourage schools and colleges to raise the profile of the

engineering industry as a career amongst school leavers and that apprenticeships are meaningful in content with the objective to gain qualifications which are recognised and transferable making apprenticeships relevant to the needs of the modern workplace;

8. encourage Government to lead by example by increasing their annual apprentice intake therefore maximising the use of facilities and resources within Government Departments;
9. introduce incentives to attract apprentices and young members into membership of our Union.

Composite 15 - Corporate Manslaughter And Directors Duties

This Conference is disgusted that the current laws relating to corporate manslaughter are still failing to provide an effective deterrent.

We propose a new criminal offence of corporate manslaughter that will apply when someone has been killed because the senior management of the corporation has failed to take reasonable care for the safety of employees or others.

The Corporate Manslaughter Act should also provide for individual liability against Directors and Senior Managers who can be shown to be responsible for corporate manslaughter.

In any event, this conference calls upon Amicus to campaign vigorously for the introduction of specific health and safety duties upon Directors and Senior Managers under the Health and Safety at Work Act, creating a general duty on Directors (and their equivalents) to provide for the health, safety and welfare of their employees and others.

Composite 16 - Health And Safety

Conference is concerned at the growing trend within companies to obscure the true health and safety statistics by reporting recordable injury figures instead of all accident figures.

Conference urges the government to tackle the serious lack of health and safety enforcement in the workplace and to recognise that Safety Representatives have a more thorough knowledge of health and safety management than many of their line managers, business managers and employers.

Conference deplores any reduction in numbers of Health and Safety inspectors and its subsequent effect on the frequencies of workplace inspectors.

Changes must be made to the safety representatives' functions defined in the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations 1977 by including:

- the additional function of issuing, to employers and/or their managers, Provisional Improvement Notices (PINs);
- the introduction of Roving Safety Reps and,
- the right to stop the Job without risk of victimisation.

Immediately following this Conference this Union will allocate sufficient resources to actively campaign to secure this important workplace function for trade union safety representatives.

Conference calls upon the union to campaign towards the reintroduction of all accident injury statistics instead of recordable injury statistics and instructs the Executive Council to:-

1. Oppose any reduction of safety inspectors proposed by Government and to actively support an increase in their numbers for the good of all workers.
2. Urge the Government to adequately fund and resource the Health & Safety Executive to provide adequate numbers of inspectors to carry out their duties of safeguarding workers in British industry.
3. Fund appropriate training for Safety Representatives so that they may carry out their role and duties of Safety representatives.
4. Campaign against any legislation that restricts the dissemination of safety information especially in relation to Bills that cite terrorism or security.

Composite 17 - NHS

This Conference pledges its support for the National Health Service.

This Conference abhors the Government's proposals to fragment and privatise the NHS. The union opposes the outsourcing of the NHS to the private sector including changing the role of the Primary Care Trusts from providers into mere enablers of services.

We believe this will result in the removal of any meaningful public control or planning of healthcare.

Private companies are in the business of making a profit and patient care will be secondary. Will any profits made be ploughed back into the NHS or will it line shareholders pockets? These policies could result in drastic cuts to the value of millions of pounds from PCT resources.

We also believe the NHS works because health workers give full commitment to the NHS as a publicly owned and controlled body and it provides treatment on the basis of need rather than the ability to make profit. As Aneurin Bevan said, it should be provided free from the "cradle to the grave".

We must do all we can to maintain a nationally funded, nationally accountable, national health service actively involving the public. Amicus should continue to defend the NHS which should be free at the point of use and not based on the ability to pay.

Conference welcomes the decision of the TUC to set up NHS Together campaign as a body to unite health workers across union boundaries to work together to protect the NHS and the values it represents. We welcome Amicus' active participation in the campaign.

Conference is, however, concerned that the national day of action called for March 3rd this year did not, as Amicus had proposed, include a national demonstration. We believe that a national demonstration would have a massive turnout from both health workers and, importantly, much wider sections of the public. The size of demonstrations across the country against attacks on local NHS service shows the potential. Unfortunately, the fact that one participant in NHS Together was publicly opposed to a demonstration, and, because of its size, seemed to be able to veto a national demonstration, has been a setback. Conference believes it has led many community campaigners to think, unfairly, that unions are unconcerned with health care provision.

Conference believes that we will only be successful in our defence of a publicly funded, controlled, and delivered health service if there is a united campaign of unions and the community. Conference therefore reiterates its call for an intensification our campaigning activities including the calling of a national demonstration with whatever trade union and health campaigning bodies support that call.

Conference welcomes the affiliation of the union, and the active support given, to Keep Our NHS Public (KONP). Conference call on the NEC to continue with this support and to ensure that material produced by KONP is made widely available to our members.

Conference also welcomes the setting up of the Public Service Not Private Profit campaign by over a dozen unions to defend public services in general, and we call on the NEC to affiliate to this campaign and to pledge the union's support to its campaigning activities.

This Conference,

1. Calls on the NEC to campaign for a publicly owned and controlled NHS that provides free healthcare on the basis of need rather than the ability to make profit, against creeping privatisation and support health workers who resist these proposals and defend the NHS.
2. Calls upon Amicus to continue campaigning and lobbying the government to halt its march down the road of privatisation and the dismantling of core NHS provisions.
3. Calls upon the NEC to defend the undertakings given by Labour to the unions in the Warwick Agreement.
4. Call upon Amicus to ensure that monies and resources earmarked for “Public Health Initiatives” within the NHS to be ring fenced by PCTs. This is to avoid the re-distribution of resources within PCTs to meet financial debts.
5. Will promote the service as a worthwhile career and do everything we can to encourage the development of NHS Employees within our own country.

Composite 18 - Care For The Elderly

This Conference urges the Government to provide free care for the elderly senior citizens who need to be looked after in rest or care homes, and demand that funds be made available to provide for these people to live out their remaining years in dignity and not means tested.

Conference calls upon the Amicus Executive Committee to use all its influence to achieve a better deal for our elderly and those in nursing homes, especially E.M.I homes and to achieve at least the same terms as in Scotland.

Composite 19 - Occupational Pensions

Conference recognises and applauds the campaigns undertaken by Amicus on pensions.

Conference calls upon the Government to protect workers in the public and private sector in defending their pension provision that has come under attack in recent months and in the event of takeovers, mergers or joint venture arrangements.

The demise of final salary Pension Schemes in the Private Sector is leaving hard working employees who have paid their dues and demands throughout their working lives, facing penury in retirement. Conference views with concern the moving away from final salary pension schemes towards money purchase schemes which are poorly funded by their employer. Conference also has concerns at how long employees have to work to receive full benefits. Lifting the retirement age would be a disaster. Pensions are part of a fundamental right for workers and are not an extra to be eroded at the whim of management but are deferred wages for retirement with dignity.

Conference deplores the growing divergence in pension provision between the public and private sector. It calls on the Government to recognise that a pension basis which is good for its own employees, and valued by them, is good for all employees.

Conference believes that a decent quality of company pension requires that employers should not only assume the greatest part of the cost of pension provision for their employees but that they should also assume the greatest part of the inherent risks involved in providing pensions. Employees on their own cannot afford to take on the greater part of those costs and they are not well placed to take part on the risks as they are forced into money purchase schemes which effectively “privatise” those risks.

Employee’s pension are continuously being attacked and eroded, yet company executives ensure their own pensions are safeguarded and in many cases have awarded themselves significant increases to their own pension pot.

This conference recognises that while a two - tier pension system exists in the UK, workers pensions will continue to be attacked. We believe it is a disgrace in an advanced technological society that whilst company directors are able to line their pockets in an unrestrained manner, workers who reach retirement ages face the increasingly bleak prospect of living in poverty.

Increased life expectancy, poor stock market returns, more onerous legislation has meant the cost of Final Salary has spiralled and with many schemes closing to new members less money is being paid into funds. Many employers have already taken a swift knee jerk reaction to close their final salary pension schemes based on cost and funding issues - but they have also made the decision to close their schemes based on the concerns of the future costs risk to their businesses.

The Government introduction of the PPF is welcome, but employees feel that this measure gives them and other British workers no guarantees or protection.

Conference notes that failure of this Labour Government to act on the findings of the Parliamentary Ombudsman. Conference also notes the European Court of Justice Judgement delivered on the 25 January 2007. This Conference therefore calls upon the NEC to seek the support of Amicus Members of Parliament to restore the full pensions lost to our members.

Conference wishes to affirm its continued opposition to the deeply iniquitous policy of operating pensions ‘clawbacks’ which is denying millions of pounds a year which would be paid to pensioners.

Conference recognises that inequality at work means that there is even wider inequality in pensions particularly for black and minority ethnic women who suffer the highest poverty in retirement.

Conference recognises that in some areas of employment flexible and portable pensions are relevant, but that these should also require compulsory contributions from employers and employees.

Conference calls on the NEC to campaign for the right for trade unions to negotiate on pensions as well as a requirement for employers to deliver fair and transparent pay audits around the issues of pensions.

This conference congratulates the NEC for the excellent service to members provided by our Pensions Department and calls upon the General Secretary and National Executive Council to:

1. campaign for the defence and extension of Final Salary Occupational Pensions Schemes for all workers; stop companies terminating final salary schemes and denying new employees access to them;
2. lobby Government for stronger legislation to prevent employers from attacking Occupational Pension Schemes and to introduce compulsion for employers and employees to be part of Final Salary Pensions Schemes, so that every employer and employee must pay into a pension fund;
3. press for legislation which ensures employees and executives are in one scheme where the same conditions apply to all and that members should be able to voluntarily retire at the age of 60 and receive due payment from their pension contributions without being penalised;
4. campaign in order to protect final salary pension scheme and for a change in the law to force employers to introduce or maintain final salary pensions;
5. use its political influence with Government to rescind laws allowing claw back of pensions by employers;
6. consult with the Government with a view to amend legislation that prescribes that pension schemes that are creditors of sponsoring companies should no longer be unsecured creditors, but preferential creditors;
7. have the TUPE regulations extended to include the transfer of pension provisions along with all the other existing terms and conditions;
8. support with all the resources of the union workers in the public and private sector in defending their pension provision that has come under attack in recent months;
9. organise industry briefings to consider the protection of Final Salary Pension Schemes and at the same time target higher funding by employers into Money Purchase Pension Schemes;
10. exploit every opportunity to push the public debate around the pensions crisis and invite the Government to join with us in this campaign and to develop policies which will encourage and reward employers who maintain and extend membership of good quality defined benefit and final salary pension schemes.

Composite 20 - Tupe & Pensions

This Conference is concerned that despite the near unanimous support of composite 19 relating to occupational pensions, which called on the NEC to:

Take the strongest possible steps in our relations with the government to strengthen the TUPE legislation to protect members pensions especially where members transferred under these regulations from all public services are involved in PPP to PFI transfers.

And:-

To lobby the government to introduce legislation to give all employees and workers the right to attain a mirror image pension scheme when TUPE applies.

little or no progress seems to have been made with the government.

In this current climate of uncertainty surrounding pension schemes, the right for all individuals to maintain their contractual right to their existing pension arrangements is crucial. The ever-increasing use of TUPE legislation as a result of competitive tendering, places a growing number of Amicus members at risk with no guarantee of pensionable income continuing.

This Conference therefore calls on the NEC to:

1. Step up its campaign to impress on the Government the urgency of closing this legal loop-hole which allows employers to use TUPE to save millions of pounds to the long term detriment of our members.
2. Campaign for the retention of pensions rights to all employees transferred under the TUPE Regulations 1981.

Composite 22 - State Pensions

This Conference recognises the vital importance of the State Pension to all workers, past and present, as an important and essential element of the overall Pensioners Charter that we fully support. We re-assert our commitment to the role that the state has in providing pensions, both basic and earnings related as the only way to guarantee that all workers receive an adequate pension in retirement.

This Conference welcomes several of the recommendations made in the Turner report on Pensions, especially the call for a reduction in means testing, an increase in the basic state pension and the re-establishment of the link between payouts and earnings. Conference does not accept all of the recommendations particularly that the state retirement age might rise.

This Conference instructs the National Executive Council to apply pressure on the government to restore the link between average earnings and the state retirement pension with full revalorisation to negate the differential that has been produced by the historic backing of the link. This move should be made in the clear knowledge that conference believes that pensions are deferred earnings.

Furthermore, any increase in the state retirement age is believed to be an attack on workers rights that they have worked and paid in for during their working lives. Conference is mindful that the current pension provisions are discriminatory against women who are forced to take career breaks

We ask this Conference to urge the government to ensure that everyone on retirement should have an adequate pension to maintain and enjoy a decent standard of living, by raising the tax threshold limits to the average age and without means testing. Britain's pensioners are the poorest in Europe because our state pension is only £82 per week. German single pensioners receive the equivalent of £267.15 a week, French pensioners £205.50 a week and Italian single pensioners £341.13 a week. Therefore we feel a single pension of £250 a week for British pensioners - the European average with a relevant increase for couples is justified.

In view of the continuing number of our members in the manufacturing industry who are being denied a company pension as a result of closures and redundancies, it is important that they have the safeguard of a decent state pension. Only by ensuring a significant increase in the basic state pension and restoring the link with earnings will British pensioners be lifted out of poverty and face the secure future enjoyed by many other European pensioners.

The central role of the state in pension provision and benchmarking adequate pension provision would consolidate the Trade Unions position of compulsory contributions with some degree of confidence for our members and also act as guarantor for the best remaining final salary schemes in the public and private sectors.

This Conference calls upon the NEC to campaign within the TUC and Labour Party to bring about improvements to the state pension and:

1. to campaign against the current Government's policy of reducing state provision at a time when private provision is collapsing and destroying the retirement plans of thousands of our members;
2. call for an immediate increase in basic state pensions and restoration of the link between pension increases with the increases in average earnings.

3. insist that you should have the legal right to retire at 65 on a fully funded state pension linked to wages.
4. to campaign to maintain the current state retirement issues keeping pensions values the same in real terms.
5. to campaign for parity on State Pensions with the rest of Europe.
6. call for the strengthening of the state second pension (S2P) to provide for at least 25% of 're-valued average earnings'
7. to campaign with Government to enact the Turner recommendations that give pension entitlement based on residence rather than contributions.

Composite 23 - Women and Pensions

Conference is mindful that current pension provisions are discriminatory against women who are forced to take career breaks. Two thirds of pensioners are women yet their income in retirement is only 57 per cent of men's, with only just 16 per cent of women receiving the full state pension.

This conference notes that women often do not qualify for the basic state pension, due to breaks in employment and low pay. State pensions should not be based solely on National Insurance contributions, taking into account that everyone should be entitled to a minimum level of state support post retirement regardless of their prior level of contribution.

It is a valid supposition that women's pensions are lower than men's due to time spent raising a family or other caring duties, therefore not paying into a pension fund.

This conference recognises that there are many thousands of men and women who have been unable to accrue enough contributions towards their state retirement pension or make provisions for a private pension because they had to give up work to act as a carer for a family member. After retirement they are forced to beg for state hand-outs to enable them to live a meagre existence.

This conference calls for women's pension provision to be addressed as a matter of priority and for:

- i. The NEC to implement a research project into the area of women's pensions. The outcome of this research project will be to prove this supposition and implement a campaign as necessary to eliminate discrimination. This research project and campaign implementation should take no more than 9 months to report back to the membership;
- ii. A decent, universal, basic State pension, not based solely on national insurance contributions, with annual increases in line with average earnings;
- iii. The introduction of a carers' pension fund, where all carers are credited for the time spent caring for relatives and that those who have not been in paid work for caring reasons should have the same state pension rights as those who have been in paid work;
- iv. The union to campaign to enact the Turner recommendations that gave pension entitlements based on residence rather than contributions;

Composite 24 - Housing

This conference questions the Government's and Welsh Assembly's intention to transfer housing stock away from the control of local councils. In effect privatisation by stealth and accountability to the citizens who elect them.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to campaign for the furtherance of our belief that everyone should be entitled to a decent home even those currently deemed intentionally homeless. The councillors and MPs who are members of this Union should be persuaded to ensure that the housing supply meets demands, that local authorities as well as Government work toward guaranteeing an adequate supply of affordable rental and purchasable housing to be available for all. When and where possible, assistance should be provided for members of this Union as well as other specialist workers to obtain housing within a reasonable distance of their work place. To this end we reaffirm our support for the Defend Council Housing Campaign and for the fourth option for council house funding.

Conference believes that the National Executive Committee should agree, support and actively facilitate the lobby of Parliament and the Government to bring about new legislation that will see the end of revenue being deducted from Local Authorities Housing Revenue Accounts by Government. This form of Government revenue is an unfair de facto tax on local authority tenants and should cease. At a time when housing and homes are becoming a critical issue throughout the country, housing account revenue should be used to refurbish, develop and maintain local authority homes to a decent standard and not to subsidise the national budget.

Composite 25 - Energy Policy

This Conference fully supports our Unions' established policy on the need for a balanced energy programme despite past ambivalence from Government, civil servants and ministers. Recent events have underlined the wisdom of our arguments and we fully support the submissions to the 2006 Energy Review supplemented by conferences in Scotland and Wales. We urge the NEC to do all it can to ensure that MPs and other opinion formers are fully supportive of our proposals.

Conference calls upon the Executive to do all within its power to lobby the UK Government to ensure that Fuel Poverty is brought to the top of the agenda. Unless the long term energy needs of the UK are determined and catered for, fuel poverty is inevitable, not just for domestic consumers, but more importantly for our union Amicus, for heavy users such as the manufacturing, metals, chemicals, food and drink and paper industries.

Without a balanced, diverse and secure electricity supply, prices will rise and investment in these sectors will go to the other countries and devastate these industries in the UK.

Conference therefore views with concern the lack of a balanced energy policy. The country is now suffering the consequences of the dash for gas and the implications of higher gas prices and risk to the manufacturing sector.

Conference notes that the increasing dependence on gas in power generation raises issues concerning the security of the UK's electricity system.

This Conference, therefore seeks the Executive Council's on-going and active support for our unions established policy in securing a balanced environmentally friendly Amicus Energy Policy, which includes the active pursuance of renewable energy sources and clean coal within this generation portfolio. Wind, wave, hydro and solar generation should be an integral part of a balanced energy policy.

Conference notes that:

1. the increasing dependence on gas in power generation raises issues concerning the security of supply of the UK's electricity system.
2. the UK Nuclear Industry is an important sector in UK Manufacturing and in UK Science and Technology. Nuclear Energy currently supplies a quarter of the UK's electricity without producing greenhouse gases.
3. nuclear energy helps the UK to achieve both Energy Diversity and Security of supply and it supplies electricity competitively, safely and reliably.
4. without Nuclear Energy the UK would find it very difficult to meet its targets to get greenhouse emissions as part of the Kyoto agreement. Renewables do have an important role to play in providing clean electricity and combating climate change. However Renewables cannot, in the foreseeable future, replace Nuclear as the largest source of low carbon emitting energy.
5. If we do not resolve the issue and find solutions to deal with the nuclear issue then we will not be in the position where we have the skills, knowledge or time to be able to resolve the problems of the future.

Conference calls on the NEC to step up its campaign and lobbying to:

- A. ensure that the Government develops a clear strategy on Nuclear, looking at solutions for dealing with Nuclear Waste;
- B. maximise the number of British jobs associated with the provision of new and nuclear capacity.

- C. commission the building of a new fleet of nuclear power stations, the first of which should be built at the Hunterson peninsula in North Ayrshire Scotland.
- D. as part of a balanced energy policy the utilisation and installation of clean coal technology in the new and existing fossil fuel generating stations.
- E. improve both workplace and home energy conservation schemes, including for instance solar panels whenever possible.
- F. reduce reliance on non renewable energy sources for transport, and campaign for light rail, tram and cycle lanes.
- G. provide training for, and encourage reps to negotiate environmental polices at work (eg ISO 14001)

Conference also calls for Amicus itself to strive for carbon neutrality, for instance by converting cars to use alternative fuels, and improve on recycling rates.

Composite 27 - Women and Domestic Violence

This conference deplores the fact that Violence Against Women within the UK and around the world has become a regular way of life and death.

With domestic violence increasing in the UK, the problem needs to be tackled.

Conference reaffirms its opposition to

1. all forms of violence against women and calls upon the Amicus NEC to actively support the Violence Against Women motions passed at both the Women's TUC and North West Regional TUC. Furthermore, Conference requests that the Amicus Women's Committee write to all Amicus MPs to make them aware of their support for these motions. We also request that the Women's Committee is provided with a summary of policies around Violence Against Women in the major institutions where Amicus is represented, this information to be provided by the relevant industry sectors.
2. we should instigate a campaign to raise the profile of the issue of domestic violence and an article should be run in the magazine to enlighten people of this problem and give direction as to where help can be sought.

Composite 28 - Labour Party

This conference re-affirms the historic link between this union and the Labour Party and thanks those of our Members of Parliament who have been active in supporting our members and expressing their concerns.

The Trade Unions formed the Labour Party and Conference calls upon the Labour Government to take account of Labour Party Policy regarding funding from the Trade Unions.

This conference distances itself from comments from cabinet ministers that the Trade Union movement choose to affiliate to the Labour Party.

We call upon all of our members of Parliament to actively support Amicus members in their time of need and to express their concerns with anyone, company, group or organisation, in the public or private sector that has influence on the issue in question.

Composite 29 - Merger

This conference supports the merger with the TGWU and the commitment that lay member democracy will be the foundation of the new union, with the members themselves having the decisive say on all matters that affect them. As a single union we will be able to focus on delivering better pay and conditions for our members and have organising strength to reach out to new trade union members in our existing workplaces, as well as in new industries.

This conference further supports the announcement that Amicus has the signed agreements with three international trade unions IG Metal, American Machinist Union and the United Steel Workers Union of America laying the foundation for a global union. With the aim of creating a powerful single union that can transcend borders to challenge the global forces of capital.

Conference calls upon the NEC to ensure that in any merger talks, the interests of all workers, are fully respected and preserved in relation to their identity and bargaining rights.

Motions

10. Manufacturing Companies

This conference calls on our union to lobby Government, local MPs and elected representatives to remove the de-rating legislation on manufacturing companies which could result in the loss of many thousands of jobs.

12. Rosyth Ferry

This Conference notes with deep concern the reduction in sailings from daily to three per week on the Rosyth to Zeebrugge Ferry.

This not only has serious potential damage to Scotland tourism industry, but more importantly greatly damages Scotland's manufacturing/exporting industry.

Manufacturing needs this direct route to Europe to both import raw materials and export finished products. The extra cost and expense of transporting goods the length of the country by road (twice), and the extra environmental damage this causes puts at risk many manufacturing jobs.

Therefore, conference calls on the NEC to campaign for a return to daily sailings.

38. Employment Protection

This Conference notes with concern the prospect of further consolidation of the steel industry. We urge the Union to lobby Government to ensure that the employment prospects and rights of all UK workers are fully protected where their industries are subject to global merger/acquisition in whatever sector.

42. Agency & Temporary Workers Directive

This conference expresses its deep concern at the continuing delay by the UK Government in implementing the Agency and Temporary Workers Directive and their on-going attempts to water down the EU Directive.

There has been a continuing growth in the use of Agency and Temporary workers throughout many of the sectors covered by Amicus, including manufacturing, services, finance, media, IT etc

Conference is aware that many agency and temporary workers suffer exploitation as well as receiving rates of pay and working conditions below those of permanent employees and are being used in some companies as a "replacement workforce". In some instances, overseas workers are being employed in UK companies by Agencies at rates of pay much lower than UK workers.

Therefore, Conference calls upon the NEC to continue to campaign for the full implementation of the EU Agency and Temporary Workers Directive; to campaign for these workers receive the "rate of pay for the job" as required under the directive; the right of unions to be consulted and agree on the use of agency and temporary workers, the length of their assignment and the numbers to be used.

Conference calls upon the NEC to support a policy of recruitment and organisation of Agency & Temporary workers.

43. Composite Employment

This Conference instructs the National Executive Council to campaign for legislation that will outlaw Composite Employment where it is believed that it is detrimental to directly employ labour.

44. Posted Workers Directive

This Conference calls for Amicus to mount a major regeneration of the campaign for the Government to fully implement all aspects of the Posted Workers Directive.

The current partial implementation of the directive is intolerable, whereby exploitation of migrating workforces undermine both the migrant and static workforces. Conference therefore calls for the government to fully implement the posted workers directive in its entirety thus ensuring a 'level playing field' for all workforces across Europe. Conference welcomes the call made by the TUC General Council, in its statement of June 2006, for the Directive to be strengthened.

47. Flexible Working

This Conference requires that remedy be sought for the situation that exists that under the 'Right to Request' legislation that allows parents of young children to request flexible working patterns to facilitate young children's care; that recognition and allowance be offered to those caring for elderly parents, disabled partners and other needy dependents.

50. Workplace Representation Time

This conference instructs the NEC to commission a review on workplace representatives' time engaged on union duties on a site by site basis. This initially to take place in Health Sector workplaces with a view to obtaining better facilities time for Amicus workplace representatives.

56. Public Sector Jobs

This Conference deplores the continuing privatisation and or destruction of public sector jobs. We call on the NEC in conjunction with other trade unions to campaign nationally to reverse a policy which devalues and undermines those employed in the public sector, while simultaneously pandering to the right wing press and furthering the interests of monopoly organisations and their shareholders.

59. Northern Ireland Water Services

Conference opposes the current UK Government's transfer of the Northern Ireland Water Service into a Government Owned Company (GOCO) and the consequential removal of Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) status for all employees together with the removal of access to the NICS Pension Scheme.

Conference further calls on Amicus to actively campaign against the water charges and any changes to the Terms and Conditions of the employment of all NI Water Service Employees and seek a commitment from the UK Government that full privatisation will not take place.

This position is supported by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, the five main political parties in NI, businesses and the majority of households.

60. Inferior Terms

This Conference whilst accepting the financial benefits Companies profit from, deplors the use of subsidiary Company legislation to introduce inferior wages, terms, conditions and benefits from those of the parent Company and asks for Amicus to organise and support a campaign, lobbying the Government to close this loophole in the legislation.

80. Dawn Raids

This Conference calls for the immediate end to the use of dawn raids and handcuffing in the removal of failed asylum seeker families. It believes that such procedures cause unacceptable fear and distress and are unnecessary and totally inappropriate where children are involved.

Conference calls for such removals to be handled with greater sensitivity, with maximum involvement from officers from social care services.

Conference calls on the NEC to vigorously pursue this issue with Her Majesty's Government and press for a code of conduct to be introduced that will ensure such removals are carried out with a minimum of force, during the normal working day, and giving those being removed adequate time to collect belongings and make contact with friends and neighbours.

84. Ageism

This Conference is mindful that the Labour Government has passed legislation to outlaw ageism. However, this will not take effect until October 2006. We therefore, call upon the NEC to initiate through our Regional Secretaries and the Shop Stewards movement to investigate the insidious effects of Ageism as it affects our membership.

The discrimination of being seen to be too old at 45/50/55 is particularly detrimental to the British Manufacturing Industry - given the absence of adequate apprenticeships and training throughout the British economy that has left a skills deficit.

Unless we can retain the experience of time served indentured craftsmen until their retirement age to pass on their skills to younger workers that skills deficit will not be addressed.

It is ironic that given the recent closure of Rover and other high profile companies that our members in the given age range can only find employment with the likes of Tesco, Sainsbury and Asda. These supermarket chains welcome older workers because they are perceived as being reliable and trustworthy.

Conference condemns the Government for excluding the national minimum wage from the age discrimination regulations.

Conference believes that the exclusion of 16 - 18 year olds from the national minimum wage is leading to wide exploitation of young workers.

Conference believes that all young workers should be in full time education and training, but recognises that due to student poverty, many have to work long hours to support their study.

Conference believes the only exemption for employers from the national minimum wage should be a training rate for employers who provide decent apprenticeships and all other young workers should be entitled to the full national minimum wage.

88. Government Licensing Of Fully Qualified Trades People

This Conference proposes that Amicus MPs are lobbied to introduce legislation so that only fully qualified trades people are government licensed to work in craft industries.

89. Training

This Conference believes that in line with the union's equality policy, regional education should be provided and accessible for all reps in facilities local to their workplace, in order to encourage training for reps who are, for various reasons unable to attend the unions residential training courses.

90. Lifelong Learning Opportunities For All Members

This Conference calls on Amicus to provide learning opportunities for all members through the education programme. Learning should:

- Equip members to fully participate in today's "Skills Economy"
- Provide a recruiting tool for union representatives.

Such opportunities should enable members to progress to their desired qualification level on a timescale acceptable to their needs.

Conference therefore instructs the NEC to review the current system of accreditation of Amicus courses with a view to ensuring that members are provided with fast track accredited pathways in further and higher education which includes the option and means to achieve at university level on both national and regional courses.

91. Learning Representatives

Despite the recognition of Learning Reps in the Rule Book and the good work done by its predecessors, Amicus policy towards lifelong learning remains unclear. There are no clear instructions available about how to contact the Lifelong Learning Office and there seems little attempt to integrate Learning reps into the fabric of the union.

This conference calls on the NEC to:

- Update and improve the website to give clearer help and guidance for Learning Reps
- Clarify union policy regarding the future of the Regional Learning Organisers
- Implement guidelines from the TUC and the Working Lives Research Institute with regard to integrating Learning Reps role into the policy making process.

92. Pay Review Bodies

This Conference calls upon the NEC to campaign to retain and promote the independence of the Pay Review Bodies. Conference notes with concern that the Chancellor sought to instigate a 2% cap for public sector pay awards in 2006 thus compromising the Review Bodies Independence.

93. Higher Education Funding And Salaries

This Conference believes that Higher Education is vital to the future of this country and notes that salaries of all staff in the higher education sector have fallen considerably behind those of comparators in other sectors.

Funding for Higher Education has been an ongoing concern in the sector for many years. Increasing reliance on industry funding and the proposed concentration of funding on RAE grade 5 and 5* departments, to the detriment of lower graded departments, pose a substantial risk to continuity and diversity in Higher Education. Short-term contracts, a narrowing of the teaching spectrum and a loss of positions and skills in under-funded areas are the most prevalent consequences of the market ethos that underlies this trend. This Conference believes that a more responsible and long-term view of education is necessary to secure high standards and good working conditions in the sector for the future.

Conference therefore calls on the Amicus NEC to lobby Government, the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly to:-

- 1) make further significant and sustained increases to the budgets for higher education and research councils and to press universities to restore salaries in the sector to the level of our comparators
- 2) ensure all Higher Education Sector Staff currently involved in the implementation of the framework agreement for the modernisation of pay structures and the harmonisation of conditions are rewarded for their considerable contribution in ensuring implementation of these agreements by August 2006
- 3) promote and implement secure and sustainable funding mechanisms that recognize government's responsibility to preserve the necessary independence, standards and diversity of Higher Education Institutions.

94. Tuition Fees And Commercialisation Of Higher Education

This Conference acknowledges that all the higher education unions were opposed to tuition fees nevertheless recognising that fees are now a fact of life.

Conference deplores the commercialisation of Higher Education that is following the introduction of variable tuition fees. We believe this system and the lifting of the £3000 cap in the 2008 review will cause a further extension of the market in education that will discourage students from poorer families from studying at university.

Conference is opposed to any further increases in real terms of student tuition fees and calls upon the Government to provide a third of tuition fees to reverse a 30% decline in higher education staff salaries.

We believe Amicus should join Coalition 2010, and fully participate in the alliance of other appropriate organisations campaigning for a well-funded and well resourced education sector that is accessible to all.

95. Integrated Education

Integrated Education in the North of Ireland has come a long way during the past 25 years. Today there are 58 schools throughout the North of Ireland educating almost 18,000 pupils.

Integrated Schools are co-educational and all-ability and aim to bring up children to live as adults in a pluralist society, recognising what they hold in common as well as what separates them, and accepting both. They are committed to maintain a balanced enrolment of the two major traditions in pupils, staff and governors and are open to children of all faiths and none.

This Conference supports the Integrated Education Fund statement:

“The campaign wants to make it a basic human right that an integrated school place is available to every parent, every child, who chooses this system of education.

Conference recognises the importance of the Integrated Education Sector as a significant social development within the North of Ireland (this development has been emphasised given the sharp political division and violence that has characterised the region). Conference supports the ongoing campaigns from parent-led groups and official bodies for greater access to Integrated Schools which challenge sectarianism and promote a culture of tolerance.

102. Domestic Health And Safety

This Conference calls on the NEC to urge the Government to re-think the legislation on electrical provisions which cover domestic installation and maintenance.

New legislation requires electricians to attain Part P under the Building Regulations. This legislation has now excluded tens of thousands of electricians from certifying their work on all but the most basic of household electrical installations such as replacing like for like items and excludes all work in bathrooms and kitchens. This even excludes industrial electricians who have been through an indentured apprenticeship; passed the 16th Edition I.E.E. Regs course; and are regularly trained in the up to date requirements of the 1989 Electricity at Work Act.

103. Asbestos Legislation

This conference requests that the Amicus National Executive Committee actively explores and pursues all avenues to seek the reversing of the two recent legal decisions concerning asbestos disease claims, namely the Court of Appeal decision on Pleural Plaques, Rothwell Vs Chemical & Insulating Co Ltd; and the House of Lords decision on Mesothelioma claims in Barker Vs Corus (UK) and Murray Vs British Shipbuilders (2006) UKHL 20.

We also ask that our Amicus MPs support any action taken in the House of Commons to overturn these two judgements.

109. Abortion

This conference notes that the right of women to have control over their own bodies is a fundamental right and that a woman's right to choose, through access to safe, legal abortion is necessary for this right to exist in a meaningful way. Conference therefore reaffirms its support for a woman's right to choose.

Conference notes with concern the continuing serious attempts by the anti-choice lobby in Britain to gain support for restrictions on women's abortion rights by encouraging a focus on late abortion in order to confuse public and political opinion. Conference further notes with concern the attacks on the right to choose in the US from the fundamentalist right.

Conference notes that the vast majority of abortions take place in the early stages but that a very small proportion of women need later terminations and those who do have compelling reasons for needing them - often facing extremely difficult and unusual circumstances such as late diagnosis of problems or barriers to access. Conference is concerned at tabloid misinformation, fuelled by anti-abortionists, wrongly suggesting scientific breakthroughs that give cause for a reduction in legal time limit.

Conferences agrees to support laws on abortion, such as the 1967 Act in the face of any attempts to restrict that law and women's right to access safe, legal abortion and we welcome announcements by the BMA and other professional medical bodies to support legal protection for women under this act. We oppose any moves to reduce the time limit and condemn the increased use of aggressive and intimidator anti-choice lobbying in Britain.

Conference instructs the Amicus National Women's Committee to work with Abortion Rights to vigorously:

Defend the current legal upper time limit for abortion at 24 weeks
Ensure that workers in sexual health and abortion services, many of whom are trade union members are free to carry out their work without fear of abuse or attack.

Make earlier access to abortion easier for women.

112. Attendance And Sickness In The Workplace

In the light of many companies looking to tighten up on attendance and sickness in the workplace this Conference calls upon the union to produce a guide for union representatives on this issue. Such a guide should cover issues such as:

- Can someone who is ill be dismissed
- How to handle disciplinary and dismissals connected with attendance and capability
- The role of company occupation health departments
- The status of GP sick notes.
- How to handle situations where members have conflicting medical advice, GP vs. Occupational Health, particularly stress related issues.

Producing a single guide that covered those difficult issues would be seen as a positive and practical way of providing representatives with the information to deal with these situations.

From this we ask Conference to support this motion and look forward to receiving a copy of this guide in the near future.

119. Climate Change And The Aerospace Industry

This Conference welcomes the conclusions of the Stern Review on The Economics of Climate Change; that transition to a low-carbon economy will bring challenges for competitiveness but also opportunities for growth.

This Conference notes that:

1. The aim from some environmental campaigners is that the public should stop flying yet only 2% of global CO₂ emissions and 3% of UK CO₂ emissions are attributable to air traffic;
2. The aerospace industry has targets to reduce fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions by 50% and NOx emissions in new engines by 80% by 2020;
3. The aerospace industry has continuously improved fuel efficiency and reduced engine emissions over the last 40 years;
4. The aircraft and aerospace industry employs 120,000 people in high skill jobs;

This Conference welcomes the fact that aircraft emissions will be brought into the EU Trading Scheme from 2011 and believes that carbon trading and offsetting are the most effective ways to tackle aircraft emissions.

This Conference believes that the aerospace industry must continue to reduce its carbon footprint and that discouraging people from flying is a direct threat to high-skill, high value jobs in the UK.

This Conference also believes that an effective carbon trading scheme for air travel could channel large sums of money into low-emission energy projects, improving standards of living in the developing world without damaging the environment.

This Conference also believes that the public should take responsibility for their personal CO₂ emissions by off-setting the carbon used in their flights to benefit the developing world.

This Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to:

- Lobby the Amicus Parliamentary Group to support the aerospace and airline industries to improve the fuel efficiency of civil aircraft;
- Encourage members to off-set their CO₂ emissions;
- Investigate providing CO₂ offset for all domestic and international flights whilst on Union business; and
- Campaign on the benefits of the aerospace and airline industries to the UK economy and counter claims that the only way to stop climate change is to stop flying.

124. Public Sector Pension Scheme

This Conference is outraged at the Governments proposal to implement what we view as unacceptable changes to the Public Pension Schemes. Furthermore, we demand equal treatment for all workers within the public sector.

We call on the Amicus NEC to campaign against the erosion of the public pension scheme and to resist all further attempts to reduce the benefits of the scheme and fight to ensure equal and fair treatment for all public sector members.

142. Flexible Retirement

This Conference asks that Amicus work more closely with the employers and government to introduce a more flexible approach to retirement.

143. Winter Fuel Allowance

This conference calls on the Labour Government to increase the winter fuel payment from £200 to £600. This payment will be made to all households with a resident of 60 years old or over. This conference will argue that the present payment has remained static since its introduction.

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Conference deplores the 30% surge in gas and electricity prices over the past 12 months and the disproportionate impact on living costs for Pensioners. Conference calls on our Union to lobby for an annual increase in line with higher energy costs.

144. Disability Living Allowance

This Conference welcomes the launch by RNIB on August 10th 2006 of the "Taken for a Ride" report which highlights the Governments failure to make the higher rate of DLA mobility component available to blind people.

This Conference also notes the Governments continued failure to make DLA available to those making an initial claim after reaching the age of 65. This is despite the Age Discrimination Act which came into force on 1st October 2006 which allows people to work beyond normal retirement age. The Government is also trying to resolve the pension crisis by making you work till you drop.

Conference calls on the National Disability Committee to campaign for:-

1. The extension of the higher rate mobility component of DLA to blind people.
2. Remove the age discrimination in DLA so that those over 65 can make initial claims for DLA.

145. Access To Work

This conference expresses serious concern in the changes being made to the allocation of “access to work” monies. Currently disabled people, if they meet the criteria, can claim funds from the DSS to provide the cost of reasonable adjustments.

Disabled people who are either in or seeking employment within the public sector will no longer be able to apply for this funding.

An employer will have to fund any adjustments from existing budgets.

This will have a negative impact on the accessibility of employment for disabled people.

This conference asks Amicus to campaign for this essential fund to be made available to all disabled people regardless of their employer.

146. Information and Consultation

This Conference recognises that the Information & Consultation Directive is becoming established within UK employment law.

Although a number of I & C agreements and model agreements are now established, having been agreed with Amicus, Conference recognises that a number of companies have established I & C structures that go against the spirit of the Directive; have been designed to by-pass unions and union reps in the workplace or provide the very minimum required under the law through “pre-existing” agreements.

During 2007 more companies and undertakings will be required to set up I & C structures and by 2008 all companies/undertakings with more than 50 employees will be required to set up I & C structures.

Therefore in order for proper I & C structures to be agreed that will fully benefit Amicus members, this Conference calls upon the NEC to:

- Set up specialist I & C training courses for lay reps
- Briefings for lay reps at regional level on the requirements of the I & C Directive
- Develop I & C agreements with groups of companies and employers where appropriate, as well as preparing a model agreement to be used by reps and officials with employers.
- Produce briefing material on the I & C Directive for members and activists in Amicus magazines and on the Amicus website.
- In addition to training members, campaign within the Labour Party and trade union movement to extend the Information and Consultation Directive rights.

150. Public Lavatories

This Conference affirms that free, clean, accessible and efficient public toilets are essential for a civilised society. Conference deplores the prohibitive cost resulting from creeping privatisation; this discourages use and leads to closure of facilities. It is particularly discriminatory towards women and children.

Conference also notes that there is no statutory obligation on Local Authorities to provide public lavatories, and that the London Assembly has expressed its concern at the lack of equal access. We therefore call upon Amicus to campaign, together with interested authorities both in London and nationally, for the long overdue introduction of legislation to address this aspect of public health.

151. Rural Areas

This Conference is concerned that stress is a growing problem for people working in rural areas, who are finding it difficult to cope with incomes which are declining in real terms.

Affordable housing and social exclusion are issues which are growing, not diminishing, in rural areas, and the current government needs to recognise this, and serve the whole population, not just its heartland areas.

Conference therefore instructs the NEC: to campaign on behalf of our members working in rural areas.

- To ensure that the issues are covered in union publications.
- To ensure that the Amicus parliamentary group is made aware of this policy.

162. Civil Liberties

Part 1 of the Terrorism Act (2000) defines terrorism so broadly as to include the threat of serious damage to property in any country designed to influence the government of any country. This definition would even include non-violent direct action as part of resistance to repressive dictatorial regimes. Conference believes that the 'war on terror' is leading to increasing attacks on our civil liberties, including our democratic right to protest or express our views. Conference resolves that Amicus will campaign in defence of our civil liberties, including:-

- a) the right to trial by jury
- b) the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty
- c) the right to have access to any evidence against you in any legal proceedings
- d) the freedom from detention without trial
- e) the right to peacefully protest
- f) the freedom to express support for resistance to oppressive regimes.
- g) freedom from having to carry or present an ID card to go about day to day activities.
- h) freedom from extradition without a UK court testing the evidence, particularly to a country such as the USA which practices torture.

163. Charter LGBT Rights 2006

The Labour government has enacted several very welcome and positive reforms for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people (LGBTs) such as equalising the age of consent and adoption rights for same-sex couples. But there is a need for more progressive changes from the government to tackle homophobic and transphobic discrimination in key policy areas:

Therefore Amicus resolves to adopt the following points to campaign upon throughout the labour movement for action to be taken by the government and others on every issue in order to meet full equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans people.

1. To campaign to amend the Charities Act to make equal opportunities for everyone a condition of charitable status.
2. To campaign to amend the Equality Act to ensure that all public bodies have a legal duty
 - combat discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
 - actively tackle homophobic and transphobic prejudice, harassment and violence.
 - include a general and specific duty to promote equality and bring in positive action in these areas.

3. To eradicate the two-tiered system of partnership law and marriage in order that same sex and heterosexual people can have a choice of both and amend legislation to enable real choices for trans persons and not force them to annul existing arrangements where both partners want them to continue, Or to amend the marriage Act such that it applies to same sex relationships with a clause conferring automatic regulation of civil partnerships and removing the requirement for trans people to dissolve marriage to gain a Gender Recognition Certificate.
4. To campaign for a review of legislation and Home Office practice in respect of asylum for LGBT people, to ensure that they are treated fairly in accordance with their specific situation, when they seek leave to remain, and to uphold the principle that they will not be returned to countries where they are likely to be tortured as a result of their sexuality or gender identify.
5. To campaign to bring about legislation which deals with homophobic and transphobic crimes and hate crimes, including laws against incitement to homophobic and transphobic hatred.
6. To campaign to remove the exemption of religions institutions from the legislation, which currently allows discrimination against LGBT employees in any workplace and related workplace activities.
7. To campaign for appropriate sex education and sexual health advice lessons that address the specific needs of young lesbians, gay, bisexual and Trans people.
8. To congratulate the Government and Trade Union movement for progressing the regulations provided for in the Equality Act to provide protection from discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services on the grounds of sexual orientation and undertaking to introduce legislation to provide the same protection for trans people as required by the European Directive.”
9. To campaign homophobia and transphobia in the Education and to promote an understanding and acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.
10. To campaign for NHS fertility treatment for lesbian women and oppose any legislative or government policy proposals that seek to deny LGBT peoples right to a self determined family
11. To campaign for appropriate monitoring processes to be enacted in all public authorities to ensure they are delivering an equalities agenda which also includes LGBT people.
12. To campaign for legislative change to retrospectively remove convictions for offences which were only applied to LGB people and have since been replaced.
13. To extend Equality Legislation for LGBT people to the private sector.

164. Partnership Rights

This Conference notes the recent Government legislation in the UK and Northern Ireland covering the rights of same sex couples. Conference further notes that the said rights, when the same sex couples enter into Civil Partnership (gay marriages), are equal to those rights applied to married couples. Those rights include:-

- Recognition for inheritance and succession of property
- Employment and pension benefits
- Social security and tax provisions
- Exemption from testifying in court against your partner
- Protection from domestic violence
- Recognition as the nearest relative
- A duty to provide maintenance for your partner and any children

Conference calls upon the General Secretary and the NEC to campaign within the labour movement for the same rights to be extended to the Republic of Ireland.

165. The BNP

This Conference recognises that the BNP is a growing movement and if allowed to proliferate it will de-stabilise the multi-cultural nation and cultural cohesion.

If Government decides to implement the state funding of political parties the BNP will also qualify for such state funding and be allowed to publicise their racist, homophobic and Islamophobic messages.

Additionally, this Conference views with alarm and concern the election of 11 BNP councillors in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

This Conference requests that the NEC:

- (i) calls upon this government to marginalise the BNP and thus exclude it from the political process.
- (ii) take such steps as are necessary in opposing the rise of the BNP and support local campaigns to counter far right activities both in London and across the country.
- (ii) instructs our Labour Party NEC member to lobby and campaign within the Labour Party on the matter of counteracting the rise of the far right in the UK.

168. Working In Unity

This Conference requests the National Sector Committee to commence a campaign with an aim that all Labour groups and Labour Councillors must adopt a strategy of working in unity in line with Trade Union principles alongside their colleagues who are Recognised Trade Unions in each Local Authority. This spirit of unity should cross through into all areas of negotiation, consultations and planning.

For far too long, local labour groupings, local Constituency Labour Parties and Labour councillors have taken little or no cognisance of the views of recognised Trade Unions into account when formulating various policies at each corporate level. The Labour party, its various Labour Constituencies and Councillors must remember that we - as Trade Unionists - represent both National and Local tax payers. We as Trade Unionists can (and often have) mobilised that membership and also the families of our membership to make those views heard if necessary. It may also be wise to remember that just as Big Business influences the Conservative party in terms of donations, The Labour Party nationally and locally is greatly funded by Trade Unions. However, unlike Big Business, we as Trade Unions act on behalf of our members employed within each Authority - members who form a great part of the local electorate alongside their families.

Therefore, this conference instructs our Local Authority National Committee to conduct a vigorous campaign through the Unions Political structures to implement a policy of working in unity between Trade Unions and Labour Councillors at each Local Authority level.

169. Devolved Administrations

This Conference applauds the development of devolved administrations by the establishment of a parliament and assemblies for the nations of the United Kingdom.

Conference believes it is important that Amicus works to ensure that members fully benefit both politically and industrially as a consequence of the devolved administrations and calls upon the National Executive Council to devise and implement a plan to this end.

The National Executive Council, in producing such a plan should have regard to any necessary structures and changes to rule that may be required to allow the lay membership to make policy on devolved matters as close to the devolved administrations as possible.

The National Executive Council should ensure that their plan on devolved administrations fully informs merger talks with other Unions and any proposed new joint rule book.

170. Export Credit Guarantee Department (Ecgd) - Extension Of Support

Export orders are being lost to the UK because companies are unable to raise the bonds and guarantees that have become a standard requirement when dealing with customers in many countries. Small and medium sized enterprises are having to turn away business that requires bonding - knowing that such facilities are either unavailable from the commercial markets or that they will detract significantly from their day to day banking lines. The governments in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Norway, Spain, Sweden and USA provide this type of bond support.

There is an urgent need for HM Government to provide some form of bond support to such companies, and a risk sharing scheme between HMG and the commercial banks that would provide vital additional capacity. This could be provided by extending the role of the ECGD to provide a bond support facility will both enable exporters, large and small, to bid for and win more orders and if operated by ECGD, help the Trading Fund meet its financial goals.

This conference calls upon the NEC to raise the issue with the Political Unit to request the Parliamentary group to lobby for this change in the role of the ECGD and provide bond supporting for exporting work.

171. Ethical Trading Initiative

This Conference believes Amicus exists to improve the working conditions of its members. The Ethical Trading initiative exists to identify & promote good practice in the implementation of codes of labour pro-actively amongst its member companies.

This Conference instructs every Amicus workplace representative to raise awareness of the Ethical Trading Initiative with their employers and to encourage them to apply for membership.

Full details including the application process and membership fees are to be found on web site www.ethicaltrade.org .

172. Cuba

This Conference notes it is now 40 years since independence of Cuba was announced.

We are dismayed that the blockade and embargo of Cuba by the United States of America still exists.

This isolation by the United States and its allies should now cease allowing Cuba to trade freely with the whole world.

This Conference instructs the NEC to:

- (1) publicise this issue to our membership
- (2) inform the Amicus Parliamentary Group of our policy and seek their active support in influencing government policy against the embargo.

173. Venezuela

This Conference notes that the government of Hugo Chavez since its was first elected in 1998 has brought health care to the sick, education to the illiterate, housed the homeless and redistributed millions of acres of land. The constitution guarantees the public ownership of the oil industry and the distribution of wealth to all citizens.

This conference congratulates the Hands off Venezuela Campaign for its role in drawing to the attention of the British Labour movement the continuing revolution being carried out by the Venezuelan people.

The Venezuelan government's popularity has been proven time and time again culminating in the ringing endorsement of the referendum of 2004 in which the Chavez government gained 60% of the popular vote.

The Venezuelan revolution is in danger and has been threatened on more than one occasion. A far right coup was attempted in 2002 only to be defeated by the people. This was followed by a bosses lockout. Again the workers came to the rescue and ran the factories without the bosses, ensuring the economy did not collapse.

Shamefully the United States has opposed the Chavez government since its election and has supported every undemocratic attempt to overthrow it. The real motives of the Bush regime are exposed by the call from Pat Robertson to assassinate Chavez.

International solidarity with the people of Venezuela is vital if the revolution is to survive. Amicus pledges,

- To promote links with Venezuelan National Union of Workers (the UNT the Venezuelan equivalent of the TUC)
- To affiliate to the Hands of Venezuela Campaign
- To circulate all branches and shop stewards with campaign material.

174. Support Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution

This Conference congratulates and supports the colossal advances being made by the Venezuelan Revolution under President Hugo Chavez in carrying out policies, which benefit working people, the poor and the landless.

Conference recognises that the nine electoral victories won by Hugo Chavez has since 1998, provides the Revolution with an overwhelming popular mandate. This reflects the overwhelming support for the social programmes carried out by the government in relation to education, literacy, healthcare, land reform and subsidised food.

Conference views with alarm the bellicose threats from the US Administration and its imperialist puppets, including the Venezuelan oligarchy and the Colombian Government, which pose a real threat to the life of Chavez as well as the Revolution itself. Conference therefore opposes all outside interference in the affairs of Venezuela.

Conference expresses its support for the National Union of Workers (UNT) as the legitimate voice of the organised working class and calls upon our union to build links with its Venezuelan counterpart. Furthermore, Conference calls upon the NEC to support a delegation to Venezuela in order to establish bonds of brotherhood between workers in Britain and Venezuela, as well as inviting trade unionists from Venezuela to Britain.

Furthermore, Conference pledges its support for the initiatives of labour movement backed campaigns that further the above aims.

175. Palestine: The Apartheid Wall and The Occupations

This Conference condemns the Wall which Israel continues to construct in the West Bank, in defiance of international law.

The Wall separates Palestinian farming communities from their olive groves, schools, hospitals and neighbouring communities.

Together with the expanding and illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, the network of checkpoints, and roads on which Palestinians are not allowed to travel, the Wall enforces an apartheid colonial society.

In July 2004 the International Court of Justice deemed the Wall wholly illegal and ruled that it must be dismantled and the victims compensated. It required States, including Britain, to ensure that Israel complied with this judgement. In reality, the British Government has ignored this and accepted the Wall.

Conference believes that trade unionists should uphold the International Court of Justice decision by participating in direct solidarity with Palestinians affected by the Wall.

We therefore instruct the NEC to:

1. Publicise this issue to our membership, through union publications, branches, and Regional Councils
2. Join other national unions (UNISON), TGWU, UCATT, FBU, CWU, PCS, RMT, NUM, NATFHE, TSSA) in affiliating to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.
3. Actively campaign against the Wall by:
 - a. contacting the Palestinian Stop the Wall campaign (www.stophewall.org) and the Popular Committees Against the Wall, in particular in the village of Bil'in where non-violent mass demonstrations are being held weekly.

- b. Investigating how industries organised by our union may be involved in constructing the Wall.
4. Inform the Amicus Parliamentary Group of our policy on this issue and seek their active support in influencing Government policy.

176. People Trafficking

This Conference is concerned by the trafficking of people, especially women, both into and within the European Union. These vulnerable individuals are often exploited and frequently end up as prostitutes. We call upon the NEC and Amicus members of all UK and European Parliaments to campaign vigorously on this issue to:

- Ensure it has a public profile
- Ensure that the various legislative bodies co-operate
- Ensure that trans-national authorities co-operate
- Ensure that the traffickers are brought to swift and appropriate justice
- Ensure that the persecuted are not the prosecuted

177. Social Forums

This conference believes:

1. That we face an ideologically driven attack on all elements of our 'social wage'. Privatisation is part and parcel of the neo-liberal agenda and has already had significant impact on health, education, employment and pensions.
2. That the Bolkestein Services directive is part of the neo-liberal offensive and it potentially undermines all legal protection, in particular countries as it states that services sold abroad would be subject to the rules of the country of origin.
3. That the World Social Forum and the European Social Forum are important gatherings of those opposed to the neo-liberal agenda.
4. For the 'not for profit' sector these gatherings - which attract trade unionists, NGLs, campaigners and charities from across the world - are both opportunities for education and for recruitment and organisation.
5. That the age profile of the Social Forums is one which the trade union movement in this country should actively be seeking.

We resolve:

1. That the NEC gives serious publicity in Amicus publications, both to the neo-liberal offensive, and to the alternatives posed by the World and European Social Forums.
2. That the NEC organises delegations to attend, agitate and organise at forthcoming World and European Social Forums.

181. Campaigns

This conference congratulates our Communications Department for the work done on trying to portray a more realistic image of what Trades Unions stand for and are trying to achieve.

We call upon the NEC to ensure that adequate resources are available for innovative campaigns that will publicise the advantages of collectivism to members and non-members alike.

182. Union Affiliations

This Conference calls on Amicus to annually publish a list of organisations to which the Union is affiliated, together with contact details, for members wishing to find out more about these organisations.

183. Amicus Policies

This Conference calls on the NEC to arrange for all Amicus policies to be published in a convenient form, in appropriate sections, updated following each policy conference and issued to branches and all conference delegates.

Units of organisation formulating motions for debate at conference should be encouraged to refer to this document prior to drafting.

184. Trade Union Outsourcing

This Conference calls upon Amicus to ensure that all printing, publishing & direct mail contracts / tenders are placed only with Amicus recognised companies.

- In the best interests of our members, Amicus and Trade Unionism.
- To promote and broaden the same procedure for other contract work undertaken for the Union *ie. electrical and buildings etc* by ensuring that all those invited to tender for any Amicus work are recognised by the appropriate union.
- To send a clear and positive message in supporting both members and recognised firms; and aiding job security.
- That Amicus will promote the Policy and Principle by encouraging fellow trade unions to follow, respect and uphold the principle.

188. Irish Membership

Conference welcomes the moves to end the perceived unequal treatment in relation to training, communication, communication materials and the lack of offers/promotions available to the Irish membership and welcomes the setting up of the Amicus Ireland website.

191. Skills And Training

This Conference welcomes the Government's commitment to improve the skills of the UK workforce and recognises the work now being done to ensure the UK remains a competitive global economy.

Conference is however disappointed that the Leitch Review on skills failed to put in place statutory provision for training within the collective bargaining agenda; a right to paid time off for learning; and the introduction of a training levy on employers where it can be demonstrated that they have failed to train their workforce.

Further, while both the government and Lord Leitch have called for 'employer led' training, this will only be delivered where employers are willing to invest in their workforce with the decision to invest in skills remaining the employers alone.

A fundamental lack of investment by employers, together with a laissez faire attitude by government on skills and training has led to the UK falling behind the skills levels of our economic competitors and this has created a skills gap. Conference therefore believes it is

now necessary for some form of compulsion to be placed on employers to train their workforce.

Conference acknowledges the success of English as a second language (ESOL) courses particularly among migrant workers and would call on the NEC to continue to campaign in order that ESOL provision and funding is continued.

It is essential that the government takes a stronger line on skills by compelling employers to train their workforce; to ensuring they provide funding for training and to give paid time off for training. To do this it is important that the trades unions are able to negotiate with employers on skills and training.

Conference calls on the NEC to:

1. campaign for training to be included within the scope of the collective bargaining agenda;
2. campaign to provide level 3 training as a right for all;
3. campaign through the Political unit to ensure trade union involvement on the board of skills academies;
4. campaign in all sectors and regions for Learning Agreements, which include vocational training, in workplaces where Amicus has recognition;
5. campaign for statutory training levies in those sector where it can be demonstrated that employers have failed to update the skills of their workforce.

Conference believes that in order to develop a strategic approach to skills and learning it is necessary that a strategy for skills and training is produced by Amicus.

Conference therefore instructs the NEC to:

- Develop a strategic policy on skills and training which will support the work of Amicus as a progressive trade union.

Emergency Motion

Land Rover and Jaguar

This Conference calls upon the NEC to lobby the Government to take the necessary action to maintain a manufacturing capacity at Land Rover and Jaguar following the announcement by Ford to dispose of these companies.

Land Rover has a unique position in the market place in providing military vehicles to the armed forces, not only in the UK but also abroad and to lose this manufacturing base would have serious repercussions in the West Midlands, the North West and across the UK in the component suppliers and service industries. It is worthwhile noting that Land Rover continues to make a profit for Ford in the PAG group.

Jaguar has been making luxury cars in the West Midlands since the Second World War and has a world wide reputation for quality and styling. It is also worthwhile noting that they have been the main supplier of vehicles to all UK Governments over the last 40 years, apart from having world wide sales in the private market.

Both companies have through previous investments built up a pool of expertise and sound resource infrastructure. The workforce of these companies and associated suppliers has produced quality goods that should make the UK feel proud. As such we feel the UK Government should do all within its power to maintain Land Rover and Jaguar as viable concerns and not allow Private Equity Companies to purchase them from Ford Motor Company. It is imperative that the Government maintain these companies as going concerns, as they are the last bastion of British owned and built vehicles and to lose them would have severe repercussions on the British economy.

Motions

Remitted/Referred to the NEC

25. Anti Trade Union Laws

This Conference is concerned that after the numerous motions calling for the repeal of the Tories Anti Trade Union Laws that have been before Policy Conference over the years, we are still no closer to being able to act as Trade Unions should in support of worker rights and solidarity action.

Whilst Conference acknowledges that the Labour Party has had its successes in other areas we as Trade Unionists feel betrayed.

Conference believes that the Government, now in its third term of office, should live up to its promises and reason it was founded, to fight for, and protect the rights of working people.

Conference believes we have waited long enough, it is now pay back time, and that actions speak louder than words.

Therefore, Conference calls upon the NEC and the General Secretary to carry out the instructions of Conference, and immediately after Conference inform the Government that unless there is a real and positive move towards a repeal and giving us back our rights, then Amicus would withdraw any further funding of the Party until they meet the aspirations of our membership, their voters.

29. Employment Legislation

This Conference reaffirms its commitment to Composite 7 - Employment Rights, adopted by the 2005 National Policy Conference.

Events at Rolls-Royce and Gate Gourmet which took place shortly after the 2005 Policy Conference clearly demonstrate that UK employment law is inadequate in its ability to protect workers and their representatives from unfair dismissal.

This National Policy Conference demands changes in UK legislation to ensure that when an Employment Tribunal makes awards for Interim Relief and Reinstatement they are immediately enforceable and it will be duty of the Chief Executive Officer (or equivalent) of the company or employer concerned to personally ensure that the award is implemented.

This National Policy Conference also demands suitable penalties including imprisonment to be imposed on the Chief Executive Officer (or equivalent) in the event that he/she fails to carry out this duty.

This National Policy Conference instructs the National Executive Council to vigorously pursue the fulfilment of this policy through all opportunities that are (and become) available.

46. Industrial Relations

This conference calls upon the NEC to engage with key industry groups to seek solutions to the “feast and famine” order book culture, which blights the Rail industry. The implications of continuing the current procurement process could be the loss of the UK’s only Rail manufacturer, permanent damage to, or elimination of the UK supplier base and an immediate economic loss, which is estimated by independent consultants to include the excess of 8,400 jobs within the Railway and supplier base. The government should be urged to undertake a strategic overview of the procurement of new rail vehicles to moderate or remove the peaks and troughs for new rolling stock. We call upon the NEC to campaign against this Command and Control culture.

48. Disability Discrimination Laws

This conference notes the appalling low figures of disabled workers in employment. In particular, it notes that only 27% of blind workers are in paid employment.

While recognising the difficulties in legislating for employers to be forced to employ disabled workers, UK employment law does not actively protect those disabled workers already in employment.

Redundancy continues to undermine job security in the UK and the growth of off shoring only exaggerates such threats. If only because of the need to make reasonable adjustments in an enterprise’s operations, the fear of unemployment for disabled workers is far greater in many circumstances than for able bodied workers.

This conference calls upon the NEC to campaign for an amendment to the DDA that permits employers to place disabled workers on an advantaged/protected basis where pools of employees are being considered for possible redundancy selection.

In addition, the compensation limits for unfair loss of employment for disabled workers are to be raised significantly thus producing another advantage to the disabled worker.

Conference calls on the NEC to campaign to

- extend the public sector duty to promote disability equality to all employers and work places.
- mandatory disability pay audits
- the right to disability leave
- The option for reinstatement and reengagement of people who have won unfair dismissal claims through DDA cases at employment tribunal.
-

51. National Public Holiday

This sector conference calls upon the National Executive Council to lobby the government to declare ‘Trafalgar Day’ in October of each year a National Public Holiday in the UK. to be taken on the nearest Monday to Trafalgar Day.

67. Pay Increase

This Conference expresses its concern at the lack of any real success in recent years in obtaining meaningful pensionable pay rise for the longer serving staff. It considers that as an absolute minimum all our members deserve an annual pensionable cost of living or £250 minimum salary increase.

Such an increase is justified when set against a background of escalating targets imposed on our members by the employers.

This takes the Amicus campaign 'Zero Tolerance for Zero Pay' a stage further as members are increasingly finding their bills escalating, so affecting their quality of life or have any choices as their pay is gradually eroded.

72. Organising For Success

This Conference recognises that members and representatives need greater support in organising in their workplaces and across new organisations, since organising is the only way that Amicus will grow, develop, and succeed; as all research has demonstrated.

We believe that the current Regional Officer and organising resource is too scarce to deliver on this agenda and is therefore preventing growth and development at Amicus - growth that would be acceptable with support. We call on Amicus to ensure every region and sector has a dedicated organiser and for every Regional Officer's time to be freed up to enable them to promote organising which will include finding alternative methods of supporting individuals with their cases.

We also call on Amicus to develop its organising strategies and resources to assist all members and representatives with organising and to embed organising in the culture of the union.

96. WEA

Conference notes with regret the decision of the National Executive Council not to continue the Amicus affiliation to the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) from 2005/2006.

Conference is aware that:

1. Very many of the 800 full and part-time employees of the WEA are members of Amicus.
2. The past affiliation of Amicus to the WEA has enabled Amicus to nominate representatives to the Association Committee of the WEA and the Conference of the WEA.
3. There was no prior consultation or notification to Amicus members employed by the WEA of the proposal not to continue with the affiliation.
4. Of the predecessor union to Amicus, GPMU, MSF and Unifi were long standing affiliates of the WEA.
5. The WEA has a long and unique history of working with individual trade unions (including predecessor unions to Amicus) and the TUC as a main provider of trade union education.
6. Many Amicus representatives and members have benefited from this provision.
7. The WEA also shares a common history, mission and purpose with the trade union movement through its education programmes in promoting the interests of working people and those suffering disadvantage and discrimination.
8. As a charitable organisation the WEA also share with the trade union movement's beliefs in the principles of democracy, equality of treatment and justice and fairness in the conduct of its affairs and in the delivery of its education programmes.

Accordingly, Conference agrees to instruct the NEC to take the following actions:-

1. Ensure that Amicus continues to be affiliated to the WEA.
2. Promote this affiliation through discussions with the WEA on the joint development of trade union and other education programmes for Amicus representatives and members.

3. Report to the next Conference on the development of these programmes.

107. Health

This Conference should take notice of the unfavourable and unhelpful reports and comments made in the media and other sources linking the food, drink and tobacco industries and health issues. While some of these reports might be well meaning, the way they are presented could have a negative effect on employment of Amicus members within this group.

Amicus should become actively involved in promoting health issues that affect the food and drink and tobacco industries in a more balanced light. We as a trade union should be able to defend our members' health and employment equally and should use all our resources to do so.

108. Salt, Sugar and Fat Content

As part of current actions to promote healthier lifestyles, Conference is aware that more information is required which will rebuild consumer faith and confidence in the Food and Drinks Industry.

Conference acknowledges the work the government is doing to improve public health including their commitment to clearer nutritional information for consumers to make informed choices. This includes reducing wherever possible levels of salt, sugar and fat in products; tackling the issue of portion sizes; action on vending machines in schools and working with government on advertising to children.

Conference recognises that the industry is keen to adopt a voluntary approach towards improving public health and welcomes the initiatives being taken by companies within the sector.

Conference is also aware that Food, Drink & and Tobacco is the single largest manufacturing sector in the UK representing almost 14% of the total manufacturing workforce. It is, therefore, vital that in order to protect manufacturing jobs within the UK, that decisions which may impact on the industry must be made with full information and consultation arrangements in order to protect the job security of members within the sector.

Conference therefore calls upon the NEC and the IEC to actively campaign for the UK and Irish Governments to enter into constructive dialogue with the Food, Drink & Tobacco industries and the Trade Unions in order to put a more robust agenda, which will:

- (i) look more closely at controlling salt and sugar levels in manufactured foods; and
- (ii) protect the job security of those employed within the sector

128. TUPE

Conference moves that where union members are involved in a TUPE Transfer and there is a subsequent business restructure/reorganisation that could potentially adversely affect members, an employment lawyer should be appointed by the union to provide legal advice and guidance throughout the re-organisation process.

139. Second Tier Pension

This Conference instructs the Executive to pursue through campaigns and through the Members of Parliament a national second tier Pension Pay financed and run by the Department of Social Security. Both employees and employers should be compelled to pay into it. Given the problems future generations will have in providing for their retirement, it will only be by compulsion that a secure retirement can be achieved. Also provision should be made by the state with contributions from the surplus such a large fund would generate and contributions from the government to allow those who commit work to retire in security and dignity.

180. Inter-Union Relations

This Conference calls upon the NEC of the union to vigorously defend the integrity and actions of the union, its officials and activists across all sectors of the union in the face of any hostility and malicious derogatory actions from other trades unions.

185. Sectoral Branches

This Conference notes that sectoral branches continue to provide support for recruitment and organising of members within Amicus. Conference instructs the NEC to maintain, support and adequately fund sectoral branches going forward into the future.

186. Branch Framework

This Conference recognises the importance of an active branch network. Following the amalgamation with Amicus many of the branches are now in danger of becoming moribund as the office clerical support no longer looks after the admin to advise the members of meetings. With a fragmented membership as is common in many financial institutions, branch secretaries often lack the resources and contact details required to set up a robust system.

Conference therefore recommends that a working party of officials and activists is set up to devise a model for all branches to adopt.

187. Branch Communication

This Conference believes that there is a lack of communication to effectively involve branches in the Union. It therefore calls on the NEC to ensure the following action at Regional and National levels.

Regional Council

A schedule of Regional Council Meetings a copy of Regional Council Standing Orders and a list of Regional Council Delegates to be circulated to all branches in the Region.

Regional Council Agenda and motions to be circulated to all branches.

Minutes of Regional Council to be circulated to all branches in the Region and circulation to be within seven days of being approved.

Regional Conference

A copy of Regional Conference Standing Orders and a list of Regional Conference Delegates to be circulated to all branches in the Region.

Regional Conference Agenda and motions to be circulated to all branches in the Region.

A Report of Regional Conference to be circulated to all branches in the Region and circulation to be within seven days of the Conference being held.

National Policy and Rules Conferences

A copy of Policy and Rules Conference Standing Orders, and a list of Policy and Rules Conference Delegates to be circulated to all branches.
Policy and Rules Conference Agendas along with motions to be circulated to all branches.
Policy and Rules Conference resolutions to be circulated to all branches within twenty weeks of Conferences being held.

National Executive Council

Minutes of the National Executive Council meetings to be published to all branches within seven days of the minutes being approved.

Circulation of Documents

Circulation of Standing Orders, agendas, motions, minutes or lists of delegates to be hard copy or electronic mail in co-operation with Branch

189. Equalities Monitoring

This Conference calls on the NEC to incorporate the monitoring of ALL equalities into the membership records system and application process. The format of this monitoring is to be agreed by all National Equalities Committees. All existing members would be invited to complete a new monitoring form published in the "Amicus magazine". This exercise is to be completed by the end of 2007.

Women, Young and Retired members should currently be identified by their record on the membership system. Disabled, LGBT and Black & Ethnic Minorities would indicate in an appropriate equalities monitoring section in line with EOC guidelines, and existing data associated with these groups would be destroyed.

All members' personal equalities data would be stored confidentially on the union's main membership database and only be accessible to the Head of Equalities and regional Equalities Officers and the individual member through "My Amicus". Statistical information would be more widely available.

Members would be advised that the main purpose of this exercise would be to ensure that all members relating to any particular equality group could be readily contactable. e.g. to send them to Equalities Forums or Educational Events, or some other activity or campaign specifically related to that equality.

190. Community and Non Profit National Sector Committee

This conference believes that representation to the Community and Not for Profit National Sector Committee should be on a Regional basis and therefore calls upon the NEC to arrange elections at National Conference on the basis of at least one delegate per Region.

NEC Report

The Report was Agreed.

Rule Changes adopted by the NEC since the 2005 Policy Conference.

In accordance with Rule 24 clause 5 the NEC had amended three rules since the last conference. These amendments were ratified by the 2007 Policy Conference

1. Self Employed Member

Rule 10

Add new clause 6

“Where the NEC is satisfied that a group of association, which consists largely or entirely of members who are self-employed, acts on behalf of those members in a collective manner, the NEC may permit that group or association to elect one or more of its members to act as representatives within the industrial structure of the sector to which the group or association belongs. These representatives to have the same participation rights as would any other elected workplace representative in a sector in accordance with the rules of Amicus. The NEC to specify the number of delegates that may be elected in each case.”

2. Extension of Term of Office of Current NEC

Rule 25

At the end of the first sentence of Rule 25(6):

Delete “.”

Insert in place of the deletion “, save that the term of the National Executive Council who took office on 1st January 2004 be extended to 1st October 2008.”

In Rule 25(8):

Delete “the calendar year preceding the year in which the successful candidates” and

Insert in place of the deletion “sufficiently in advance of the expiry of their term such that there will be at least 28 calendar days between the election of the incoming National Executive Council and the expiry of term of office of the outgoing National Executive Council”.

As a consequence Rule 25 (6) and Rule 25 (8) now read:

- (6) Members of the National Executive Council shall hold office for concurrent terms of 3 calendar years, save that the term of the National Executive Council who took office on 1st

January 2004 be extended to 1st October 2008. If otherwise suitably qualified, members shall be eligible for re-election.

- (8) All elections of members of the National Executive Council for a new term of office shall be conducted sufficiently in advance of the expiry of their term such that there will be at least 28 calendar days between the election of the incoming National Executive Council and the expiry of term of office of the outgoing National Executive Council. A member shall not be eligible to be a candidate in more than 1 such election. A member who has been nominated for more than 1 seat shall be entitled to choose in which seat to be a candidate.

3. Trustee Company

Rule 31

Add new clause 6 and renumber subsequent clause

“If for any reason and at any time it is expedient in the interests of the Union for an additional trustee to be appointed in respect of any property of the Union held by a Trustee Company then the General Secretary may act on behalf of the Union to appoint as an additional trustee either (at his or her discretion):

- (a) a Deputy General Secretary; or
- (b) any member of the National Executive Council.”