



Volume 30 No. 1 January/February 2002

FIRE FIGHTER

**VICKY
KNIGHT**

**the FBU's
first ever
Executive
Council
member
for women**

**was elected
21st January 2002**

First ever elected member for women

Vicky Knight has been a firefighter with Merseyside Fire and Civil Defence Authority for the last 10 years.

She has actively participated in the progress of women within the Service and particularly the Fire Brigades Union.

From the first FBU Women's school many years ago, Vicky has always ensured that the issue of equality was high on the agenda.

She started off as a Branch Official in Merseyside and moved on to Brigade then Regional Fairness at Work Rep. before progressing to be the Region 9 Women's representative. After the monumental decision by annual Conference to bring the new

Sections into the formal structures of the Union, she was finally elected into the position of National Women's Committee Secretary.

As an active Union member and Official, Vicky has shown not just her commitment to the issue of Equality, but in all issues facing the trade union movement as a whole.

She has not just had an influence on the FBU, but has also made her mark outwith the FBU in the Home Office, DTLR and CACFOA in her own unique manner.

Congratulations go to Vicky on this historic election of the first ever Executive Council Member to represent all women within the Union.

National Officer election result

THE result of the election for National Officer is as follows:

Bro. John McGhee

12,474 (77.6%)

Bro. Ernie Thornton

3,599 (22.4%)

Therefore, Bro. John McGhee was elected as National Officer and has taken over membership services and education references at Head Office.



GENERAL SECRETARY

For a new improved Pay Formula

OVER the last 20 plus years the Fire Service Pay Formula has served us well. Real wages for firefighters have improved steadily in line with those of skilled manual workers in the private sector. But in recent years occupational change has accelerated quite dramatically while firefighters responsibilities have broadened considerably. In the wider economy de-industrialisation and multi-skilling have accelerated while the information technology revolution has created a new demand for qualified engineers, technicians and management staff. And within the Fire Service, quite rightly, more emphasis is now placed on fire prevention and community liaison.

In short, the old formula based on comparisons with industrial manual workers no longer fits the bill. Since all sides recognise the value of the Pay Formula, it is time to discuss some fine-tuning. If the Fire Service is to recruit and retain staff, particularly in periods of relatively full employment in many parts of Britain, then the Pay Formula needs to better reflect modern realities. In essence this means a revamp at the centre of which is the need to agree a new and more relevant group of comparators.

The events of September 11th have reminded the public of the contribution firefighters make to modern societies. It is a high-risk job requiring increasing levels of technical training and application, including abilities to work with other social agencies, the business community and the public at large.

Basic rates for qualified firefighters are now far too low and simply do not adequately measure the contribution our members make to society. So we need both a major upgrading of basic salaries and a revamped Pay Formula to guarantee future progress. The campaign starts now. We know from past experience that advances in pay will not be readily conceded. It will be a struggle, but with your support the Union can secure significant improvements to the salaries, wages and conditions of all firefighters and related staff.

We know that productivity has risen dramatically in recent years with a considerable increase in fire, flood and accident incidents and a fall in the numbers of front line firefighters. It's time all these factors were better reflected in the salaries and career prospects of uniformed staff.

Surely this is at the heart of Government's declared commitments



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Basic rates for qualified firefighters are now far too low and simply do not adequately measure the contribution our members make to society

to improve public services. Any people-centred service relies on its workforce for service delivery. Better motivation, together with improved training and state of the art equipment is the key to improved quality, provided that staffing levels are adequate. Salary and career structures have a key role to play in better motivating staff at all levels.

And a quality service can only be delivered if overall objectives are agreed by employers and providers. In our view, the Fire Service must remain a public service provided free at the time of need, financed directly from the public purse and democratically accountable to elected politicians and the communities they represent. Privatisation, the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contracting out parts of the operation are all challenges to the public service ethos and run the risk of putting private profit before public interest.

A recent study of the new Worcester Royal Infirmary built with PFI money, shows that:

- Costs increased from £49 million to £108 million during the PFI negotiations.
- Beds were reduced by 28%.
- Kidderminster Hospital had to be closed to help pay for the extra costs incurred at Worcester.
- Staff members have been cut – 17% fewer nursing staff.

The political impact was stunning as well. Labour lost the Kidderminster seat at the General Election to an independent candidate on a one-issue ticket – keeping the local hospital open.

So the economic, social and political fall out of PFI is dangerous for the nation's health and threatening to Labour's electoral prospects. Worcester and Kidderminster are not isolated cases. In Edinburgh for

example, the new hospital due to open in 2003 will have 33% less beds and 25% fewer staff than provided by current arrangements.

Of course it's nice to have new hospitals with modern facilities, but if the cost is to be less beds, fewer staff and higher costs, then you have to ask whether the Government is tackling the crisis in the NHS or simply opening it up to private capital so that big business can cream off massive profits. In the FBU we will need to monitor the position carefully now that more PFI schemes are being brought forward within the Fire Service.

Macho management style is still very much with us.

MERSEYSIDE

The recent failed attempt by the Merseyside Fire Authority to downgrade Formby Fire Station is another indication of the problems stemming from the inadequacies of top management. The Authority's evidence to the Adjudication Panel was found to be poorly presented, incomplete and possibly deliberately misleading.

After the major dispute last year I wrote to the Home Office calling for a Government Inquiry, fearing that Merseyside management practices could result in continuing industrial relations problems. The Formby episode further vindicates our approach.

MR BLUNKETT GETS IT WRONG

Britain is a multi-cultural society. This adds to the richness of all our lives and helps to make the United Kingdom more economically dynamic and culturally creative than many of our European partners. It's part of what modern Britain is about.

So what does Home Secretary Blunkett mean when he calls on minority communities to be "more British ..."? Surely if people obey the law and respect the rights of others, what they do in their own time and communities is up to them. And if there is a problem with national identity, then is the Government helping by encouraging single faith schooling at the expense of the Comprehensive principle?

Community disturbances involving young working class men, particularly on a Friday and Saturday night are not new. They arise from poverty, discrimination, unemployment and lack of hope in the future. They have nothing to do with the ability to speak English, or the colour of the skin or religion of the participants.

The Government should concentrate on the regeneration of our inner cities and the development of a first class inclusive education service.

ANDY GILCHRIST
General Secretary



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5th COLUMN

SCHOOL DATES

AS promised the EC education sub committee has now set dates for a number of schools aimed at branch officials or potential branch officials.

I wanted to give as much notice of these dates as possible in order that regions can plan their education commitments for the year, where possible around these.

Venues will be confirmed in the next week or so and notice will then go to all branches. In the meantime, as education officers are not yet on the e-mail system could you pass on these dates.

- 5-7 March Branch Officials School
- 22-24 March Branch Officials School
- 9-11 April Branch Officials School
- 28-30 May Branch Officials School
- 7-9 June Branch Officials School
- 19-21 April Fairness at Work School
- 25-27 June Fairness at Work School
- 29 April-1 May Health and Safety School
- 20-22 September Health and Safety School

Your assistance in this education program is vital, we can supply the school's you must supply the students!

John McGhee



IT'S nice to know that Councillor Fred Walker (head of the GMC Fire Authority), has received an 18.9% increase in his allowances for being a Councillor, taking his Council allowances (excluding expenses), to £30,000 per year. Not bad for a part-time voluntary job where you are only expected to work three days a week.

If he didn't get this, poor old Fred, a Labour Councillor, would have to survive on the income from the travel company he owns in Manchester.

Write to **THE FIFTH COLUMN**, c/o The Editor, The Firefighter, Fire Brigades Union, Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT2 7AE

Welcome for new employment rights

TWO important new employment rights came into force recently, both were welcomed by the TUC.

From October 25 all workers are entitled to paid leave from their first day at work. The rights build up over the course of a year amounting to a minimum of four weeks leave a year.

Previously, workers only became entitled to leave after 13 weeks with the same employer. The right to paid leave stems from the European Union Working Time Directive (1993), which was adopted in the UK as the Working Time Regulations (1998, amended 1999 & 2001). UK regulations originally said that holiday rights only started after 13 weeks with the same employer. However, earlier this year the European Court ruled that rights should start from day one, following a legal challenge brought by BECTU.

The TUC is campaigning for better holiday rights with a three-point package:

- Three more bank holidays a year. UK workers get only eight bank holidays a year compared to 12 in Italy, 13 in Austria and up to 14 in Spain and Portugal.
- The statutory four-week paid holiday should be in addition to bank holidays. At present employers can make employees count bank holiday breaks towards their 4-week holidays.
- Extend the four-week paid holidays to those groups who are currently exempt: transport workers, seafarers, offshore workers and junior doctors.

The other important change was that from 12 October people who suffer discrimination at work because of their gender have new rights at Employment Tribunals. The new rules mean employers will have to prove they have not discriminated. Up to now employees have had to prove discrimination.

TUC MAIL

CO-RESPONDING

Co-responding: cheap excuse for poor ambulance cover

Dave Chappell
Region 14

AGAINST a background of poor and deteriorating ambulance cover, co-responding has been introduced and extended over the last three years in my Brigade, the Devon Fire and Rescue Service (DFRS). This has caused many arguments between those who think we have a moral duty to respond to need, and those who think we should not perform the duties of the ambulance service.

From next April, like all ambulance services nationwide, our local ambulance service (Westcountry Ambulance, covering Somerset, Devon and Cornwall) is supposed to meet improved targets by getting an ambulance paramedic to 75% of 'immediate life-threatening' (category A) calls within eight minutes.

Westcountry currently has one of the worst attendance records in the country, with a current response rate of only 58%.

Anyone that has read the Executive Council's report on Co-responding presented to last year's Conference, will know that 75% was chosen by the Health Service, in place of a proposed higher figure of 85%, solely on the grounds of cost, and co-responding was introduced as a means of helping achieve the target (so if a DFRS co-responder arrives within eight minutes the ambulance service is deemed to have met its response time, even though they are not paramedics).

The FBU argues that this is simply applying a sticking plaster to chronic ambulance underfunding. The truth is even worse and was reported as such in my local paper, the Exeter Express and Echo.

The fact is that Health Service bosses have no intention of meeting even the lower attendance target of 75%, and have refused to give Westcountry Ambulance the additional £2.9 million needed to introduce extra ambulances and paramedics. Their 'spokesman' says that the £2.9 million plan is not "an affordable option", and adds "There are a number of initiatives to help meet the targets, and we are hopeful this will be achieved."

Co-responding is one of the main initiatives, and the fact is

that it is being used as a cheap excuse for LESS ambulance cover!

This is exactly what the FBU said would happen, and proves the point that those (mostly well-intentioned) firefighters who undertake co-responding are assisting Government and Health Services chiefs by giving them the excuse they seek for not providing the funds. This is not in the interests of the public, the ambulance service, or the fire service!

Co-responding has mutated from an essentially noble and proper concern. One of the main factors was the recognised life-saving potential of defibrillators for people suffering heart attacks.

To stand the best chance of success, defibrillation has to be undertaken within about eight minutes, and this is where the attendance target comes in. I have just returned from the USA, and over there defibrillators are everywhere – in shops, restaurants, filling stations, offices etc.

True to form, in Britain there has been little attempt to ensure that defibrillators are provided everywhere, and here again our co-responding is an excuse for inadequate provision.

But if we were simply providing a defibrillator that would not be very controversial. The scheme has shifted fundamentally, so that co-responding crews attend all category A calls, even those they are not possibly trained to assist, such as women with severe obstetric haemorrhage. In practice

the situation may be even worse, as the ambulance service sometimes mobilise co-responders to non life-threatening calls (eg broken legs), if the ambulance is likely to be even further delayed. In the future maybe they won't send an ambulance at all?

If the situation was reversed, so that the fire service was in the crisis the ambulance service currently is, and ambulance crews offered to help us out by responding to our calls and carrying additional firefighting and rescue equipment, what would the reaction of our firefighters be I wonder?

Would we thank them for helping us out, or would we tell them (politely, of course) not to undermine our battle for a proper service with proper funding?

The ambulance service sometimes mobilise co-responders to non life-threatening calls (eg broken legs), if the ambulance is likely to be even further delayed. In the future maybe they won't send an ambulance at all?

WILTSHIRE CONTROL MERGERS CAMPAIGN



We won't let this project destroy our service

Joe Tray
Wiltshire Brigade Secretary

AS MOST members are aware, the "Invest to Save" projects to put Fire Control in with the Police and Ambulance Controls has been long-running, frustrating and seemingly endless.

All three of these projects affect and involve not just Fire Control, but firefighters and the public. As usual we are the people doing all the work as opposed to CFOs and local politicians who are intent on, at best, ignoring our view and at worst, lying to our members.

It is apparent from the feedback, that our members will not stand back and let this Government orientated project destroy what is recognised as one of the most effective and efficient services in the country.

The current situation in Wiltshire!

"INVEST TO SAVE" ??? HOW?

We are two years into the "Invest to Save" joint control room project here in Wiltshire! So far we have a muddy field within the grounds of the Police headquarters, a pretty drawing of a single control building, an overpaid project manager and a commitment of several millions from a Fire Authority that prides itself on being one of the cheapest Brigades in the country?

"INVEST TO SAVE" ??? HOW?

We have had two years of arrogance of a management who tell us that although there is not a joint control in the world that is successful, they will get it right? And money is not a problem when the Health and Safety (oh yes and welfare) of our Fire Control staff are concerned?

"INVEST TO SAVE" ??? HOW?

There has been two, yes two, Best Value reports written on the control (the first was almost honest, but not to the satisfaction of our CFO so had to be re-written??) As for the second report, well who knows, because this public document has been kept a secret from everybody???

"INVEST TO SAVE" ??? HOW?

The present control could be brought up to a high standard for a fraction of the cost of this police driven expensive flawed project.

"INVEST TO SAVE" ??? HOW?

The Fire Control Staff and the firefighters in Wiltshire have listened to CFO Wright's points for the move to a Joint Control Room. They will not get one fire appliance to an incident any quicker, neither will they save any more life so why then go?

"INVEST TO SAVE" ??? HOW?

This is not solely a jobs and conditions issue. Our opposition has been and continues to involve genuine "expert" operational concerns, which have continually been side-stepped, ignored or underplayed by management. CFO Wright, if you can't answer our concerns and accept our "expert" opinion, admit this proposed move is a money orientated political nonsense.

"INVEST TO SAVE" ??? HOW?

Well I will tell you how they intend to save on this investment; that is by the loss of our control staff!!! Well you are wrong CFO Wright if you think the firefighters and fire control staff in Wiltshire will allow you and your partners to lose even one of our control staff. I will give you a tip: start saving now to invest in Green Goddesses!! Because we will not be moved!!!!!!

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

US firefighters' leader joins ceremony to honour fallen members

EVERY 28 April trade unions and workplace health and safety campaigners in over 100 countries focus on the issue of workers' health and safety. Workers' Memorial Day is the day when we "mourn for the dead, fight for the living", drawing attention to the plight of the 335,000 workers worldwide who die every year as a result of their work, but also campaigning to prevent further deaths, injuries and diseases.

To mark the event last year, our General Secretary, Andy Gilchrist, planted a tree in the gardens outside Head Office. At that time, a stone was ordered as a permanent memorial to our members who had been killed on duty.

However, after the events of 11 September, it was felt appropriate to invite the International Association of Firefighters to send a representative to mark the occasion. The IAFF represents firefighters in the US and Canada and we were delighted to receive their General President at Head Office to witness the event.

The stone was dedicated on Tuesday, 8 January 2002, by the General Secretary and in recognising the sacrifice our members had made over the years, Andy also spoke of our Union's shared grief at the loss of so many New York Firefighters who gave their lives during the rescue attempt at the Twin Towers.

The IAFF's General President, Mr Harold Schaitberger, then made a short and moving contribution describing the loss they've suffered and the personal friends he had lost in the tragedy. He also told the gathering that they lose around 100 members every year at incidents and his mission as their incoming President was to look at their procedures and culture to identify the reasons for such a high toll.

A brass plaque was commissioned for the stone with the inscription:



Andy Gilchrist and International Association of Firefighters General President Harold Schaitberger (right) at the unveiling

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

This stone was unveiled by our General Secretary, Brother Andy Gilchrist and is dedicated to the memory of all workers who have died as a result of their work.

In particular, we dedicate this memorial to those members of the Fire Brigades Union who have made the ultimate sacrifice and to Firefighters the world over who have given their lives to protect those we serve.

'We mourn for the dead ... but fight for the living'

January 8th 2002

Dave Patton

HSC Chair concerned by increase in deaths at work

THE Health and Safety Commission's (HSC's) Health and Safety Statistics 2000/01, published in October 2001, show that there were 295 workplace fatalities last year, compared with 220 the previous year. Just over one third of these occurred in the construction industry alone and a further 17 per cent in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector.

The rate of reported major injuries to employees fell by 5.4 per cent over the same period, while the rate of reported over three day injuries was down by 2.4 per cent.

There were also an estimated 7,800 new cases of work-related musculoskeletal disorders and an estimated 6,600 new cases of work-related stress and mental health problems seen by specialist physicians in 2000/01.

A full breakdown of the injury and ill-health statistics can be found on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) web site at www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/hss0001.pdf.

Responding to the new figures, HSC Chair, Bill Callaghan said: "We are greatly concerned by the increase in fatalities in 2000/01 – which goes against the downward trend of recent years – and are taking firm action to encourage sustainable improvement. The sad fact is that nearly all these deaths were preventable and each is a tragedy for the victims, their families and friends. I would like to express my sympathies to all those who have suffered such a deep and personal loss.

"But sympathy is not enough. All employers must look after their employees' health and safety properly, as well as that of members of the public affected by their workplace activities. The HSC will do all it can to help them do so – and encourage action through the HSE and local authorities where they do not.

"Responsibility for health and safety lies directly at the door of Directors and their representatives throughout the management chain. The HSC has clear health and safety guidance on what it expects from the Board Room. I strongly advise employers to follow it.

"In addition, we have challenged Britain's top employers to show what they are doing to address health and safety issues. I have been meeting with chief executives and senior directors of major companies to encourage good practice, which we can then

share with smaller organisations."

To help achieve the HSC and Government's improvement targets for the health and safety system, the HSC's work programme for the next three years will tackle the main causes of fatalities and the worst-offending sectors of industry.

Mr. Callaghan said: "It is too soon to compare progress data against the improvement targets, but I expect our priority programmes to make a real impact over the next three years. We will be looking for significant improvement and it is down to all stakeholders – employers, workers and others – to deliver them. Everyone has a role to play in what must be a partnership process."

Mr. Callaghan said: The spotlight will fall on the construction, agriculture and health service industries in particular, where health and safety performance must improve. Construction alone accounted for 36 per cent of fatalities in 2000/01. Last October I attended the construction industry's Working Well Together conference, where tough action has been pledged to bring down the sector's unacceptable record. We will be looking very closely to ensure that words are matched by action."

On occupational health Mr. Callaghan said: "Our research indicates that stress and musculoskeletal disorders, which cover everything from bad backs to RSI, are an increasingly significant feature of the modern working world. Again we have targeted these as priority programmes over the next three years – and progress in both is vital."

The HSE has already produced guidance on tackling work-related stress in large organisations and will shortly be publishing similar help for small employers.

Mr. Callaghan concluded: "We are now developing more reliable and sophisticated models for evaluating the incidence of work-related ill-health. While the information we have at present is indicative, by the year 2004/5 we will have much more to report. All organisations need to create a better working environment and invest in protecting their workers from occupational harm. We will soon have the means to judge how far they are doing so."

Health & Safety Commission

'All organisations need to invest in protecting their workers from occupational harm. We will soon have the means to judge how far they are doing so'

RACE RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Legislation sets new public sector agenda

Gurbux Singh
Chair Commission for Racial Equality

THE CHANGING FACE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR

MODERNISING Britain's public services is a key government objective. Good race relations must be at the heart of that change. The level of scrutiny into services has never been more intense. Speculation around funding, efficiency and levels of public confidence often dominate the news headlines, leading to alarmist reports of failing schools, sink estates and overburdened health services crumbling by the day. Amidst this analysis it can be difficult to see a positive future for public bodies and to understand what is possible at the start of the 21st century.

Yet a dramatically different future is opening up for the thousands of public bodies that influence so much of everyday life. This future is one in which fairness, opportunity and high standards of delivery will link together and touch people in every section of every community.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act is about to steer an exciting course for public services, both in the way we public bodies employ our staff, and in the way we reach out to members of the public – whether they are pupils, patients, council tenants, children in care or other local people. This legislation sets a new agenda in which public sector organisations must place race equality at the heart of our functions, culture and aims.

A FAR REACHING ACT

The Act was born out of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, which spelt out the grave consequences of public bodies neglecting race equality and the needs of ethnic minority communities. The public sector's approach to racial equality has for too long been marked by inconsistency and inertia. Of course there have been examples of committed work. Some councils, health trusts, schools and police forces have been at the forefront of good practice, and have been imaginative in providing real opportunity to their employees and their communities. Others have done little. Others tried to tack racial equality on as an 'added extra' to their policies and gave neither the time nor the priority needed to bring about real change. Little more than a paper exercise, this approach failed to monitor the impact of

policies on the people who matter.

There is ample evidence of the results of this half-hearted approach. As we near the end of 2001, still ethnic minority communities face disturbing levels of discrimination and disadvantage; people from ethnic minority communities are more likely to suffer ill health, live in poor housing, and be excluded from school.

NEW DUTIES NEW CHALLENGES

Under the new Act public bodies now have to adopt a proactive approach to racial equality, not just reacting when discrimination is revealed, but positively promoting it throughout their work and the services they deliver. This general duty has been in force since April 2001 and from December 3rd a number of specific duties became law. These apply to all listed public bodies and set out the means by which they can meet the general duty. The specific duties come into effect on 31 May 2002. By this date all public bodies bound by these duties will need to comply. Many public bodies covered by the specific duties must produce a race equality scheme setting out clear plans for delivering race equality in external and internal work. Other requirements include;

- setting out arrangements for ensuring access for all people to information and services
- monitoring existing policies
- assessing and consulting on proposed policies and their impact on racial equality
- and in employment carrying out ethnic monitoring of all staff at all stages of their career from application to exit interview

These duties will mean some radical changes to the way public bodies respond to the people we serve and the best examples will gradually become standard practice.

For example, a health authority may review a particular cancer screening service for women and discover that there is low take up amongst ethnic minority women. Under the general duty of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, the health authority must promote equality of opportunity for all. To do this effectively they may need to take action to assess in more depth the reasons why some women in their community are not coming forward for screening. Following that, they may decide to introduce measures



STEFANO CAGNONI/REPORTAGE DIGITAL.CO.UK

The new Act was born out of the official inquiry into the investigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence – marked by this memorial in Eltham, South London

such as an outreach project with interpreters accompanying health workers to different community venues; holding a health conference targeting ethnic minority women; and producing information in different languages.

GEARING UP NOW

Around 44,000 public bodies across Britain will be affected by the Act. To help public servants understand and meet their new responsibilities the CRE is issuing a code of practice giving clear detail on each legal requirement, as well as guidance giving practical examples. The draft code was published on 3 December 2001 for a three-month consultation period. Your views are vital.

From 31 May 2002 the code will come into effect and have statutory status. Although this deadline is months away, there is pressing work now for public bodies to prepare their organisation for the changes to come. An honest assessment of how well racial equality is being tackled now is essential. In addition, staff at all levels need to know about the Act and how it will affect them. Getting hold of the CRE's guidance documents and responding to

the consultation on the code of practice will help you start planning internally.

FROM PAPER POLICY TO LIVING CHANGE

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act is not just about a better deal for ethnic minority communities but will help public bodies to provide better and more tailored services for everyone. Any public body which is open about the way it works, and visibly strives to meet changing needs is set to have better relationships with the people it serves. The changes the Act calls for are not intended to be burdensome or bureaucratic and the CRE is committed to helping the public sector deliver their responsibilities. We're planning training programmes and resources on our website to give you the help you need over the next few months.

■ For more information on the general and specific duties under the Act, the CRE's Code of Practice including how to respond to the consultation, and additional guidance on the implications of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act visit the CRE website – www.cre.gov.uk or call the CRE on 020 7932 5284.

STUC CHHOKAR FAMILY JUSTICE APPEAL

Scottish TUC appeals for funds to mount inquiry into Chhokar murder

THE General Council of the STUC agreed in principle some months ago to launch an appeal to raise funds for an independent Public Inquiry into the case of the murder of Surjit Singh Chhokar, and the subsequent handling of the investigation and prosecution by the authorities.

Following the unsatisfactory Campbell and Jandoo reports, following secret Inquiries, the appeal was formally launched on 2 November, 2001. The amount being sought is £40,000, and it is hoped that this can be raised to enable the Inquiry to get underway and complete its work by the Spring of 2002. A contribution of 6p by every Trade Union member in Scotland alone would meet the full cost of the Inquiry.

This is a major undertaking, but one which the General Council sees as extremely important if we are to demonstrate that Civic Scotland, and the Trade Union Movement, can stand alongside vulnerable people such as the Chhokars who have been failed by the official justice system. Details of the Appeal and the Inquiry are attached.

I would be most grateful if, as a matter of some urgency, your organisation/members could give very sympathetic consideration to:

a) making a direct contribution to the Appeal

A special account has been opened for this Appeal and contributions should be made payable to the "Chhokar Family Appeal" and sent to the STUC at 333 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6NG.

I realise that there are many, many demands on all Union organisations at present, but this issue is one which represents a challenge to the vision the movement has of the kind of country we want to build, and your help would be greatly appreciated.

Bill Speirs
General Secretary STUC

THE STUC CHHOKAR FAMILY JUSTICE APPEAL

LISTED below are details about the STUC Chhokar Family Justice Appeal. Specifically we have set out what the fundraising appeal is for; why a public investigation is necessary; how the fundraising appeal will work; and how the public investigation process will be conducted.

WHAT IS THE FUNDRAISING APPEAL FOR?

The STUC is launching the Chhokar Family Justice Appeal to raise £40,000 in order to fund a public investigation process into the Chhokar case. Although we support the recommendations for action set out within both the Campbell and Jandoo reports, we have always supported the Chhokar Family's calls for an independent Public Inquiry into the case, and regret that the Scottish Executive chose instead to undertake internal investigations.

We now recognise that the Scottish Executive is unlikely to agree to a Public Inquiry following the internal inquiry process which has taken place. However we also recognise the real need for the Chhokar family to put on record their experience over the past three years, to see truth and justice prevail, and to find peace following the loss of their son. It is for these reasons that we have chosen to launch an urgent appeal for funding so that a public investigation process can go ahead.

WHY IS THE PUBLIC INVESTIGATION NECESSARY?

The Lord Advocate himself stated that the reports into the Chhokar case were inconclusive due to the lack of any direct involvement from the family. Also the contents of both reports have attracted much criticism from a range of organisations working in the race equality field. The Campbell report failed to recognise any form of institutional racism in the justice process, while in contrast the Jandoo report, identified institutional racism in the Crown and Police, but made inappropriate and deeply offensive personal attacks on the family and its representative. Furthermore, the definition of institutional racism offered by the Jandoo report, has been contested by the Commission for Racial Equality for moving too far away from the definition set out within the MacPherson report following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry.

Only through holding a public, transparent, credible process then producing a report based on the findings of that process, and on the direct input of the family, will we be able to fully learn the lessons of the Chhokar case and settle the many questions still outstanding.

HOW WILL THE FUNDRAISING APPEAL WORK?

A bank account entitled the "Chhokar Family Appeal" will be established and managed by the STUC. It has been estimated by the family's legal team that around £40,000 would be required to fund the public investigation process. This has been agreed as the target amount, which we hope raise. The STUC will take this Appeal into the heart of the Scottish Trade Union Movement and every branch and local association across our membership will be



Gurdev Chhokar mother of Surjit Singh Chhokar (above) leaving the Lord Advocate's office in Edinburgh. The family, backed by the Scottish TUC, are campaigning for justice for their son Asian waiter Surjit Chhokar who was murdered in Wishaw, central Scotland, in April 1999.



asked to contribute to it. We also hope that the Appeal will be supported and promoted widely across the Scottish media and that the people of Scotland will assist the STUC in achieving the target amount. All cheques and donations should be made payable to the "Chhokar Family Appeal" and sent to the STUC headquarters.

If for any reason, the Scottish Parliament or Executive decide to go ahead with a Public Inquiry and the funding is no longer required, or there is money left over in the fund following the investigation process, this money will be channelled into a trust fund in the name of Surjit Chhokar, aimed at supporting more Black and minority ethnic law students to enter the legal profession through the provision of a bursary. This is in line with the wishes of the Chhokar family.

HOW WILL THE INVESTIGATION BE CONDUCTED?

Once the target amount is reached it is hoped that the public investigation process can be started in January of this year and it is expected that it will take approximately three months to complete. A Co-ordinator will be appointed to run the administration of the process and to act as the secretariat to an independent panel of investigators, who will be drawn from the legal

field, academia, and the race equality field. The panel will be instructed to carry out their duties at all times in an open, objective and transparent manner.

The terms of reference of the investigation will be made publicly available before the start of the process. A public call will go out for contributions to the process and evidence will be accepted from a wide range of contributors both in writing and verbally. All information provided to the investigation process will be made publicly available. The findings of both the Campbell and Jandoo reports will be considered as part of the process. Evidence from the family will be taken and will be central to the process.

On completion of the investigation the panel of investigators will produce a report, which will be made publicly available. This report will act as a response to the Jandoo and Campbell reports and build on the work they did not conclude; it will give a more comprehensive picture of what went wrong and why; it will put the family's voice on record; and it will be produced in a fitting tone that will give the Chhokar family a dignified and lasting legacy to the memory of their son.

We call on the Trade Union Movement and all trade unionists to support this appeal and the Chhokar family in their continued quest for justice.

CUBA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN



Cuban delegate Francisco Harvey at the conference

Delegates pledge solidarity with Cuban trade unionists

OVER 300 delegates from British Trade Unions attended the Cuba Solidarity Campaign (CSC) /SERTUC Trade Unions for Cuba Solidarity Conference held recently at TUC, Congress House.

Delegates attended from AEEU, ASLEF, AUT, BFAWU, CWU, CYWU, FBU, GMB, MSF, MU, NATFHE, NUJ, NUM, NUT, RMT, T&G, TSSA, UCATT, UNISON, and UNIFI.

The Conference was also attended by 16 delegates from Cuban trade unions. The Conference was rounded off with an evening Fiesta for Cuba, in Congress House, where delegates enjoyed British and Cuban music and danced the night away to the sounds of Racies Cubanas.

Conference delegates agreed the following conference declaration:

CUBA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN TRADE UNION CONFERENCE

This Cuba Solidarity Campaign Trade Union Conference held on 27 October 2001 at the Trade Union Congress Centre, London

affirms its commitment to building enduring solidarity with Cuba, and in particular with the Cuban trade union movement, amongst trades unionists in Britain.

We declare our support for:

- Respect for Cuba's sovereignty and independence;
- An end to the US trade blockade of Cuba;
- An end to interference in Cuba's affairs by foreign governments.

We express our commitment to campaign against the continuing blockade of Cuba by the United States Government using the Cuban Adjustment Act, the Torricelli Act, the Helms-Burton Act and their support for bodies such as the Cuban-American National Foundation.

We recognise the right of Cuba to take the necessary steps to defend its sovereignty by identifying and monitoring anti-Cuban terrorist organisations including those operating within the United States. We therefore call for the immediate and unconditional release of René Gonzalez, Fernando Gonzalez, Gerardo

BIG UN VOTE FOR END TO BLOCKADE

THE UN General Assembly, for the 10th consecutive year, voted overwhelmingly for an end to the US economic blockade against Cuba.

The vote was 167 to 3, identical to last year's record vote. Despite strong UN support for American positions since the Sept. 11 attack against the United States, sympathy for Cuba's financial plight and condemnation of the blockade remained unchanged.

Not even apartheid achieved such an overwhelming vote of condemnation by the UN General Assembly.

Those opposing the resolution, in addition to the United States, were Israel and the Marshall Islands, the same countries who supported Washington in 2000.

Nations abstaining were Latvia, Micronesia and Nicaragua. All three nations abstained last year, in addition to Morocco.

The 15 members of the European Union including the UK all voted in favour of the resolution because of US laws that seek to prevent foreign firms from having commercial dealings and investments in Cuba.

Belgium, speaking for the EU, said Europeans deplored the consequences of the embargo on the Cuban people. Speaker after speaker, especially those from developing countries, said the unilateral embargo was a violation of the UN Charter, and affected international trade.

The resolution, as in previous years, referred to the 1996 Helms-Burton Act that allowed US citizens who were Cuban citizens before the 1959 revolution to file suit in US courts against foreign companies or individuals who "traffic" in expropriated property.

US representative James Cunningham said the trade

embargo was designed to promote democracy in Cuba and that the United States had moved dramatically to allow Havana to buy food.

Cuba's foreign minister, Felipe Perez Roque, last month denounced Washington for waging an "ineffective unjustifiable bombing campaign" in Afghanistan.

But Mr Perez, in his address to the assembly, detailed the US prohibitions and said Cuba would be willing to reach an agreement "for the nearly 6,000 US companies and citizens" whose properties were nationalised after the 1959 revolution.

He made the unusual offer with the proviso that "Cuba-recognises their rights – and would be willing to reach an agreement that also takes into account the extremely burdensome economic and human hardships inflicted on our country by the blockade."

Two years ago, a Havana court claimed more than \$180 billion in damages from the US government for deaths and injuries caused to the Cuban population throughout the last 40 years. More than 3,000 Cubans have been killed in terrorist attacks since the 1959 revolution, almost all of which emanated from within US territory.

Mr Perez said that putting Cuba on the US State Department list of terrorist states was particularly outrageous.

"This is an outrage to the Cuban people, who have in fact, as everyone knows, been the victims of countless terrorist acts organised and financed with total impunity from US territory," Perez said.

■ For additional comment and opinion contact Cuba Solidarity Campaign 020 7263 6452

**General Assembly
votes 167 to 3
for and to
US sanctions**

Hernandez, Ramón Labañino and Antonio Guerrero the 'Miami 5'.

In the light of recent events we appreciate the viewpoint of the Government of Cuba that it is "opposed to terrorism and opposed to war". We agree that world poverty, unemployment, disease and the wide variety of economic and social problems that affect the world must be addressed through concerted programmes of action.

We call on the British Government to respect the sovereignty of Cuba by completely disassociating itself from any attempt to blockade the right of Cuba to enter into trade with whomsoever it wishes.

We call on the British Government to pursue this policy in all the appropriate international bodies including the European Union.

We pledge ourselves to working to strengthen solidarity

between trades unions in Cuba and Britain through:

- building bilateral links between fellow trades unions in both countries;
- promoting material which conveys the viewpoint of Cuba;
- supporting material aid initiatives such as the CSC container appeals and Salud;
- encouraging national, regional, local branch and individual affiliation to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and active involvement in the work of CSC;
- encouraging visits by trade union delegations to Cuba;
- exchanging of information about the concerns of trades unions in both countries.

**Maureen Foster
CSC**

GLOBALISATION

Labour movement faces global challenge

Phil Cerny

**Professor of International Politics
at the University of Manchester**

HOW many times have we heard the cliché that ‘the world is getting smaller’? It sums up the ‘modern’ age, whether we’re talking about the last 30 years or the last 300 years. European expansion and imperialism, the Industrial Revolution, technology from the railways to air travel and computers, all have been part of this long process of the compression of society, economics and politics in time and space. Today we treat ‘globalisation’ as if it’s something new, but it’s been with us for a long time. The problem is that the path hasn’t been a smooth one in a clear direction. It has been bumpy, full of twists and turns, multilayered and complex – punctuated by wars, depressions and a whole range of everyday changes and events. Globalisation has been propelled in different directions and at varying speeds on different levels, and various social and political forces have shaped it in different, often unforeseen, ways.

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

This long process has, however, taken place within a particular kind of overall organisational structure in the world, one people have increasingly taken for granted and thought of as ‘natural’. That is the division of the world into nation-states – countries with their own independent political systems, national economies and national social identities. Of course, this world of nation-states is itself a modern creation. It was originally imposed after the decline of the feudal system by kings and their armies and bureaucracies. It became the basis for economic development too, as national economies and national empires competed for international resources and markets. Lenin revised Marx’s notion of capitalist internationalism to say that national imperialism was ‘the highest stage of capitalism’ and that the clash of those empires (he was writing during the First World War) would open the way to revolution. But national states were also the seed-bed of social democratic politics, as unions and other groups allied with sections of the bourgeoisie to create welfare states and planning-orientated economic policies in the wake of the Great Depression and the Second World War.

INSTITUTIONALISED ACCOUNTABILITY

In other words, globalisation itself – this process of the world growing smaller – took place in a world where both elites and masses, organised into nation-states, were at the same time dividing it into separate national compartments. Governments take as their first duty and obligation the defence of ‘national interests’. This is actually strengthened by democracy, as it is only within national democracies that the universal franchise, civil liberties and some form of accountability to the people has been institutionalised in the modern world. At the international level, countries in the 20th century first became more closed off (Fascism and Nazism, the New Deal, the Sterling Area) and then were prised open by American capitalism and military power, driven by a new internationalist zeal. After the Second World War and during the Cold War the West pushed for greater international interdependence through American hegemony and the new multilateral economic institutions – the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (now the World Trade Organisation).

GLOBAL CITIES

Meanwhile, of course, globalisation from below has been speeding up too, with revolutions in transportation, communications, information technology and the like. Different parts of the world – not just countries – have become increasingly interdependent with others around a cross-cutting division of labour that brings together Silicon Valley and Bangalore, or so-called ‘global cities’, or international financial markets, or just Western consumers wanting the best product at the best price no matter where it is produced, into transnational networks of production and consumption. The old problem at the core of Marx’s analysis is being reformulated in this new environment: Have the forces and social relations of production outgrown the capacity of the superstructure – national governments and comparatively weak international institutions – to effectively organise EITHER transnational capitalism OR the search for socially desirable and just alternatives?

A FASTER MODERN WORLD

My view therefore is that understanding and coping with globalisation isn’t about whether one is for it or against it. Globalisation



Demonstrating for a fairer world at the European Union summit in Laeken, Brussels in December

is neither good nor bad in and of itself; on the contrary, it is the inevitable consequence of the speeding up of the modern world. What is at the heart of the problem is whether the political superstructure – states and the ‘states system’ – is an effective and/or desirable way to organise this world. Of course, national governments have been, and still are, the main places to go to ask for better public services or collective goods, but their capacity to provide them is becoming more problematic. Furthermore, in military affairs the main players are still states – even when the enemy isn’t, as with Al-Queda. Nevertheless the playing field is changing in increasingly complex ways, and we need to think more about whether the rules of the game need changing too.

ALTERED PERCEPTIONS

Up to now this rethinking has primarily been done by Western states, by the multilateral international economic institutions and by transnational capital. Today, however, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and pressure and interest groups of every kind (mainly led by the environmentalists; trades unions remain

stubbornly national), along with a new awareness of the world through mass communications, travel and consumerism, are redefining everyone’s horizons. Global inequality is on the agenda too, whether from the World Bank at the top or the debt forgiveness movement and other more localised protests at the bottom. Most recently, the events of 11 September 2001 have certainly had a huge impact on Americans’ (and others’!) perception of their own vulnerability in this globalising world.

TIME TO ORGANISE

Having said that, however, real reorganisation has hardly begun, and it is important for those who value social justice not just to retreat into a closed anti-globalisation stance or to expect the nation-state (still basically dominated by capital too!) somehow to ride to the rescue. A more globalised world requires a more global approach on the Left as well as the Right. Trades unions can only be in the forefront of this transformation by developing strategies attuned to the global challenges the labour movement increasingly faces.

HEALTH & SAFETY SYMPOSIUM

Opening eyes to uranium danger

Dave Carter
Region 7

BACKGROUND: On 25th October 2001, following an invitation to attend a Health and Safety Symposium organised by ECHOSE (The European Centre for Health Safety and the Environment), which is based at the University of Glasgow. Richard Liggins, (Regional Secretary No.7 Region) Pete Mathews (Regional Health and Safety Co-ordinator No. 10 Region) and myself, travelled to Bucharest, Romania at the invite of Dr Charles Woolfson, Director of ECHOSE, to speak to an extremely knowledgeable audience of experts in the fields of Health and Safety, and Health and the Environment, these included representatives of the International Labour Organisation, World Health Organisation, US Government, European Trade Unions, Professors, Doctors and last but not least the FBU, to speak specifically on the problems of Depleted Uranium in the Workplace.

Prior to the start of the Conference we were asked to submit a brief abstract on the issues involved with Depleted Uranium, (below) being limited to a maximum of 350 words, not all of the information could be included, but it was certainly enough to stir the minds of the academics that were soon to be gathered to question our findings and fears.

ALTHOUGH this report has been drafted to report on the Conference that we attended, it would be unfair and wrong of us not to make mention of Romania and its people and the sights that were to greet us as we stepped from the airport.

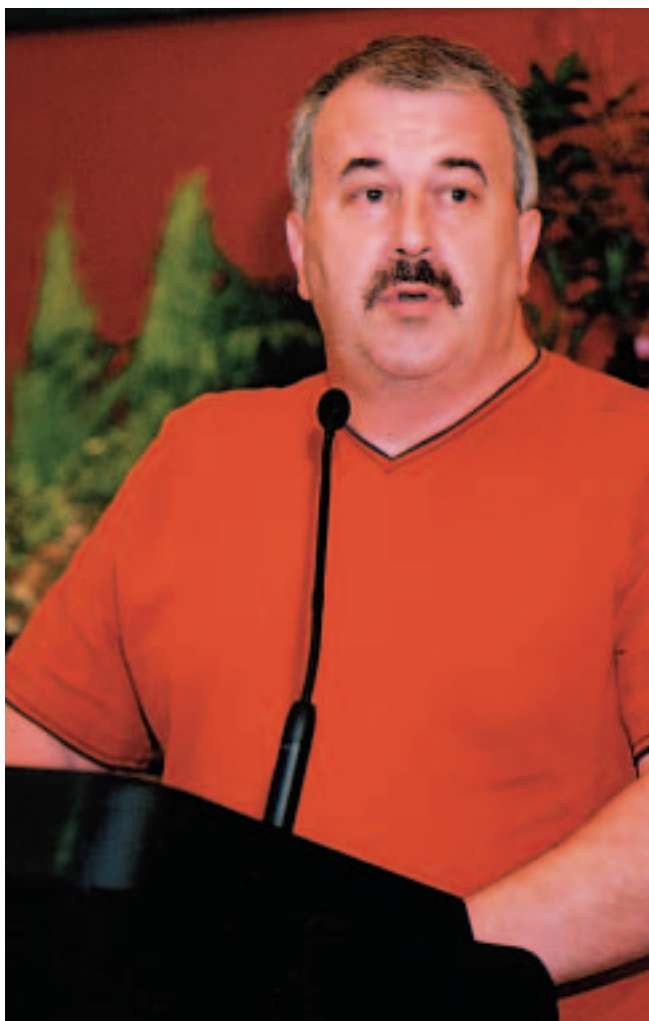
This was the first time that any of us had visited Romania, and on arrival in Bucharest we were greeted with a sight that none of us will ever forget! I have personally never seen anything like this in my life, the sheer poverty and conditions that these people live in is quite unbelievable. We were to see things that you hear about, but never actually believe, children with horrific burns being used as begging tools, young girls and boys being offered for prostitution, babies being put up for sale, elderly women sitting with dogs begging for food, and all of this within metres of shops selling Gucci, Armani and other expensive designer clothes at extortionate prices! There are only two types of people in Romania, the haves, and the have nots, and I can assure you that the latter are in the majority. It does appear that the Revolution definitely didn't work for the vast majority.

With this in mind, we now have a greater understanding and respect for those comrades from the fire service up and down the Country, that have travelled to Romania to render aid to the orphaned children, over the past years. These men and women have given their time and effort unselfishly to improve the lives of these children. It would be a grave injustice not to make mention of this, in

'We were to see things that you hear about, but never actually believe, children with horrific burns being used as begging tools, young girls and boys being offered for prostitution, babies being put up for sale ...'

any report that includes an insight into the problems of this country.

Prior to the first full day of the Conference, there was an opportunity for all delegates to meet; formal introductions were made as well as outlining the aims and objectives of ECOSH. As this moved to a less formal atmosphere, we had the opportunity to exchange views and opinions not only on Health and Safety issues, but also the part that Trade Unions play within this arena throughout the world. A number of interesting issues were raised, which indeed moved away from Health and Safety specifically, this I will mention later in the report. It goes without saying that we made presentations to the organisers of this conference, not only to say thank you for inviting the FBU, but also to reduce the weight of our suitcases.



Dave Carter

THE SYMPOSIUM

Day One: The Symposium was held at the Institute of Public Health in Bucharest which was a 1950's style building that not only required a lick of paint but a team of cleaners and a plumber to get at least some of the sanitary systems working, a well chosen venue by the organisers to highlight the problems facing workers in Romania.

The meeting was opened by Prof Mark Robson from Rutgers University, USA who led a moment of silence in remembrance of those who lost their lives in New York, Mark was called in by the New York Port Authority to supervise the Health and Safety of the rescue workers, during the time we spent at the meeting he gave us an insight into the horrific conditions under which the rescuers had to work. This was followed by an introduction by Marius Petcu, President of Cnsl-Fratia, the largest Trade Union in Romania, and Prof Charles Levenstein of the University of Massachusetts USA.

There were lectures on several major issues in connection with European Legislation including one from Prof Frank Wright from University of Salford in Manchester (where the Hazards Conference was held in 2001). It was interesting to hear that the same issues and problems that face workers in the UK, are also major issues else where in the world, such as Risk Assessments, Sickness Absence Monitoring, Health and Safety Training, and the effectiveness of the law and legislation in general to bring about the changes needed. From the first speaker it became evident that there was a strong opinion that Trade Unions needed to be involved in all aspects of Health and Safety, and where there was no such organised workforce, this must be addressed as being a vital link.

Following lunch there followed a number of talks on workplace problems in many countries in Europe including Poland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Lithuania, Yugoslavia as well as Romania, and the

Depleted Uranium A KILLER METAL

"Our interest in the uses of Depleted Uranium arose from a fire at Royal Ordnance Speciality Metals (ROSM) Featherstone, Staffordshire, UK. In February 1999. This factory was involved in the machining of depleted uranium for armour piercing shells. Depending on which reports are read, is dependant on the opinions expressed as to whether or not DU was consumed in the fire. Following this incident, we were informed about a further incident, which involved a plane crash at Stanstead, UK. Twenty bars of DU were used in the planes construction as counter weights, sixteen were recovered, and four were not. It is the assumption that they were consumed in the fire.

It is from this background that we set out to ask the questions to establish if firefighters were being put at extra risk by potential contamination from DU whilst attending incidents. Investigations proved that DU has many uses, not only in the

munitions industry, uses such as counter weights in fork lift trucks, cranes, lifts, planes, and ships to name a few. DU is controlled by the existing legislation for radioactive materials, as well as the Health and Safety legislation for the handling and transportation of this material. But, when this material has been manufactured into a product, such as a counter balance does the same apply? Our concerns are therefore this, there is the possibility that there are a number of factories up and down the UK that process DU, and subsequently distribute their products for use within other manufacturing and assembling processes. Hence, there is no clear knowledge where DU is stored, processed, or what products use it. DU becomes unsafe when exposed to high temperatures, such as a plane crash or fires in general, as well as high impact. Therefore firefighters are at a greater risk. We are asking for a greater control and restriction of DU uses, as well as a possible data-base giving pre-knowledge of where this material may be stored, as well as the products that may use it. After all it's the particles given off, as well as vapours when DU is involved in fire that may prove to be deadly."

HEALTH & SAFETY SYMPOSIUM

day was concluded with an excellent workshop on Asbestos, a subject that is taboo in Eastern Europe.

Day Two: This consisted of a workplace visit, Danubiana S.A. a tyre factory on the outskirts of Bucharest, employing 2000 workers. The factory was established in 1959 with full production starting in 1962 using initially technology that had been developed just after the Second World War. However, on the tour of the factory it did appear that little had changed to either improve the manufacturing process, or more importantly to improve the working conditions of the workers. We were taken around by a very cautious manager who had obviously been told to say nothing, and with strict instructions that no photographs could be taken.

While working in awful filthy conditions the workers had no PPE whatsoever, when questioned the factory representatives stated that they were well looked after as they only worked 6 hours a day and were given milk and a hot meal. (A Doctor from Poland informed us that this was an old Russian idea that milk actually stopped lead poisoning so therefore stops everything else). They also retired at Fifty to ensure that they didn't burn themselves out, in reality this meant that there was no evidence of negligence, and as there is no pension or any kind of payment for the unemployed this meant the streets had new occupants.

In the afternoon we had our input into the meeting and I was fortunate enough to be given the responsibility of chairing the session. Richard gave an insight into Depleted Uranium problems to the very keen listeners (although I am not too certain on the gentleman from the US military) It became evident that although the audience were well acquainted with the issues of depleted uranium, little consideration had been given to the impact of this heavy metal and its civilian uses. The audience were left with this thought, "If some counter balances in lifts are made from DU, and some planes are counter balanced with DU, we know that this material is dangerous when exposed to high temperatures, would there be a further potential risk that has not been considered, following the tragic events on September 11th?" After approximately an hour of questions it became obvious that we had been successful, as we were approached by a number of the people present for more information. Following this meeting we travelled into Bucharest to try and make contact with the local Fire Fighters, this turned out to be a tougher task than we thought.

The Fire Service in Romania is divided into two sections, those Fire Fighters that are civilians, and those that are from the military. Nothing can be done without permission of a senior officer, they

cannot even have their photographs taken, we approached a crew that were parked in the street on a 24 hour shift, in which they stay with the appliance dressed in fire kit, we couldn't even take a snap of the appliance.

However we did eventually make contact and were amazed at the very poor quality of equipment etc that they have e.g. forty year old appliances with no pump, no BA, no ladders, I haven't got a clue how they fought fires! Yet they do have a Trade Union, The National Federation for the Firefighters, the official membership figures are 150,000 volunteers, and 20,000 members.

Day Three: The final day was taken up by a series of talks on PPE (or the total lack of it) as well as other issues such as VDU regulations. We made further contacts with the Fire fighters leaving them with a few reminders of the FBU (ok, so they can now read Forged in Fire while waiting for a call) but also with a promise to raise their particular problems of worker organisation, to consider what assistance could be given by the FBU. Believe me when I say, that they will certainly need all the help that they can get.

Summary: Romania is, without doubt, the poorest country in Eastern Europe, the entire assets of the country are less than some British firms, as a country and indeed as fellow workers they are in desperate need of aid, not only financial.

They are fully aware of European Health and Safety legislation but have no means of implementing it. The Employers have no desire for it and pay no attention to it (my god this is sounding very familiar!) and when you realise that a teacher is paid only £60, yes £60 per MONTH, you see that there is a strong need for Trade Unions and a system to link them together. With this in mind, one of the main elements that came out of the Conference, as well as in general conversations was the area that has not been fully explored, that of the fundamental link between Trade Unions, Employers and Academics. It was mentioned earlier in this report that other issues were discussed apart from Health and Safety, with the contacts that we made we have learnt that an application is to be made to Europe to obtain a grant to pursue the need for Trade Unions within Romania, especially within the Fire Service, also within the year 2002 all fire service responsibilities are to move away from military control to that of a civilian authority. We are of the opinion that we have not only opened the eyes of other countries to the dangers of DU, but we have forged links within the Health and Safety arena throughout the world, as well as being involved initially in making a case for European funding to assist Romania in improving their fire service. Let's hope that the FBU can do its bit to help achieve this.

'The factory was established in 1959 with full production starting in 1962 using initially technology that had been developed just after the Second World War. However, on the tour of the factory it did appear that little had changed'

DATA PROTECTION

FAIR PROCESSING NOTICE

Principle 1 of the Data Protection Principles requires, amongst other things, that personal data shall be processed fairly.

Broadly, fairness is achieved if the data subject, (in this case the member) is provided with the following information

- The identity of the data controller;
- The purpose or purposes for which the

data is intended to be processed;

Any further information which is necessary, having regard to specific circumstances in which the data are or are to be processed, to enable processing in respect of the data subject to be fair.

The following notification, prepared by our solicitors, ensures that the Fire Brigades Union complies with the principles stated above;

DATA PROTECTION NOTICE

The Fire Brigades Union collects and maintains personal information in order to carry out its functions as a Trade Union, provide membership services and comply with certain statutory obligations. All personal information is treated with the utmost confidentiality and with appropriate levels of security.

By joining the Union you agree to our processing your personal information, including sensitive personal information, such as trade union membership for the following purposes.

The personal data will be used for a range of Union based activities relating to the running of the Union including the maintenance of records, monitoring for equal opportunity purposes, assisting with employment disputes, ballots, AIF and injury claims etc. and other services and benefits.

All information (updated as appropriate) will be kept throughout membership and, to the extent necessary, for such reasonable period after membership as may be necessary to enable the member to access any post-membership

benefits.

It will be available to our employees, officers and officials both at Headquarters and Brigade, and regional offices, and certain service providers. Where, occasionally, the Union uses the services of such organisations, they are contractually obliged to process your data on behalf of the Union as data processor and in a secure and confidential manner under our strict instructions.

Under the Data Protection Act 1988 you also have the right to ask for a copy of your information (for which a small fee can be charged of £10) and to request correction of any incorrect information held.

This notice will be amended from time to time and will be regularly published in Union material such as The Firefighter, and the website).

Dave Patton
National Officer

SPECIAL REPORT

Life goes on in the Big Apple

Dave Chappell
Exeter Branch

LT. GLENN Perry, Ff Bob Minara, Ff Ken Kumpel, Ff Matt Barnes, Ff Joe Rivelli, Ff Paul Ruback, Ff John Collins – these are the names of the firefighters from the New York Fire Department's [FDNY] Ladder 25 company who lost their lives at the World Trade Centre attacks on September 11th. The entire shift was lost in the fire and collapse of the towers.

All the firefighters who died at Ladder 25 Company had their own stories to tell, and these simply add to the poignancy and tragedy of their loss. For example, Glenn Perry was only attached to the Company temporarily, Bob Minara was due to retire in just a couple of years. Matt Barnes was the hero of a high rise rescue in 2000, plucking a mother and child from a tenement block fire. John Collins had only very recently returned to the FDNY after leaving to set-up his own computer business. Many leave family, while Paul Ruback and his wife had been adoptive parents to over 10 children.

Ladder 25 company is on West 77th Street near Broadway, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, and just happened to be across the road from the hotel I and my partner stayed in at the end of October when we visited New York. We hadn't planned to visit the USA, before September 11th. But my partner is American, and used to spend part of every summer in New York with her family when she was young; she was badly affected by the attacks on the World Trade Centre, and as a result felt a growing need to, in her words "Go see home". She left the USA more than 30 years ago, settled in Britain because of her disenchantment with American politics, and became an active socialist. So if my partner is anything to go by, the terrorists' attack has backfired somewhat, since it managed to turn a US-critical American into a flag-flying patriot!

In the midst of all the horror generated that day, the role played by the city's heroes – the Police, Port Authority officials, Emergency medical teams, and especially the firefighters, who lost so many of their comrades – has become a focus for grief and respect. When everyone else was trying to escape the area they were going to help. And though of course the lives of the

Every firehouse which lost firefighters has become a shrine, outside of which people have placed flowers, plants, pictures, poems, posters, paintings – they have even written messages of support and sympathy on the sidewalks in chalk, which people are careful not to tread on as they pass

thousands who died in and around the Towers touches many people directly, many knew where their local firehouse is, and some knew the firefighters too.

So, every firehouse which lost firefighters has become a shrine, outside of which people have placed flowers, plants, pictures, poems, posters, paintings – they have even written messages of support and sympathy on the sidewalks in chalk, which people are careful not to tread on as they pass. These are truly moving, sacred places, representing a 100% genuine and spontaneous out-pouring of feeling. Ladder 25 Company is just one of dozens of firehouses around the city which illustrate this point, yet even in this unprecedented time they maintain the tradition that anyone who brings something to them receives something in return [in my case a T-shirt!]

It is a credit to the surviving New York firefighters that, in the face of a catastrophe that would probably have put almost any other Fire Brigade out of commission, the FDNY has continued to function, performing all its usual fire and rescue operations, and at the same time dedicating itself to the heart-rending job of searching for their comrades still buried under the rubble. Up until very recently 100 firefighters a shift were continuing this gruelling task, and some people will have seen or read about the argument between the firefighters and FDNY management over the decision to reduce this number to 20. The firefighters' commitment is not to stop until they have



Clockwise from left: memorial stone to commemorate firefighters lost in the Twin Towers attack; remembering the dead - parade in New York; typical memorial at firehouse



retrieved all of their colleagues, so that the families can achieve what Americans call 'closure'. This is a laudable and entirely understandable emotion.

Many are already paying the price for these efforts with their health. Over 4000 New York firefighters [almost a third of the entire FDNY] are now suffering with persistent coughs and chest pain, and one firefighter has been treated for allergic alveolitis, a rare lung inflammation. Nearly 11,000 firefighters who responded to the attack will now undergo screening. Unfortunately, it was only some weeks after September 11th that firefighters were issued with appropriate respirators. There is a general and widespread concern about exposure to the chemical cocktail in the smoke still issuing from WTC fires, for example dioxin levels in lower Manhattan at the end of October were reported to be 58 times the safe level.

In addition, there is the emotional and physical demand of attending funeral or [more often the case] memorial services for all the 343 who died. The FDNY tradition of having a guard of honour with 6000 – 10000 firefighters at the death of any serving member has had to be waived in the current circumstances, as just a glance at a list of the programme of services shows. It also plays on their conscience that they cannot give their comrades the respect they deserve.

At the office of the Uniformed Firefighters' Association [UFA] – the New York firefighters' union – staff and volunteers work constantly to respond to the requests for help from the

relatives of those lost, and to process all the messages of condolence and donations that arrive from all over the world. Yet they still make time for a friendly greeting, and offer information and gifts to those who drop in to say hello. And life goes on for the union, in the never-ending struggles between workforce and management. Prior to September 11th the UFA had just concluded two years of talks on the firefighters' proposed new contract – these were awaiting ballot approval by the UFA membership. In the aftermath of the attacks many are saying that firefighters should now reject the proposals as being inadequate, and, under the circumstances, who could blame them if they did?

The union has also been having to fight against firehouses being closed on a day to day basis in some parts of the city as an economy measure. In May of this year the UFA reported that in the Borough of Queens, on average six firehouses were temporarily closed each day, and crews detached elsewhere. Just as I am writing this article, news is breaking of an aircraft crash in the Borough of Queens, so this campaign now has a dramatic new edge to it.

This article is not intended to single out Ladder 25 Company from the 343 who perished on September 11th, but simply to honour and acknowledge them as representative of the terrible loss suffered by the FDNY. My thanks go to Ed, Debbie, Fern and Jim at the UFA office, and Peter Mamatos at the Ladder 25 Firehouse, for their friendly welcome and assistance.

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Stage managed?

I couldn't say ...

Tam McFarlane
Brigade Secretary Somerset

30th September to 3rd October 2001

AT THE 2001 FBU Annual Conference in Bridlington resolution 101 was passed on a card vote, which raised the issue of our Union's traditional links through affiliation with the Labour Party. The delegation from Somerset that I was a part of voted against this resolution and as a member of the Labour party and a keen supporter of the Labour movement I believed at that time it was the right thing to do. However, they say that a week is a long time in politics and the policy decisions and actions of the Labour government over the last few months have led me to question both my membership of the Labour party and indeed the affiliation of the Fire Brigades Union within it.

The failure to repeal Tory anti – Trade Union laws, a lack of action over the campaign promise of real reform in the second chamber, a growing centralisation of power, and of course the discredited and shallow ideology behind PFI / PPP are all issues which I believe have created a growing divide between the Labour Government and traditional supporters of the movement.

It was with the above in mind that I looked forward to attending the 2001 Labour Party Annual Conference as part of a delegation from Region 14 of the Fire Brigades Union and hopefully finding out for myself what really makes the Labour party tick.

It is important to realise that this is not a conference in the sense that we as FBU members can relate to within the context of our own Annual Conference in Bridlington. Upon entering the hall for the first time you realise that the emphasis of this Conference is on presentation with a very impressive (and no doubt expensive) platform set up and the catchphrase "building a better Britain" emblazoned everywhere. The lighting and sound systems give an impression of a venue more suited to a rock concert than a political gathering and the strict stewarding of the event, with delegates and observers being shepherded to and fro,

can leave a person with the uncomfortable feeling of being not so much guided as controlled.

The mood surrounding this particular Conference was of course sombre following the events of September 11th. The terrorist outrage that took place on that day led to the Conference being shortened and was the focus of the majority of discussions both within the conference hall and in the fringe meetings around it.

There were many debates that I looked forward to and being a member of the fire service I of course eagerly anticipated a full and proper debate on the provision of public services. Imagine my surprise then when, as the debate was about to begin, a coffee table and four chairs were wheeled onto the front of the platform. More than a few eyebrows were then raised as it was

announced that what was to follow was not exactly a debate but instead more of a "question and answer session" between delegates on the floor and the three Government public service

The mood surrounding this particular Conference was of course sombre following the events of September 11

Ministers sitting at their coffee table. Can you imagine Mick Harper trying to pull that one off at Bridlington?

As the Q&A got under way I began to wonder about the spontaneity of some of the suspiciously similar questions being asked. Most contained a variation of the phrase "the public don't care who provides the services, just that they are improved" which to me is not only completely untrue but also suspiciously similar to the approved party line. Stage managed? I wouldn't like to say!

However it was during this Q&A that a detailed package of proposals was announced by Stephen Byers, the Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions. The package was in response to concerns raised by public service trade unions and contains three main proposals:

1. It has been acknowledged that there are real concerns about the much-vaunted "Best Value" initiative and so a three-month review has been set up to focus on higher standards and not just lower costs.
2. Action has been promised to prevent contracting out leading to a two tier workplace with an acknowledgment that when

people who work alongside each other are on different pay, different conditions, and different pensions then that can only lead to division and conflict.

3. Proposals will be put forward to allow Councils to borrow money against assets for investment as an alternative to going into the private sector.

Now these proposals are hardly earth shattering and to be frank if the Government would see sense and drop their discredited policy on private sector involvement within the public services then there would be no need for this damaging debate to be had at all. But it is important to see these proposals for what they are:

They are concessions to the public service trade unions.

Of course they do not go nearly far enough but the fact that affiliated trade unions can force a Labour government into concessions and so into further debate seemed to me an encouraging point to bear in mind.

This point was brought home forcefully and, for FBU members, very relevantly when the delegation from the Fire Brigades Union managed to submit and move an emergency motion on International Terrorism. The General Secretary, Andy Gilchrist, gave an outstanding speech, which started a debate in which he called for a "measured response" to the terrorist outrage in New York. Having just returned from New York he paid fitting tribute to our brothers and sisters in the New York City Fire Department noting that the special bond which links firefighters the world over gives us a very real understanding of the heroism and sacrifice shown by our comrades on that day. Turning to the Members of the Cabinet sitting behind him he made the point that if the Labour Government had wanted the views of British Firefighters on the tragedy presented to the party conference then it should have been sought through the elected representatives of UK Firefighters, a pointed comment aimed at the decision to invite Richard Bull (CACFOA President) to address conference on day one.

I am not aware if CACFOA is considering affiliating to the Labour Party.

Andy continued on an international theme saying that "any attempt to retaliate for the sake of retribution must be resisted" and that "you cannot bomb people into democracy or deprive starving children of food and essential medicines in order to change their government's policy" before calling on all nations to show consistent support for international law.

As he sat down after making his contribution the rest of conference stood up to show their gratitude not only for the way the speech was delivered but also because a delegate had proved brave enough to tackle the issue of an appropriate response head on. In the debate that followed Tony Benn addressed Conference, for what he said was probably the last time, and gave his thanks



The FBU delegation at the conference

and backing to the FBU for moving the motion.

Now, for me, there is an important and very relevant point which can be drawn from the contribution of the Fire Brigades Union:

It could not have been made if this union was not affiliated to the Labour Party.

This was the only debate which could accurately be described as such throughout the entire Conference. It was not under the strict control of the party mandarins (despite consistent attempts on their behalf to put pressure on FBU delegates), it gave a voice to a largely held view that had to be listened to by Government Cabinet Ministers, and importantly, it was achieved by delegates from an affiliated Trade Union.

The above was the highlight of any debate within the confines of the conference centre and to find other forums for information and discussion I had to move outside to the various fringe meetings held throughout the week. I quickly found the fringe meetings to be the most satisfying aspect of conference where the grass roots of the Labour party could have their voice heard

and their concerns addressed by MPs and Ministers of all departments. I was greatly heartened to find at these meetings that the working class socialist movement is alive and well within the

Labour party. At almost all of these meetings I found that there is a great deal of unrest amongst party members about the increasing centralisation of power by Millbank and at the direction in which the Government is trying to move the party as a whole. Concerns were continually raised about the way that party policy is decided and the hoops that have to be jumped through before a resolution can be submitted and debated. It is undoubtedly the case that members do not feel so much repre-

As the Q&A got under way I began to wonder about the spontaneity of some of the suspiciously similar questions being asked

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

sented as controlled but the encouraging aspect for me is the commitment shown by a large proportion of active members who are determined to reclaim "their" party by strengthening internal party democracy from membership level upwards and by doing so reclaiming and strengthening the Labour party itself.

I attended fringe meetings on a variety of subjects including foxhunting, public service reform and the suffering of the Iraqi people and the under running feeling throughout them all was of the tremendous commitment by people from all backgrounds to work together in the belief that by doing so they could achieve change for the good. It is inspiring to be in the company of people who care so deeply and are willing to work so hard on behalf of others.

Back in the conference hall other highlights that I endured included Mr Blair's extraordinary leader's speech (which although admirable for the vision of a new world order did leave me wondering what he would do on the eighth day), then there was David Blunkett explaining to us all that asylum seekers kept in closed rooms behind sealed fences with security guards on the gates should not be described as being locked up! And finally the highlight on the last day was the take over bid by John Reid for who would be next in line for the top job (Gordon Brown would be well advised to take a careful look over his shoulder).

Having sat through it, I am disappointed to say that I do not believe this party conference can be realistically described as a policy making forum, instead I think that it is steadily being eroded into a made for TV showcase where the delegates are no more than wallpaper for the cameras. I sat in a palatial conference centre where business companies such as Sky and Orange had bought space to advertise their wares and meanwhile, outside in the rain, comrades were kept on the wrong side of barriers as they attempted to sell the Morning Star. It is therefore tempting to conclude that this conference is too stage managed to be worth attending and that the Labour Party is not a democratic organisation where Trade Union funds should be spent.

But I believe that it would be wrong to give in to this view.

People sneer at politics and politicians but it is only through politics that we can shape a better and more just world for us all. The Labour movement remains the best, the only, instrument to achieve our political aims and I believe that what I experienced at this years conference proves that not only must we win it back but that with our involvement we can win it back. Affiliation to the Labour party is currently controversial and it is right that trade unions enter into a debate about what they want from the government, but it would be folly to either move to other parties or even worse to simply cease involvement with any political movement at all.

The benefits of affiliation are very real and must be carefully considered. It is quite simply a fact that if Andy Gilchrist had



FBU General Secretary Andy Gilchrist addresses the conference

been standing outside the Conference centre giving the speech that he did then nobody would have had to take any notice but instead, because of our affiliation, he was able to represent the Fire Brigades Union on quite literally the world stage with the most senior cabinet ministers in the government sitting a few feet away as he gave a voice to our members. It is only through this type of political involvement that we can achieve the changes that we as a trade union desire. We are not going to make this Government listen to and respect the Trade Union movement if we all just walk away in the huff whenever we don't get our own way. Neither will they pay any heed to an organisation that does not give its representatives the opportunity to access ministers and enter into effective lobbying at party conferences and other gatherings. The consequences of being unable to put our representations forward in this way will ensure that we are kept out of

any argument until we force our way in by using industrial conflict, which is, of course, always dependent on the will of the membership being behind any such action.

I believe that the Labour Party must change but I am also convinced that it is the responsibility of the Trade Unions to influence that change. We must acknowledge that we have an important role to play and engage fully in any future debate to bring about a positive change within the organisation. We currently have the ability, through affiliation, to ensure that the voice of our members is heard from within at party political meetings and we must ensure that this continues especially given the uncertain future that may lie ahead for the fire service.

It is at times difficult to be optimistic when considering the political aspect of Trade Unionism, especially when as union officials we often feel that we are in a constant battle with all

I do not believe this party conference can be realistically described as a policy making forum – it is more a TV showcase

The NJC has agreed an increase of 3.9% for all ranks with effect from 7 November in line with the established pay formula.

The following revised rates of pay and fees are set out below: Wholetime members (FF to SDO); Wholetime members (FCO to PFCO); Retained and Volunteer members; Non-operational staff; Junior firefighters and mess managers' allowance

Annual salaries for the ranks of Station Officer to Senior Divisional Officer and Fire Control Officer to Principal Fire Control Officer are exclusive of any entitlement to the 20% flexible duty system supplement.

The weekly rates for wholetime members are equivalent to the annual rates divided by 52.167 (rounded down to the nearest penny). The hourly rates are equivalent to the weekly rates divided by 42 (to the nearest penny) except for non-operational staff where the weekly rates are divided by 40 and the ranks of Fire Control Operator to Senior Fire Control Operator where they are equivalent to the 40-hour weekly rate divided by 40.

The casual overtime rates for the ranks of Station Officer, Assistant Divisional Officer and Fire Control Officer apply only to members in those ranks who are not on the flexible duty system.

WHOLETIME MEMBERS (FIREFIGHTER TO SENIOR DIVISIONAL OFFICER)

	Annual £	Weekly £	Basic hourly rate £	Casual overtime rate £		Annual £	Weekly £	Basic hourly rate £	Casual overtime rate £
Firefighter (aged 18)					Assistant Divisional Officer				
During first 6 months	16941	324.74	7.73	11.60	During 1st year in rank	28908	554.14	13.19	19.79
After 6 months	17727	339.81	8.09	12.14	After 15 years' service	29847	572.14	13.62	20.43
Firefighter (aged 19 or over)					During 2nd year in rank	29781	570.87	13.59	20.39
During first 6 months	17208	329.86	7.85	11.78	After 15 years' service	30732	589.10	14.03	21.05
After 6 months and during 2nd year	17982	344.70	8.21	12.32	During 3rd year in rank	30666	587.84	14.00	21.00
During 3rd year	18843	361.20	8.60	12.90	After 15 years' service	31605	605.84	14.42	21.63
During 4th year	19776	379.09	9.03	13.55	Divisional Officer III				
During 5th year	21531	412.73	9.83	14.75	During 1st year in rank	30960	593.47		
(subject to being fully qualified)					After 15 years' service	31905	611.59		
After 15 years' service (qualified)	22491	431.13	10.27	15.41	During 2nd year in rank	31569	605.15		
After 15 years' service (unqualified)	20694	396.68	9.44	14.16	After 15 years' service	32523	623.44		
Leading Firefighter					During 3rd year in rank	32241	618.03		
	23055	441.94	10.52	15.78	After 15 years' service	33198	636.37		
After 15 years' service	24006	460.17	10.96	16.44	Divisional Officer II				
Sub-Officer					During 1st year in rank	32874	630.16		
During 1st year in rank	23643	453.21	10.79	16.19	After 15 years' service	33822	648.34		
After 15 years' service	24594	471.44	11.22	16.83	During 2nd year in rank	34158	654.78		
During 2nd year in rank	24555	470.69	11.21	16.82	After 15 years' service	35106	672.95		
After 15 years' service	25503	488.87	11.64	17.46	During 3rd year in rank	35499	680.48		
Station Officer					After 15 years' service	36447	698.66		
During 1st year in rank	27426	525.73	12.52	18.78	Divisional Officer I				
After 15 years' service	28377	543.96	12.95	19.43	During 1st year in rank	36312	696.07		
During 2nd year in rank	28035	537.40	12.80	19.20	After 15 years' service	37257	714.18		
After 15 years' service	28980	555.52	13.23	19.85	During 2nd year in rank	37155	712.23		
During 3rd year in rank	28638	548.96	13.07	19.61	After 15 years' service	38109	730.51		
After 15 years' service	29577	566.96	13.50	20.25	During 3rd year in rank	37980	728.04		
					After 15 years' service	38928	746.21		
					Senior Divisional Officer				
					During 1st year in rank	39090	749.32		
					After 15 years' service	40038	767.49		
					During 2nd year in rank	40164	769.91		
					After 15 years' service	41106	787.96		
					During 3rd year in rank	41235	790.44		
					After 15 years' service	42168	808.32		

PAY

WHOLETIME MEMBERS

(FIRE CONTROL OPERATOR TO PRINCIPAL FIRE CONTROL OFFICER)

	Annual (42-hour week) £	Weekly (42-hour week) £	Annual (40-hour week) £	Weekly (40-hour week) £	Basic hourly rate £	Casual overtime rate £
Fire Control Operator						
Aged under 17 years	14163	271.49	13170	252.45	6.31	9.47
Aged 17 years	14655	280.92	13623	261.14	6.53	9.80
Aged 18 years during first 6 months	15588	298.80	14514	278.22	6.96	10.44
Aged 18 years after 6 months	16311	312.66	15174	290.87	7.27	10.91
Fire Control Operator (aged 19 or over)						
During first 6 months	15825	303.35	14736	282.47	7.06	10.59
After 6 months and during 2nd year	16539	317.03	15396	295.12	7.38	11.07
During 3rd year	17325	332.10	16131	309.21	7.73	11.60
During 4th year	18174	348.38	16920	324.34	8.11	12.17
During 5th year (subject to appraisal)*	19827	380.06	18438	353.44	8.84	13.26
After 15 years' service	20682	396.45	19230	368.62	9.22	13.83
Leading Fire Control Operator						
	21225	406.86	19719	377.99	9.45	14.18
After 15 years' service	22071	423.08	20526	393.46	9.84	14.76
Senior Fire Control Operator						
During 1st year in rank	21750	416.93	20238	387.94	9.70	14.55
After 15 years' service	22605	433.31	21033	403.18	10.08	15.12
During 2nd year in rank	22590	433.03	21015	402.84	10.07	15.11
After 15 years' service	23445	449.42	21816	418.19	10.45	15.68
Fire Control Officer						
During 1st year in rank	25248	483.98			11.52	17.28
After 15 years' service	26103	500.37			11.91	17.87
During 2nd year in rank	25797	494.50			11.77	17.66
After 15 years' service	26643	510.72			12.16	18.24
During 3rd year in rank	26343	504.97			12.02	18.03
After 15 years' service	27198	521.36			12.41	18.62
Group Fire Control Officer						
During 1st year in rank	28482	545.97				
After 15 years' service	29334	562.30				
During 2nd year in rank	29043	556.73				
After 15 years' service	29895	573.06				
During 3rd year in rank	29652	568.40				
After 15 years' service	30513	584.91				
Principal Fire Control Officer						
During 1st year in rank	31437	602.62				
After 15 years' service	32283	618.83				
During 2nd year in rank	32667	626.20				
After 15 years' service	33516	642.47				
During 3rd year in rank	33411	640.46				
After 15 years' service	34260	656.73				

* See paragraph 2 of circular LRC/7/83

RETAINED AND VOLUNTEER MEMBERS

ANNUAL RETAINING FEE

	During first 3 years' service £	After 3 years' service £
Firefighter	1881	2055
Leading Firefighter	2055	2115
Sub-Officer	2115	2274
Sub-Officer i/c of station	2274	2475
Station Officer	2574	2913

The annual retaining fee may be reduced by up to 25% where cover is provided for a limited period only

	Turn-out fee £	Pre-arranged attendance fee* £	Attendance fee £	Drill night fee £
Firefighter	13.93	6.20	7.56	12.22
Leading Firefighter	16.27	7.20	8.49	14.04
Sub-Officer	18.47	7.95	9.29	15.61
Station Officer	20.79	9.52	9.96	18.59

** Also extra payment for remaining on duty and payment for extra work*

LONG SERVICE BOUNTY PAYMENTS

	10 years' service	15 years' service	20 years' service	25 years' service	30 years' service	35 years' service
Firefighter	948	1125	1281	1482	1641	1809
Leading Firefighter	990	1152	1311	1536	1704	1866
Sub-Officer	1086	1263	1440	1674	1857	2028
Sub-Officer i/c of station	1200	1383	1572	1836	2034	2235
Station Officer	1440	1692	1917	2238	2466	2694

ANNUAL RETAINING FEE FOR MEMBERS ON THE DAY CREWING SYSTEM

Firefighter	1035
Leading Firefighter	1065
Sub-Officer	1149
Sub-Officer i/c of station	1236

For members on the day crewing system the turn-out fees, attendance fees, drill night fees and extra payments for remaining on duty are as for retained members

For volunteer firefighters the payment for authorised duty is £6.20 per hour (the rate for retained firefighters who remain on duty)

JUNIOR FIREFIGHTERS AND MESS MANAGERS' ALLOWANCE

Junior firefighters' annual pay		Mess managers' allowance			
	£	Meals served per day	Mess manager (without a deputy) £	Mess manager (with a deputy) £	Deputy mess manager £
Aged 16	7482	Up to 50	5.62	3.75	2.09
Aged 17	8043	51 to 69	6.70	4.53	2.40
Aged 18	as for recruit firefighters of the same age	70 to 89	7.75	5.37	2.66
		90 to 109	8.80	5.85	3.16
		110 to 129	10.14	6.70	3.46
		130 and over	11.24	7.46	4.00

PAY**NON-OPERATIONAL STAFF**

These scales apply to non-operational staff in post on 1st April 1980 who were previously paid on control room scales (see NJC/5/80)

	Annual £	Weekly £	Basic hourly rate £	Casual overtime rate £
Non-operational staff (Fire Control Operator equivalent)				
During first 6 months	13776	264.07	6.60	9.90
After 6 months and during 2nd year	14388	275.80	6.90	10.35
During 3rd year	15072	288.91	7.22	10.83
During 4th year	15813	303.12	7.58	11.37
During 5th year	17220	330.09	8.25	12.38
After 15 years' service	17982	344.70	8.62	12.93

	Annual £	Weekly £	Basic hourly rate £	Casual overtime rate £
Non-operational staff (Leading FCO equivalent)				
	18441	353.49	8.84	13.26
After 15 years' service	19197	367.99	9.20	13.80
Non-operational staff (Senior FCO equivalent)				
During 1st year in rank	18918	362.64	9.07	13.61
After 15 years' service	19674	377.13	9.43	14.15
During 2nd year in rank	19632	376.32	9.41	14.12
After 15 years' service	20388	390.82	9.77	14.66

FBU CIRCULAR

MEMBERS have been informed of the 3.9% increase to pay which arose from the Pay Formula this year. This increase produced a weekly rate of pay for the Qualified Firefighter of £412.73 with an annual salary of £21,531. The rates of pay for all members are attached to this circular.

Set out below is an explanation, as agreed by Annual Conference, as to how this years Pay Formula was calculated:

PAY FORMULA

The formula was agreed in 1978 following the National Strike, and equates the earnings of qualified firefighters with the earnings of the upper quartile of adult male manual workers. To achieve this the formula requires the following information:

1. The New Earnings Survey upper quartile figure.
2. The average earnings index.
3. The earnings of qualified firefighters.

UPPER QUARTILE FIGURE

The New Earnings Survey is published annually by the Office for National Statistics which provides information relevant to April each year. This year the National Joint Council were informed that the upper quartile figure for adult male manual workers was £430.00.

AVERAGE EARNINGS INDEX

As the Fire Service Pay Date is 7 November each year and the upper quartile figure is calculated on an April figure it is necessary to project the upper quartile to a November figure. This is done by using the movement in average earnings and the latest available figure to us was 4.5% which relates to August. This projection means that instead of using an upper quartile figure of £430.00 to calculate firefighter earnings we used £441.31.

EARNINGS OF QUALIFIED FIREFIGHTERS

The Union and the Employers jointly carry out a survey each year of the earnings of qualified firefighters. This survey showed that the qualified firefighter in August 2001 received earnings of £417.26 per week.

This earnings figure is made up of basic pay of £397.26, allowances of £14.25 and casual overtime of £5.75.

This total earnings figure is a 3.5% increase over last year which reflects increases in London Weighting Allowance, overtime and turnout fees.

These increases in the earnings of firefighters affect the calculation of basic pay and demonstrate very clearly what the impact of issues such as shift overtime would have on the pay formula.

The reality is with our formula that any increases in earnings of firefighters through allowances and overtime have a direct effect on the basic pay of all firefighters, the greater the increase in allowances and overtime the lower the pay increase!!

CALCULATION OF FORMULA

The following calculation therefore applied to the 2001 Pay Agreement:

Upper Quartile of Male Manual Workers	£430.00
Projected Upper Quartile	£441.31
Firefighter Earnings	£417.26
Casual Overtime Worked	0.41 hours
New Basic Pay of Qualified Firefighter	£412.73

This resulted in an increase of 3.9% which was then applied to the pay rates for all members of the service and set out in the NJC Circular.

Mike Fordham
Assistant General Secretary

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE



FBU General Secretary Andy Gilchrist addresses the conference

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politicians, but in an attempt to finish with a smile I'll leave the last word with Tony Benn who finished one particular fringe meeting by saying that the only thing that gets him to sleep at night is this thought:

"The struggle of the working class is a struggle that will follow a certain pre-determined course – there will be defeat, followed by defeat, followed by defeat, followed by defeat, followed by total outright victory, so keep smiling because there really isn't anything to worry about after all!"

Mixed feelings

Dave Green

EC Member – Region 6

IT WAS WITH MIXED FEELINGS that delegates gathered for the Labour Party Conference held in Brighton. Only a short time after the events of September 11th the spectre of international conflict hung heavily over us all and the conference organisers had decided to shorten the timetable, which meant a three-day conference, to enable MPs to get back for a recall of Parliament.

There is no doubt that given normal circumstances the Labour hierarchy would have planned an occasion of celebration following the re-election of a Labour Government. This would have been played out against a backdrop of protests against areas of Labour policy, led particularly by the unions, in an aggressive defence of public services providing the headlines and the main debating points, with much damage done. However, what criticism there was was severely muted and restrained in the prevailing international circumstances.

The first day saw the opening of conference and an address on behalf of the Fire Service by the CACFOA president, Richard Bull.

This address was not witnessed by the FBU delegation due to our incredulity of the Labour party, our Labour party, inviting an individual representing an organisation with absolutely no links with the party. The General Secretary's reaction to this prompted several hastily called meetings with all concerned wondering how such a thing could happen!

As a result the FBU were allowed to move an emergency resolution over the September 11th attacks with Andy Gilchrist calling for a measured response to the events whilst also expressing sympathy for workers killed and condemning those responsible for the atrocities.

The rest of conference was pretty mundane fare, with the main speakers adopting a suitably serious and responsible attitude. Even the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, dropped his usual conference opening 'comedy slot', which usually livens everyone up with attacks on the Opposition. However, his sober tone indicated that this was not your usual conference.

In order for everyone to be 'on message' furious behind-the-scenes negotiations took place to defuse the row over the future of public services. The unions, led by Unison, moved a composite resolution that was considerably watered down by the time it made it to the rostrum. Dave Prentis (Unison) only went as far as to say 'the Government has no mandate to privatise'. This in effect will delay until next year at least confrontation over the government plans to 'reform' the public services. No real criticism here of the PFI scheme as a whole which, incidentally, is a relic from John Major's Conservative Government and now taken up by the Labour Party with even more enthusiasm. So much so that the public sector is paying PFI firms around £2.5bn a year for the honour.

The only real concession made for this compliance was a 'commitment to fair wages' and an end to a 'two tier workforce'. Stephen Byers also announced a three-month review of 'Best Value', which will be completed in the New Year.

Some promises were also made to Bill Morris (TGWU) over the voucher system for asylum seekers, which has caused such controversy. Interestingly enough all major announcements seemed to be left until the end of conference: abolish student loans; turn Railtrack into a publicly owned trust, and, of course, the stop on the use of vouchers for asylum seekers.

The Prime Minister's speech on Tuesday was aimed at an audience way beyond those in the hall and received saturation coverage from the nation's media. He used the occasion to reiterate the 'war on terrorism' and how the world must unite in the forthcoming battles ahead. Of major concern was the idea that this has now become a reason to support the concept of globalisation with the alternative being 'isolation'.

So, overall it was yet again the stage-managed, controversy free event it has become over the recent years. The major debate appeared to have been whether the conference actually went ahead this year. Thankfully it did, but in the end a fairly timid few days with many of the dissenters backing off in their criticism of the government.

RULES, POLICIES, POLITICS

Rules, Policies, Politics

Ken Ross**Brigade Chair (Acting) Strathclyde**

SOME OF our members feel that the activities of the Fire Brigades Union should be confined to representing members to the management of their respective Brigades.

Although this reflects the vast majority of any Official's work, the Fire Brigades Union, as part of the National & International Trade Union Movement, has a much bigger role to play within our society and indeed the world.

It may be fair to say that not everyone is politically motivated and that is fine. Most people, if asked, would probably say that the main reason for joining the Fire Brigades Union was not because they wanted to be a trade unionist, but wished to be represented, both locally & nationally, by the most influential, competent and successful Trade Union within the UK Fire Service – A Trade Union that fights for the best Conditions of Service for its members. A Union that is widely respected by the TUC in general. The Foreword of our Rule Book states – 'THE IMMEDIATE AIMS of the Fire Brigades Union are to serve its members by winning for them the best possible conditions...'

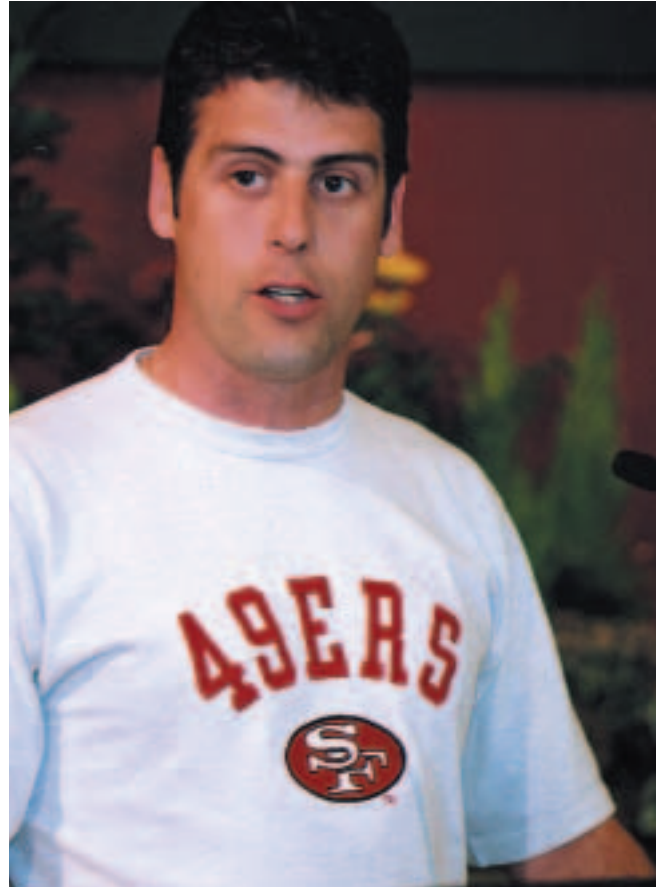
POLITICS

However, a question that arises is – What has politics got to do with the Fire Brigades Union? This would appear to be a strange question, however, lets look at the facts.

Firstly, lets take our employers, both locally and nationally. They are elected Councillors who sit on Fire Boards and the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire Brigades. In other words, Politicians! The Fire Service is governed by Government Legislation – The Fire Services Act 1947! Responsibility for the Fire Service in the UK is that of the Department of Transport, Local Government & the Regions – a Government Department headed by Stephen Byers MP (A Politician)! Our Pension Scheme is an Act of Parliament – The Fireman's Pension Scheme 1985!

The Trade Union movement has been instrumental in the promulgation of such Legislation as the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, the EC Directives in Health & Safety 1992 (Six Pack), Health & Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996, Working Time Regulations 1998 ... the list goes on. In fact the Fire Brigades Union was the driving force behind the recent change in the law regarding the Breach in Civil Duty. For the above reasons, that is what the Fire Brigades Union has to do with politics!

OK, so this is the politics that is linked to our workplaces. Well, lets look at a different type of politics, the politics of everyday issues within our society – what has this got to do with the Fire Brigades Union?

**Ken Ross**

I will refer you again to the Foreword of our Rule Book:

'...the Fire Brigades Union is part of the working-class movement and, linking itself with the international Trade Union Movement, has as its ultimate aim the bringing about of the Socialist system of society.'

TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The Trade Union Movement around the world represents working class people. In many countries, including this one, there are people who suffer poverty, injustice, discrimination, inequality and racism. The world has no shortage of refugees who are fleeing oppressive and tyrannical regimes. The world has no shortage of people who are murdered and who suffer torture and other horrific abuses.

The Fire Brigades Union as part of the International Trade Union Movement has a voice; a voice that fights for Equality, Justice and Peace. A voice that many working class people around the world do not have. The Trade Union Movement has been instrumental in assisting peoples, both at home and around the

world, who are desperate and in need. This is a proud and worthwhile involvement and reflects the humanitarian service that we provide in the Fire Service.

The Firefighter Magazine reflects this involvement, which is why it covers the many national and international issues that it does. Some members have questioned why ‘..non-Fire Brigade Issues..’ are in the magazine. These issues have been referred to as ‘..nonsense...irrelevant..’ and ‘..nothing to do with us..’.

If a member has no interest in the political issues within the Fire Brigades Union then that is their choice. However, the Fire Brigades Union is perfectly correct to support and affiliate to campaigns that are in line with the aims and goals of the Trade Union movement – to fight injustice no matter where, or in what shape it comes.

It may be irrelevant to some members who do not have an interest in such matters. It may not have a direct link to the UK Fire Service, but what members should bear in mind is that these issues are an integral part of the Trade Union Movement. The Firefighter Magazine is a Trade Union Magazine. It is therefore totally relevant that these issues are featured and discussed within it. If there are articles or letters within the Firefighter magazine that aren't of a particular interest to an individual, then they have the freedom to disregard it. This does not mean to say that the issues should not be there.

COMMUNICATION

Quite rightly, members are entitled to express their views on all the issues within this Union. This can be done in various ways. Writing to the Firefighter Magazine is one, but the easiest way of doing this, of course, is by attending their Branch meetings.

This leads on to a more fundamental issue; that is the role of both the Fire Brigades Union Official and the Fire Brigades Union Member. Firstly, Officials will make every effort to convey information back and forth through the various Committee levels. Information may include reports on meetings with management and meetings of other committees, which will include both local and national issues. Members are kept informed in two fundamental ways:

Branch Meetings.

Fire Brigades Union Notice Boards.

The flow of information through the Committee stages, for the most part, is excellent however it can fall down at any stage. This is not always the fault of the Officials. However, it is very difficult for Officials to keep members informed if members do not read their notice boards and do not attend their Branch meetings. It is very difficult to run, say a Branch, if there are no Officials in place to act as a Delegate to attain information.

RULES & POLICIES

At times, Officials will make decisions on behalf of the members that they represent; they have to. It would be impossible to consult every member, every day, every time a decision has to be made or when management asks a question to an Official, for

example.

The guidance that Officials use are Union Rules and Union Policies. Any decision that an Official makes must be within the confines of Union Rules, Union Policies and must comply with the aims and aspirations of this Union. Policies are made from Resolutions that originate from the Branches and are democratically carried at Annual Conference. Conference Agendas and other Proposed Business are circulated from Head Office to every Branch months in advance. Members should endeavour to make themselves aware of any proposed Conference Business or indeed any relevant issues within this Union.

In an organisation like the Fire Brigades Union, where there is over 51,000 members, invariably not all members will agree with every Rule and every Policy. This is why the Fire Brigades Union adopts the Democratic process to decide what proposals are adopted. Officials then utilise these decisions as a guide in order to make decisions that reflect the wishes of the majority of members and the overall aims of the Fire Brigades Union. There is no other way of doing so. The only alternative would be to ballot the membership on every single issue. This is totally unfeasible, which is why Officials have Policies and Rules to refer to. As long as an Official, within these boundaries makes a decision, then he/she can do so in the name of the Fire Brigades Union.

Officials have made decisions over the years on behalf of the members that they represent. Unfortunately, some of these decisions have, at times, been unpopular with some members, but have never been out-with the confines of Union Policy. If members are unhappy with decisions that Officials make, more often than not it's the policy that they are unhappy with.

FUTURE FIGHT

This Union enjoys Conditions of Service second to none within the Public Sector. This is down to the continuing efforts of Fire Brigades Union Members and Officials up and down the country.

There are many enormously important issues to be addressed by this Union in the near future. The Employers have a new shopping list. They are looking again at detrimental changes to our Pension Scheme, Rank Structures and Duty Systems. Chief Officers are once again attempting to push policies incorporating Capability through Brigades.

It will take the great resolve of all of us to ensure that these attacks are defended and defended vigorously. Please support your Officials and strengthen this Union's resolve. Officials will continue to work hard and continue to provide the necessary information to all members. All members are urged to attend their Branch meetings and to read their notice boards on a regular basis. And when you are enquiring about an issue and asking ‘What are the Union doing about it?’, then ask yourself ‘What am I doing about it?’

Knowledge is Power. The more members understand the role of the Fire Brigades Union both within the UK Fire Service and the International Trade Union Movement, the stronger this Union will be. This will be to the benefit of us all!

JOHN MONKS' NEW YEAR MESSAGE

2002 will be 'make your mind up' time for government

**In his New Year's message,
TUC General Secretary
John Monks said:**

““The government faces a series of tough choices in the year ahead. Their decisions on these will define Tony Blair's second term.

“First, the introduction of Euro notes and coins will make the Euro a live issue. I do not expect a referendum during 2002, but unless the government pushes ahead with the process of its economic tests and starts a serious hearts and minds campaign, the conclusion will be that no referendum will take place before the next election. That would be disastrous. If the decision is put off again, the international investment community will conclude, probably rightly, that New Labour simply hasn't got the bottle to face down the Euro sceptics, and that will have serious economic and political consequences.

“This would be particularly bad news for the manufacturing sector. Some said the TUC was alarmist when we warned a year ago that 100,000 manufacturing jobs would be lost during 2001. But the likely final figure will be closer to 150,000. The continuing difficulties in the world economy makes it likely that a further 150,000 manufacturing jobs will be lost in 2002.

“We do not of course blame the government for the worldwide slow down. But they do have a responsibility to ensure that the country maintains a sufficient manufacturing base to

respond to eventual economic recovery. A clear intention to join the Euro would be one effective way of bearing down on the overvalued pound, but the Bank of England must also stand ready to continue cutting interest rates in the year ahead. There are wider problems contributing to the particular difficulties of the manufacturing sector that flow from our relatively low productivity. One highlight of 2001 was the joint reports prepared by the TUC and CBI on tackling the productivity gap. The government has already begun to respond positively, and while all three partners may disagree about other issues, if we can continue to work together to address the productivity gap in the year ahead, that will be a real achievement.

“Second, the government must decide what it really thinks about public services. At the moment it appears to shift between two positions. One week it rightly recognises that turning round our public services will take huge efforts, considerable time and real money. That is an honest position. It chimes with the experience of service users. And after real delays in the first term, cash is now available.

“But another week it will pretend that there is some kind of quick fix, usually involving the private sector. Yet, to take the example of the NHS, the deep problems of under investment,

shortage of doctors and nurses, and closed beds cannot be turned round by taking over a few beds in a BUPA hospital. No-one can object to spare capacity in the private sector or abroad being used as a short term measure for NHS patients, but to pretend that this is anything but a sticking plaster for a local bottle neck is to think that gimmicks and spin can substitute for sustained investment.

“Improving and modernising our public services is the biggest

‘The government must decide what it really thinks about public services. At the moment it appears to shift between two positions’

‘Every study shows the UK remains one of the most lightly regulated economies in the advanced world’



challenge facing the government. It will only succeed if it wins the support of public sector staff for the changes that are needed and convinces voters that a programme of steady improvement has begun. Gimmicks and an obsession with tomorrow's headlines may appear attractive short-term tactics, but they work against the only long-term strategy that will deliver.

“Thirdly it must make up its mind what relationship it wants to have with business. Of course the government must work closely with business and help British firms prosper and succeed. But it must recognise that there are other interests as well – the consumer, the employee and the environment to name three prominent ones. It must also understand that being pro-business is not the same as responding to special interest lobbying from business leaders. Yet it has allowed a climate to develop in which sensible rules to regulate markets, protect consumers or secure minimum standards of fairness at work can be dismissed as red tape and regulation, rather than discussed on their merits. Yet as every study shows the UK remains one of the most lightly regulated economies in the advanced world.

“It must recognise that business lobbying can often be short

sighted. Take for example training. Everyone now recognises that the poor skills level of much of the workforce is a major brake on productivity, but business has consistently lobbied against effective measures that would make employers invest in training their workforce, while other countries have got on with building high-skill, high-productivity workforces.

“Rather than respond to special interest lobbying, or give one lobby an inside track, the government must develop open partnerships with all the many interests that make up our complex society. And then, when they can persuade us to work together, as in the recent CBI-TUC proposals on productivity or the Low Pay Commission, they are likely to get sensible proposals that go beyond special pleading.

“2002 will also be a challenging year for unions. There are good signs such as new recognition deals that show unions can reach out to new workplaces, but continuing manufacturing job losses will hit membership. The challenge to unions to modernise and attract new members in the new sectors of the economy continues. New mergers will help modernise our structures.

”

SPECIAL REPORT

What am I like?

THE STRUGGLE for equality for gay men and lesbian women in employment must continue. The Scottish Court of Session (equivalent to the English Court of Appeal) has overturned the earlier decision that discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation falls within the definition of sex discrimination under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA).

Ministry of Defence – v – MacDonald arose as a result of the compulsory resignation from the air force of Mr MacDonald prior to the removal of the ban on gays in the military. By contrast with those who had previously challenged the ban, MacDonald proceeded by way of a challenge under the SDA. Although there was authority to the effect that the SDA did not prohibit discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation these cases had been before the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA).

The Scottish Employment Appeal Tribunal allowed MacDonald's appeal on the (mistaken) basis that the European Convention on Human Rights treated sexual orientation as "sex"

The Court was unanimous in the view that "sex" for the purposes of the SDA referred only to the "male sex and the female sex, and the simple categorisation of people as men or women", rather than to "gender or sexual orientation".

with the effect that the word "sex" in the SDA was ambiguous and, accordingly, could be construed so as to give effect to the UK's Treaty obligations to protect the applicant from discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation.

The Ministry of Defence appealed against EAT's decision. By this time the HRA was in force which meant the Court was bound to read and give effect to primary legislation, such as the SDA, in a



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way which is compatible with the Convention rights (s3). Further, as a public authority, the Court was bound not to act in a way which was incompatible with a Convention right (s6). Their Lordships accepted that such discrimination contravened the European Convention on Human Rights. But the Court was unanimous in the view that “sex” for the purposes of the SDA referred only to the “male sex and the female sex, and the simple categorisation of people as men or women”, rather than to “gender or sexual orientation”.

Having defined the meaning of sex, the task was to establish whether there has been less favourable treatment on grounds of sex. That requires a comparison of the cases of people of different sex where “the relevant circumstances in the one case are the same, or not materially different in the other” (section 5(3) SDA). The Ministry of Defence had argued that the appropriate female comparator in this case was a lesbian woman who would have been subject to the same treatment as MacDonald himself. MacDonald argued that the appropriate comparison was with a heterosexual woman – so a man wanting or having a male partner should be compared with a woman wanting or having a male partner.

If the “relevant circumstances” were wanting or having a male partner, less favourable treatment and unlawful sex discrimination was made out of the facts. But if the relevant circumstances were wanting or having a same sex partner, there was no less favourable treatment on grounds of sex.

The Court of Session was divided, with a majority (two Judges) taking the latter view and preferring to read the applicant’s sexual

The Ministry of Defence had argued that the appropriate female comparator in this case was a lesbian woman who would have been subject to the same treatment as MacDonald himself

“orientation” (i.e. his homosexuality, as distinct from the bare fact of his attraction to men) into the circumstances “irrelevant” for the purposes of s5(3). They were not satisfied that s3 of the HRA required that the SDA be interpreted to extend to the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation as well as gender.

The decision in MacDonald may be criticised because of the approach taken by the Court to its interpretation both of the Human Rights Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. In another HRA case (*R – v – A*) the House of Lords took a very robust approach to the application of s3, utilising it to subvert the intention of the legislature where the legislation at issue was itself seen to interfere with individual rights.

In MacDonald, the SDA merely failed to provide a remedy against interference whether by a public or private employer. The decision, should it stand, illustrates the operation of entrenched rights as constraining, rather than requiring, state action. Such

‘Less favourable treatment’ has, on occasion, been found by tribunals in the dress code context but such decisions are rare

rights operate against action taken by the State to ameliorate disadvantage – in *R v A*, the House of Lords undermined legislation directed specifically towards eradicating the impact of sexist assumptions on rape trials. But they are less effective in requiring a positive response to action taken by others.

It is arguable that the Court of Session misapplied the specific model of entrenchment embraced by the HRA, coupled with the imposition by the European Convention organs of some degree of positive obligation on the state to protect Convention rights from interference by non-state actors. Confronted with a case brought under the SDA, it can be argued that the court is obliged to interpret the SDA itself “so far as it is possible to do so” to prohibit such discrimination.

The second point raised concerns s5(3) SDA. Here the majority decision is the latest in a line of cases in which that provision (and its Race Relations Act equivalent) has been used to undermine the ability of the SDA (and the RRA) to prohibit direct discrimination.

The question whether a woman and her comparator are in the same “relevant circumstances” is at the very heart of the problem of equality. Unless it is taken that the circumstances “relevant” to the comparison do not themselves differentiate directly between men and women, any less favourable treatment which could be rationalised by reference to any difference between the man and the woman compared would be defined as “not discrimination”.

S5(3) has given rise to the difficulties in relation to sex-specific clothing and appearance rules, (such as mandatory silly hats for female nurses and ponytail bans for men) as well as in sexual orientation cases.

The courts generally accept that a “sex appropriate dress code” can be a “relevant circumstance” within s5(3), and find discrimination only if the terms of the code, as they apply to one sex, are significantly less favourable than those which apply to the other (*Schmidt v Austicks Bookshops* [1978] ICR 85).

“Less favourable treatment” has, on occasion, been found by tribunals in the dress code context but such decisions are rare. It is to be regretted that the Court of Session did not seize the opportunity afforded it in MacDonald to give effect to the purpose of the SDA – the eradication of sex discrimination – by refusing to accept as relevant for the purposes of s5(3) a circumstance itself tainted by sex.

Had it done so, the logic of the decision would have reached beyond the issue of sexual orientation discrimination and beyond.

'HUMAN ERROR'

Human error: Who

WHEN there is a disaster, like an aeroplane crash or train crash, it is not unusual for media reports to attribute the incident to "human error". The employee making the error can then expect to be blamed for the whole matter and in some cases vilified. Although there may be management failures these will be seen as secondary, or even insignificant, compared to the acts of omissions of the individual.

Fortunately disasters are few and far between. However incidents at the workplace that lead to injury or could have led to injury, happen every week. Management, like the media reports, has a tendency to blame incidents on the errors of individuals involved. This in turn can culminate in disciplinary action against them. The basic assumption is that people are able to choose between safe and unsafe acts. Therefore if something goes wrong, then it must be the fault of that individual.

Given this approach, how can individuals in these circumstances be defended? It is suggested that putting the error into context, looking for the underlying causes and considering the management of human error by the company will be important for defending disciplinary proceedings (and also criminal proceedings if these are brought).

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) estimates that human error is involved in approximately 80% of accidents. In its publication *Reducing error and influencing behaviour* (1999), more often called by its reference HSG48, it states:

"Many accidents are blamed on the actions or omissions of an individual who was directly involved in operational or maintenance work. This typical but short-sighted response ignores the fundamental failures which led to the accident. These are usually rooted deeper in the organisation's design, management and decision-making functions".

It goes on to say:

"Organisations must recognise that they need to consider human factors as a distinct element which must be recognised, assessed and managed effectively in order to control risks".

HSG 48 is quoted by Lord Cullen in his report into the Ladbroke Grove crash of 1999, published last June. One of the train drivers passed a red signal (known as a SPAD – signal passed at danger) which resulted in the collision.

The signal in question had been passed on eight previous

occasions in six years and each had been attributed to "driver error". Lord Cullen found that the industry investigations into these incidents had failed to identify root causes. Lord Cullen's analysis explains how the driver's error was a consequence of poor infrastructure and management failures rather than looking at his error as a cause of the crash. There are now proposals to amend the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) to require employers to investigate the causes of certain workplace accidents. In addition the findings of the investigation will have to be taken into account when reviewing any relevant risk assessments. Annexed to the Health and Safety Commission's Consultative Document setting out these proposals, there are extracts from a contract research report detailing a survey carried out of current industry practice in incident investigation. The report, entitled *Accident investigation – the drivers, methods and outcomes* (CRR 344/2001) and published by the HSE, says that the survey found the incident investigation of companies ranged from a largely unstructured approach to one supported by clear procedures and associated analysis tools.

Approaches to investigation varied from "system" based (which examine all potential contributory factors) to "traditional" methods (focusing on the individual concerned and the most immediate cause). Overall, companies were found to favour the traditional approach. The findings also suggest that the majority of companies do not differentiate between immediate and

underlying causes.

Human error can clearly be a hazard which may need to be risk assessed in appropriate circumstances (as required by Regulation 3 MHSWR). HSG 48 gives guidance as to how this type of hazard should be risk assessed. Therefore in any disciplinary proceedings it is important to consider any relevant risk assessments. It is important to also consider how the company took human fallibilities into account when designing the task, activity and/or workplace relevant to the incident. In other words, was it possible that these elements made an error by an individual more likely?

It must be ensured that those carrying out the investigation into the incident have the appropriate training and understanding or have expert advice available to them so that all contributory factors can be identified and understood. That is to

Incidents at the workplace that lead to injury or could have led to injury, happen every week. Management, like the media reports, has a tendency to blame incidents on the errors of individuals involved.

is to blame?



STEFANO CAGNONI/REDFERDITAL.CO.UK

Accident at work: Emergency services, after peeling off the front roof of the vehicle and removing an injured Parcel Force employee from his van following a collision with a London bus, inspect the damage at the scene

say an organisational approach needs to be taken to the investigation, finding the underlying causes so that the nature of the error can be understood and any culpability determined fairly.

It is interesting to note another publication by the HSE Successful Health And Safety Management, referred to as HSG 65 (1997) which states that the prime responsibility for accident and ill health prevention rests with management. It says:

"Accidents, ill health and incidents are seldom random events. They generally arise from failures of control and involve multiple contributory elements. The immediate cause may be a human or technical failure, but they usually arise from organisational failings which are the responsibility of management. Successful policies aim to exploit the strengths of employees. They aim to minimise the contribution of human limitations and fallibilities by examining how the organisation is structured and how jobs and systems are designed".

The approach set out above does not seek to justify a blanket immunity from sanctions for all acts and omissions by individuals involved in incidents. This would clearly be undesirable as it might be seen as encouraging unreasonably reckless, negligent or even malevolent behaviour. However the problem lies in distinguishing between truly bad conduct and unsafe acts and omissions for which discipline, it is suggested, is neither appropriate or useful.

Professor James Reason, a human factors expert, in his book

Managing The Risks of Organisational Accidents (Ashgate 1997) refers to the substitution test put forward by Neil Johnston as a way of determining when there should be disciplinary action. If the unsafe acts of a person are implicated in an incident then the following test should be applied. Substitute the individual concerned for someone else coming from the same area of work and having comparable experience and qualifications. In the light of how events unfolded and were perceived by those involved in real time, it is likely that this new individual would have behaved any differently? If the answer is "probably not" then apportioning blame, Professor Reason argues, has no material role to play. He adds that this test can be expanded upon by asking the individual's peers: "Given the circumstances that prevailed at the time, could you be sure that you would not have committed the same or similar type of unsafe act"? If the answer again is "probably not", then blame is inappropriate.

So far these theories are being examined in the context of major disasters and criminal litigation and have a crucial role to play. In addition, the understanding of these concepts in employment law – particularly in disciplinary and unfair dismissal cases – could alter the law and perception of the very meaning of capability and conduct.

**Extract from Thompsons Labour and European Law Review
June 2001**

LETTERS

IMPERSONATING JEWS

Dear Firefighter,

I am very glad that Paul Kleinman (July/August edition) wants to hear both sides of an argument, but his letter indicates that this willingness seems to be somewhat superficial and that he should check his facts before presenting them.

Firstly, facts and figures. Israel has historically refused to define its borders; the size referred to is the size of pre-partition Palestine. The Partition Plan handed 54% of that land as a state to those representing 27% of the population – mainly Europeans. Imagine Britain having to hand England over to Italian immigrants because the Romans happened to be in charge 2000 years ago! Ben Gurion, the Zionist leader, urged Zionist acceptance of the plan at a Conference in Baltimore, USA, explicitly stating that what was on offer was only a start and that the Zionists would build a military force that would take the rest in due course.

If we are talking comparisons, “ethnics” – as in people non-indigenous to an area or of immigrant extraction – are mainly found in the Jewish population of Israel.

Secondly, the democratic point. Israel, which has no written constitution to guarantee equality for all its citizens, discriminates against (non-Jewish) Arabs in many ways. A couple of telling examples: It is illegal for a non-Jew to own or purchase land; qualification for some state benefits or even a mortgage is deliberately dependent upon service in the IDF – which is barred to Israel’s Arab citizens (religious Jews have special dispensations).

Uniquely, a non-Jewish Arab can be jailed for “impersonating a Jew” – why should this matter if a non-Jewish Arab is equal under the law in every way? It is also illegal for a political party in Israel to be anti-Zionist in nature. So what is an Arab’s vote worth if he has to cast it in favour of a party that is committed to maintaining the Jewish supremacy that denies him full equality? Worth mentioning also, is the all-pervasive lack of investment in the provision of education, health infrastructure and other services in Arab areas of the country.

Take the rose-coloured spectacles off Paul Kleinman, not every democracy is the same. It’s not a matter of “a certain amount of discrimination”: Arabs are treated differently in almost every way – full stop!

As for the 1999 “Peace Agreement”, which never got beyond an offer – so nothing was actually agreed – let’s hear the other side of that story... “Israel agreed to withdraw from 90% of Palestinian territory in return for lasting peace” (what about the other 10% of what you admit to be Palestinian territory? Was it too cruel to ask those settlers to move again?)

To the Palestinians, Israel is occupied Palestinian territory – I’m sure they would jump at the chance to get 90% of it back! The Occupied Territories represent about 18% of pre-partition Palestine. Let’s put it this way: if someone takes your 4-



bedroomed home and then offers to give you the garage, tool shed and a narrow strip of garden connecting them, would you fall over yourself with gratitude? Taking something from someone and then offering back the bits you don’t want or find inconvenient to keep is an insult.

The principle aside, the offer was so full of strings – leaving control of water, access, movement, security etc in Israeli hands – that the Palestinian “state” would have been nothing more than the Arab enclosure at the Israeli safari park; an insecure ghetto, but a useful PR coup for the Israelis.

Why the surprise that the occupiers are hated? Hate, like respect, is something that is earned. Treat people like dirt and they won’t like you for it – it’s a simple enough concept. For twenty years they provided the Israelis with dirt-cheap labour, a captive market for their goods; they were taxed to pay for the machinery of occupation; they even had to build the settlements! (“Making the desert bloom” in the Negev was dropped in favour of breaking international law). No one bothered to talk to or negotiate with them. It was only the first Intifada that showed the occupation up for what it was, and still is. It was only when “Iron Fist” generated bad PR in the USA that the Israelis were made to take notice.

Under International Law the Palestinians have the right to resist the occupation. The settlers are part of that occupation. Even with the IDF to do the terrorising and the brutality for them,

the settlers are violent and provocative (two Israeli judicial reports attest to it). If settlers are killed, they have only themselves to blame. They choose to be there and provide a human shield for Israeli expansionism.

"Terrorism" is defined as violence for political ends. Two former terrorists have been Israeli Prime Minister; the present incumbent has been particularly active in state terrorism throughout his career. We need to get away from angels and devils: neither side is more blessed or cursed than the other is.

I could go on and on. I advise Paul Kleinman to read more around his subject. There are other valid voices to be heard. The facts are in the public domain. I agree with him about the corruption; and it is true of both sides, as a look at Israeli politics will show.

I hope however, that he could agree with me that the only way to really end the tragedy – for both peoples – is to treat both sides as equals, despite the imbalance of power and influence. There can be no meaningful negotiation and no real justice done with one side refusing to talk "under fire" and the other side, under occupation and siege, looking down the smoking barrel of the Israeli war machine.

Now that America has accepted the need for a Palestinian State; Israel still has not declared her borders, and the Palestinians have accepted Israel as a non-reversible entity (not Israel's "right to exist" – which implicitly accepts that Israel had a right to dispossess the Palestinians to fulfil its existence) maybe the time is right to go back to basics.

I suggest that a neutral and trusted third party (the Norwegians again?) draw up the boundaries of two viable states; the Security Council accept it in advance, as a gesture of confidence; the UN adopt the boundaries and recognise both states. Israel and Palestine would then be required to agree, under pain of sustained international economic sanctions. Each would adopt a written constitution granting complete equality to all citizens. There need not be massive transfers of population only the voluntary departure of those not willing to stay. Who knows, maybe one day they will join a federation of some sort together? A truly just settlement would allow the world to isolate the "terrorists" on both sides. Maybe Tony Blair could sponsor this idea ... or the FBU? Finally, anyone can say they want peace when it is on their terms. The real test of that wish is when you lose as much as you gain to achieve it, as both sides will do. The challenge will be for the Israelis to reaffirm the choice of 1947 – when it was only Palestinian land being given away.

PAUL HORNER
South Wales Brigade

THANK YOU

Dear Firefighter,

As a FBU member for 27 years and continuing as an Out of Trade member since my retirement in September 2000, I would like to thank the Union and especially Joe MacVeigh, London Region

member, for the continued support and skilled help in my appeal involving the Social Security.

Thanks again.

Michael Sheppard
OOT Member – London

APPEALS

Dear Firefighter,

As an Out of Trade member I would like to thank the FBU and in particular Joe MacVeigh (London Region), for representing me at my Appeals Service Hearing. Without his help and guidance, I doubt we would have been successful.

PAUL OSWALD
OOT Member

TORY BLAIR

Dear Firefighter,

I agree with the sentiment of Neale Williams' viewpoint in Sept/Oct Firefighter, but an alternative Party to New Labour is severely handicapped. Blair has no affiliation with Socialism or Labour principles, but he insisted on keeping 'Labour' in his new party name.

No doubt, as one of the numerous lawyers in the 'House, he realised that whilst he 'misused' the name of Labour, real Labour/Socialist activists could not use it.

As it is a well known fact that many Labour voters would like to see the back of Blair's sleaze ridden outfit, who seem to indulge only in self-benefit and preservation in the midst of some of Parliament's biggest blunders, i.e. the fateful Dome, Foot and Mouth, Railtrack, etc., with not one resignation by anyone responsible.

However, getting Labour voters to vote for parties standing on a Socialist ticket is very difficult as older people like us have always voted Labour and many look on the Socialist variants as extremists and 'lefties', with the undying help of the media of course. The solution must come from within, with Unions withdrawing their financial support and assistance, in search of a better deal for the 'real' people in this country rather than the speculators who flit from one grossly overpaid job to another, always taking with them massive golden handshakes/share options, usually for leaving the outfit worse off than when they arrived. One needs only to look at the House of Lords to understand Blair's strategy. He got rid of the majority of hereditary Peers because he did not agree with unelected people influencing the running of the country. So say all of us! Then he fills the benches with his cronies/benefactors and back-scratchers. Elected!!! Not a chance. And who are the Government Ministers that creep out to face the press/media in crisis, ... the 'untouchable' Peers, who cannot be cross-questioned by MP's in the House, hence Blair's authority in Parliament is bombproof.

LETTERS

He's got to go, but he's got to be toppled from within, like his mentor, Maggie. Blair's New Labour has to be replaced by the Labour Party so as "to secure for the workers, by hand or brain, the fruits of their labour."

PETE GIBLIN

OOT Member – Kingston upon Hull East

FAIR'S FAIR

Dear Firefighter,

Following the time I have spent working with the Fire and Rescue Service on the Equality and Fairness initiative, I would like, through 'Firefighter', to thank all those who contributed over the past 18 months.

My own involvement with the initiative has come to an end, but I hope the work we put in will help the Service in its development. The response to the two-day seminar from those requesting further involvement was up and above initial expectation. It is my hope that that commitment can be built upon. Thanks to the FBU and to the members of the management team. Special thanks to the Fire and Rescue Service employees who made the initiative a pleasure to be involved with. Particular thanks to all those who "dropped me off at the station."

Good luck for the future.

CHRIS MURPHY

Trade Union Education

FIGHTING TALK

Dear Firefighter,

I, and several of my colleagues have just read Firefighter Vol. 29, No. 7 September/October 2001.

On page 8 there is a story featuring the Amirauya Shelter incident in the Gulf War of 1991. In the passage it states that 403 civilians, including 52 children and 261 women were executed in a planned and co-ordinated attack when a specially designed armour-piercing missile penetrated the ventilation hole.

I, and many of my colleagues take great exception to this statement and find it distasteful that an otherwise reasonable magazine should stoop to slanderous and libellous comments. To suggest that these people were executed is a total insult to the aircrew who flew in the Gulf War and a statement made on no evidence.

Whilst it is appalling that civilians die in any situation, could we please put this in context? At the time, the top floor and possibly the second floor of this building were being used as a command and communications centre. This is not mentioned in the article, but it is a common tactic by unscrupulous Governments to put valuable military assets on top of civilian shelters, then if they are hit, it makes the allies look bad. The people who wrote this article were obviously drawn into this trap. We see the same happening in Afghanistan. Further, why execute civilians when no one could

know who was in there? If this was an execution why weren't there more? In addition, Iraq gains a great deal of money from oil exports probably enough to feed and treat its population. Saddam Hussein spends it on air defences and military equipment. If you don't believe it, read the UN literature more closely or Janes Defence Weekly or any one of 30 or 40 respected military. You will find the Iraqi people starving, not because of us, but because of the leadership commentaries.

ALEX RACE – Cleveland

SECRET INFORMATION

Dear Firefighter,

I retired on medical grounds from West Yorkshire Fire Service in May 1993 after serving for 23 years, 17 of which I was a Divisional Official of the FBU. In my later years I had an interest in freedom of information and became increasingly concerned with the 'secret' personal record files that were kept by the Brigade on all firefighters. Access to these files was denied to the firefighters who were subject to them, but officers above and including ADO, could view any firefighter, Leading firefighter and Sub Officers P.R.F. This often led to the ridiculous situation that when an officer was giving a retirement speech on behalf of a retiring lower rank, he would publicly refer to items contained in the P.R.F., of which the retiree had no knowledge. Often this knowledge was imparted to the audience as a means of entertainment.

Just prior to my retirement, the FBU had negotiated access for firefighters to their personal record files. This access was granted on the grounds of written request and that officers of the personnel section would be present whilst the file was viewed. The Authority reserved the right to remove any items they did not want you to view. No copies of entries in the file were allowed at this time. I took advantage of this and viewed my file, which in some respects was a biography of my life from the age of 21 years old to 46 years old. The P.R.F., I viewed contained approximately 20 items.

After my retirement from the West Yorkshire Fire Service I became a lecturer and head of department in a large Further Education College. In October 2001, whilst discussing the Data Protection Act with a law lecturer colleague, I was informed that information such as personal record files kept by employers were now covered under this Act and employees and ex-employees were entitled, under the Law, to copies of such information. The maximum charge that could be levied for this information by employers was also prescribed in Law at £10.00.

I wrote to West Yorkshire Fire Service believing that they would be conversant with the Law, and requested copies of all entries in my P.R.F. I received a reply, which said that my P.R.F., now contained 450 items and there would be a charge of £180 for copies. I believed this to be a breach of the intent of the legislation and a deliberate attempt to obstruct me in obtaining my P.R.F.

I again discussed this matter with my Law lecturer colleague. He supplied me with a telephone number for the Freedom of Information Commissioner's Office at the Home Office. I telephoned this number and was told categorically by a member of the Commissioner's staff that the maximum charge for copies of information held by an employer on an employee was £10.00. He also supplied me with the reference of the statutory instrument, which relates to this charge, which is as follows:

The Data Protection Act 1998

The Data Protection (Subject Access)(Fees Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2000

Statutory Instrument No. 191/2000 Section 3

I contacted West Yorkshire Fire Service Personnel Department and informed them of this. They were sceptical and said that there was a lot of work involved in copying 450 items. I supplied them, by fax, with a copy of the Statutory Instrument and can only assume that they will now abide by the law.

Once again I feel angry at the obstructive nature of the Fire Service when dealing with employees and ex-employees. My personal record file can be of no use to West Yorkshire Fire Service, especially as I have been retired for 8 years and I believe it would be a nice gesture if when a firefighter retires, he or she was presented with a copy of their P.R.F. This would avoid them finding out what was in it at a retirement function and would ensure that any entries made in the file were factual and not hearsay and opinion.

I hope the information I have supplied helps other serving and retired firefighters to obtain the secret information that was kept about them during their service.

ROGER MORTON
OOT Member

UNITED WE STAND

Dear Firefighter,

We at the Formby Branch, Region 9 Merseyside, have been the focus of an intense campaign by Chief Officer Saunders and the Merseyside Fire Authority to reduce fire cover from Wholetime to day staffing. The Section 19 was granted, but it went to arbitration, resulting in a victory for the FBU. I would like to put on record our thanks to the National Officials, especially Mike Fordham and our Local Officials at Region 9, who were all magnificent, but special thanks to Ian Foulkes, Les Skarratts, Neil Thompson, Pete Skinley and past Brigade Chair and Secretary Dave Buckney and Tony Carvell.

Also, I would like to pass my thanks to all the Branches throughout the country who sent letters of support.

Once again, the FBU has prevailed and have proven there is strength in unity.

D. ORR
Branch Secretary

FIGHT FOR TRUTH

Dear Firefighter,

The Campaign, family and I would like to convey our sincere thanks for your recent purchase of the Memorial books – £237.00 towards our continuing fight for 'truth' and 'justice' regarding my brother Errol's and nephew Jason's suspicious deaths.

People from throughout the country attended our Demo/Rally on 15th September that drew attention to police incompetence and their apparent indifference to racial antagonism. Speaker after speaker called on West Mercia Police to publish the 57 recommendations that the Metropolitan Police, that the public may scrutinise. Without your continuous support we would not have retained emotional strength nor had the finances to remain resolute in our aims.

Yours sincerely,
CLIFTON McGOWAN

Justice for Errol and Jason McGowan
PO Box 216 Wellington, Telford, TF1 4WU
Tel: 07974 791 358 – e-mail: cliff.mc@ic24.net
www.mcgowanaj.co.uk

THANKS

Dear Andy,

Thank you for the message of sympathy on behalf of yourself and members of the Fire Brigades Union. My colleagues and I were proud to have known and worked with Jimmy throughout his period in office. It is comforting and reassuring to know that the thoughts of all those who came into contact with Jimmy are with his family and the Union at this time.

Along with all others, the Union will place your condolences on record.

VERNON HINCE
Acting General Secretary, RMT

SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Dear Firefighter,

Rossington N.U.M. Branch Dispute with UK Coal

May I take this opportunity to thank you personally for the magnificent support and messages of solidarity that we have received from the Regions and Stations across the United Kingdom. Every message has been read out to Branch meetings to tremendous acclaim, it has often been a humbling experience to understand that such warmth, understanding and comradeship still exists in today's 'look after number 1 climate'. I have enclosed a number of our latest bulletin sheets for circulation at your convenience. You will no doubt see that the Branch, albeit narrowly, voted for a return to work after 12 weeks

LETTERS

on all out strike. It is fair to say that they gave their utmost and remained 100% loyal to their Union and themselves, with not one member crossing the picket line. The dispute has been a difficult one to sustain, the anti Trade Union Laws playing a huge part in what effectively seeks to "hamstring" any attempts that the Union seeks to ensure support is forthcoming. If you or any of your Executive require any more information, do not hesitate to get in touch.

It remains to say in conclusion, that the heartfelt thanks from the Branch members and their families seems scant reward for the efforts of the magnificent firefighters of Great Britain.

CHRIS SKIDMORE

Branch Delegate

National Union of Mineworkers

THANKS

Dear Firefighter,

Rossington N.U.M. Branch Hardship Fund

Once again we salute our magnificent comrades from the FBU. It has been true to say that even some hardened miners have been moved to tears, never mind their wives, by your wonderful efforts on our behalf. The Brigadesmen/women the length and breadth of the country have been a credit to themselves and to their Union. With Christmas just around the corner, we can do something to alleviate the hardship of the Branch members, especially those who are sick and injured and still away from work. Your efforts on our behalf will never be forgotten; it is hoped that one day our paths will cross and you can be properly thanked for the help you have given us.

CHRIS SKIDMORE

Branch Delegate

National Union of Mineworkers

BLOCKING THE DAM

Dear Firefighter,

CAMPAIGN SUCCEEDS AS BALFOUR BEATTY WITHDRAWS FROM ILISU!

This is the letter we always hoped one day to be able to write! On 13 November, Balfour Beatty, the lead contractor for the Ilisu Dam, announced its withdrawal from the project on social, environmental and economic grounds. Its Italian partner, Impregilo, has also withdrawn. So first, we wanted to say a huge THANK YOU to you all for your support. And also let you know what's happening and how we need your help in the future.

The news was greeted with jubilation by campaigners and by those whose homes, lands and livelihoods were threatened by the dam. Speaking from Batman, a town which would be impacted by the dam, Mayor Abdullah Akin said, "The people are celebrating."

Executive Director of the Kurdish Human Rights Project and Chair of the Ilisu Dam Campaign, Kerim Yildiz, expressed his delight at the news: "Balfour Beatty's withdrawal has vindicated what we at the

Campaign have been saying all along; that the Ilisu dam would be a human rights, environmental and cultural disaster. This Campaign, strengthened by the unity of human rights and environmental groups working together, has helped to establish a precedent in sending a clear message to governments and companies that projects like Ilisu are simply not acceptable. This Campaign not only stopped the Ilisu dam, but has also helped to establish the beginnings of a democratic platform in Turkey where people can discuss possible alternatives to disastrous projects like Ilisu. After one and a half years of very active campaigning we have finally prevailed in getting the UK out of the Ilisu dam project. We used many tactics, including the credible threat of legal action, press coverage, political work, grassroots letter writing, demonstrations, public meetings, coalition building, international networking and shareholder activism. It really did work and much of the credit must go to you, the supporters. It was your active support that built the groundswell of public furore around this project, helping to make Ilisu so controversial that even a huge multinational like Balfour Beatty had to listen.

Balfour Beatty had applied for export credit support from the UK Export Credit Guarantee Department (ECGD) and from the US Ex-Im Bank. With the company's withdrawal, both agencies have now ceased to be involved in the project. The company admits that the project failed to meet the conditions laid down by the agencies for export credit support – which is what we have argued all along. We will be continuing to monitor the project closely, although the chances are that Ilisu has now effectively been stopped due to the consortium's collapse. A Turkish source told Channel 4 news, "Other European firms won't be interested now and the Ilisu project may not go ahead." We will continue to work with international colleagues to ensure that other companies do not become involved – so that Ilisu is once and for all truly stopped.

We are now calling for the lessons of Ilisu to be learned. We want ECGD and other export credit agencies to adopt legally-binding human rights, environment and development standards – so that other 'Ilisus' cannot happen in future. To this end, the coalition that founded the Ilisu Dam Campaign – the Kurdish Human Rights Project, Friends of the Earth, The Cornerhouse and Mark Thomas – is going to be campaigning on other projects in the region. One, the Yusefeli dam, would be built by UK firm AMEC and partly financed with a £68 million ECGD credit. Another, the BP-promoted Baku-Ceyhan oil and gas pipeline, will cut through the Kurdish regions of Turkey, raising human rights and environmental concerns. We would love to have your continued support for our proposed work on these campaigns. With your help we could capitalise on the victory we have achieved with Ilisu. Because of the Data Protection Act, we need your consent to contact you on these issues in the future. (Mailings would be about as frequent as they have been with the Ilisu Dam Campaign). Please help us to follow through on the successes of the Ilisu campaign. With many thanks again for your invaluable help and support.

KATE GEARY

Co-ordinator – Ilisu Dam Campaign

Email: ilisu@gn.apc.org • Web: www.ilisu.org.uk



The only war worth fighting

NEVER has the slogan of the radical charity been more appropriate than now, as the world's richest nation bombs one of the poorest.

Poverty and hopelessness can lead people to take desperate measures. While the well-dressed and well-educated hijackers of September 11 could hardly have pleaded poverty, many of their countrymen and women, struggling to survive in Afghanistan, Pakistan and across the Middle East can.

During the 50 years that War on Want has been in existence it has relentlessly sought a truly socialist response to global poverty. We have worked to help the people most affected by poverty find long term solutions – the unemployed and illiterate, workers who earn little and whose rights are virtually non-existent, women who experience abuse and discrimination and young children who have to forego an education to work punishing hours so that their families can survive. By working with indigenous organisations we have eschewed prescriptive solutions in favour of self-determination and self-empowerment for those affected by poverty.

By launching a war on poverty the West could begin to address the cancer that lies at the heart of the vast majority of conflicts around the world. Such an initiative would help isolate terrorists from their potential sympathisers. The poverty-stricken are the most vulnerable to anti-American and anti-Western rhetoric – resenting the grotesque contrast between their own desperate situation and that of the rich West. After all, if you have no hope, what do you have to lose? Thus, violence has always proved itself the last recourse of the poor, the disenfranchised and the powerless – from the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, to the current conflict in Palestine.

On September 11, in the developing world 35,615 children died of starvation, according to United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation statistics. When the means to eradicate poverty exists, this can hardly be called a just situation, so when will the war on starvation be declared – Operation Enduring Freedom-For-All?

Nearly 800 million people currently do not get enough food,

By launching a war on poverty the West could begin to address the cancer that lies at the heart of the vast majority of conflicts around the world

and around 500 million are chronically malnourished. More than one third of the world's children are malnourished. More than 840 million adults are illiterate – 538 million of them are women. One in five of the world's people – 1.2 billion – live on less than a dollar a day, according to the UN Development Programme's most recent annual report. More than 50 countries have lower real per capita incomes today than they had a decade ago.

If poverty is the oxygen that feeds the flames of terrorism, then unprincipled, unbridled globalisation is the bellows that fans those flames. While globalisation has meant essential trade and development for the developing world, it has also meant growing inequality, exploitation of scarce resources and abuse of workers' rights. Globalisation in its present relatively unregulated form, is the new colonialism. Where once the West invaded countries, enslaved their people and plundered their resources, now Western companies set up factories in impoverished nations in order to exploit low wages and the lack of regulations.

If the West really wants to tackle the root cause of poverty, and thus of conflict, it must tackle the World Trade Organisation – by root and branch reform or replacement with a body whose dictates address the problems of impoverished nations. Drugs for widespread and fatal illnesses must be affordable to the poor and the West must abandon hypocritical policies whereby the agricultural products of rich nations are subsidised – giving farmers an unfair advantage over their cousins in the developing world – or where aid is cruelly tied to trade.

Since the terrorist attacks, Governments, central banks and stock exchanges have demonstrated their willingness to intervene

WAR ON WANT



Demonstrating for Paestinaina rights in London last year. Tony Blair says: "The Palestinians must have justice and the chance to prosper in their own land as equal partners with Israel."

in the market place to shore-up ailing companies and help slow the onset of global recession. This willingness to intervene somewhat contradicts the same organisations' criticisms of measures to dampen currency speculation, such as the Tobin tax. If it is possible to intervene in the name of shareholders and British or US jobs, why is it not possible to intervene for the sake of the poor whose fragile economies are vulnerable to speculators?

Fifty years ago, not long after the second world war, one of our founders, Harold Wilson, had a vision of how the post-war Labour Government's brand of socialism – the NHS, the National Insurance scheme, etc, could be exported to the rest of the world. He called it the war on want and established our organisation to help make it happen.

Now, a Labour Government led by Tony Blair is in pole position to draw the United States' republican administration out of its isolationist stance on the Middle East, Kyoto and so on and find some progressive and long-term solutions to the world's problems.

Like Harold Wilson before him, Blair outlined a progressive global vision during his speech to Labour Party Conference last October. He talked of a "Partnership for Africa between the developed and developing world" whereby the West would provide more aid, write off debt and help develop infrastructure. He acknowledged the need to improve access to Western markets "so that we practice the free trade we are so fond of preaching."

The terrorist attacks have shown that the US is not invulnerable to fall-out from overseas conflicts, this time in the Middle East. Blair has acknowledged that the state of Palestine must be recognised if the Middle East crisis is to be resolved: "The Palestinians must have justice and the chance to prosper in their own land as equal partners with Israel."

This is a beginning, but it is far from being the full extent of the problem. Within a decade or so, an already drought stricken Middle East will be almost completely devoid of water. At the same time its population will have doubled. What then?

Blair's sentiments are welcome and we hope that they are speedily put into practice. A far sighted vision for helping build rather than bomb the way to a sustainable peace in the Middle East, with justice, liberty, hope and the prospect of prosperity for all is urgently needed. The issues involved are complex, but until this complexity is fully acknowledged and embraced, no workable solution can be found. The problems in this region, as in so many 'conflict zones', are not simply political or religious, nor are they static. They are social, economic, environmental and rapidly changing. Most importantly, there is no quick fix.

All those who desire a more peaceful and equal world should press the Government to turn its short-term battle against terror into a far-sighted, ongoing war on want, with all the challenges that implies.

ANGELA ROYAL
Executive Director, War on Want

UNION AND HUMAN RIGHTS DELEGATION TO CALI, COLOMBIA

'Never forget'

Statement of the Trade Union and Human Rights delegation to Cali Colombia

WE, A NINE MEMBER DELEGATION representing UNISON, the Colombia Solidarity Campaign, War on Want, the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers and local branches of the RMT and TGWU Unions, visited Cali in Colombia from 6th to 12th October 2001. The delegation is endorsed by the TUC and a large number of other trade unions and NGOs, reflecting the widespread concern for the human rights situation in Colombia.

Cali is a city of over 2 million people, the capital of Valle de Cauca department and the biggest city in Colombia's South West. We express our warm and public thanks to our co-hosts SINTRAEMCALI, the municipal workers union in Cali and the "National and International Human Rights Campaign Against Corruption, Privatisation and the Criminalisation of Social Protest." Both of these organisations work under constant threat.

This statement is an immediate summary of our main findings stated against the delegation's objectives, together with our observations and conclusions.

Objective: to demonstrate solidarity with SINTRAEMCALI and its members who have suffered human rights violations.

The delegation worked closely with SINTRAEMCALI. We heard accounts of some of the events surrounding intimidation, state derecognition and violence against trade unionists. The union has had 6 of its members assassinated in the last 5 years. Its leaders work under constant armed guard.

We have seen that SINTRAEMCALI is at the heart of the trade union movement regionally and nationally. A regional trade union leader spoke of genocide against trade unions and social movements. We heard reports of numerous assassinations of trade unionists in the small towns of the Valle de Cauca. Teachers have been particularly targeted. One public sector union that had protested against the loss of trade union rights had 6 members of its local executive assassinated.

Nationally, the CUT reports that 110 trade unionists had

been assassinated up to 6th October last year and that 3,000 trade unionists have been assassinated since 1987. The food processing workers union SINTRAINAL is bringing a case in the USA against the drinks multinational Coca Cola for the murder of its negotiators. But only a few of these murders receive attention in the Colombian media. The latest victim occurred during our visit. He was Gustavo Soler Mora, President of the mineworkers union at the US multinational Drummond. His murder and the subsequent protest strike only reached page 17 of El Tiempo the main national newspaper.

We offer our full support and active solidarity with the membership of SINTRAEMCALI and trade unionists in Colombia. We call on the trade union movement in Britain and internationally to engage in active accompaniment of our Colombian brothers and sisters.

Objective – to understand the current position of the campaign against privatisation of EMCALI EICE, by investigating how the corporation provides public utility services and plans to continue doing so.

We met with the union's advisers, its executive committee as well as being fully briefed by the principal directors of the EMCALI Corporation. We were also invited to two major water plants and interviewed some of the workforce. There was a striking degree of agreement between the union leadership, membership and

EMCALI's current directors that the corporation should stay in the public sector.

Despite providing the best water services in Latin America, as well as efficient electricity and telecommunications services, EMCALI's accumulated significant debts from 1995 to 2000, and the corporation is now under a special intervention regime. The sources of these debts include: an unfavourable contract to buy electricity at above market prices with a US multinational, Intergen; national Government's failure to finance the PTAR sewerage treatment plant; the failure of state entities to pay their bills; the refusal of national Government to assume its share of pension payments. In fact, the national Government is

Despite providing the best water services in Latin America, as well as efficient electricity and telecommunications services, EMCALI's accumulated significant debts from 1995 to 2000, and the corporation is now under a special intervention regime. The sources of these debts include: an unfavourable contract to buy electricity at above market prices with a US multinational, Intergen.

UNION AND HUMAN RIGHTS DELEGATION TO CALI, COLOMBIA

a net debtor to SINTRAEMCALI.

The current directors and the union are united in their condemnation of the corrupt practices of previous administrations. Working together from May last year, they are determined to run a clean operation. The workforce and management have agreed on a joint programme PARE (STOP) to save the corporation from privatisation. But the situation is very tense. During our visit national Government declared that it will replace the current Director with an appointee from the Spanish multinational FENOSA. There was a mass union meeting the same day and immediate plans are being made to block this take-over. In any case the fate of EMCALI is likely to be settled within the next few months.

The united struggle to keep EMCALI and its services in the public sector for the common good is coming to a head, the defence of this corporation and the lessons it can provide are of international significance.

Objective: to evaluate the union's joint work with community organisations, including specific co-operative projects, in the context of preserving and extending essential services to poor communities.

The workforce holds a "Minga" once a month, which means that labour teams and other volunteers go out and work for a weekend in one of Cali's many poor communities, fixing services and providing specialist skills. Due to flight delays, not all of our delegation observed the Minga. We subsequently met with community representatives from Comuna 20. There is strong support for SINTRAEMCALI and the direction that it is trying to take EMCALI Corporation.

None of the community representatives agreed with privatisation, which they see as a threat to low cost services and coverage into the poor areas. As it is the lowest strata if newly arrived displaced people have no resources at all, unemployment runs at 80-80% and the union is pushing for state support so that it can provide services to these areas.

We concluded that there is scope and strong willingness for joint project work between the union and community to provide public services in Comuna 20.

Objective: to establish contact with other trade unions and social sectors in the region, including urban community organisations, displaced people, peasantry, indigenous and black (Afro-Colombian), social organisations, in order to record their experiences of human rights violations as well as their views on public service provision.

The provision of listening at first hand to the personal narratives and testimonies from social organisations has been very moving. The scale of the violence against the civilian population, in the main part by the paramilitary AUC, is shocking. (On 10th October a massacre of 30 or more civilians took place near Buga, one hour's drive from Cali).

It is important to note that our delegation did not have the resources or the time to investigate the testimonies we heard. But at the human level, we felt we had heard an authentic expressions from many people at high personal risk. (During our visit Human Rights Watch published a major report on paramilitary violence and its links with the Colombian military.)

In Buenaventura, a port city on the Pacific coast, we met with "Palenque el Congal" a local group affiliated to the Process of Black Communities, trade unionists, social movements and the church. The Afro-Colombian community insists that it is not part of the armed conflict. In spite of this, it has suffered a great

number of massacres by the paramilitaries. The pattern is that the armed forces enter into a zone to confront the guerrilla movement and after these battles, the paramilitaries enter and conduct massacres against the civilian population. The riverside communities along the Pacific coast have been depopulated. 452 families have been displaced from along one river alone. The common people in Buenaventura as well as the

recently arrived displaced live in acute poverty alongside a port that generates enormous income.

We call on the Colombian Government to provide a protection regime for the Afro-Colombian communities living on the rivers around Buenaventura.

In Popayan we met with the Governor of Cauca, Floro Alberto Tunuvala Paja, the regional indigenous council CRIC and also several trade unions and social movements. Plan Colombia and the damage caused by fumigations was a central theme. According to the testimonies we heard there is no systematic mechanism to ensure that legal crops are not destroyed, together with illicit drug crops. The Governor recommended manual methods to eradicate drug cultivation.

The Governor and other leaders made a public call for the main guerrilla movement, the FARC, to respect the autonomy of indigenous areas.

Despite the human rights violations, there are many active movements in the area. The workers of the San Jose University Hospital are on strike to save their jobs and health services to departments. We heard testimonies from movements of

The scale of the violence against trade unions and social movements is programmatic. That is to say it is not simply a pocket of violence here and there, but a number of people have been logistically organised to execute systematic violence against the civilian population. The authors of this violence enjoy impunity from prosecution.



Former FBU General Secretary Ken Cameron and TUC General Secretary John Monks were amongst a delegation to the Colombian Embassy in London last month in support of the Emcali Sintraemcali workers' occupation against privatisation in Cali

homeless people, from families of disappeared people who described repression of their own members. CRIC told us that if it had not organised and raised consciousness among the indigenous population, they would be extinct today. As it is, they have lost 400 lives to political violence in the last 30 years. It is estimated that there are about 40 paramilitary assassinations in Cauca each month, but this figure is unconfirmed.

The majority of Colombian citizens, according to the testimonies which we heard, are suffering the consequences of the policies of their own Government in the terms of privatisation and cutting of resources for health and education. And there are grass roots struggles to stop this.

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Up to now there is no process of collecting and recording all the data of human rights violations. Neither the Colombian state, which is deeply distrusted by the victim organisations, nor any other entity, is compiling the information.

The violence causes displacement and is consistent with economic interests that want to take advantage and seize the land of the displaced.

The human right to life is part of an integral concept of the human right to live in dignity that is including economic, social and cultural as well as civil and political rights.

Plan Colombia has accelerated displacement because of the damage from fumigation and because of the expansion of the activity of the paramilitary forces, which is apparently linked to the plan.

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS

Part of the delegation visited the University of the Valle de Cauca, while another group visited the Villahermosa prison in

Cali. Both of the experiences will be included as sections in our full report, which will be produced as soon as possible after our return to the UK.

We also met lawyers representing victims of environmental damage from the BP ODC and OCENSA pipelines through Antioquia, their testimony will be included in our full report.

PRELIMINARY GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The social movements in Cali and the South West of Colombia are resisting a sustained onslaught on their very existence.

The theme of 'Never Forget' is a challenge for the international trade union movement and in these days of globalisation for all citizens of the world. There are many people in the UK waiting for the report of this delegation.

We must not forget our Colombian brothers and sisters struggling for a dignified life for all.

We urge an international mobilisation in defence of the human rights of SINTRAEMCALI and all Colombian trade unionists and social movement activists.

We call for an ongoing campaign.

TRADE UNION AND HUMAN RIGHTS DELEGATION

Cali Colombia

12 October 2001

SPECIAL PUBLIC HOLIDAY 3 JUNE 2002

A special public holiday for the Queen's Golden Jubilee has been declared by Parliament to take place on 3 June 2002.

The NJC has agreed that the day should be treated in the same way as other public holidays for leave and pay purposes.

Authorities are also reminded of Parliament's decision to move the Spring Bank Holiday from the last Monday in May to 4 June for 2002 only.

ASBESTOS

Victory for South African asbestos claimants

CAPE PLC, who mined asbestos in South Africa for several decades, has finally agreed to a compensation settlement of £21 million for the thousands of South African asbestos victims.

The settlement will be paid out through a fund where £11 million will be paid in within the next six months and a further £10 million over the next ten years. This brings to an end the long legal battle fought by 7,500 claimants since 1997.

Pressure group ACTSA has led the public campaign in Britain to hold Cape accountable for its lax health and safety conditions in its asbestos mines and mills in South Africa. As more and more people have died throughout the case, ACTSA has worked with trade unions and asbestos support groups across the country to exert pressure on Cape and its shareholders to negotiate a just settlement out of court.

Aditi Sharma, Acting Director at ACTSA who has just returned from visiting the affected communities in the Northern Cape and Northern Province said: "The communities will find it hard to believe that their long struggle for justice is finally over. Today's settlement by British asbestos company Cape is one further step in the process of truth and reconciliation in South Africa. The deal cannot address the devastated lives of hundreds of families, but at last is a recognition of their immense suffering."

The settlement comes following weeks of intense negotiations and pressure from all parties, including a recent visit to the UK by a high level delegation from South Africa, led by the Premiers of the Northern Cape and Northern Province.

Ngoako Ramatlhodi, Premier of the Northern Province said today, "When Cape left in 1979, it didn't once look back at the death and devastation it had knowingly created. But now finally, the local South African communities can have a sense that the global justice system didn't pass them by."

Manne Dipico, Premier of Northern Cape also welcomed the deal. "Over the years we've kept the belief that this matter will be resolved in the best interest of our people. Now that the waiting is over, the next step is to begin to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those who have had to live with this trauma."

Despite the known dangers, Cape mined and milled asbestos in South Africa's Northern Province and Northern Cape for over 90 years until 1979, when it closed its operations, leaving behind a legacy of disease and pollution. Cape's South African workers were exposed to 30 times the British legal limit of asbestos dust without adequate protection. To date, Cape has settled British cases for compensation, but has used every legal loophole to shirk responsibility for the thousands of South African victims.

Fire Brigades Union Gay & Lesbian Support Group

www.fbu.org.uk/sections/ngl.html



email us at:

gal01@fbu-ho.org.uk

write to: NGLC

(national gay and lesbian committee)

PO Box 10555

London N1 8XT

Phone: 0800 7834778

The trade union movement represents ALL working people, regardless of their sex, race, religious belief, sexuality or disability.

All FBU members are entitled to the full rights and benefits of Union membership. The FBU believes in Fairness at Work for everyone and is committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination, both at work and within the community.

The group was set up by gay and lesbian firefighters and control staff who are 'out' in the workplace and felt they were in a position to help others within the UK fire service. Within the groups five year existence, we have achieved official recognition with the FBU, as well as representing the FBU in forums which were once untouched. We also have an extensive network to support and advise gay, lesbian and bisexual members who may feel isolated or harassed.

The group is run on a strictly confidential basis and accepts the rules, constitution and democracy of the Fire Brigades Union.

Our main aims are:

- ★ Ensuring gay and lesbian members have a voice within the FBU, and making sure we are not left out in equality issues at Brigade, Regional and National level.
- ★ Providing support to gay, lesbian and bisexual members in ALL regions of the FBU.
- ★ Identifying and dealing with any issues/problems faced by our members.
- ★ Providing members with the opportunity to talk/meet with other members.
- ★ Distribute information concerning gay and lesbian issues to members.

Any gay, lesbian or bisexual FBU member contacting the group will only be dealt with by a group member. All information will be protected and NOT made available to any official unless the member gives his/her permission.



0800 783 4778 0800 783 4778 0800 783 4778

25 YEAR BADGES



Firefighter Gary Barson being presented with his 25 year badge by Div Sec P. Eyre



Phil Brannon receives his 25 year badge from Paul Stephenson, Herts Brigade Sec at Hemel Hempstead Fire Station



Bro Dave Ivey receiving his 25 year badge from Brother Steve Rogers (Brigade Education Rep). Both from Dartford Branch



Phil Brannon receives his 25 year badge from Paul Stephenson, Herts Brigade Sec



Bro Willie Grierson presents 25 year badge to Gordon Dow, Stn O, Perth Branch, Tayside



Bro Kevin Corcoran receiving his 25 year badge from Brigade Secretary Jim Jelley



Dave Edwards (right) receives his 25 year badge from Brigade Chair John Drake. Presentation held at Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.



Bro Willie Grierson presents 25 year badge to Keith McIntosh (Ado), Perth Branch, (Bi) Tayside



Steve Hunter, Acting Brigade Chair, Cumbria receiving his 25 year badge from Davie Patton at National Conference 2001



Alfie Hyndes receives his 25 year badge from Branch Chair (Speedwell, Avon) Kevin Herniman. Happy retirement!



Branch Sec Earl Smith presents 25 year badge to Paul Armistead at St Annes (Lancs)



Bro Willie Grierson presents 25 year badge to Dave Wallace, Sub, Perth Branch, Tayside



Bro Willie Grierson presents 25 year badge to Stewart Nelson, Stn O, Perth Branch (Bi), Tayside

25 YEAR BADGES



Russ Parker receiving his 25 year badge from Brigade Secretary Jim Parrots at Roedean Fire Station



L-R Brother Kevin Maddox, Maurice Brookes (Shropshire Brigade Sec) and Brother Dave Humphries



Firefighter Bob Davies of Cardiff Central receives his 25 year badge from Branch Secretary Dominic Stokes



Bro Rick Hodge from Tunbridge Wells, Kent receives his 25 year badge from South Division Sec Bro. Fitz-Gerald



Branch Chair FF Dave Doneo, Ellesmere Port Branch, Cheshire presents 25 year badge to FF Shaun Morrissey



Retired sub officer Robert Mitchell of Blue Watch, Northland, L'Derry (left) receives his 25 year badge from Regional Representative, Bro. David Scanlon, Bro. Martin Roddy, Secretary, Northland and Bro Tommy Barr, Acting Chairman, Northland. On either side of duty firefighter Malcolm Adams (left) and firefighter Denis Canavan (right) both of White Watch, Northland.



Bro. Harry McCauley receives his 25 year badge from Steve Hill, Brigade Chair, FBU Staffordshire



Jim Fitzpatrick MP presenting Ian Edwards with his 25 year badge



Bro. Tony Turner receives his 25 year badge from Steve Hill, Brigade Chair, FBU Staffordshire



Dave McArthur receives his 25 year badge from Chester Branch Chair Nick Gough whilst White Watch look on - Region 9



25 years badge presented to SFCO Galashan of Grampian Control. L-R: Jennifer Leslie (Secretary) Joan Gahashan (SFCO), Joanne Smith (chair) and Jillian Murray (Vice chair)



Cliff Wilkinson receiving his 25 year badge from Steve Hunter, Acting Brigade Chair at Whitehaven Fire Station, Cumbria. Is there anyone out there who was at Chorley Training Centre in the hot summer of 76? It would be good to hear from you - Steve and Cliff



Paul Gardner receives his 25 year badge from Erith Branch rep Mick Horne



John Lord receiving his 25 year medal from Branch Chair Nick Gough with members of his watch looking on - Chester Branch, Region 9



Firefighter Ken Brammer being presented with his 25 year FBU badge by Div Chair Brian Coupland