

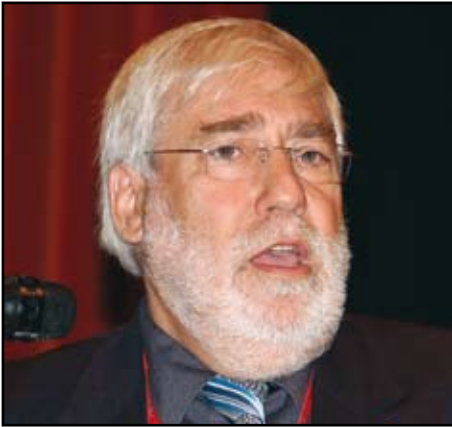
A Happy
and
Prosperous
New Year
to all Members!



**IAN HODSON
ELECTED NEW
NATIONAL
PRESIDENT**

**SEE PAGE 6 FOR FULL
DETAILS OF VOTING**

EDITOR'S NOTES



Well now we know! All in this together indeed! The biggest attack on the welfare state since the great depression with hardly a glance at the rich financiers who got us into this mess in the first place. Can't upset the chaps after all—they may leave! No wonder the ConDems use the first world war poster of Kitcheners "Your Country Needs You" fame. Like the generals in the first world war leading millions into hopeless battles and slaughtering a generation, so the coalition politicians propose to lead millions of us into economic disaster. To make a whole generation pay for their ideological economic experiments that makes Thatcherism look like a mild dose of the flu.

The attack on the sick, homeless and disabled is a disgrace, pushed forward by the right wing press using extreme examples to suggest all sick, disabled and homeless people are scroungers. This leads to such actions as the attack on real need in housing benefit for example. Even the Mayor of London, Tory Boris Johnson, sees this as a sort of social cleansing. No wonder Tory and LidDem politicians are in shock and on the verge of revolt. And it is not only in London that the effects of this attack on the poor and the homeless will materialise. All our big cities will see this phenomena as the poor are shunted out of their homes and the effect this will also have on the places they are sent to have yet to be seen.

Talk about hypocrisy. The coalition proposals are built on an edifice of sand, lies and distortions. It was not the last Government who caused this crisis it was the recklessness of the banks and financial institutions in a world wide

fraud and casino gambling with nation's economies. Politicians connived in this conspiracy by bailing out the banks with almost a trillion pounds of our money—which the banks promptly sat on to boost their balance sheets and pay out obscene bonuses and pensions to the very people who landed us in the mess in the first place. And when the time comes to pay the bill what happens? The perpetrators of the mess get off scot free. Whilst the sick, old, disabled, mothers, children and homeless of Britain are asked to pick up the tab. All in this together indeed!

On top of this we now see that Board Room bosses are doing very well indeed. The Chief Executives of the FTSE 100 companies have seen their pay gallop ahead by 55% in a year according to Income Data Services. Indeed the top 350 listed companies have increased total board pay by an average of 45%. This at a time when the FTSE index rose by less than 20%. Payment by results indeed! And these are the same bosses who impose at best pay freezes at worst cuts in pay and other terms and conditions for their workers. All in this together eh!

Clearly there is one rule for the bosses and another for the rest of us. Nothing changes in ConDem Britain. On top of pay rises these same bosses see obscene increases in pension provisions whilst the rest of us are asked to work longer for worse pension—that's where we get a pension at all. This is not an issue of envy. It is an issue of gross unfairness.

What a Swiss!

Whilst the ConDems attack the vulnerable they protect the rich. If you have a Swiss bank accounts don't worry. The new 'deal' the ConDems has struck with the Swiss means that Britons with these accounts could avoid up to £40bn in taxes. According to the Guardian approximately £100bn to £150bn of British investors' money is believed to be in Swiss banks. Tax on that would go some way to sharing the pain, rather than attacks on those who live and pay their way in this country. Will this happen? Don't hold your breath. Much easier to attack the sick and vulnerable, the students and children and undermine the welfare state. Instead of tackling tax avoidance by the rich, sack the revenue workers who chase up such avoidance and dress it up as an attack on quangos and red tape. At least that

placates the right wing of the Tory Party and grabs quick headlines in the Murdoch press.

There is an urgent need for the labour movement not only to expose these obscenities. That is important but nowhere near enough. There needs to be a plausible alternative to these voodoo economic practices being tried out in Britain. The movement needs to answer the question "Well what would you do?" That is the task now facing Ed Milliband and his team and the TUC. In order to go on the attack we need credible weapons and alternative solutions. We have to take the fight to the ConDems with our alternative solutions. To ensure the defence of the Welfare State, of jobs, education, the old, the sick and the vulnerable.

We have advocated before the need to support public investment in as radical house building programme that will reduce homelessness and unemployment. There are three other areas we can look at as an alternative to the current policies of blaming us for the crisis and making us pay for it.

- 1 A fairer taxation system that focuses on the £120 billion in evaded, avoided and uncollected taxes. Instead of sacking people in the tax offices get them chasing these tax dodgers.
- 2 Job creation- public investment at times of recession is one way of maintaining employment. We also need to look at job creation and one area is that championed by the Campaign against Climate Change to create 1 million 'climate jobs' to tackle unemployment and the environmental crisis.
- 3 Introduction of a wealth tax to transfer the debt onto the richest people by taxing their wealth. The UK has a national debt of £800 billion. A 20% wealth tax on the richest 10% pays off the national debt. Then we would really all be in this together.

There is an alternative if we are bold enough to put it. That is our task now—not opposition for oppositions sake—rather the need for a just alternative.

Hope to hear from you.
joe.marino@bfawu.org

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CREATED FOR YOU TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT:

- WHAT IS **BFAWU** AND WHAT THEY DO,
- WHY IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO BE A MEMBER,
- CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT LAW IN THE UK,
- HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK IN THE UK,
- **BFAWU LEARNING SERVICES**,
- HELP WITH COMPENSATION CLAIMS,

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NATIONAL PRESIDENT RONNIE DRAPER WRITES

As 2010 comes to an end our thoughts turn to the future. What will the new year bring and what are our hopes and aspirations for the coming 12 months?

Traditionally it is the time to take decisions that will bring benefit to our lives or those of our families and friends. Quit smoking, lose a few kilo's, take a little bit more exercise or generally become a nicer person. That generally covers January 1st and then it's back to normal. But what promises and guarantees can we make for 2011? What is in store for workers that will be perceived in any way as being a benefit?

Sheep in wolves' clothing

The Con-Dem Party have already started showing their hand after pretending to be sheep in wolves' clothing. George Osborne's proposals have condemned hundreds of thousands of public service workers to years of unemployment and for society in general the guarantee that the caring services they enjoyed in the past will disappear forever. The jam tomorrow pledge that the slack will be taken up by the private sector appears to be on a par with throwing 50 pence into a wishing well.

In our own industry we continue to see rationalisation and redundancy, erosion of terms and conditions and the return to the casualisation of labour and these problems are being replicated throughout British industry, so where are the new private sector jobs that are going to more than cover the 490,000 public sector jobs being lost? The suspicion is that anything created will be low wage, low protection, low value jobs aimed at driving down terms and

conditions elsewhere.

His heinous proposals are like a game of Russian Roulette except all the chambers have a bullet. Care homes for the elderly will suffer, social services will be decimated and the public services that we take for granted like refuse collection, street cleaning and lighting will pale to a fraction of their former efficiency.

Empty promise

The empty promise that first line services would not be touched has proved to be just that, an empty promise. The police will see their civilian back-up like Community Support Officers and backroom staff culled, schools will have teaching support staff reduced and their meddling in the National Health Service will see a return to the Thatcher years when surgery was not dependent on your illness or injury, but by your postcode and the size of your cheque book.

The recent announcement by Cameron that University tuition fees can potentially treble is good news for nobody, but especially those least able to pay. Higher education made accessible to all by Labour will become the domain of the better off.

Yes, Labour increased fees to an unacceptable level, but the proposals of the Con-Dems turns what was a financial burden to the poor into the impossible dream.

Puppets

It was a proposal that was supposed to make the Liberals squirm, given their manifesto pledge to abolish tuition fees, but is in keeping with the political lie

they have lived since May, believing that the bastardisation of their principles is a price well worth paying for being a front bench puppet of the Tories. The sight of Clegg patting Osborne on the back as though trying to get his wind up was sickening. It's not the fact that Clegg supports a Tory Chancellor, after all he's a closet Tory himself, it's the fact that he supports and smiles while he does it, with the knowledge of the misery, poverty and despair that these announcements will heap on thousands of families.

The prediction for the future is that this present government will be more destructive and more hated than the regime that Thatcher reigned over. She was the Iron Lady ruling over her cabinet with a fist of steel, the centre of attention whether good or bad. She took the praise and she took the blame and eventually became the sacrificial lamb for all the wrongs of the country and in particular the Tory party. She was the figurehead towards who we could vent our spleen, but now things have changed.

Shock absorber

Cameron is like the ringmaster surrounded by clowns, quietly pulling the strings in favour of the rich at the cost of the paying public. He has his shock absorber Clegg, ready to do his bidding and to deflect some of the blame away. Even Osborne has his own personal lap dog in the shape of Danny Alexander, ready to justify everything his master tells him, without being sure of what or why he is saying it.

Changes for the BFAWU

For the union 2011 will see changes not least at head office with the retirement of Bro Joe Marino after 31 years at the helm. This I will deal with in the next issue of the Foodworker, but it would be remiss of me not to congratulate Ian Hodson on his election as National President. I am certain he will continue to be a real asset to the union and to its members. I am sure you will all join me in wishing him every success? Besides congratulating Ian I would like to thank the other 10 candidates who stood in the ballot for their input and demonstrating that the BFAWU has no shortage of talent in its ranks.

Finally I would like to wish all our members, activists, staff and officials a very merry Christmas and a peaceful and happy new year.

Ronnie Draper

CREDIT UNION RELAUNCH

EXCITING TIMES AHEAD FOR BFAWU CREDIT UNION

At the 2009 annual general meeting it was decided to carry out a root and branch review of the Credit Union with regard to the way it operates, the services that it provides, the rules and procedures under which it operates and of course who it interacts with the Credit Union members and the BFAWU as a whole. During the course of the coming year we shall see the following developments:

- A new Credit Union Logo has been agreed
- The Credit Union will launch its own website giving members direct access to the credit union providing direct access to:
 - Direct contact provision
 - The Credit Union's Rules
 - The FSA Regulator
 - The FSA (Regulators) Handbook on Credit Unions
 - Membership application forms, loan request forms, account closure forms, complaints procedure forms and other forms.
 - A revised Bad Debt Recovery procedure.
 - Credit Union advertisement material (for branches).

We are extremely pleased to announce that unlike the high street banks we shall not be paying multi million pound bonuses to the Credit Union's directors as all the directors of the Credit Union give their time, effort and commitment freely.

If you would like to get actively involved in the running of the credit union please contact Pauline Nazir (credit union secretary) at admin@bfawucreditunion.co.uk

John Vickers



CREDIT UNION

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e: admin@bfawucreditunion.co.uk

CREDIT UNION OBJECTIVES AND MEMBERSHIP

In setting up the Credit Union the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers Union were seeking to provide a safe environment in which the Union's Members could save and borrow.

The overriding principles adopted were:

- to provide a system which enabled our members to escape from the extortionate interest and repayment demands that both the legal and illegal lenders were placing on them and that there would be no fat-cat directors' salaries and bonuses to fund.
- That all of the directors would be elected from the Credit Union membership and that the directors would provide their services on a voluntary basis.

The Common Bond

To qualify for admission to membership of the Credit Union a common bond must exist which is that Credit Union members must become and remain members of the Bakers Food & Allied Workers Union.

FSA regulation

The Bakers, Food & Allied Workers Union Credit Union is regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Accounts

There are two types of account which are available to members of the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers Union and their families. These are:

- **Normal Members account:** to qualify for this type of account you must be a member of the BFAWU and save a minimum of £2 per week.
- **Juvenile accounts:** these are available to the Union members immediate family.

Conditions for Granting Loans

- The total amount on loan to a member cannot at any time be more than £3,000 in excess of the member's share balance or such permitted maximum as may be prescribed by law
- Members must ensure that they will be able to meet loan repayments as all loans made are recoverable.
- Loan default may be treated as Bad Debt which could result in legal action being taken to recover such debt.

THE CREDIT UNION LAUNCHES ITS WEBSITE

In order to improve membership access to the Credit Union the website has been launched – members can now log on to the site at <http://www.bfawucu.org> and access the benefits that the Credit Union offers.

Members will be able to access the FSA (the regulator) direct from the Credit Union site they will be able to view and download the Credit Union rule book along with all the forms required to join and maintain their accounts.

IAN HODSON ELECTED NATIONAL PRESIDENT

In a close race, Ian Hodson has been elected as the new National President, succeeding Ronnie Draper who is to be the new General Secretary. The Electoral Reform Service announced the result as follows:

ELECTION OF NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Our report of voting for the above election, which closed today at noon, is as follows:

Number of eligible voters:	21,923
Votes cast by post:	3,392
Total number of votes cast:	3,392
Turnout:	15.5%
Number of votes found to be invalid:	9
Total number of valid votes to be counted:	3,383

Result (1 to elect)

HODSON, Ian	645*	ELECTED*
RICHARDSON, Tony	631*	
COKAYNE, Janine	378	
JAMES, John	373	
VICKERS, John	333	
FRENCH, Marylin	280	
LOVEDAY, Frank	195	
MILNE, Alan	180	
SUDDARDS, David	137	
FLOOD, Kevin	127	
McLELLAND, Jim	104	

*Confirmed by a recount.

As Scrutineers appointed in accordance with Section 49 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended), we are satisfied as to each of the matters specified in subsection 52(2) with regard to the election. The following points should be noted:

The person appointed under section 51A to carry out the storage and counting of voting papers was Electoral Reform Services Limited.

The person appointed under section 51A to carry out the distribution of voting papers was Electoral Reform Services Limited.

A copy of the register of voters (as at the relevant date) was examined in accordance with section 49(3). The examination took place at our own instance and did not reveal any matter that should be brought to the attention of the trade union.

We would draw your attention to sections 52(4), 52(5), and 52(6). Section 52(4) requires that a copy of this report be published and made available to all members of the union within a three month period from today. This does not, however, mean that every member has to be notified individually.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Wilkins

Senior Consultant

ONE WAY TO TRY AND BEAT GOVERNMENT SPENDING CUTS (OR AT LEAST SAVE YOUR BFAWU SUBS!)

It seems that government spending cuts are being announced virtually on a daily basis at the moment, which means less money in the pockets of most people in the UK. What's more, to add to the gloom and doom, fuel bills are expected to rise this winter too. To help counter some of the effects of this, BFAWU has teamed up with Union Energy to offer our members access to its independent energy price comparison service which could save you money. Over the last two months*, customers using the service have saved an average of £283.16 which would cover your BFAWU subs and ensure you are not paying over the odds for the gas and electricity you use at home.

Union Energy's service not only promises to find you the most competitive domestic energy suppliers available on the market, but guarantees competitive prices in the future thanks to its Lifetime Monitoring Programme. Unlike most other energy price comparison sites, the service is 100% impartial and includes tariffs for every energy company active in the UK market for maximum choice. Customers therefore have all options available to them, be it standard gas and electricity paid by direct debit, single fuels, green energy, capped rate products, etc. supplied by smaller niche energy companies as well as 'the big six'.

If you register for Union Energy's Lifetime Monitoring Programme, when energy prices change you will be re-contacted as soon as you can save whatever sum you have stated as being important to you which ensures ongoing savings for the long term.

Union Energy is owned by the TUC and its new website is powered by Energylinx, a UK company with an excellent track record. What's more, because its service is not just web-based, if you have any problems or queries you can pick up the phone and speak to an experienced person based in the UK who actually knows what they're talking about.

Union Energy also offers a similar service for businesses interested in cutting their fuel bills.

To find out how much you could save by switching energy suppliers call 0800 094 9039 (Monday-Thursday 9am-6pm; Friday 9am-4pm; Saturday 9am-1pm) or visit www.unionenergy.co.uk. It's completely free and only takes a couple of minutes. You may be surprised by the result!

*From 21 Aug – 19 October 2010 customers using Union Energy's service saved an average of £283.16. The biggest saving during this period was £609!

NB: Union Energy's service can be used by households in England, Scotland and Wales (mainland only).

PRESENTATION OF TWENTY YEARS BADGES AT SAYERS



Congratulations to the following members on completing 20 years membership of the Bakers Union, at 242 Sayers The Bakers Branch, and receiving their silver badges.

Sis Pam Lewis

Bro Heath Ritchie

Bro Mick Massey

Bro Ray Talbot

Bro Wayne Foster

Bro Ray Hesketh

On behalf of the Sayers Branch, and the union I would like to thank you all for your service and support, not to mention loyalty over the last 20yrs. It is very much appreciated, thanks.

Yours fraternally

John Wade, Branch Secretary

Ian Hodson (third from left) with some of the recipients of the 20-year badges

OVARIAN CANCER – DON'T IGNORE WARNING SIGNS

In June 2009 I was a delegate at BFAWU Conference. I wasn't feeling too well but put it down to an existing illness, fibromyalgia. In August 2009 I received the devastating news that I was suffering from ovarian cancer. On 1st September I had a hysterectomy then, seven weeks later, I started a 6-month course of chemotherapy, finishing only weeks prior to the BFAWU 2010 Conference which I attended as a delegate. The cancer is now under control and my health will be monitored on a regular basis. I will also be on medication for the rest of my life.

My dear friend Vi Carr agreed to speak about ovarian cancer at our 2010 Conference as I wanted to get the message across to our female members, who have any of the following symptoms to get them checked out. I can't stress enough how important it is.

- Persistent Pelvic and abdominal pain
- Increased abdominal size/persistent bloating – not bloating that comes and goes
- Difficulty eating and feeling full quickly

Other symptoms could include:

- Urinary Symptoms

- Changes in bowel habit
- Extreme tiredness
- Back Pain

If these symptoms are new to you, do seek medical advice from your GP.

Don't ignore it – Beat it!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Conference Delegates and visitors for all the kindness and support given to me, also to everyone that donated to Vi Carr's collection for Macmillan Cancer Support and Ova The Rainbow, both registered charities. £214 was raised and split equally between the two charities.

I would also like to thank the following people for their very generous donations:

- Jane Booker from Malloy Whittle Robinson Solicitors – £50 cash which I used to buy raffle prizes.
- Julie Blackburn and Jane Gulliford, Thompsons Solicitors – £50 and £30 respectively in Marks and Spencer vouchers
- Clive Thomas, Watkin & Gunn Solicitors – £50 in Argos Vouchers

- Michael Laffy, Thompsons Solicitors – Newcastle United signed Football Shirt
- Sam Vickers, FTO – DVD Player
- Peter Taylor, Westfield Health, – His and Hers golf umbrellas plus various other prizes.

Donations were used as raffle or tombola prizes at my charity functions. I also had a car boot sale with items donated from family and friends. The grand total raised from the collection, raffle, tombola and car boot was £1953.60 for the Ova The Rainbow ovarian cancer charity, based at the James Cook Hospital, Middlesbrough, where I had all my treatment, and where I must still attend on a regular basis.

I would also like to thank:

- Peace Ellah- Aryee and Jim Mclelland for their help with bucket collection.
- My dear friends Michael Lynch Peter McDermott & Vi Carr for looking after and supporting me.
- Last but not least, my own delegation for their kindness and support.

God bless you all

Kath Suggett

REDUNDANCY: YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY JESSICA BOWMAN OF MWR SOLICITORS

As a popular and busy employment solicitor helping victims of unfair dismissal, I know that redundancy is a growing issue, especially with public sector bodies considering redundancy as part of cost cutting measures. Here are some common questions on redundancy

1. Are there any steps employers have to take before making me redundant?

There are a number of steps that should be taken by employers before they decide to make somebody redundant. These steps include:

- Consulting with any trade unions that are recognised within the workplace or any workplace representatives in order to discuss trying to avoid redundancies and how people should be selected for redundancy.
- Inviting you to consultation meetings to keep you up to date on the progression of the redundancy situation and to discuss whether or how you have been selected for redundancy.
- Either allowing you to work your notice period or paying you in lieu of your notice period.

2. Is it a genuine redundancy situation?

Every dismissal situation is not necessarily a redundancy situation. The law states that the following situations will amount to a redundancy situation:

- Where an employer stops carrying on the business that you were employed to do.
- Where an employer stops carrying on business in the place that you were employed.
- Where an employer stops carrying out work of the kind that you were employed to do.
- Where an employer cuts down on the kind of work you were employed to do.

3. If there is a redundancy situation, how should my employer select the people they wish to make redundant?

If there is a situation where only a certain number of the workforce are to be made redundant, employers must put in place a fair way of selecting the people to be made redundant. There are a number of ways that they can do this. A common first step used by employers is to offer voluntary redundancy as this will reduce the number of people they will need to make compulsorily redundant. Another common way of selecting people is to agree with employees some selection criteria that will be used to assess each affected employee on a points system.

4. Am I entitled to statutory redundancy?

Employment legislation states that you must have been employed for a continuous period of two years before you are entitled to claim statutory redundancy from your employer.

If you have not been employed for two continuous years, check your contract of employment to see if you are



contractually entitled to redundancy pay, irrespective of your length of service.

5. If I am made redundant, how much redundancy pay am I entitled to?

If you have more than two years' continuous service with your employer and you are made redundant, you are entitled to receive a statutory redundancy payment as compensation for losing your job. Your contract of employment may have the benefit of paying you a redundancy payment in excess of statutory redundancy and so you should always check what your contract says in this regard.

For each full year's continuous service, up to a maximum of 20 years, employees are entitled to receive the following as statutory redundancy:

- **For every year worked up to age 21** - half a week's pay per full year of service.
- **For every year worked between the ages of 22 to 40** - one week's pay per full year of service.
- **For every year worked over the age of 41** - one and a half week's pay per full year of service.

MWR Solicitors is a specialist in redundancy. If you have any queries, please contact us on 01772 254201.



PARLIAMENTARY GROUP REPORT TO NOVEMBER EXECUTIVE

Over the past few months the abuses of RIDDOR perpetrated by some companies has become a very live issue and will continue to be over the coming months. Below is the report submitted to the National Executive in November of the work we are conducting in Westminster.

“The Group is in the process of producing an in-depth response to the report and will be seeking a meeting with the Government in due course. In particular, we will be asking MPs to raise our concerns in Parliament through Parliamentary Questions and are hoping to secure an adjournment on health and safety as soon as possible.

John McDonnell MP has tabled a written question asking about the monitoring of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 RIDDOR

“To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what (a) monitoring and (b) investigations his Department undertakes in respect of compliance with the provisions of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.”

The Group became concerned that employers were failing to report accidents under the act. On 25th October Chris Grayling, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions responded that “for 2008/09 the compliance rate was estimated at 58% for non-fatal injuries”.

Ian Lavery MP tabled a Written Parliamentary Question in July 2010 asking:

“To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many (a) fatalities, (b) major accidents and (c) major injuries were reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 in (i) Wansbeck constituency, (ii) Northumberland and (iii) the UK in the last 12 months.” (See Annex 4)

Workplace injuries continue to be a focus for the Group and to this end a number of Parliamentary Questions have been tabled by Group members. In July 2010 John McDonnell MP tabled the following question:

“To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many workers incurred a workplace injury in each year from 1997 to 2009.” (See Annex 4)

In addition to this a further Written Question was tabled by John McDonnell MP asking:

“To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many non-workers were injured by workplace activities in each year from 1997 to 2009.” (See Annex 4)

The Group issued a press release under the auspices of the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group following the publication of Lord Young’s report and will be responding further in due course. We will be meeting with officials from the HSE at the next Group meeting on 14th November following our approach and pressing home our concerns. The Group is also pursuing a Parliamentary adjournment debate on this issue as well as circulating Parliamentary Questions. In addition the Group continues to promote EDM 441 Health and Safety.”

The Parliamentary group has successfully campaigned to have Workers Memorial Day recognised by the UK government as a national day of remembrance.

The work still continues to have a maximum working temperature enshrined in law. We have written to Iain Duncan Smith MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for a meeting but to date he has declined due to diary commitments.

The Health and Safety Executive will attend our next meeting on 24th November at the House of Commons with a view to progressing our campaign. On top of this John McDonnell will pursue an adjournment debate that will highlight the lack of prosecutions despite there still being a widespread problem with failure to manage heat in the workplace.

If you require a copy of the full report or have any questions about the work of the Parliamentary group, please contact head office

Since these articles were written, Lord Young has resigned as special advisor for health and safety to David Cameron. If he had not proposed so many H&S cuts and he had risk assessed his speech, he would not have fallen on the dangerous political sword. Good riddance and a permanent retirement from all those who value their safety.

Wishing you a safe and healthy New Year

SAVING LIVES v SAVING MONEY

That's the stark reality of the Tories spending revue and unfortunately, some would say predictably they looked to cut costs.

Following the release of the Young report which in itself would trivialise the work being undertaken by a vast army of health and safety representatives, George Osborne took the dramatic step of announcing a cut in the Health and Safety Executive budget by 35% over the next 5 years.

If that was not bad enough he also cut the funding of Local Authority budgets by a further 28% which in itself will have a horrendous effect on health and safety inspections in shops.

It may seem an idiotic assumption that if you cut the budgets of the HSE and the Local Authorities you would expect them to do even less than before? Not this Tory rag tag and bobtail outfit, they want the HSE to produce extra guidance for the smaller businesses and become more involved with the larger ones. More for less being the watchword.

The LA's according to Lord Young will be asked to combine health and safety inspections with food hygiene visits. Excellent planning, reduce workers, double the workload, undermine expertise, increase responsibility, cross your fingers and hope for the best.

Sadly the true effect of this Tory meddling and cost cutting will be an increase in serious injuries, debilitating illness and worse still fatalities.

Speaking at an insurance conference on 25th October, Lord

Young in answer to criticism of his report stated that during his tenure as Minister of Employment in the mid Eighties he doubted that he had spent more than two and half minutes discussing health and safety. What he failed to say was that fatalities during his term of office were more than 400 compared to 152 now. Some record to brag about?

The latest expectations are that if you are a large business you can expect a random visit from a HSE inspector every 14 years and if you are a small business the likelihood is that you will never receive a visit.

Many people within the trade union movement have long thought that improving standards in health and safety was like pushing water uphill with support services like the HSE being systematically underfunded by successive political parties. Link this with some of the vague language in law like the words "reasonably practicable" that the more unscrupulous employer thinks means if you can't afford it, you don't need to do it, and you can be forgiven for thinking that to some cost is the underlying consideration in determining the level of safety.

With the latest swingeing cuts the Tories have removed any lasting doubt about the cliché "Kill or cure?". They had a fantastic opportunity to improve the health safety and welfare for all, but when asked the question do you protect your greatest resource (the people of the country), or do you save money and put their lives at risk, their answer is SAVE MONEY!!!!!!

GRAYLING TO REDUCE FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS

Below is the written response to John McDonnell MP's question on behalf of the BFAWU Parliamentary group regarding the government's plans to combine two major services offered on the high street to ensure food safety standards are maintained.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the likely effects on health and safety standards of the implementation of proposals to combine the roles of food safety and health and safety inspectors in local authorities. [22347]

Chris Grayling: Lord Young is working with the Health and Safety Executive, the Food Standards Agency and the Local Government Regulation to take forward his recommendations which were published in his report "Common Sense, Common Safety". Many local authorities already combine food safety and health and safety inspections or

have the capability to do this. The intention is to build on existing good practices which are currently used in food premises. Local authorities will continue to respond to health and safety complaints and incidents with a risk based approach. The system will be more standardised, more efficient and more transparent for the consumer.

Clearly the intention is to drive headlong into reducing costs with the direct effect that standards are compromised. Whilst the companies that we represent will continue to ensure that the food sold through their retail outlets will continue to be of the highest standard, those employers who have a tendency towards cutting corners will find they have a friend in Mr Grayling.

The relatively rare cases of food based illnesses such as salmonella and botulism may become more prevalent if hygiene standards are allowed to slip and the chances of being caught are diminished.

This is not about cutting civil service jobs because there are a glut of people employed in those posts, nor is it the breaking up of some bureaucratic quango. They cannot even say it is about righting an inefficient process. This is a heinous and deliberate attempt to cut costs and to reduce the impact of health and safety on business.

I don't know whether or not Grayling is right that the process already happens in many local authorities, but that is now not after the 28% cuts to local authority and 35% HSE reductions have kicked in.

We will continue to campaign against any reduction in health, safety, hygiene and welfare standards through our Parliamentary group and any other group that will listen and assist.

Maybe Young's report "Common sense, common safety" will be renamed after a couple of years Tory rule to "No sense, no safety"?

Wishing you a safe and healthy New Year

THOMPSON'S QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS SOLICITOR JUSTIN MADDERS ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

My GP has been signing me as "not fit for work" for several months. She has now signed me as fit for some work and recommends reduced duties. But my employer says that if I am fit for some work then I either come back full time or my sick pay will be stopped.

Under the new "fit note" system, where an employee is signed fit for work with recommendations and the employer does not apply those recommendations then the fit note reverts back to a sick note. You are therefore entitled to treat the fit note as a sick note and provided you have notified your employer according to your contractual requirement in order to qualify for sick pay, then you are entitled to be paid in the same way that you were when you were signed as "not fit for work".

Speak to your FBU rep about lodging a grievance that you have been subject to an unlawful deduction of wages. The deadline for a claim for unlawful deduction from wages is three months less one day from the date the deduction was made.

Can an employer alter my members' hours of work without our agreement?

Altering an employee's hours almost always amounts to a change in the contract of employment. There are specific ways that an employer can do this. These include:

Change through conduct: If an employer announces new hours and employees start working them without complaint then they may be stuck with the new arrangement. If members are unhappy with the change they should immediately raise the issue with their union rep and dispute the change by using the grievance procedure. It is important that there is a written record of the dispute and that the correct procedures are followed.

Failure to do this may be interpreted as agreement to the changed hours.

If the issue remains unresolved then further advice and legal assistance can be sought through the union.

Change through agreement: If employees agree to the change in their contract then the employer should ask them to sign a letter or other document confirming the changes.

Change through collective agreement: Collective agreements can be renegotiated with unions in order to change contracts of employment.

Dismissal and re-engagement: Some employers may try to dismiss employees and offer to re-employ them on a different contract. To do this the employer must give the correct legal notice to dismiss the employees affected.



This approach to changing a contract may lead to potential claims for unfair dismissal. Members should contact their union rep as soon as possible.

Any attempt by an employer to change a contract without following one of the procedures above may result in a breach of contract claim in the employment tribunal or civil courts. The time limit for these claims is normally three months from the date the change took place so members should seek advice from their union without delay.

I recently returned from a week's holiday in Spain but was ill with a stomach bug for the whole week. My employer has refused to accept this as sick leave and says I must take the time as paid or unpaid leave. Is that right?

The European Court of Justice ruled in the case of *Pereda v Madrid Movilidad SA* that a worker who falls sick during a period of scheduled leave has the right to take the lost leave at a different time.

It's not an automatic right. The employee must request that the holiday be treated as sick leave and it helps if they propose dates when the leave could be taken within the same leave year. If the holiday was at the end of the annual leave year then case law has established that a worker prevented from taking the leave due to illness must be given the right to take it even if it starts or ends in the following leave year.

The Working Time Regulations specify that an employee must give twice as much notice of the leave to be taken. So for a week's leave, two week's notice should be given.

You may have a claim before the employment tribunal for a breach of the Working Time Regulations if your employer continues to refuse to allow you to take the lost leave at another time. Contact your FBU rep for advice as soon as possible as the deadline for lodging a claim is three months less one day from the first day of the leave you propose to take.

Wishing you a safe and healthy New Year

WORKPLACE STRESS: THE INVISIBLE TIME BOMB

There is little doubt that the implications of work place stress are becoming more recognisable. The evidence is both consistent and obvious that work-related stress has severe implications for the health and welfare of both employees and society in general and it is an epidemic that will become much worse before it gets better. When taken against the background of economic reductions, cost-cutting, increased responsibilities and the promise that your job may be removed from the safety spotlight after Lord Young highlighted schools, offices and shops as being low risk areas.

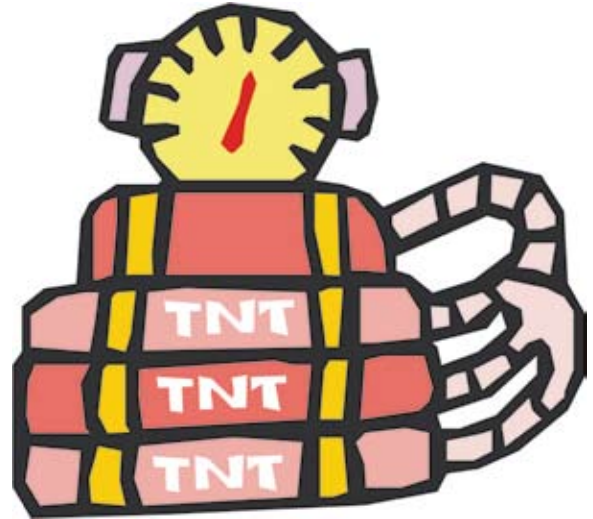
These are some of the findings of a major new report on workplace stress, which was commissioned to look at the current state of research on work-related stress, as well as the potential effects of the economic crisis on the issue. It was released before the 12th annual National Stress Awareness Day, which was held on 3rd November.

The report's author, Tarani Chandola, who is a professor of medical sociology at the University of Manchester, emphasised that work-related stress is a common determinant of mental disorders and cardiovascular disease, and is heavily linked to sickness absence.

Prof Chandola speaking at the launch of the report at the British Academy on 29th October, said: "Since 2009, there has been a sharp rise in job strain and job insecurity, both determinants of work-related stress. Conflict at work, in the form of poor support and bullying, has also increased, as has work-life balance as an issue." He went on to say that "although the HSE's management standards for stress have been around for six years now, there has been little change in stress levels, or the scale of the problem".

Prof Chandola said that part of the problem is that employers don't focus enough on the job quality, wondering: "Why do we treat people with illnesses like depression, only to then return them to the same conditions that caused the problem in the first place? There is a tension between job quality and any job at any cost, but I don't think we have the luxury of saying that job quality doesn't matter. It does."

Too often the emphasis is to get people back to work without having a true understanding of why they went off in the first place. There are many aspects of life that can lead to stress and attributing it directly to work may at times be a problem, but there is little doubt that the way work is managed can lead to triggers. Cuts in pay can lead to poverty in the home and whilst the true effects may be felt at home, work has definitely been the catalyst.



Long hours, low pay, pressure to meet targets and all types of bullying and harassment are all potential signposts to workplace stress and when combined with the economic crisis, raise in VAT and reduced security, can have a devastating effect.

More thought should be given to ensuring that the working environment is more conducive to keeping workers healthier for longer. Like all other workplace hazard stressful situations need to be risk assessed and more importantly, dealt with. We have become obsessed with risk management instead of good old risk reduction and that has to change. If there is a trigger for stress that has been identified then the obligation is on the employer to deal with it as part of the overall control measures. Compromising health safety and welfare should never be an option, but where it happens then legal redress has to be an option. If you wish to find out more about this study and other stress related issues, visit www.isma.org.uk

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE FOOD MANUFACTURE WEBSITE REVISED

Just to let you know the HSE Food & Drink Manufacture website has been extensively revised and is now available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/food/index.htm>

The site is extensive and is a must for anyone working in the food industry. The website has gone from being a rather difficult resource to navigate to one that will give immense help to Safety Representatives and Practitioner's alike. It is a fantastic tool for gathering information, statistics and analysis and is only a click of a mouse away.

Wishing you a safe and healthy New Year

TWENTY YEAR BADGES AT PREMIER FOODS, BELFAST

Congratulations all round! At a presentation in Premier Foods, Belfast, Ronnie Draper presented twenty year membership badges to a group of members. After the presentations we sat and had a yarn about things in the past and stories about them serving their time as apprentices. It was only then did they remind me of the apprentice competition that two of them had taken part in and the memories that they still have of those days. It is sad that we as a union have lost that part of our heritage where apprentices are concerned. That said it turned out to be a good day with the company involved. It was good to see that Paul Simpson and Caroline McKinley had put so much into the day, both in putting together the buffet and helping to make it a good day for the most important people there. It is a privilege for me to say on the union's behalf, thank you to L McCloskey, G Brown, D Thompson, T Clugston, E Corbett and Keith Fulton for your input over the last twenty years, and good luck for the next twenty.

Billie Gallagher
Regional Organiser



Ronnie Draper present badges to: from the top: (first column) L McCloskey, G Brown; (second column) D Thompson, T Clugston, E Corbett and Keith Fulton

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC & LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 5-7 NOVEMBER 2010

As usual for this time of year the invitation to attend the SDLP Conference was conveyed to the regional meeting, and as usual it was to be dismissed and binned as normal through lack of interest, and the general perception that the party represented only one side of our community, but this year I expressed concern that the BFAWU should be represented at this conference while after all the SDLP was accepted as the sister party of the Labour party, and I felt that it was important for us to be represented at the conference, and for my insistence I was volunteered to attend. The recent involvement of the Northern Ireland MPS in the Maximum Working Temperatures Debate at Houses of Parliament emphasized the need for the BFAWU to seek to develop a good working relationship with politicians of all political parties, and with the gradual normalising of life in Northern Ireland it was important to have political influence and not just local influence but combined influence to the betterment of all aspects of working peoples lives. The conference was very well organised, with the usual back slapping going on between the Politicians, but more importantly the economy and effects of the recession on jobs and services was debated in depth which clearly will have serious implications for the vulnerable and poorest in our society. The highlight of the conference for me was the open debate with a Shared Society panel discussion, chaired by Conall McDevitt MLA. Presbyterian Moderator Dr Norman Hamilton sitting alongside CRC's Duncan Morrow, Prof Colin Harvey (QUB law), Tom Daly (former Ulster GAA president) and Dolores Kelly MLA. This debate allowed the



SDLP leader Mary Ritchie is greeted by delegates. Diarmuid Best is immediately to the right facing the camera

delegates to get involved and to raise issues that would not normally be discussed at a party conference, and all questions were answered in full with the experience, and expertise of the panellists professions. Overall I enjoyed the conference and I am glad we did not bin the invitation, and while it is early days I believe it is the beginning of developing a relationship with local political parties which I believe is essential and beneficial to our members both local and at Westminster.

*Diarmuid Best
Branch Secretary
Allied Bakeries Ireland*

LBD OPEN DAY, 7TH SEPTEMBER: LBD OPEN THE DOORS TO LEARNING



This site is moving forward with learning and will be offering their employees the opportunity of IT Training, Basic Skills, NVQ's and Apprentices training. This is a joint venture with LBD, BFAWU, Learning Services and Union Learn.

The Open Day on the 7th of September was the start. Thompsons Solicitors attended to give advice along with Union Learn. Northern College also attended bringing a bank of laptops so that potential learners could complete a Skills Check on Literacy and Numeracy. Many people took part in these checks to ascertain which level they would be working at and even Steve Boyd, the Group HR Director participated in taking his mini skills check.

Ronnie Draper, National President for the BFAWU was also present to support the opening, as was John Vickers, Project Team leader along with members of his team.

REPORT ON 2010 TUC CONFERENCE



Dinner with the Vietnamese trade union delegation and our TUC delegates. On the right Tony Richardson is at the front, Roy Streeter next and then Vi Carr. Joe Marino is on the right of the table at the far end.

Joe Marino, Roy Streeter, Tony Richardson and myself, Vi Carr, attended the 2010 TUC Conference. There were not many motions that I could say were very controversial – Joe moved a motion on Vietnam and also spoke in support of a composite motion on Health and Safety, Lord Young Review.

Motion 71: Vietnam

Congress appreciates the incredible achievements of the Vietnamese people in rebuilding their country since Vietnam's liberation.

It is 35 years since one of the most brutal wars in history, which destroyed the infrastructure of the country.

Congress recalls with respect the three million Vietnamese killed and four million injured in the fighting and bombing.

Congress notes that over eighty million litres of defoliants, including the dioxin Agent Orange, were sprayed on forests, farms and villages and that the legacy of this terrible poison still lives on with over three million people affected and many birth deformities and health problems still today. Congress further notes that no reparations have been paid for this appalling damage.

Despite the devastation of the country, Vietnam has rebuilt at an incredible rate and greatly improved the living standards of its population. Congress congratulates the Vietnamese trade union movement on the role that its members played in the liberation of their country and subsequent reconstruction.

Congress further congratulates Trade Union Friends of Vietnam and the Britain Vietnam Friendship Society and

affiliated unions for the work they have done to maintain contacts with Vietnamese workers and their families, and urges affiliates to consider their work. Congress calls upon the General Council to establish closer links with the Vietnamese General Confederation of Labour.

This motion was carried unanimously.

We also attended Fringe meetings one being held by The Trade Union Friends of Vietnam and Ronnie Draper was spoke at The Trade Union Coordinating Group Fringe meeting

Deadly Serious: Health & Safety Under Threat

People occasionally get killed, it's unfortunate but it is part of life. Lord Young's statement signalled his review will weaken workplace protection for workers, adults and children. The HSE could be cut and employers will be using the economic crisis to cut corners. How can Unions and communities work together against the attack on our safety? Speakers Bob Crowe, RMT; Ronnie Draper, BFAWU, were amongst the speakers at this very important Fringe Meeting

We met old friends and made some new and Joe and Ronnie did our Union proud. Because of them our union has a very high profile for a small union.

We went for dinner with the Delegation from The Vietnamese General Federation of Trade Unions. They were very unassuming and so humble it was a pleasure to be in their company and they gave each of us a gift. Once again I would like to thank them. I would also like to thank my colleagues Roy Streeter And Tony Richardson for their company.

VI Carr

EGYPTIAN FOOD WORKERS UNION VISITS THE BAKERS FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION SPONSORED BY THOMPSONS SOLICITORS, MANOR CARLTON BAKERY AND WARBURTONS

On Sunday 17 October, Ronnie Draper, National President, Marilyn French, Executive Council and Adel Mahmoud, interpreter met the delegation. The Egyptian union delegation consisted of Hilmy Ali Mohammed Gamil, Atef Metwally Salem Faraha, and Ebrahim Hassan Mohammed Abed Alkader and after brief introductions we made our way back to Welwyn Garden City where we had dinner and an overnight stay.

On Monday 18th we set off early towards Sheffield where we arranged to visit our Solicitors Thompsons at their Call Centre. Julie Blackburn, Tristran Sterry, Richard Woolley, branch manager, Melanie, Liz, Gill, made us very welcome; we had a presentation about the range of services that are provided to our members through Thompson Solicitors.

A buffet lunch was kindly provided and warmly appreciated by all. After lunch we toured the call centre and had the opportunity to speak directly to the staffs that help our members when they call our free help line

Vicky and Gary both work as part of the team and deal with BFAWU calls directly, on the day we visited Vicky she was dealing with two of our members' claims.

On Tuesday 19th we set off to Manor Bakeries Carlton, where we met with Pauline McCarthy, branch secretary, shop stewards and members of our Union. After a short break for lunch we had a tour of the bakery; we also paid a visit to the very busy learning Centre with John Vickers ULF Project Manager.



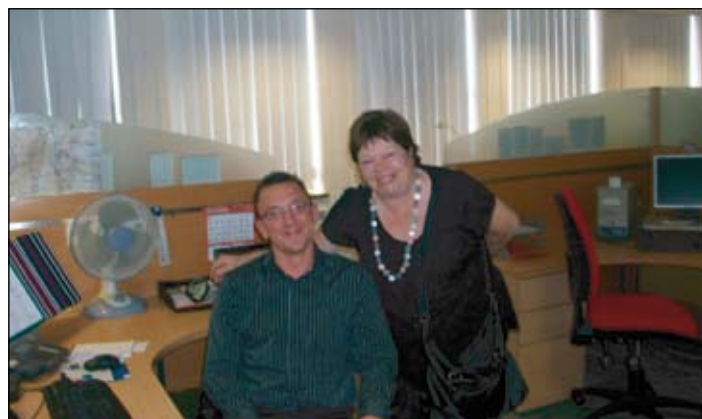
Thompsons call centre



Here to help you at Thompsons call centre Vicky, seen here with Ronnie Draper



Manor Carlton Bakery



And Waiting for you to call is Gary

On Wednesday 20th we drove north east to Newcastle, where we visited the Greggs North East Bakery. On arrival we met with Management, Shop Stewards, Lizzie Dinning (Branch Secretary) and members of the Union in the bakery. After an excellent lunch and a tour of the bakery, we visited the Angel of the North.



Greggs North East Kazia, Janet, Rachel, Lizzie, Craig, Ray.



Visiting the Angel of the North

On Thursday 21st after an opportunity to do some shopping we were off to visit Warburton' bakery in Newcastle again we met local shop stewards Branch Secretary John Bennett and union members in the bakery (below).



On Friday 22nd October we visited to our Welwyn Garden City Union Head Office, meeting General Secretary Joe Marino (above)

On Saturday 23rd we visited London taking, in tourist sites and having lunch with Tom Jones of Thompson Solicitors. In the evening there was a farewell dinner at Welwyn Garden City.

On Sunday 24th October we returned to Heathrow Airport for the flight to Egypt.

MANOR BAKERIES CARLTON

The Lyons Den based in Manor Bakeries has a dedicated team of ULR's who each have a unique role to play and have an active say in how the centre is run and utilised.

The site shows that the Union and Management can work together to provide our members with the best opportunity to learn new skills which will benefit them not only in the work place but in everyday life.

Pauline McCarthy the Branch Secretary and her exceptional team have proven that dedication and a little hard work really illustrates how efficient and productive a learning centre can be.

The site is being used as a pilot for the British sign language courses, and HR Manager Michelle Cornick has generously agreed to pay for twenty people from across the site to achieve their level one in the BSL qualification, thanks to the good negotiation skills from Pauline and her team

If it wasn't for dedicated ULR's like these so many people wouldn't be given the chance to get back into learning.

Lisa Greenfield



&



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