



## **2019 NATIONAL BLACK MEMBERS CONFERENCE**

### **COMPOSITE BOOKLET**

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## **Composite Motions - Advice for Delegates**

Composite motions are designed to bring together motions and amendments that contain similar subject matter, so that the debate on a particular issue can be more focused and repetition can be avoided. It is the responsibility of the Standing Orders Committee to facilitate the smooth-running of conference and the composite motions have been drawn up in this spirit.

The submitting bodies involved in an agreed composite motion must liaise with one another to decide which delegate is going to formally move the motion. Submitting bodies involved in a composite motion will be given priority speaking rights in the debate.

## COMPOSITE A

### **The Windrush papers, generations and their descendents – a hostile environment and what next** (*Motions 13, 14, 15 and amendments 15.1 and 15.2*)

#### *Submitters:*

- 13 *Eastern Region*
- 14 *National Black Members' Committee*
- 15 *Greater London*
- 15.1 *East Midlands Region*
- 15.2 *SOAS UNISON*

Arriving in UK between 1942 – 1971 from the Caribbean islands. The generation named the Windrush in reference to the MV Empire Windrush, which arrived at Tilbury Docks, Essex, on 22 June 1948, bringing workers from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and other islands, as a response to post-war labour shortages in the UK.

The entry in to the UK ended with the 1971 Immigration Act, when Commonwealth citizens already living in the UK were given indefinite leave to remain and After this, a British passport-holder born overseas could only settle in the UK if they firstly had a work permit and, secondly, could prove that a parent or grandparent had been born in the UK. It was also not clear that citizens needed to change their Caribbean passport to a British one.

It is difficult to imagine anything more demoralising than the experience the 'Windrush generation' has undergone at the hands of the British Government in the past few years.

Conference the way in which the Windrush Generation has been treated is truly appalling. They were invited to the 'Mother Country', as law abiding British Citizens, to help to rebuild Britain 70 years ago, post 2nd World War. Having worked hard and delivered what they were invited to Britain to do, some returned of their own free will to their homelands, while others chose to remain. They came on the promise of equality, carrying the same passports as anyone individual born in the United Kingdom, Colonies and Commonwealth countries. They did not, however, realise that a 'hostile environment' law awaited them.

Some of the Windrush Generation were heartlessly deported to places they left all those years ago. Others, often children of the Windrush era who came to Britain on the passports of their parents have been forced to stop working, without recourse to public funds. Cases are mounting up of individuals seeking NHS treatment, passports, jobs or housing only to find themselves having to prove their right to live in the country where they have been legally resident for more than 50 years, or risk being deported. Traumatic stories have emerged of individuals being made homeless, jobless and refusal of medical treatment, after they failed to produce proof they were never given in the first place. Some have been denied treatment for illnesses such as Cancer. A Londoner who been diagnosed with prostate cancer, was refused NHS medical treatment because his immigration status and billed £54,000. Forced to give up social or council housing and made to feel like criminals. They have been forced into debt and become a burden to others.

This conference condemns the Tory Government's actions as institutionally racist, many of which would have been illegal, and holds Home Secretaries, in particular, responsible for the many individual tragedies. Their rights were eroded further as the appeals process

effectively made them guilty until proven innocent. They withstood the racism whipped up by politicians like Enoch Powell and through many ensuing struggles changed for the better both labour movement and society it is a betrayal and an insult that in retirement they have been told they don't belong. Evidence that might have put a stop to this mistreatment is the landing cards that recorded arrivals from the Caribbean until the 1960s. These were destroyed by the Home Office in 2010.

Conference many of you here today are here due to those early pioneers who suffered immeasurable hard times and discrimination during their time in Britain and who paved the way for us to have a better life.

Many who came had a trade or were professionals in their own country. However on arrival they were often denied the opportunity to take up their chosen profession due to racist practices in their places of work, housing etc. They would 'turn the other cheek' when faced with discriminatory situations which today would be regarded as sackable offences. I know many of you will have heard of the signs that read 'No Blacks, No Irish, No Dogs'. Can you imagine how these law-abiding British Citizens, some who had to leave family members behind initially, would have felt and the absolutely appalling conditions they had to put up with?

In 2014, Theresa May, the home secretary produced a new immigration policy which created a hostile environment toward illegal immigrant by forcing landlords, employers, banks and NHS services to run immigration status checks. It also allowed people to be deported more quickly and avoid lengthy appeals processes. The policy was further extended in 2016 to enforce penalties to any employer who did not follow through with the new policy and further distress to those who cannot prove that they have rights to work/live in the UK. Teresa May and her government have tried to bury their heads in the sand. They must have been aware of the implications that the new Immigration Laws would have on people such as those from the Windrush era, however we must not forget that there was an immigrant target that needed to be met.

The Tory government has created a racist hostile environment in which if you can not prove you are British from specific paperwork you are in fact classed as an illegal immigrant and will be deported. The Home Office, have used the disgraceful, divisive rhetoric, including vans with 'Go Home' emblazoned on them, to scapegoat migrants for their failures and to divert attention away from their austerity agenda of benefit cuts, attacks on our NHS and schools, and other public services in particular. Never forget, we are here and have survived, thanks to the legacy and resilience of the Windrush Generation, who sought a better life for themselves and future generations. We cannot let them down.

The U-turn being made by the new Home Secretary Sajid Javid with the introduction of the Windrush scheme and the taskforce for compensation are welcomed. Additionally the resignation and apology by the previous Home Secretary Amber Rudd was needed but more needs to be done.

We do not trust that this Tory Government can put the situation right. The apology and the promise of compensation are too little, too late. We believe the trade unions must work with Labour and the TUC to protect the rights of workers including migrant workers against exploitation from bosses, deportation and loss of access to public services such as health and education and all racist immigration controls.

We welcome the Movement for Justice's Widen Windrush Campaign to include the descendants and relatives of the Windrush generation who came to Britain as adults after 1973, in the government's 'Windrush Scheme' thereby offering them a route to citizenship. At its launch Janet Dabby MP, David Lammy MP, Eleanor Smith MP and Baroness Hamwee all spoke in support of this campaign.

Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Continue in raising awareness of the issues facing Windrush generation in 'Black Action;'
- 2) Build and strengthen alliances with other charities and organisation such as the JCWI – Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants who are supporting victims of immigration crisis;
- 3) Request Labour Link discusses with the Labour Party how to reform the immigration system when it gets elected into government;
- 4) Produce an article about the Windrush Generations and their most valuable and lasting contributions to British Society;
- 5) Consider the theme for Black History Month in 2019 is "Windrush a time to celebrate our legacy and the commonwealth";
- 6) Work with other Trade union Black workers organisations including through the TUC Black Workers Conference to continue to campaign against the hostile environment, particularly as it has affected those from former British 'colonies' and help establish a network of support for Black workers subject to these illegal policies;
- 7) Work with all appropriate campaign groups and stakeholders' including the Widen Windrush Campaign to challenge the racism of immigration legislation and its impact on the descendants of the Windrush generation;
- 8) Raise the issued faced by the Windrush descendants and offer support to any UNISON members affected, where possible;
- 9) Prepare and circulate information to all branches about the Windrush campaign, support available from the union for members affected and how they access this;
- 10) Work with the Movement for Justice Campaign and MPs from all parties, especially the Labour Party to campaign for the removal of 'immigrant' status of the Windrush generation and descendants in recognition of their British Citizenship, even before arriving in the UK. This will still only be a small recompense for having been treated as second class citizens in their own original countries such as the Indian sub-continent, Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, whilst their natural resources were extorted to build the economy of Britain.

## COMPOSITE B

### **Knife crime – gangs, knives and the killing of young Black people**

*(Motions 17 and 18)*

*Submitters:*

17 *National Black Members' Committee*

18 *Greater London Region*

Conference notes the alarming spike in knife crime in 2018. In London knife crime has risen by 16percent in the past two years and over 50 people were killed by stabbings and shootings in the first 3 months of the year. This gave rise to speculation that the murder rate is higher in London than New York. The number of young people killed in the UK this year through knife crime and youth violence is unprecedented, Young Black men were victims in almost a third of killings in London last year despite only making up 1.4 per cent of its population, according to figures.

Conference notes that the furore over the 'knife crime epidemic' served to demonise Black youth who are blamed for the stabbings. Whilst in reality they are victims of the crime. Urban youth music such as 'Drill' music has also been blamed for the rise in knife crime.

It is no coincidence that a significant number of those killed by knife crime are Black youths. However, conference recognises that the reason for the rise in stabbings is a consequence of the cuts in services to young people. Nearly a decade of cuts to public services and austerity measures, which are well documented to have disproportionately affected the Black community, have taken their toll. Black families often find themselves trapped in areas of deprivation, with increased social pressures. Added to this cuts to youth services Black young people can find themselves spending time on the streets as they have no-where else to go, leaving them vulnerable to gangs. Young Black people have been worst hit under the Tories austerity programme with Black youth unemployment of 25 percent compared to white youth unemployment of 12 percent.

Furthermore under this Conservative Government Police numbers have been cut year on year. The latest figures show that between September 2010 and September 2017, the number of police officers in English and Welsh forces fell by 19,921 or 14 percent, according to the Home Office. This has resulted in reduced Police visibility and little deterrent for gangs not to operate or individuals to carry out violence crime.

Youth services in particular have been slashed to the bone. Youth services help young people to lead positive lives as members of society.

UNISON's research has found that by 2016, £387m had been cut from youth services, with the loss of more than 3600 jobs and 600 youth centres. Since then, figures from the House of Commons library show that the amount councils plan to spend on youth services dropped by 53.6 percent between 2010 and 2017. Local authorities have responded to Tory cuts by reducing youth service budgets, outsourcing to alternative delivery models, and merging youth services with other departments – like social work, youth offending teams, and libraries.

In 2015 in response to Southwark Council's 60 percent cut to youth services and merger with leisure services, Damilola Taylor's father stated 'More kids will be stabbed if youth

services are cut. Bearing in mind the level of killing, stabbing and violence this is not the right time. This is the wrong approach and bad decision of the council'.

Conference notes that not only cuts to youth services but cuts to children and adolescence mental health services, schools and education has all had an impact on the lives of young people.

Conference therefore welcomes Labour manifesto commitment, when in government, to reverse the youth service cuts, restore EMA, set a £10 hour minimum wage, ban zero hours contracts and end student tuition fees. Conference notes that Corbyn's anti-austerity message is massively popular with young Black people and amongst our members.

Rising violent crime levels have led some to call for more stop and search, and Met Commissioner Cressida Dick has backed its greater use, if it is deemed necessary by police. Despite changes by police, the racial disproportionality in the use of stop and search remain high and of concern with Black people eight times more likely to be targeted by officers than white people.

For Stop and search to be effective it needs to be used correctly. Some argue concerns raised re Stop & Search are being used as an excuse not to deal with the gang culture/increasing number of knife crimes.

The senseless loss of life from knife crime/youth violence, whilst devastating for friends and family, has a wider impact on the Black community. There is also an impact on UNISON members and other public sector workers who work in the NHS or services supporting victims and their families.

Year on year we are seeing innocent Black lives lost due to knife crime and gang culture. This is particularly so within cities but the ongoing violence is also spreading further afield across the UK. An urgent solution is needed and collective action.

This National Black Members Conference welcomes decision of the 2018 UNISON National Delegate Conference for 2019 to be designated as 'The Year of Young Workers' and the commitments to set a target of a 5 percent increase in young membership and young member activists by conference 2019, and a further 5 percent in young membership and young member activists by conference 2020, and allocate the resources required to meet this aim. We believe it is essential that part of this campaign focussed on recruiting young Black people both as members and activists as the future of our union.

Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Campaign against youth service cuts and support UNISON initiative in fighting the cuts in youth workers jobs and closures of youth centres;
- 2) Work with Labour Link and support the call to stop youth centre closures and support funding to youth organisations;
- 3) Highlight the campaigns and impact of youth service cuts in Black Action;

- 4) Organise and campaign that local council to use their reserves and borrowing; powers to fund youth services;
- 5) Work with the London Mayor's office, other politicians, community groups and other stakeholders across the UK to share information, best practice and ideas on how best to promote a positive message of why not to carry a knife and alternatives to gangs;
- 6) Continue to campaign against cuts to public services, especially for young people, to defend quality public services.