



Equality Matters

Communication Workers Union - South West Region Equality & Diversity Newsletter

European plan to extend maternity leave

Edition 5

The European Commission is unveiling plans to extend the minimum maternity leave across Europe from 14 to 18 weeks. The plans are meant to offset falling birth-rates across the EU.

The existing EU law, which dates from 1992, provides for a minimum 14 weeks of maternity leave throughout Europe, including two compulsory weeks before the birth. The new rules say women should be entitled to at least 18 consecutive weeks' maternity leave, six of which should be taken after birth. The rest would be taken before or after labour, as the mother chooses.

Under the proposals, the 27 EU countries would guarantee that women won't be sacked during or immediately after maternity leave. Governments would be free to offer new mothers more time off, but would have to pay them at least as much as sickness leave.

Across Europe, there are wide differences in the amount of leave and pay for mothers-to-be. In Belgium, it is 15 weeks; in France, 16; in Britain it is 26, while in Bulgaria you can take almost a year. In Germany, which has one of the lowest birth-rates in the EU, women are entitled to the minimum 14 weeks, but with full pay.

The European Commission may want a better balance between work and family life, but that costs money. Countries like Germany and Belgium would have to give women longer maternity leave, Britain and Bulgaria would have to pay them more while they stay at home looking after their babies - at least as much as normal sickness pay.

There are fears that it could create reluctance

from small employers to hire women. Some, like the Czech Republic, also object to what they say is European Commission interference in their social welfare systems.

But if a majority of EU governments and the European Parliament agree, the new rules for maternity leave could be in place by 2011.

Equality & Diversity Committee Meeting

The next Regional Equality & Diversity Committee meetings all start at 11am and will be:

13th January AGM, Bristol regional office
26th March venue to be confirmed (TBC)
19th May, venue tbc
2nd July Exeter venue tbc
8th September, venue tbc
10th November, venue tbc

All branches are required to have an equality officer, could branches ensure their equality officer/rep or a substitute attends.

Gary Williams, Secretary South West E&D Committee.

Women's Regional Committee AGM

The South West Regional Women's Committee AGM will be **at the regional** Office Bristol, 11am 20th January 2009

We urge all branches to ensure their women members are aware and encourage their attendance. Men are welcome to attend if your women's officer or rep cannot make it.

Regional Equality & Diversity Committee

COMMENT: Members will have seen in previous newsletters reports from Pride events in the southwest region. This year saw the largest number of regional Pride events, including two new ones in Truro and Swindon, but it also saw an appallingly low turnout from local CWU branches.

It appears only representatives from two south west branches IN TOTAL took part, in fact members from two London branches turned up at one Pride, doubling the entire CWU contingent!

I appreciate that giving up a Saturday isn't easy and we are all busy but given the fact that there were only 5 Pride events with marches in our region the support shown has been disappointing to say the least.

This committee will be supporting 2009 regional Pride's (Bournemouth Pride is 11th

July and Truro Pride 8th August) and let you know when and where they will be but can I ask branches to seriously consider taking part and bring along your banners, members, family and friends.

There isn't a branch in the region that does not have lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender members, even if you don't know who they are. Imagine the message your sending to your members if other unions or branches are present but not theirs?

You don't have to be lesbian, gay bisexual or transgender to take part, everyone is welcome, Pride events are great days out, an opportunity to advertise the union, show support and solidarity and even recruit new members!

Gary Williams Secretary

Equality Officers Profile

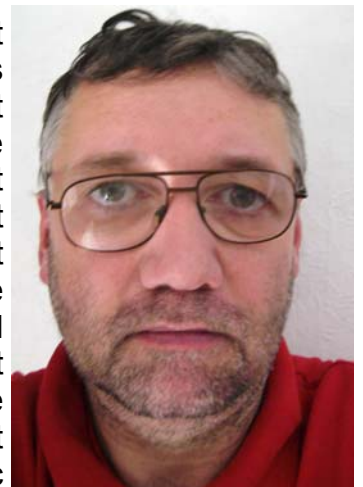
This edition features Andy Rathbone, Equality officer for Wessex South Central branch.

My name is Andy Rathbone and I'm the Equal Opportunities Officer for Wessex South Central Branch, which covers the area around Southampton and Salisbury. I work at Southampton Mail Centre, where I am also the Late Shift Rep and the Deputy Area Processing Rep, and have worked for Royal Mail for nearly twenty years. Before that, I was a student and active in the National Union of Students.

I started getting active in unions because I've always believed that everyone should be treated equally and with dignity and respect. It appalled me particularly that people were physically attacked or discriminated against to such an extent it ruined their lives, simply because they were different. It was a simple step from there to realising that you need to organise collectively to oppose bigotry in the same way as you do to fight for better wages and conditions at work. The labour movement has to take the lead in doing so.

The issue that worries me most at present is the rise of the far right, not only in Britain but

also throughout Europe. It is particularly important that we get the message across that the BNP are not just "hyper-Tories" but from a far more sinister political tradition, and that their leaders have been involved in racist and homophobic violence, denying the holocaust, organised union-bashing and intimidation of any activists who oppose them. Allowing these thugs to get real power does not bear thinking about.



Locally, we have just elected our first Women's Officer (Shirley Edwards), which is very exciting, and everyone in our branch is beginning to see the importance of equality work.

There's certainly a lot to do.

Barriers for people with Disabilities

While the proportion of disabled people in paid employment has risen since the start of the decade, employment levels are still well below those of the working age population generally, with an even lower employment rate for people with mental health problems.

This is one of a number of findings of a new report, *Experiences and expectations of disabled people*, published by the government's Office for Disability Issues, which polled nearly 2,000 disabled people in Great Britain on a range of key policy areas including employment. A similar study was last undertaken in 2001.

Since the 2001 study, the proportion of working age disabled people in paid employment has risen slightly from 39% to 43% now. Yet this remains well below the 74% rate for the working age population generally. And working-age adults with mental health problems fared significantly worse than even other disabled working age people, with only 16% in paid work at the time they were interviewed.

Those who were in work felt optimistic about the contribution work made to their lives with the overwhelming majority (96%) reporting that work helps keep them active. A similar proportion (95%) said work provides them with financial independence, while 92% said it enabled them to meet other people and 90% said work makes them feel they are contributing to society.

Yet, despite these positive views, work was nevertheless the area where people reported experiencing disability discrimination most frequently. Nearly half of all those reporting disability-related discrimination (47%) said this had happened in relation to employment. This included not being given a job in the first place (9%), not being allowed suitable hours due to disability (9%) and being asked to leave or made redundant (8%).

And disabled people in employment were 25% less likely than the working population as a whole to be employed as managers or in professional occupations, but 39% more likely

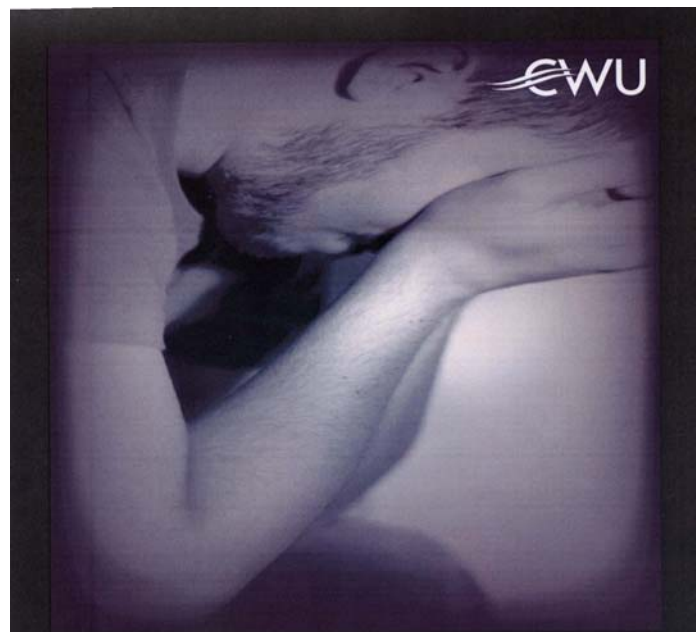
to be working in elementary occupations — a classification covering a very wide range of jobs including labourers, waiters, porters and cleaners.

Of those of working age who were not in employment, one in 10 said this was because they did not have the skills needed to get a job, and the proportion was even higher (17%) for younger people aged 16 to 34.

Minister for disabled people Anne McGuire acknowledged that the research showed “disabled people of working age can and want to work, but still face barriers in accessing and staying in jobs”.

She pledged the government's determination to “make sure we provide the support that disabled people need to make the most of the opportunities that are out there”.

The report can be accessed at: www.officefordisability.gov.uk/research/eedp.asp
From Labour Research Department, August 2008



Discriminated for your age?

From the 1st October 2006 it will be unlawful to discriminate against someone on the ground of their age. This is a unique piece of legislation, as every single worker, both young and old will be protected...**Know your rights!**

For more information contact your local CWU branch office, or the ACAS website at www.acas.org.uk. Alternatively you can also go to the TUC web site at www.tuc.org.uk

150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, SW19 1RX • www.cwu.org • General Secretary: Billy Hayes www.billyhayes.co.uk
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Report from CWU LGBT Conference 2008

Conference was opened by Cllr. Alan Lloyd, deputy mayor of Swansea who had been a member of the Post Office Engineering Union (the telecoms fore-runner to the CWU) when he worked for BT some years ago.

Alan currently leads the UK delegation for the Council of Europe (This was Europe's first political inter-governmental organisation. It seeks to protect and promote peace, democracy and human rights across the continent). He told us 'Every minority has a right to be heard and a right to be listened to'

Dave Daniel, the Chair of the CWU LGBT Advisory Committee spoke briefly about the Committee's work over the past year and some of the successes as well as areas where more work needed to be done, for example, transgender people are still not being given the same protection in law against discrimination as everyone else.

Conference then observed a minutes silence in memory of victims of homophobic attacks.

CWU General Secretary Billy Hayes addressed conference. He told us 'your work (as a committee) is making an important contribution to the CWU'. But he warned; 'its one thing to win a policy, another to get it enforced'.

Conference then heard from Derek Walker, head of policy and campaigns for Wales TUC. (Trades Union Council). He explained that LGBT people face unacceptably high levels of harassment at work (1 in 4 according to a recent survey) and high levels of hate crime; people are being murdered because of their sexuality.

Derek told us how the 1st Wales TUC LGBT Conference next year would be focusing on homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools.

We then heard from Lindsay England of the Gay Football Supporters Network (GFSN). The GFSN had started life around 15 years ago as a social group and had become a formal group around 10 years ago. They campaign with the

FA against homophobia in football.

Martin Reynolds, director of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement and an Anglican priest for 31 years, spoke passionately about issues faced by LGBT people including his own experience in a same-sex parent family and the kind of issues he and his partner had faced when adopting children. He told us 'whether its marriage or civil partnership, it should be the same rights for all – no gay ghettos'.

Conference then heard 11 motions and emergency motions from delegates across the UK on various issues including calls to;

- Lobby and campaign for an end to homophobia in sport.
- Campaign against the blanket ban on healthy gay men giving blood.
- Campaign against the legal loop hole that allows people to discriminate against LGBT people on the grounds of religious belief.
- Raise awareness of the issues facing older LGBT people so they can live their lives with the dignity they deserve.
- Campaign to ensure the strongest possible representations are made to protect the rights of LGBT people across the world, following intimidating behaviour from extremists in countries such as Croatia, Latvia, Estonia, Russia and Poland.
- Campaign to halt the atrocities in Iraq against LGBT people.

Report continued on next page.....

Photo below: Gary Williams moving motion 7.



.....CWU LGBT Conference 2008 — Report continued

- Raise awareness of the issue of domestic violence for LGBT people and to call for inclusiveness of refuges to help these people.
- Campaign for a national monument to LGBT people, to recognise LGBT people murdered, assaulted or imprisoned.
- Campaign against recent legislation in California; the passing of proposition 8; the removal of the right to marry.
- Call for the CWU to publicly condemn the Stonewall organisation for nominating Julie Brindle for one of this years 'Stonewall Awards'. Julie Brindle has previously openly expressed transphobic opinions.
- Campaign to remove Joel Edwards from the EHRC (European Human Rights Commission). Joel Edwards has previously opposed all LGBT equality legislation and wants to extend exceptions to equality legislation for faith organisations allowing them to legally discriminate against LGBT people

Conference voted for two motions to be put to General Conference next June. The first was Motion 10. Following a tie between motions 2

and 3 a follow-up ballot chose motion 3.

Motion 3 called for a campaign to close the legal loop hole that allows people, on religious grounds, to discriminate against LGBT people and Motion 10, which asks the CWU to raise awareness of the issue of domestic violence for LGBT people and to call for the inclusiveness of refuges to help these people.

CWU National Equality Officer, Linda Roy closed conference, saying 'the message we send out is that it's not right and it's not acceptable to discriminate because of sexual orientation'.

Dave Daniel Chair of the LGBTAC closed conference by thanking all delegates, visitors and guests for making this a successful conference.

Katy Hartland, Equality Officer, Gloucestershire Amal

Photo below:

Some of the South West Equality and Diversity committee with General Secretary Billy Hayes, Dave Daniel Chair of the LGBT Advisory Committee and Linda Roy, Assistant Secretary Equal Opportunities.



Report from CWU Disability & Special Needs Conference.....

Tony Sneddon, Chair of the Disability and Special Needs Advisory Committee welcomed us to Conference. Tony briefly outlined some of the work the DSNAC had been doing over the last year, including the OCD Action partnership and the Dyslexia Toolkit. He went on to explain that 1/5th of the working age population of Great Britain classed themselves as disabled. Disabled people were more likely to live in poverty. They are also more likely to feel excluded and be in the lowest paid jobs due to a lack of understanding about their disability and the law on disability. He concluded; 'Disabled people don't want to be treated differently, just on equal terms'.

Linda Roy, National equality Officer, addressed conference briefly, thanking everyone involved in its organisation. Linda told us how the CWU campaign for dignity and respect for their members in the workplace, and that it was our job to insure none of our members were discriminated against because of their disability.

Tony Kearns, Senior Deputy General Secretary, then addressed conference. Tony had stepped in for General Secretary Billy Hayes, who had been unavoidably called away to other Union business. Tony spoke passionately about the dedication and determination of the Para Olympians, who unlike able-bodied Olympians were unlikely to be rewarded with riches and fame for their efforts.

He also spoke to conference about how the most vulnerable people in society were often the hardest hit in a recession. This is why we need to continue to defend equality, fairness and justice. We need to defend the people most likely to be 'put upon' during a financial crisis.

There were 11 motions on the agenda, 2 Industrial and 9 National issues. One emergency motion was admitted, E1, to the Industrial section and Motion 11 from the National issues section was withdrawn. The motions dealt with a wide ranging set of issues such as:

- forming a partnership with BT's 'ABLE2' self-organised disability network,
- addressing problems that members in Orange were experiencing because of their

employers lack of understanding and interpretation of the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act),

- raising awareness of the new legislation that carers of disabled people should also be protected from discrimination under the DDA too,
- raising awareness of anxiety to ensure our members aren't discriminated against due to anxiety related issues such as IBS,
- a database of cancer patients to ensure they are not being discriminated against,
- a campaign to have our industry recognised by the Department of Work and Pensions so members would be entitled to benefits for work-related deafness,
- raising awareness of the issues faced by people who stutter,
- raising awareness of Asperger syndrome and autism,
- providing equality proofing training for all reps,
- a campaign to enforce agreements which state that doctors appointments should be disregarded on sick records.

Delegates spoke with passion about issues which face them and their members.

All 11 motions were heard and carried. In fact, all were carried unanimously except for Motion 5, which called for a database of cancer patients to be set up, so that the Union could ensure these members were not being discriminated against due to their illness, as cancer is now covered by the DDA.

Motion 5 was controversial for some branches. Most said they fully supported the Motion in principle, but the Motion stated " ... a policy of reporting all instances of cancer be put in place..". This was taken as implying it would be compulsory to be on the database.

It was explained by the Mover during her Right to Reply that this had not been the intention, and that she had written the motion while in a very emotional state, being personally affected by cancer herself.

Continued on next page...

.....Report from CWU Disability & Special Needs Conference continued

Continued from previous page....

After some debate, Motion 5 was carried by about a 60/40 split.

There were two very inspirational speakers at the conference. Firstly we heard from Dr Norman Waddington, a biodiversity and conservation scientist who has also worked in nuclear energy.

Dr Waddington has been totally blind from birth and was the first blind person to be employed at Sellafield. He spoke about his own experiences including his work with the European Blind Union whose mission and role is to protect and promote the interests of blind and partially sighted people in Europe.

Sarah Veale, head of Equality and Employment Rights at the TUC (Trades Union Congress) then spoke to conference about various disability issues including hate crimes against disabled people and the campaign against Remploy factory closures. (Remploy is a provider of specialist employment services for disabled people set up in 1945 after the 1944 Disabled Persons (Employment) Act introduced by Ernest Bevin, the Minister for Labour)

Conference voted for two of the Motions to be put forward to General Conference next June; Motion 3. This called for the CWU to be at the forefront of lobbying to ensure a high level of awareness on the new legislation covering care providers with protection under the DDA following the Coleman V Attridge Law.

And Motion 9, which called for basic equality proofing training for all workplace reps

91 delegates and 6 visitors attended the conference. Although this was a very good turn-out, it was down on last year. One reason for this reduced turn-out suggested was that people were attending a rally held in Crewe that same day to protest against the Mail Centre closures announced in that area.

Linda Roy closed the conference, saying how the CWU 'punches above its weight' with regard to disability matters. She concluded, 'the CWU take disability matters very seriously and we need to keep pushing them forward'.

Katy Hartland, Equality Officer, Gloucestershire Amal Branch

News snippets

Man with Disability denied wedding

An Italian bishop denied a 25 year old paraplegic man a church wedding because he could not have children. The Bishop of Viterbo said the purpose of marriage was not only love but also procreation.

The Times, 10/06/08

Senior Police officer drops case.

Britain's most senior Asian police officer has settled planned legal action against the Metropolitan Police. Assistant Commissioner Tarique Ghaffur reportedly complained of being undermined by colleagues.

He has withdrawn claims that Met Commissioner Sir Ian Blair acted in a racist or other discriminatory way towards him. The senior officer signed a gagging clause and will step down from his role shortly.

BBC news 25/11/08

RAC and CWUHA team up.

In an unprecedented development the Race Advisory Committee has cemented a relationship with the CWUHA that will see a project develop that ultimately will aim to bring water provision to a village in Tanzania, Africa.

The work will also see the two groups team up with the specialist water provision charity JUST A DROP. The Equal Opportunities department notes the wonderful work of CWUHA and the hope it brings to so many under privileged children in parts of the world where life opportunities are pretty much non-existent.

The passing of Motion 21 from this year's CWU annual conference means there is conference policy on this brilliantly worthwhile project.

Branches can affiliate to CWUHA and they are listed as an official charity.

The White Ribbon Campaign

The White Ribbon Campaign is the largest effort in the world of men working to end men's violence against women. It relies on volunteer support and financial contributions from individuals and organizations. Wearing a white ribbon is a personal pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women.

Each year, we urge men and boys to wear a ribbon for one or two weeks, starting on November 25, the International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women

Comparing violence committed by women and by men, the British Crime Survey notes that the result of men's violence is five times as likely to require medical attention. Women are four times as likely as men to fear for their lives, and three and a half times as likely to be murdered by a male spouse than vice versa.

We are deeply concerned about violence against children, which is committed by both women and men. We are concerned about the many forms of men's violence against other men, whether it's in a bar, on a playground, or in a sports arena, and whether it's because of someone's skin colour, sexual orientation, culture, or simply because they looked the wrong way. We are also concerned by the comparatively rare acts of violence by women against men.

We don't think that men are naturally violent and we don't think that men are bad. The majority of men are not violent. Researchers have discovered many past cultures with little or no violence. At the same time we do think that many men have learned to express their anger or insecurity through violence. Many men have come to believe that violence against a woman, child or another man is an acceptable way to control another person.

The problem does not stop with physical violence. There are forms of emotional violence--from sexist joking, to sexual harassment at work, to other domineering forms of behaviour. By remaining silent about these things, we allow other men to poison our working and learning environments.

The good news is that more and more men want to make a difference. Caring men are tired of the sexism that hurts the women around them. We're not male bashers because we're men, working with men, who care about what happens in the lives of men.



Three sisters – Patria, Maria Teresa and Minerva Mirabel (political activists in the Dominican Republic) were assassinated in a 'car accident' in November 1960. **They were killed for their involvement in efforts to overthrow the fascist government of Rafael Trujillo.** The Mirabel sisters quickly became symbols of dignity and inspiration. Their lives raised the spirits of all those they encountered and later, after their death, not only those in the Dominican Republic but others around the world.

July 1981: Women from across Latin America came together in Columbia. Appalled by the extent and diversity of violence against women, **they agreed to hold an annual day of protest, and they decided to adopt 25th November as the date** for this International Day Against Violence Against Women in memory of the Mirabel sisters.

1991: The first White Ribbon Campaign was launched by a group of men in Canada after the brutal mass shooting of 14 female students at the University of Montreal.

1996: In South Africa the National Network on Violence Against Women launched their own White Ribbon Campaign and many South African women's groups quickly adopted the White Ribbon symbol.

1998: WOMANKIND launched the first White Ribbon Day in the UK.



International Women's Day

This event takes place annually on the 8th March. Women's achievements are recognised across the globe. In recognition of this excellent day, the CWU agreed recently at a joint WAC/RWC meeting that we should hold our own celebratory event in honour of women around the world.

We are really pleased to announce that a CWU 'Woman of the Year' event will be held culminating in a showcase gathering on or around 8th March 2010. The formal launch of this prestigious event will take place at the CWU Women's Conference, which is taking place on 28th February 2009, in Manchester. More details will follow soon.



1st December World Aids Day

More people than ever before are living with HIV in the UK and new infections continue to rise. HIV is a serious long-term condition and people living with HIV often face discrimination. Whatever your HIV status, there is a role you can play in ending HIV prejudice and stopping the spread of HIV.

The UK theme for World AIDS Day 2008, "Respect & Protect", is inspired by the UNAIDS and World AIDS Campaign ongoing international theme, 'Leadership'. The international theme is developed as an overall theme which each country is encouraged to adapt to suit more specific issues around the epidemic in their region.

Respect & Protect is inclusive and highlights the responsibility everyone has to transform attitudes to HIV and encourage actions that stop its spread. Respect & Protect inspires individuals to consider the different roles they can play:

Show respect by always treating people living with HIV fairly, respect their confidentiality and challenge prejudice. Respect themselves and their partners by always practising safe sex to protect their sexual health. Find out the facts about HIV, spread the Respect & Protect message and encourage others to do the same.

CWU Harassment Database

Reminder to Branches, you will need to fill in the Harassment Complaints Database (HCD) forms, as illustrated in LTB 450/04. Please ensure that all reps have a copy of LTB 450/04 as it contains useful guidance as well as the form itself. This is available on the members section of CWU website.

Branches may also find LTB 289/04 useful which contains information as well as the HCD. The completion of the HCD forms is part of our agreement with the Equal Opportunities Commission and is, therefore, CWU policy (the full agreement can be found in LTB 292/04).

The Equal Opportunities Commission has raised concerns regarding the completion rate, which need to be addressed, otherwise we will fall foul of the agreement. Therefore, please ensure that any complaint raised with branch representatives by members that involves possible harassment should be notified to HQ via these forms.

The data that will come through to HQ will be vital in enabling us to analyse and identify any obvious patterns where problems exist.

CWU HELPLINE
HARASSMENT
0800 107 1909
or email cwu.dignityandrespect@firstassist.co.uk

CWU HELPLINE
HARASSMENT

The CWU harassment helpline:

- is for anyone who feels unable to speak to anyone locally about a harassment problem
- offers a 24 hour service for logging calls which will be passed to union HQ for action
- can also give direct access to professional counsellors if you need additional emotional support

To seek advice, just call **FREEPHONE 0800 107 1909**

CWU - General Secretary Billy Hayes · 150 The Broadway London SW19 1RX · 020 8971 7200 · www.cwu.org

Disfigurement campaign launched

A Face Equality at Work campaign, addressing discrimination at work met by people with facial disfigurements, has been launched by Changing Faces (CF), the charity which represents people with disfigurements of the face or body.

CF works with employers to help ensure employees and customers with facial and other disfigurements are treated fairly. It asks employers to sign a "Commitment to Face Equality" and implement policies on fair treatment of people with facial disfigurements in recruitment retention procedures, and in customer service strategies.

More than 540,000 people in the UK have a significant disfigurement to their face, whether from birth or through an accident, skin conditions, or cancer surgery. CF wants employers to adopt three goals in showing support for equality — becoming familiar with the causes and effects of disfiguring conditions; adopting positive thinking about people with disfigurements through ensuring an inclusive workplace culture; and altering behaviour "so that people with disfigurements are recruited, retained and served, equally and fairly".

Legal Judgement

In a judgment described as "catastrophic" by the National Secular Society, a London registrar has had her tribunal claim for religious discrimination upheld.

Ms Ladele, a practising Christian, was employed as a Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths. When the *Civil Partnership Act* came into force in 2005, Islington Council required all its registrars to take on civil partnership duties. Ms Ladele refused, saying it was contrary to her religious belief that marriage should be a union between one man and one woman. After complaints by gay colleagues, the council informed Ms Ladele that her conduct was contrary to its *Code of conduct and dignity for all policy* which required all employees and members of the public to be treated equally regardless of their sexuality or religion. When threatened with disciplinary action, Ms Ladele brought a

tribunal claim for religious discrimination.

The tribunal found the council guilty of direct discrimination because, while it had considered the importance of not discriminating against the gay community, it had failed to take account of Ms Ladele's own rights as a member of a religious group.

By requiring all registrars to carry out civil partnership duties, the council additionally subjected Ms Ladele to indirect discrimination, in that it put her at a disadvantage as an Orthodox Christian. This was unjustifiable because the interests of the gay community could be protected by other registrars carrying out her duties, whereas Ms Ladele's own religious beliefs had been given no consideration. The council has indicated that it will appeal

Disability Discrimination Judgement

The European Court of Justice has decided that disability discrimination legislation covers able-bodied employees "by association".

Sharon Coleman, a legal secretary with a disabled son born in 2002, claimed direct discrimination and harassment by her employer, as a result of which she felt forced to volunteer for redundancy in 2005. She claimed her employer refused to allow her to return to her previous job when she returned from maternity leave, refused to allow her to work flexibly; and subjected her to abusive and insulting comments about her child.

The tribunal referred the matter to the Court of Justice to decide if the directive on equal treatment also covered employees treated less favourably because someone for whom they cared was disabled.

The ECJ said that it should be interpreted as protecting employees who, although not themselves disabled, nevertheless suffered discrimination or harassment because they were associated with a disabled person. It also said the same with regard to harassment.

The decision has potential ramifications for employees bringing claims under other discrimination legislation, such as sexual orientation, religion and age.

Labour Research Department October 2008

2009 CWU Women's Conference

BNP members should be 'sacked'

The 2009 Women's Conference will be on Saturday 28th February 2009 at the Britannia Hotel, 35 Portland Street, Manchester, M1 3LA..

All those attending the Conference are invited to a social event, which will be held at the Britannia Hotel on the Friday evening, more details will be sent out nearer the time.

It is important Branches book places early at the Britannia Hotel as they will be holding a number of rooms on a 'first come, first served' basis. Bookings can be made by calling Central Reservations on 0161 923 0320, quoting CWUMA272.

Please note that a credit card is required to reserve the room - no charge will be made at time of booking. Accommodation rates: (preferential CWU rates for Friday & Saturday night only)

All rooms are double rooms charged @ £60, bed and breakfast (single occupancy) and @ £80, bed and breakfast (double occupancy)

{Rooms will be held at this rate until Friday 30th January 2009, after which time they will be released and the preferential rate may not be available}

Please let the Equal Opportunities Department know as quickly as possible and no later than Friday 30th January, if anyone has any mobility or access issues etc. or if a signer is required.

If anyone requires a crèche; Prayer Room, or if special diets are required (other than vegetarian), please let the Equal Opportunities Department know as soon as possible and no later than Friday 13th February.

Please note that detailed information, including registration forms for the Conference, will be sent out by LTB via the National Standing Orders Committee at a later date.

Any enquiries to the Equal Opportunities Department, quoting reference 1.50.4, email address: dgittens@cwu.org.

The membership list for the fascist BNP was recently released on the web and identifies some fascist BNP members are teachers, prison officers and police officers.

Unite Against Fascism believe it is in the public interest to remove BNP members if we are to prevent abuses. Not least that these people may have access to sensitive information and in positions of influence in our public services.

The BNP are not a party like any other, it is a fascist organisation determined to use the respectable cover of public office to incite racial hatred. The BNP has been exposed for its links to fascists around the world; it has leading members and supporters who have been convicted of racist violence.

The BNP's politics of hate and division threaten the freedoms and safety of those they would see annihilated -- Jews, black people, trade unionists, Muslims and all ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, disabled people and anybody who stands for a democratic society.

Robert Cottage, 3 times BNP candidate, was jailed in 2007 for having stockpiled chemicals, bomb making equipment and rocket launcher. He was the latest in a line of BNP members and BNP councillors found guilty of offences ranging from racially aggravated assault to attempted firebombing. Jon Laidlaw, who told police he was a BNP member and wanted to kill all black people, was convicted in Feb 2007 after a shooting spree on the London Underground.

The BNP through it's acolytes, supports the Redwatch website which contains the names and addresses of those who oppose the fascists along with threats of violence against them. Some of those targeted by Redwatch have been attacked and intimidated. It seems that one of the BNP's own have used their tactics on the BNP itself by releasing the membership details for all to know. We must ensure that our public services are fascist-free zones.

The BNP list is available on <http://wikileaks.org/leak/bnp-membership-list.txt> or you can search by postcode on www.localgibson.com/bnp/

Regional Equality Contacts

Equality & Diversity Committee:

Chair: Trevor Matty, (see Worcester & Hereford).

Secretary: Gary Williams (see Solent branch).

Regional Secretary: Kevin Beazer;
0117 935 0055, southwestregion@cwu.org

Branch Equality Officers:

Bournemouth & Dorset Amal: Luke Brown;
luke.brown@unioncwu.org Office: 0844 4849593

Bristol & District Amal: Deputy Equality Rep
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Harman announces equality panel

Harriet Harman, minister for equalities, announced a new initiative to probe deeper into the causes of inequality at the TUC Congress.

The National Equality Panel, headed by Professor John Hills, director of the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at LSE, working with the TUC, will investigate the complex factors that cause disadvantage and provide an analysis of equality trends since 1997.

Speaking in a session on equal pay and the continuing extent of workplace discrimination, Harman underlined the progress made on equality issues under the Labour government, reiterating the new duties and powers that will come into force with the Equalities Bill, including strengthening the roles of union

equality reps.

Despite Harman's endorsement of the work of the Equality and Human Rights Commission some union delegates were critical of its lack of teeth. Comments covered its failure to investigate and enforce contraventions of equality duties, its limited resources, its "one size fits all" approach to equality, and lack of monitoring and auditing of progress.

Unions termed the Equality Bill a "milestone" that could be "the most important piece of legislation for a decade" and urged the minister to ensure it included sufficient enforcement powers to avoid it becoming a "single act of mediocrity".

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