

UNITE 1ST REGIONAL BLACK, ASIAN AND ETHNIC MINORITIES CONFERENCES 2009

Key Issues from first Regional Black, Asian and Ethnic Minorities (BAEM) Conferences October 2009

BAEM Workers - Promotion & Other Workplace Issues

- Union to support and take action on BAEM workers not being promoted as they should be
- Must tackle the lack of black people at the top of organisations, including Employers' commitment as well as action on the ground
- Black workers should not have to take further steps than anyone else to get promotion
- Look at ways to support BAEM workers who do not want to pursue a race case but wish to ensure that race discrimination is tackled and race equality promoted in the workplace as a whole
- Find out and analyse figures on local population broken down by ethnic background to compare with figures in workplaces

Unite BAEM Structures

- Having to be a union rep to be part of Unite BAEM structures is a huge barrier as it is not easy for BAEM members to become reps and this is killing off activity
- More needs to be done in the union to encourage BAEM members to become involved in the Committees, perhaps re-looking at Rule 6
- The recession has meant more people becoming unemployed, particularly black people and this should be taken into account within Unite rules on having to be in employment to be part of BAEM structures

Tackling the Far Right

- With the rise of the English Defence League (EDL), we should develop information to send out to regions
- With the rise of the Far Right organisations like the BNP they are encouraging people to blame black people and migrants for the recession and lack of jobs. This must be recognised and tackled
- The rise in unemployment is one of the key reasons why the BNP have targeted Wales and need to look at ways to address this

Equality Legislation

- There is not enough focus on black workers in the Equality Bill, particularly in relation to the pay gap and we need to find out what will happen to the Equality Bill if Labour do not win the General Election
- Lobby for full enforcement of the Public Sector Duties

Supporting BAEM Workers

- Develop specific information/strategies for BAEM people in the public sector
- Develop networks for BAEM reps to ensure they do not feel isolated
- More focus on tackling racial discrimination in the private sector

Union Equality Representatives

- Develop Officers & Union Reps as mentors for Union Equality Representatives
- Lobby to amend the Equality Bill to include statutory rights for Union Equality Reps

Migrant Workers

- Ensure migrant workers are in the union
- Monitor the agencies being used to ensure good practice

Black History Month & Other Campaign Activities

- Develop regional BHM activities, with local Black Workers events
- Black History Month – Develop materials/activities highlighting the achievements of black people in the community
- Black History Month publicity – Should we include Asian people and other ethnic minorities in publicity materials – different views
- Focus on community activism and make sure Unite is seen out and about in the community taking a prominent role

General

- Support for our members who become unemployed and make sure we keep in contact with them, e.g. contact cards
- Publicise our successes in relation to race equality and BAEM members