

UNITE SENDS MESSAGES TO LABOUR

Hundreds of GPM sector print and paper workers joined 2500 Unite members to send a message to Labour at the recent Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth to support Unite's campaign aims to encourage the government to introduce employment rights for agency and temporary workers, end the opt out of the working time directive, build affordable homes for working families and campaign for tougher corporate manslaughter laws.

At the TUC Conference Tony Burke, Unite Assistant General Secretary, welcomed the Prime Minister's announcement to double apprenticeships over the next 10 years and produce 5m more skilled jobs, but warned that the Government will have to introduce sector skills levies if they are to hit the targets sent for improving skills in the workplace. He described employers response to the Government's "Skills Pledge" as lamentable.

He said: **"If the Prime Minister wants the best-trained workforce in the world, he will have**

to introduce sector skills-based levies that are compulsory on employers." This message was backed up at the Labour Party Conference by Unite Deputy General Secretary Graham Goddard who told Labour delegates: **"The Government commitments to workplace skills training are in danger of being lost as the direction of the government's policy moves towards an even greater emphasis on the needs of employers, and leaving employers to decide whether they wish to train the workforce or not."**

Speaking at the Labour Party conference Tony Burke called for tougher Corporate Manslaughter laws:

"All the evidence shows that stronger penalties, including imprisonment and large fines for company directors are a key determinant in companies making improvements to their health and safety provisions. Unite is clear, it is about time employers that are found guilty of killing or seriously maiming their staff go to prison."



Although the new law means we can prosecute organisations more easily, it will not put anyone in prison and that is what is required."

Derek Simpson, Joint General Secretary of Unite, called for the end to the restrictions that limit the ability of trade unions to act on behalf of working people. Speaking at the Labour Party conference he said that if governments cannot protect workers from exploitation by global companies trade unions would but, to be effective, they needed to changes legislation. He said **"Higher profits for employers and lower wages for workers, the increasing gap between rich and poor and the attacks on labour standards show that the that governments and supranational bodies are not protect workers against global capital."**

Tony Woodley Joint General Secretary of Unite speaking on the need for legislation to protect Agency and Temporary workers told Labour delegates: **"It is time for this government to fulfill its pledge and legislate in the UK to deliver protection and employment rights for temporary and agency workers. We need rigorous enforcement of existing laws, making examples of the worst employers who should go out of business or be sent to jail. The ministers's announcements are welcome but the law also needs to be extended. Crucially, the law should guarantee equal treatment of agency workers and the directly employed."**



PRINT UNION REPS MEET IN LIVERPOOL

A Conference of Union Reps from the gravure printing across Europe met in Liverpool on 21-25 September 2007.

Over 50 union representatives from the UK, Germany, Switzerland, France, Netherlands, Italy and Belgium attended a meeting convened by Uni Europa Graphical to discuss a wide range of issues affecting the gravure printing industry including pay and conditions, hours of work, new shift patterns, globalisation of the gravure sector and the problems confronting the industry over the coming years.

The Conference was addressed by Tony Burke, Unite Assistant General Secretary who told delegates he expected significant changes within the industry across the European Union particularly the advent of new shift patterns, 7 day 24 hour working, and the demands publishers and supermarkets are making on the production of magazines and catalogues.

Simon Dubbins, President of Uni Europa Graphical, told the conference that unions would have to work together to prevent a "race to the bottom". He told the conference: **"Global capital is aggressive, we cannot solve it anymore nationally, we have to take an international approach."**

Frank Werneke, Deputy General Secretary of the German services union Ver.di (which includes graphical workers), said: **"The conference comes at the right time. Trade unions and worker representatives have to co-ordinate their strategy in order to avoid workforces of different countries to be played off against each other."**

The Conference was also addressed by Catherine Hearn, Chief Operating Director of Polestar UK, who set out her view of the way the gravure industry would develop in Europe over the coming years, potential company mergers, the company's relationship with Unite in the UK and their decision to build a new gravure plant in Sheffield.



UNITE SECURES RECOGNITION DEAL AT THE GUARDIAN PRINT CENTRE

Re-organisation of newspaper industry continues with Unite, the UK's biggest union representing print and graphical workers in the newspaper and media industry, securing union recognition at the Guardian's new Print Centre in London.

The recognition agreement been signed by Unite Regional Officer Paul Frizzell, with the Guardian Print Centre after considerable organising work by Regional organiser Guy Langston, and covers all the workers including over 100 Unite members in pre-press, press hall, post press, engineering, maintenance and warehouse.

Unite National Officer, Steve Sibbald, said: **"Hopefully we will enjoy a fruitful, productive relationship with the Guardian Print Centre who have co-operated with Unite throughout. This agreement is part of the continuing success story of the re-organisation of the Newspaper Industry where 20 years ago, apart from a few newspapers, the whole industry was virtually de-recognised."**

"We have other recognition agreements in the pipeline in regional newspapers and we will continue until all of the newspaper industry is re-organised once again."

SCOTTISH PRINT INDUSTRY REACHES HALF CENTURY

September marked the 500th anniversary of the first printing licence in Scotland, issued by King James IV. Walter Chepman and Andrew Myllar were the first book printers in Scotland, after being granted an exclusive royal concession on 15th September 1507. They produced small poetry booklets, followed by a full-length novel, a romance called 'The Complaint of the Black Knight', which was translated from English into Scots, in April 1508. 50 years earlier the first printing press had been established by Joseph Gutenberg in Germany.



CORRUGATED PAY DEAL

3.8% pay deal for corrugated members

Corrugated packaging workers are to be balloted on a pay rise of up to 3.8% after Unite and the Confederation of Paper Industries (CPI) reached a settlement.

Unite national officer Peter Ellis said lower-paid workers would receive an extra £9 to £12.50 per week. Unite has also negotiated 3.5% as a fall-back figure for the rest of the corrugated industry, depending on local arrangements. **"We've had to recognise the difficulties that the corrugated industry is undergoing at the current time and employers have made a good case,"** said Peter.

In addition to the pay deal, the two parties agreed further improved terms and conditions for corrugated workers. New dads will receive 10 days' paternity leave on full pay from September 2008, compared with the current five days on full pay. Both male and female workers will also be entitled to paid time off for cancer screening.



PAPERMAKING NEWS

SA Kimberly-Clark workers win pay dispute

Unite's sister union in South Africa CEPPWAWU has won a significant pay deal with Kimberly-Clark after a strike which was backed by Unite in the UK and sister unions throughout the world through Union Network International (UNI).

The dispute between Kimberly-Clark and CEPPWAWU, was resolved after three weeks of strike action. CEPPWAWU claimed victory in the dispute after the company had finally agreed to its terms, which included a wage rise and demands that temporary staff be

made permanent. The union had called an all out strike across its membership which covers chemicals, paper, print, wood and furniture, which also led to petrol pumps running dry across South Africa.

Tony Burke Unite AGS wrote to the chief executive of Kimberly-Clark in the USA urging him to intervene in the dispute in South Africa, and sent copies of that letter to the Kimberly-Clark managing directors in the UK and all Unite union representatives in the company in the UK. Unite has received a letter of thanks from the leadership of CEPPWAWU as well as the personal appreciation of the unions' Deputy General Secretary Keith Jacobs.

USW WIN "MASTER CONTRACT" AT 14 INTERNATIONAL PAPER MILLS

Members of Unite's sister union in the USA and Canada, United Steelworkers have voted overwhelmingly for a four-year master agreement across 14 mills that improves wages and benefits and secures jobs with a successorship clause.

Under the agreement, steelworkers' wages and health and retirement benefits will improve, but they also receive job protection from a "successorship clause", which is particularly significant in the volatile paper industry in the USA. The successorship provision says that if IP sells a mill, it will as part of that sales agreement require the new owner to retain current workers, recognise the union, and honor the collective bargaining agreement until expiration.

It allows a new owner room for work force reduction, but that must occur under the seniority terms within the contract. The USW represents 150,000 workers in the North American paper industry. Overall, it has more than 850,000 members in a wide array of industries throughout the U.S. and Canada.

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