

## Contents

Message from the Chair  
UCU Annual Black Members' Conference Update  
Events coming soon  
Get involved!

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### Message from Bill Gulam, Chair of the Black Members' Standing Committee

*"Following on from our successful annual gathering on the 12/11/2010 is there really any need for me to urge you to keep up the level of involvement and interest shown and expressed at our meeting? Your commitment and contributions were there for all present to see and for UCU as an organisation to note.*

*We need however to ensure this is maintained during what will undoubtedly be a dire and watershed time for education. We owe it to ourselves, and to education itself, to scratch that line in the sand and to affirm: - **no more cuts, no more marketisation**"*

**Bill Gulam**

Chair of the Black Members' Standing Committee and NEC Member

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### UCU Annual Black Members' Conference Update

A successful annual black member's conference was held on Friday 12 November at UCU head office, Carlow Street, London.

Unfortunately, Bonnie Greer had to return unexpectedly to the US so was not able to address the conference. That said, our other speakers, Linda Bellos and Lee Jasper received a warm response and both gave excellent speeches to the [Enter number] of delegates present – a record attendance!



**Linda Bellos** addressed conference by talking about her early days of campaigning for equality and applauded the students who took to the streets on November 10. Linda expanded by drawing the comparisons of the uprisings in Brixton, London and Toxteth in Liverpool and the use of language being espoused by politicians and the media branding the isolated scenes of violence as a 'riot'. Linda stated clearly that *'a few broken windows are not the same as people being killed.'*

Linda who now works as an equality practitioner delivering equality training to organisations within the public and private sector informed conference on the importance of gaining an understanding of the tools that are around, namely, the Equality Act.

The Act is the only tool that we have in which to take forward the legal argument for equality. This may not be the only way to achieve equality but it is important to know what the law says.

Linda closed by stating that it is important to unite not only as Black workers but to unite with all other groups.



**Lee Jasper** delivered an entertaining but

serious address – his opening statement: ‘people are living in fear of attack on society’. He too applauded the students who took part in the November 10 demonstration and called for all current politicians who had the luxury to receive a maintenance grant without having to pay tuition fees to refund the monies spent on their education if they felt that students should pay.

*‘Whenever the economy dips there is a rise in racisms and attacks. Cuts to policing and an increase in youth unemployment will see crime increase and thus lead to further scapegoating of already marginalised groups.’*

**Lee Jasper, Political Advisor to the 1990 Trust.**

services and sack thousands of public sector workers including many black workers across the country.

The joint initiative organised by Zita Holbourne PCS National Executive Member and TUC Race Relations Committee and Lee Jasper,

Delegates were encouraged to form alliances with BARAC (Black Activists Rising Against the Cuts) a grassroots coalition of black public and voluntary sector workers, trade unionists, community organisations, service users and concerned individuals, whose aim is to create a critical mass of opposition to the Government plans to cut vital

BARAC has no formal structures and is open to all and further information is available from:

Lee Jasper: Email [lee-jasper@live.com](mailto:lee-jasper@live.com) Mobile: 07984 181 797  
Zita Holbourne Email [zita@pcs.org.uk](mailto:zita@pcs.org.uk) Mobile: 07711 861 660



UCU was pleased for the second year to have **Wilf Sullivan**, TUC Race Relations Officer addressed the conference. Wilf summarised the key points made by the speakers and gave his observations on what next.

*‘When faced with resistance, don’t bang your head against a brick wall – you’ll only get a headache. Organise!’*

**Wilf Sullivan, TUC Race Relations Officer**

With regard to the Equality Act, Wilf commented that ‘people have lost sight of the general duty and instead, get caught up with individual problems and therefore not tackling racism in the workplace.’ The attack on the working classes called for stronger networking, organising and building alliances with

to organise and to exercise power. We must have a belief in ourselves to change things. It’s what we do outside of our union and workplace to convince others to fight against the cuts.

## Motions

A number of motions were presented for debate and were all passed. A summary of the motions passed follows:

## **Motion**

### **The annual report of grievance cases**

## **Summary**

The motion called for UCU to monitor individual cases against employers in terms race, gender, disability, sexuality and religion.

### **Monitoring Equality Legal Support Cases**

UCU to monitor the equality agenda in universities and colleges and to publish an annual compliance report.

### **Building and Promoting Networks**

The Black Members Standing Committee (BMSC) to develop the networks in colleges and universities.

### **Caps on visas for non-EU Workers**

National Executive Committee (NEC) to provide advice and support to members including legal advice on the effects of the interim cap on visas for non-EU workers.

One emergency motion was submitted and unanimously passed. The full text is as follows:

## **Defend Education**

This meeting denounces the misleading media coverage describing the protest to defend education on 10th November as 'a riot'.

This meeting argues that the real violence, dispossession and hardship is a result of the brutal government attacks on education, services and welfare entitlement.

Conference applauds everyone who took part in the demonstration of 10th November – their actions signal the first expression of mass resistance to Con-Dem cuts. We believe that UCU must build on this and that political resistance must be imaginative and inclusive, both in the workplace and in the street.

For black workers, the challenges are urgent. We, and other poor communities, stand to suffer most.

We call on BMSC:

- to develop materials to build campaigning alliances with black communities;
- to work with activists to build expertise in street and workplace campaigning;
- to link with black members in other unions to defend our jobs and services.
- to urge UCU to support students and others victimised for expressing resistance on 10 November

## **Election results**

Seven nominations were received for five vacancies lasting a period of two years. The following members have been duly elected to serve on the Black Members' Standing Committee.

**Gargi Bhattacharyya**, Aston University  
**Dawn Livingston**, Lewisham College  
**Cecile Wright**, Nottingham Trent University  
**Sandra Tury**, University of London  
**Mumtaz Khan**, Leeds Metropolitan University

Congratulations to those elected.

The full composition of the Black Members' Standing Committee is as follows:

### **NEC Black members' seats**

Maureen Henry-Johnson Sandwell College

William Gulam

### **Elected for two years**

Gargi Bhattacharyya, Aston University  
Cecile Wright, Nottingham Trent University  
Mumtaz Khan, Leeds Metropolitan University

Dawn Livingston, Lewisham College  
Sandra Tury, University of London

### **Elected for two years with one year remaining**

Maeve Landman, University of the West of England  
Bertha Ochieng, Bradford University  
Penny Charles, College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London

Dave Muritu, Halesowen College  
Adel Nasser, Manchester University

The standing committee will next meet in January 2011.

Successful workshops were held on:

- Organising black women workers in times of restructuring
- New racisms and fighting the far right
- The Equality Act 2010

A number of action points arose from these workshops which will be taken forward by the standing committee.

## **Events**

### **Race, racism and the workplace**

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011

NUT, Mabledon Place, London

#### **Speakers:**

**Rakesh Patel** from Thompsons Solicitors; **Sonia McKay** from the Working Lives Research Institute and **Wilf Sullivan** from the TUC. Topics for the day include: The Equality Act and racism in the workplace: a legal overview; The changing nature of racism at work: the experience of migrant workers to name a few

For further details about this seminar, contact Phelim Mac Cafferty,  
Projects and Events Officer  
Institute of Employment Rights  
179 Preston Road  
Brighton East Sussex  
BN1 6AG

t: **01273 330819** e: **phelim@ier.org.uk** w: **www.ier.org.uk**.



# **unite against fascism**

## **Annual Conference**

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2011

For further details, visit <http://uaf.org.uk/>



## March for the Alternative: Jobs, Growth, Justice

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2011

Assemble Victoria Embankment, 11am to march to a rally in Hyde Park

Deep spending cuts damage public services, hit the vulnerable and threaten recovery. They're dangerous, unfair and unnecessary.

But there's an alternative - one that's fair, safe and sustainable: A Robin Hood tax on the banks; Close tax loopholes; Policies for jobs and green growth

Let's march to tell the government they need to change course

For further details, visit <http://www.tuc.org.uk/alltogether>

### How do I get more involved in UCU?

**What are you interested in?** Start out by thinking about what interests you. What issues motivate you? It could be anything from equality issues, rights for fixed-term and part-time staff, bullying in your workplace or threats to jobs. You might want to help members with individual problems or want to strengthen the union by helping to recruit more people and find other new activists like yourself. It's also worth thinking about what particular skills or knowledge you have. Computer skills would come in handy for updating a local website or putting together a local activists' email list.

**Get in touch with your branch** The best way to get involved is through your branch. A local committee will always welcome offers of help. You can discuss with them what you might be interested in doing and they can let you know how you can become active. Besides becoming a workplace or department contact, you can also help in more informal ways. You could offer to recruit colleagues, maintain a notice board or help out with campaigning work. You might even just want to pass information on to the union. Whatever you decide to do, it all helps to strengthen your union.

**Get trained** Whatever it is you want to do; UCU has a training course that will help you do it. Have a look at the website to see what training is available. These courses are a great way to learn about what UCU does and how you can contribute. They are also good for meeting like-minded colleagues from other institutions.

Our **Developing Activists Network (DAN)** is also available to host a one day course in your region specifically for black members'. To arrange a DAN day in your region, please contact **Chris Nicholas** ([cnicholas@ucu.org.uk](mailto:cnicholas@ucu.org.uk)) or **Ed Bailey** ([ebailey@ucu.org.uk](mailto:ebailey@ucu.org.uk))

### Next issue....

There will be a full briefing on the **Equality Act**

**Equality Email Networks:** If you received this newsletter via a colleague and would like to receive your own copy directly, please email [eqadmin@ucu.org.uk](mailto:eqadmin@ucu.org.uk) with '**join black member's network**' in the subject header. Similarly, you can also join our other networks for **Disabled, Women** and **LGBT** members.