

## National Delegate Conference

**Speakers.** There were many speakers at the rostrum that spoke with passion about the issues close to their heart and one of the biggest round of applause was given for the speech made by guest speaker Paul Moist, President of the Canadian Union



of Public Employees who spoke with passion and encouragement when he talked about the TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) between EU and the USA and the various other agreements that are currently being discussed and negotiated world-wide behind closed doors (Composite H). He stated that these agreements represent a real threat to public services, employment and labour rights, and the need to firstly reject then fight against these proposals/agreements.

**Fringe meetings.** I also attended the Black member caucus meeting where a unanimous decision was made to bring the meeting to a close early in order for us all to support the 'Show racism the Red Card' fringe meeting. I managed to get to the 'Getting members involved through learning' fringe which was very informative and offered support on how to run workshops in your branches. I found as with most areas of learning, the modern trend seems to be moving towards e-learning.

**Motions.** Most disappointing was the NEC's response to the attack on facility time. Speaker after speaker went to the rostrum and gave evidence on their branch's experiences and their individual fights in their regions and all that seemed to be available from the leadership was a resource pack that had been sent out. Throughout the week I had listened to motions around the importance of recruiting and organising, branch organisation, modernising our union and a union for the future, but felt that there was no recognition from the NEC that none of these priorities will be possible if there is no personnel or facility time to make this happen. Branches are expected to fight individually, this is an impossible situation without national strategic leadership. What will happen when there is no-one available to represent our members?

**West Midlands.** Coventry was represented in the West Midlands Region daily news sheets as both Sarah (photo opportunity) and Joanne (article) appeared in Wednesday's publication.

**Demo.** We attended the Glasgow strike lobby in support of the striking homeless caseworkers and Robert O'Donnell which took place in George Square. As we all stood side by side with our comrades we met and conversed with delegates country-wide. Janet Marshal, Western Isle Heath Branch (picture right with Joanne and Antonia Myers, Coventry University) told us all about her home and encouraged us to visit the island and the great festivals that take place there. (Made some new friends!)



**Glasgow City.** The Scottish Exhibition Conference Centre was an excellent venue as far as comfortable space and Glasgow is a very hospitable city. You only had to stand still for 10 seconds and look like you were lost and someone would ask if you needed assistance and try to help. At every opportunity its residents would make an effort to strum up a conversation, have a 'wee' laugh and make you feel welcome. (Made more new friends!)

**TUC Aid Appeal.** We went in to conference to find small envelopes on all our chairs.



Hopefully the Branch will be encouraged to either make a donation or do a bucket collection in support of this worthy cause.

In summary, a good time was had by all.

Clareta Barnes & Joanne George  
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