

ENVIRONMENT

NUCLEAR MOTION 2012

Conference is acutely aware of the significant number of skilled employment opportunities created by the UK civil nuclear industry, both in power generation and decommissioning.

Conference understands that nuclear power is low-carbon, affordable, dependable, safe and capable of increasing diversity of energy supply. New nuclear power stations would therefore help the UK address the twin challenges of climate change and security of energy supply.

Conference is also especially mindful of the huge economic stimulus which the proposed programme of nuclear new build will generate. The global nuclear renaissance provides a multi-billion pound opportunity for those industries involved in the supply of goods and services required for the construction, operation and maintenance, as well as decommissioning, of nuclear power stations.

Conference is conscious of the fact that in 2011 the Energy & Utilities National Sector Conference pledged its support for all forms of power generation, including nuclear, by endorsing the motion on *Security of Supply Through Diverse Balanced Energy Policy*.

Conference calls on the Executive to remain consistent with the aforementioned motion and lend its full support to the UK nuclear industry and its members, and future members, employed therein.

Energy & Utilities NISC

NUCLEAR POWER

This Conference does not support the building of new nuclear power stations in the UK.

Unite the Union is committed to supporting, and promoting, the creation of green jobs and the renewable energy sector, and is committed to taking strong action on climate change.

Support for new nuclear power stations runs contrary to those policies. Not only are nuclear power stations an expensive, risky, and polluting source of energy, but they would take funding and jobs away from renewables and energy efficiency programmes and therefore not help the UK meet climate change targets.

The government wants ten new nuclear power stations at eight sites across England and Wales. Each new reactor would cost more than £6 billion and, to attract investment, the government is reforming the electricity market to provide hidden subsidies to nuclear and transfer the risk of nuclear power construction from the private sector to consumer electricity bills.

The disaster at Fukushima shows that nuclear power remains a risky and unpredictable source of energy. The cost of cleaning up the disaster is still unknown but likely to exceed £100 billion.

The number of jobs which would result from a programme of new-build nuclear reactors is far lower than would follow from a similar investment in renewables or energy efficiency. Per unit of energy, nuclear power creates far fewer jobs than any other power source, and saves much less carbon per pound spent than would be saved by energy efficiency and decentralised energy.

Unite supports the 'Million Green Jobs' campaign that the majority of money spent on revising the economy should be on green measures, including energy efficiency and renewable energy, public transport and the retro-fitting of efficient insulation to existing housing stock.

Therefore Unite does not support the construction of new nuclear power stations in the UK and believes that existing nuclear power stations should be phased out with existing workers employed to decommission them and then diversified to energy projects which will produce a higher rate of safer jobs.

LE 524 Branch

NUCLEAR POWER

This Conference is opposed to the expansion of nuclear power and in particular to the building of ten new nuclear power stations on the grounds of cost and safety.

Conference believes that nuclear power is not required in order to ensure energy security ('to keep the lights on') nor to ensure a reduction in CO2 emissions by 2050 and further believes that Parliament was misinformed on this matter when the National Planning Policy Statement on nuclear power was debated in 2011.

Conference calls on the Executive Committee to campaign against the expansion of nuclear Power.

Luton General 1210M Branch

LOW CARBON INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

This Conference believes that recent changes by the current Con-Dem Coalition Government to energy policy have put too much cost pressure on energy intensive sectors and created too much uncertainty for energy investors.

Workers in the UK's high energy-intensive industries - iron and steel, aluminium, cement and lime manufacture, pulp and paper making, basic inorganic chemicals, and nitrogen fertilisers are particularly vulnerable as they adapt to a low carbon future. Together these industries directly employ around 220,000 workers, in some 400 installations across the UK, accounting directly for about 0.5% of UK GDP. They also have a long history of trade union membership and organisation; many of these sectors offer high quality, highly skilled employment supported by decent terms and conditions. They also provide unusually high rates of full-time employment.

These industries are particularly at risk from what is known as "Carbon Leakage" – the transfer of jobs from countries with higher standards of environmental controls to those with less. There are already major concerns that many of these jobs are being moved outside the EU where controls are generally higher. This process is happening through a combination of increases to energy prices related to oil and gas prices as well as government climate policies and global market rules that allow other countries to undercut.

These base industries are crucial to the UK's manufacturing capability and will play an important part in supplying the new low carbon manufacturing (e.g. steel for wind turbines or glass for double glazing). It will therefore be counterproductive not only for the workers who lose their jobs but also for the environment if these jobs and carbon emissions go elsewhere.

At a time when rebalancing of the economy needs UK manufacturing to be playing a bigger role, energy-intensive industrial users need more help, But the current policies put forward by the coalition government unilaterally increases their cost base.

Heavy energy users need and want to do their bit and reduce their emissions, and many are already doing so. But what these firms need is help to use renewable heat, use energy from waste and use more of the innovations already out there.

To achieve this will require a working, flexible and future-proof exemption model; it may also require a different level of rebate for different sectors. That's why a clear definition of energy intensives is so important: businesses need to receive rebates when they qualify as a risk, so that everything's transparent and everything's understood.

This motion calls for Unite to immediately engage with all stakeholders and begin lobbying for political solutions to this problem in order to secure:-

- A rebate-based exemption linked to the energy intensive industries' work on energy efficiency.
- How to make current products in a low-carbon, resource-efficient manner
- How to transform factories and products
- To explore changes to the entire industrial system

To achieve this Unite should use all the resources of the Union including Research, International and Political Departments.

Metals (inc Foundry) NISC

GREEN JOBS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Conference recognises that we face an accelerating environmental crisis with rising temperatures, increasing global carbon emissions and worsening environmental degradation.

It is deplorable that whilst neo-liberal governments in UK, Europe and across the developed world are failing to cope with the global capitalist crisis, they are also all but ignoring the burgeoning environmental crisis threatening our planet.

UNITE believes that both the capitalist economic crisis and the environmental crisis need addressing and can and must be addressed together.

Our left Alternative Economic Strategy recognises the essential role of the public sector as the motor for economic recovery when the private sector (the capitalist economy) is in the doldrums and unable to stimulate growth itself due to falling demand and the high cost of debt.

Public sector investment, so vitally needed to stimulate growth, should be directed where possible into areas that help to reduce global carbon emissions and help save the environment. These should include:

- Renewable energy – including the use of wind, tidal, solar and hydro-electric power generation to replace as far as possible power generation from fossil fuels. UNITE recognises there are genuine planning concerns to be reconciled with such a policy
- Appropriate financial incentives to improve home and business insulation and progress towards zero-emission status including through the use of solar energy, heat pumps, feeder tariffs etc
- Expansion of public transport through public ownership and public investment, and funding of subsidised fares to encourage modal shift from private cars etc.

Passenger NISC

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE UK

The East Midlands Regional Industrial Health Sector Committee calls upon conference to support Sustainable Economic Development in the UK.

In order to secure the future of the UK, we need to have an economic plan which will deliver sustainability. We need to invest in future industry and research in order to deliver sustainable products and ongoing development in areas such as energy production e.g. wind power, hydro electric power, tidal power, solar power and others.

We also need to develop low voltage domestic equipment and lighting as well as a state of the art green public transport system.

We need investment in organisations which can deliver sustainability and become sustainable themselves. This will require grants for research and investment in our young people through good quality education and training. This in turn will create jobs and deliver a healthy British economy.

We therefore ask Unite the union through the Executive Committee, to campaign and lobby for sustainable economic development in the UK.

HEALTH RISC - East Midlands

INTEGRATED PLANNING REGULATION

This Conference calls upon the General Secretary, Executive Council and Political Officer to oppose the Coalition Government relaxing the planning regulations and ensure that the Labour Party put in their next general election Manifesto a commitment that the next Labour Government will introduce an integrated planning regulation that takes into account the following:

- The need for affordable housing for working people, this includes council housing and houses to buy that are affordable for ordinary people.
- The need to create an urban environment that meets the needs of the local community.
- The need to grow our economy and infrastructure.
- The need to protect our national parks, areas of outstanding beauty, green belt and other environmentally sensitive areas from unsuitable development. While giving people comprehensive rights to access to these areas for relaxation, recreation and enjoyment.

1 MILLION CLIMATE JOBS

This Conference believes that Climate Change is the biggest single threat to the global economy and social stability. We believe that urgent investment is required in jobs across all public and private sectors to transform the economy towards zero carbon emission.

Conference notes the campaign launched by the Campaign Against Climate Change Trade Union group for urgent investment in 1 million climate jobs now, to ensure public services that promote energy saving, housing refurbishment and new build, the extensive development of a co-ordinated public transport system, and investment in green energy production including wind, wave and solar energy turbines and industrial plant.

This Conference calls upon the Union to:

1. Support the national petition and campaign for 1 million green jobs now, supported by the TUC <http://www.climate-change-jobs.org/petition>
2. Call upon the Government for urgent investment to lower the UK's carbon emissions, with Local Authorities taking a lead role in co-ordinating cross-sector initiatives
3. Affiliate to the Campaign against Climate Change and support the activities of the campaign's Trade Union group
4. Encourage all Branches to campaign for 1 million green jobs now.

SW/Local Authority RISC

HOME MANUFACTURING & GREEN ENERGY SUSTAINABILITY

We face an accelerating environmental crisis with rising temperatures, increasing global carbon emissions and worsening environmental degradation.

It is deplorable that whilst neo-liberal governments in UK, Europe and across the developed world are failing to cope with the global capitalist crisis, they are also all but ignoring the burgeoning environmental crisis threatening our planet.

The capitalist economic crisis and the environmental crisis need addressing and can and must be addressed together. Our Alternative Economic Strategy recognises the essential role of the public sector as the motor for economic recovery when the private sector (the capitalist economy) is in the doldrums and unable to stimulate growth itself due to falling demand and the high cost of debt.

Public sector investment, should be directed where possible into areas that help to reduce global carbon emissions and help save the environment. They should create domestic employment and have an export potential should improve our balance of payment and be available within our national boundaries. This conference calls upon the TUC to lobby Government to act immediately on this serious problem by exploring,

- Renewable energy – including the use of tidal, wave, solar, geothermal and hydro-electric power generation to replace as far as possible power generation from fossil fuels.

- Appropriate financial incentives to improve home and business insulation and progress towards zero-emission status including through the use of solar energy, heat pumps, feeder tariffs etc.
- Expansion of public transport through public ownership and public investment, and funding of subsidised fares to encourage a shift from private transport to public transport.

Loughborough Central Branch

HYDRAULIC FRACTURING/FRACKING

This Conference calls upon Unite the Union to lead a campaign and lobby the government over 'hydraulic fracturing', or 'fracking' for short, because of the dangerous environmental damage this drilling technique causes.

NW 6/527 Branch