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Our economy is in the wrong hands

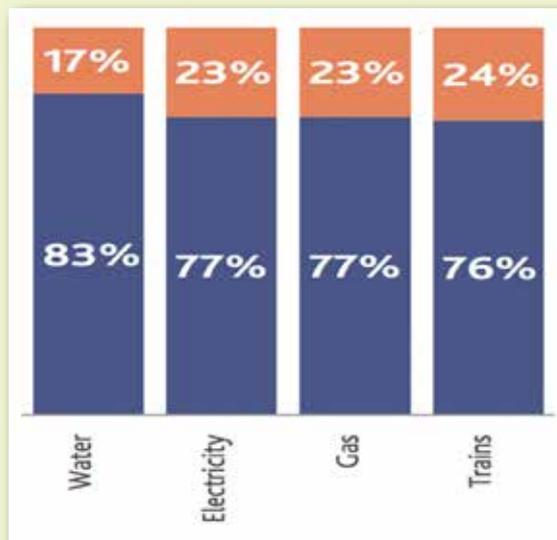
A landmark study of public opinion in the UK since the General Election has found widespread support for Labour's nationalisation agenda, and much less support for free enterprise. More than three quarters of the public say <http://bit.ly/2ytuFPQ> that water, electricity, gas and railways should be in the hands of the public sector. Great then that unions have caught the new public mood.

At this year's TUC Congress, September 2017, unions urged the TUC to coordinate a campaign to get our rigged energy system back under democratic control. And once again the Campaign Against Climate Change gave voice to the unions' new found confidence at its TUC fringe meeting, with GJA backing.

As the Bakers' Union motion put it, unions want action on the 'irrefutable evidence that dangerous climate change is driving unprecedented changes to our environment.' As we went to press the Government finally published the 'Clean Growth Strategy' - nearly 2 years behind schedule! We will carry a detailed assessment of it in the next newsletter.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy>

With the government outrageously preoccupied with its bitter internal conflicts there is a need for the labour movement to address this political vacuum. Unions want a 'cross-sector industrial strategy focused on our internationally agreed emissions reduction targets.' Getting to grips with the energy sector is at the heart of this challenge. And clearly, the public mood is on our side.



% public sector support for nationalisation

1. TUC Congress 2017

Unions want power sector back!

This year's TUC Congress in Brighton unanimously agreed new, far reaching policies demanding the democratic control of energy and a modern low carbon industrial strategy. An ambitious motion from the Bakers' Union brings the trade union movement much closer to the vision set out in Labour's election manifesto. It also brought a dozen delegates to the rostrum, urging the TUC to campaign for the UK's rigged energy system to return to democratic control, and to work with unions on a cross-sector industrial strategy to tackle 'the irrefutable evidence that dangerous climate change is driving unprecedented changes to our environment'



Addressing TUC Congress: Sarah Woolley, Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union

The TUC motion <https://congress.tuc.org.uk/composite-04-climate-change/#sthash.5P9CaV4i.dpb> proposed in a speech by Sarah Woolley from the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU – see picture), has five key demands for the TUC to:

- Campaign to bring the UK's rigged energy system under democratic control.
- Back a mass programme of homes insulation
- Demand rights for workplace environmental reps
- Demand that Just Transition is integral to industrial strategy
- Consult with unions on a cross-sector industrial strategy focused on our internationally agreed carbon emission reduction targets.

Sarah Woolley argued that the breakdown of the planet's climate is a core issue for her union, with its global impacts on food production and distribution. Agriculture and food manufacture, processing and transport accounted for a tenth of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. Meanwhile, hurricanes were devastating the Caribbean, while floods in India had caused massive damage to its infrastructure. And the UK's rigged energy market would not deliver secure, low carbon and affordable energy for all. 'We need an industrial strategy to confront the realities of climate change. All sectors need their just transition strategies,' Sarah argued.

[See the full text of the TUC motion on page 7](#)

Best ever green fringe at TUC?

At one of the best attended green fringe meetings at this year's TUC, Suzanne Jeffrey, chair of the Campaign Against Climate Change, announced that her organisation was planning a national conference on *Climate and Jobs - another world is possible* on 10 March 2018 (note date in your diary!). She said the new TUC commitments provided an opportunity for progressive new policies for the labour movement.



CACC speakers: Chris Baugh, Sarah Woolley, Suzanne Jeffrey, Diana Holland

The Campaign Against Climate Change meeting was backed by the Greener Jobs Alliance. Here's how union leaders spoke of the need to tackle climate change:

- **Sarah Woolley, BFAWU regional secretary:** 'We need to know much more about the impacts of climate change and explain it to our members. We need to be at the forefront, getting our members trained as environmental reps in the workplace.' Tackling fuel poverty and bringing energy back into our ownership were two key priorities.
 - **Diana Holland, Unite's Assistant General Secretary:** 'Jobs and a safe climate... We have to deal with both... we have to make those words Just Transition really mean something for union members.' We cannot protect transport workers' jobs without acknowledging the impacts of transport on the environment. For example, Unite is tackling diesel emissions as a workplace health and safety issue through its Diesel Emissions Exposure register <http://bit.ly/2xyqSfn> 'Because we work in so-called environmentally damaging industries, doesn't mean we aren't in the game,' she said. The union is taking various steps to raise awareness among union members and engaging them in consultations with employers.
 - **Chris Baugh, Assistant General Secretary PCS:** 'We have come a long way in the past year, by focussing on the core issues of just transition and energy democracy.' In PCS, in Lancashire, PCS members are challenging claims that fracking will create a jobs bonanza, when there are abundant opportunities in other sectors. And at Heathrow, a PCS study on jobs in aviation <http://bit.ly/2gbcebh> has helped inform the debate on the real economic benefits of expanding aviation capacity.
- 
- Graham Petersen said the online environmental education courses provided by the Greener Jobs Alliance, including a new unit on air quality, was filling a gap in mainstream trade union education programmes.
 - Sean Sweeney from Trade Unions for Energy Democracy said that there's a growing community of unions pushing for public ownership and control of energy as a means of controlling climate breakdown <http://bit.ly/2y8KJ9b>

2. Labour Party Conference 2017

GJA's 10-point skills plan

At a GJA sponsored Roundtable on 'Sustainability and Education,' the GJA presented its 10 point plan on an education policy needed to support an industrial strategy delivering a low carbon transition. The event on September 25th was organised by the GJA in conjunction with SERA (Labour Party Environment Campaign Group) and the National Union of Students. Our platform included Gordon Marsden MP, Shadow Skills Minister, Joanna de Groot, UCU President, and Shakira Martin, NUS President. Speakers were invited to respond to questions like, How can we equip young people with the skills to succeed in a clean energy era?

The GJA will follow up this successful event with the Shadow Labour Team to contribute to policy formulation around the proposed National Education Service.

Naomi Klein urges Labour on

Naomi Klein, guest speaker at this year's Labour Party conference:



'The biggest challenge we face is overcoming the way neoliberalism has waged war on our collective imagination, on our ability to truly believe in anything outside of its bleak borders. I want you to know that what you have done here is reverberating around the world - so many of us are watching your ongoing experiment in this new kind of politics with rapt attention. What happened here is itself part of a global phenomenon. It's a wave led by young people who came into adulthood just as the global financial system was collapsing and just as climate disruption was banging down the door. They began by saying no - to austerity, to bank bailouts, to fracking and pipelines. And so these movements started to dream together, laying out bold and different visions of the future.... and credible pathways out of crisis. And most importantly they began engaging with political parties, to try to win power.'

Speech in full:

<http://press.labour.org.uk/post/165759935209/author-naomi-klein-speech-to-labour-party>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jj1nuw38DqY&pbjreload=10>

3. Scotland bans fracking

In a truly momentous win for the anti-fracking movement, the Scottish Government joined the ever-growing list of states and regions to outlaw the industry. It will be met with celebration and relief across the country, particularly by those on the frontline of fracking in Scotland who have been working for a ban these last six years.

Over 60,000 people responded to the Scottish Government's consultation on fracking, the second largest number to engage in a consultation in the history of the devolved Parliament, with 99% calling for a ban. This is the largest number of people ever to express a single opinion to a Scottish Government official consultation.

<https://foe.scot/scotland-ban-fracking/>



4. Book Review: Naomi Klein, *No is not enough*

In October 2015, a few weeks before the UN's Paris Agreement on climate change, Naomi Klein, launched her ground-breaking book, *This changes everything: capitalism versus the climate*
<https://thischangeseverything.org/book/>

Speaking as a guest of the TUC in London, she argued that 'climate change has become an existential crisis for the human species.' The scale of planning and environmental management needed to halt climate breakdown 'is entirely outside the boundaries of our reigning neoliberal ideology.' And how, in two short years, has her quest for radical change become mainstream!

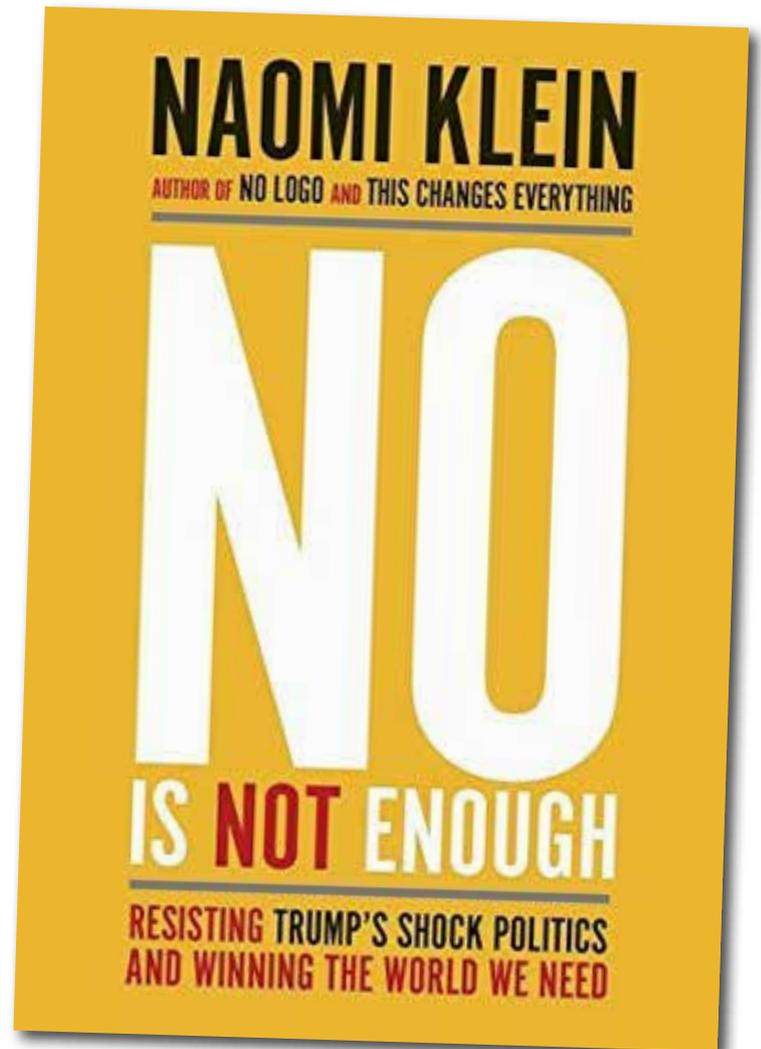
This changes everything argued that 'only mass social movements can save us now,' but it did not provide a blueprint for action. But it warned us that a 'profound economic transformation' was essential – the fundamental challenge facing the 'climate movement.'

Now, in Klein's timely sequel, *No is not enough*,
<http://bit.ly/2hAOKsS>

she offers a burst of ideas for change. The book was written in the aftermath of Trump's shock victory. In it, she invites us to join a kind of global workshop. So, in chapter 13 Klein takes us to a long weekend retreat in a great log cabin in the Canadian outback, where we are huddling down with a 60-strong gathering of trade unionists, indigenous peoples, folks from women's rights and environmental movements and many more besides. They have come together, she writes, 'to figure out what connects the crises facing us, and to try to chart an all-embracing vision for the future that would overcome many of the shared challenges at the same time.'

What emerged from the heated debates is the Leap Manifesto, <https://leapmanifesto.org/en/whos-on-board/> a vision for a 'just transition' underpinned by democratic demands and an insistence that saying no is just the start. Little is left untouched, from clean energy jobs, skills and training and infrastructure through to railways, healthcare, public interest media, an end to fossil subsidies, and every vote counting. It's what she described as a bold and different vision of the future when she spoke at this year's Labour Party conference. Much like Labour's manifesto, in fact, or indeed, the new climate motion to TUC Congress.

In *No is not enough*, Klein also rightly acknowledges that unions with members in the high carbon and high energy-using sectors face the biggest transformations. But she argues for unions to get engaged, to demand a place at the table, saying, 'A justice based transition



also means that workers in high carbon sectors - many of whom have sacrificed their health in coal mining or oil refineries – must be full and democratic participants. Our guiding principle is: no worker left behind.'

5. Research: First ever review of union climate policies

'Trade Unions in the UK: Engagement with climate change' is the title of groundbreaking new research conducted by Catherine Hooke as part of an internship with the Campaign Against Climate Change Trade Union Group. It provides the first ever review of climate change and energy policy of 17 UK unions. It asks, What are the driving forces behind trade union engagement in climate change issues?; and What are the barriers and difficulties for trade unions, in the UK, in engaging with climate change?

https://www.cacctu.org.uk/sites/data/files/sites/data/files/Docs/tu_in_the_uk_and_climate_change.pdf

6. Campaigns: Air Quality

Unions are starting to mobilise around Air Pollution. The GJA is linking up with the Hazards campaign www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/hazards-conference and other organisations to provide training in a series of regional events.

In London, the second part of a joint initiative with the London Sustainability Exchange is underway. In Stage 1, 18 activists were provided with air testing equipment and carried out measurements of pollution hotspots. The results are now in, and on October 25th we will reconvene to plan the next stage of the campaign. Participants will discuss how best to use the results to press for local action by councils and businesses.

In the NW Region a training session has been arranged for Friday, December 1st. Check the GJA website for confirmation of the venue in Manchester and how to apply. [See details here.](#)

Media coverage illustrates how unions are beginning to approach this as a workplace issue. <http://bit.ly/2yhNMcks>

The scale of London's air pollution crisis was laid bare with new figures recently showing that every person in the capital is breathing air that exceeds global guidelines for one of the most dangerous toxic particles – PM2.5.

<http://bit.ly/2xfNnFE>

7. International

Bonn climate talks kick off in November

The annual United Nations Conference on climate change takes place in Bonn on November 6th-17th. There will be plenty of action, debate and workshops around the People Climate Summit - full programme at https://www.campaigncc.org/cop23_bonn. The International Trades Union Confederation (ITUC) has published a report entitled 'Just Transition: where are we now and what next?'

<http://bit.ly/2yfYQZV>

The report identifies the lack of progress on implementing worker protections in the context of climate change. In our November newsletter the GJA will provide an update on initiatives being taken to address this

Time to Cycle heads for Bonn



UK activists will be cycling to the climate talks in Bonn. The ride is organised by the Time to Cycle Campaign. Check out the website for information. The ride meets at the Harwich ferry on October 27th. The rides are a great way of combining protest with keeping fit!

<http://bit.ly/2wNYWEy>



Graham Petersen from the GJA participated in the cycle ride that took place in August to protest against the mining of lignite coal in the Rhineland. Thousands of people came from across Europe to set up a climate camp close to the gigantic coal fields that are scarring the landscape. Ende Gelände (Here and No Further) organised

the event. Workshops were held in the lead up to the mass direct action protests.

Graham reports: "I spoke at a workshop on a Just Transition from Fossil Fuels. This was followed by the realities a couple of days later of coming across a festival organised by the energy unions who were supporting coal extraction. I was invited in and a discussion took place with the Vice President of the Miners Union. With around 60% of the local community dependent on their livelihood directly or indirectly with



RWE, the mining company, it threw in to sharp relief what can sometimes seem like an abstract discussion. Needless to say we failed to agree on whether the mines should be allowed to continue extracting until 2045. However, with the three energy unions themselves having different views on the way forward it is more important than ever to keep a dialogue going.

Yet there is considerable local opposition to the scale of the devastation that is taking place. Whole villages are being evacuated if they are in the path of the giant machinery that is ripping up the earth. Their inhabitants are being rehoused in soulless new towns

on the fringes of the coal fields. Cycling with a group of 50 mainly young activists (I was the oldest on the trip) across the Netherlands was a great experience. The energy in the climate camp to challenge dirty coal expansion was invigorating and a source of great optimism for the future of the climate movement.

Ende Gelände will be organising further actions in the lead up to the Bonn talks. Highlighting the fact that the dirtiest form of fossil fuel burning is taking place next door in the Rhineland coal mining area.

<https://www.ende-gelaende.org/en/>

8. TUC Congress 2017: motion on climate change

<https://congress.tuc.org.uk/composite-04-climate-change/#sthash.5P9CaV4i.dpbs>

Congress notes the irrefutable evidence that dangerous climate change is driving unprecedented changes to our environment such as the devastating flooding witnessed in the UK in 2004.

Congress further notes the risk to meeting the challenge of climate change with the announcement of Donald Trump to withdraw the US from the Paris Climate Agreement. Similarly, Brexit negotiations and incoherent UK government policy risk undermining measures to achieve the UK carbon reduction targets.

Congress welcomes the report by the Transnational Institute Reclaiming Public Service: how cities and citizens are turning back privatization, which details the global trend to remunicipalise public services, including energy, and supports efforts by unions internationally to raise issues such as public ownership and democratic control as part of solutions to climate change.

Congress notes that transport is responsible for a quarter of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions and believes that a reduction in carbon dioxide levels must be the basis of the UK's future transport policy in addition to building public transport capacity and moving more freight from road to rail.

Congress believes that to effectively combat climate change and move towards a low carbon economy we cannot leave this to the markets and therefore need a strong role for the public sector in driving the measures needed to undertake this transition. Congress notes that pension schemes invest billions of pounds into fossil fuel corporations. To this end, Congress calls on the TUC to:

- i. work with the Labour Party and others that advocate for an end to the UK's rigged energy system to bring it back into public ownership and democratic control*
- ii. advocate for a mass programme of retrofit and insulation of Britain's homes and public buildings*
- iii. lobby to demand rights for workplace environmental reps*
- iv. lobby for the establishment of a Just Transition strategy for those workers affected by the industrial changes necessary to develop a more environmentally sustainable future for all, and develop practical steps needed to achieve this as integral to industrial strategy*
- v. consult with all affiliates to seek input into the development of a cross sector industrial strategy that works towards delivering internationally agreed carbon emission reduction targets*
- vi. investigate the long-term risks for pension funds investing in fossil fuels, promote divestment, and alternative reinvestment in the sustainable economy.*

Mover: Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union
Seconder: Communication Workers Union
Supporters: Fire Brigades Union; ASLEF; TSSA

Hazards
c a m p a i g

GreenerJobsAlliance

Air pollution – A Trade Union issue

Friday, December 1st, 2017 from 1.00pm – 4.00pm

Air pollution in the UK is a public health emergency. Over 40,000 people die each year from causes linked to the air that they breathe – more than obesity and alcohol combined.

Workers are exposed to and create pollution to fulfil contractual obligations to employers. It is an occupational health issue that employers take little responsibility for.

Attending this course will help you to:

- **Examine why air pollution is both a workplace issue and a public health one**
- **Find out about air pollution busting Citizen Science techniques**
- **Create action plans to deal with workplace exposures**
- **Create action plans to meaningfully engage in air pollution with local councils**
- **Share experience, knowledge and ideas**

**Lunch
provided**

UNISON Regional Office,
Arena Point 1,
Hunts Bank,
Manchester M3 1UN

Registration is required.
Please confirm your attendance by email to:
janet@gmhazards.org.uk

For further information please contact Janet
Newsham on Tel 0161 6367558

