

## **Subject: TUC 2018 motion 67**

Firstly can I thank the Morning Star for managing to put the images of myself and Chris Grayling alongside one another in today's edition. Let me say It's the one and only time that this man and Napo will ever be on the same page.

Was it really 4 years ago that I reported the views of a former Napo member who just before they tragically took their own life, chillingly forecasted that the then justice secretary Chris Grayling was likely to have blood on his hands as a result of his disastrous part privatisation of the Probation service? The same Chris Grayling who along with others claimed that privatisation was going to be safe.

Congress, this week we have heard references to the deaths of 96 people in the Hillsborough disaster and the 72 victims of the fire at Grenfell Tower and we have heard the heart-rending calls for justice. Justice for the families of the victims and for those responsible for these terrible events to be called to account. And in Motion 67 Napo sets out our particular concerns about the increase in Serious Further Offences (which typically include Murder) that have occurred since Transforming Rehabilitation was implemented.

Figures provided to me by Granada TV suggest that in the last three years there have been 67 instances of the loss of life by victims at the hands of offenders across England and Wales who, in many cases, have been under the supervision of the Probation service. Here within Greater Manchester there have been three such incidents this year alone. These deaths may not grab the headlines in the same way as the terrible tragedies in Sheffield and West London, but those victims and their families should also be afforded respect and dignity and be just as entitled to expect that the people whose incompetence and stunning complacency have contributed to these appalling losses are called to account.

Napo warned about the impact of this social disaster long before it was perpetrated by that serial failure Chris Grayling. 4 years of unmitigated chaos in the probation service and many of you here will over that time have heard the tales of despair direct from the coalface from Napo delegates.

This year in what was probably the most damning Parliamentary inquiry report I have ever seen, the Justice Select Committee reported that the Probation Service could not work in its present form. Their conclusions chimed with numerous independent reports from HM Inspector of Probation, which highlighted the systemic failures that they have discovered across the probation estate. In the main these have occurred under the watch of the 21 privatised community rehabilitation companies although there are, as our motion says, a number of serious problems within the dysfunctional and still Prison-centric national probation service.

And of course what else can we expect in the face of understaffing, massive caseloads, staff morale falling through the floor and record levels of sickness absence as people keel over with stress related illnesses.

Bailiffs arriving at the CRC offices of a private provider to seize goods in lieu of unpaid utility bills, rat infestation in Approved Premises where night supervision has recently been privatised.

Sex offenders placed on unpaid work assignments at or near to nursery premises; no you could not make it up.

And shambolic operational systems introduced by a number of the owners responsible for the 21 CRC contracts that have created blatantly unsafe standards of supervision with clients not actually being seen for several weeks and instead being telephoned by a practitioner to ask whether they are following their rehabilitation programme oh, and whether they happen to have committed a crime or two recently?

It gets worse, much much worse of course because now we are starting to see more of the human impact of a fragmented and disjointed supervision system where serious further offences as referenced in the motion are becoming all too regular

Many of you will have seen the shocking BBC Panorama documentary which featured two dreadful SFO's one resulting in the death of a child and one a young adult at the hands of offenders who ought not to have been at that place at that time, but where system failures were a major contributory factor to these tragic crimes

The response to this type of incident and the operational chaos that I have spoken about by this inept and cynical government is to shake that good old Money Tree again and find a staggering £230 million pounds for each of the next two years for failing contractors as they head towards another marketisation of this once gold standard service. More money to reward failure while Napo engages in difficult pay negotiations to try and secure a pay rise that our members have been denied for the last 10 years.

So we call for a counter revolution to restore the probation service back to its rightful place, to build on the notable concession that will see the return of Offender management in Wales back from the dreadful Working Links CRC to the national service, because David Gauke and Rory Stewart if you can do that in Wales you can do that in England as well!

We must see a probation service back where it belongs.... in public control and public ownership,....free from the disastrous management of profit seeking privateers who know the price of everything but the value of nothing. Ideally, we need that under a Labour Government. A Labour Government whose leadership has pledged to kick the privateers, soothsayers cheats and thieves out of our probation service without a penny in compensation from the public purse.

Because it will only be those with the professional skills knowledge and acumen who possess the commitment to serving and protecting our communities who can to step in and make a real difference to the vicious cycle of reoffending, spawned by the

continuing cycle of substance abuse and violence in our prison service that is spilling increasingly onto our streets.

Let this congress join the clarion call to the likes of Sodexo, Interserve , Working Links and others to not wait two years before the ending of their current contracts but to go, and go now.

I move.