

Resolution Date: 14 March 2020

Resolution Title: The Morning Star and Transphobia

This branch notes that the appalling discrimination experienced by trans people, including workplace discrimination. Research by Stonewall suggests that:

- One in eight trans employees (12%) have been physically attacked by a colleague or customer in the last year
- Half of trans people (51%) have hidden their identity at work for fear of discrimination
- A quarter of trans people (25%) have experienced homelessness

This branch believes that trans people face constant attacks from the right, both internationally and in Britain. Donald Trump has banned trans people from the US military. In February 2020, the American website LGBTQ Nation reported that 226 bills are proposed around the US which attack the LGBTQ community, many of them focusing on trans people. In both 2018 and 2019 over 20 trans people, mostly women of colour, were murdered in the United States.

That the last year has seen a rise in transphobic attacks in Britain. Autumn 2019 statistics showed a rise of 37% in transphobic hate crimes over the previous year. On 18 February 2020 a Sheffield man was jailed for five years for an arson attack on a trans woman's flat.

That, as in America, this increase in transphobic hate reflects a shift in attitudes promoted by the right as part of their new "culture war" tactics. The Murdoch-owned Times and Sunday Times have repeatedly recycled transphobic talking points, suggesting that trans women are predators, and that young people are coerced into believing themselves to be trans and should be refused supportive healthcare. On 18 February the Telegraph claimed that "trans extremists" were promoting a "mad" new religion.

This branch reasserts its commitment to opposing discrimination against trans people and fighting for equality for members of society regardless of their gender identity.

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This branch further notes that on Tuesday 18 February the Morning Star published a cartoon which the paper acknowledged to be transphobic in an apology published on Sunday 23 February

That the Morning Star has repeatedly given a platform to writers who call into question campaigns for trans equality, and has not apologised for doing so

That the Committee of Management which oversees the Morning Star includes representatives from Unite, GMB, NUM, CWU, FBU, Community, RMT, POA and the TSSA.

That unions have policies supporting trans rights and against transphobia.

This branch believes

- That the offensive cartoon, drawn by a regular Morning Star cartoonist, could only get printed, and an apology not be issued for five days, because of the failure of the newspaper to consistently oppose trans oppression, though it was more explicitly and crudely transphobic than other materials published
- That it is unacceptable for a paper funded and supported by the labour movement to promote transphobia in this way.

This branch supports the letter written by UNITE Equalities members to the Morning Star condemning the cartoon, expressing shock and betrayal and calling on the importance of the independent enquiry to ensure this never happens again.

Our branch supports a range of left and independent media including the Morning Star as a way to share information and draw working people together. We would be forced to reconsider this support for any publication that instead of uniting people sows discord and prejudice.