



PRESS RELEASE

9th November 2012

UNION ISSUES WARNINGS AGAINST IGNORING HISTORY

The Northern Region's biggest general union has today hit out at extremism and racism.

Referring to the 74th anniversary of Kristallnacht also referred to as the Night of Broken Glass, a series of coordinated attacks against Jews throughout Nazi Germany and parts of Austria on 9–10 November 1938, which left the streets covered with broken glass from the windows of Jewish owned stores, buildings and synagogues, the GMB Union said that history should never be forgotten and needed to be learned from to ensure that such atrocities never happen again.

Chris Jukes, Regional Political Officer of the GMB Northern Region said:

"We need to remember that at least 91 people were killed in the attacks simply because they were Jewish, and a further 30,000 arrested and incarcerated in concentration camps. In addition homes, hospitals, and schools were ransacked, as fascist attackers demolished buildings with sledgehammers. Over 1,000 synagogues were burned (95 in Vienna alone), and over 7,000 Jewish businesses destroyed or damaged. This was sheer hatred and generations of people died in a disgraceful and shocking example of brutality and genocide.

"The GMB attended a recent meeting of the Northern Regional TUC where the Anne Frank Education Trust was exhibited, which was a very moving account of the horrors of the holocaust in the Second World War. Anyone viewing or engaged in the work of Anne Frank would not fail to feel the importance of the phrase we should never forget".

In also referring to recent troubles in Sunderland with the English Defence League and the siting of a Mosque in Millfield, Mr Jukes said that fascists and agitators are only too willing to exploit situations for their own ends and that it was important for trade unions to stand up and work together against fascism.

He said:

"Let's be clear the lessons of history need to be learned no matter what faith is being attacked. Whether it be the horrors of the Holocaust or those that seek to cause hatred and bile today, we need to stand up to those who would turn the clock back to a time of division and intolerance and stand up for those who seek co-existence and mutual respect".

"With Remembrance Sunday in just a few days and the focus on paying heartfelt respects to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, now is the time to reaffirm that we will never forget".

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