

12 December 2023

From the President

PSMA president Jas McGuinness writes about an important motion passed at conference.

*“Take a look at you old man, as you sit in your chair.
You could be almost anyone, for all I know or I care.
On your chest is a red star, from your days long gone by.
For a proud fighting past, and a cause you held high.”*

These are the opening lines of a song called These Hands by Glasgow band The Wakes. If you were at PCS annual delegate conference this year you would have heard Martin Gardner from the DWP quoting these lyrics in a speech supporting the motion for PCS to become the twelfth union in Britain to affiliate to the International Brigades Memorial Trust (IBMT).

Ten years ago, in July 2013, I was part of a committee which raised a memorial to the International Brigades in my home town of Motherwell. It was one of my proudest moments that I, along with union members from RMT, ASLEF, Unison and another PCS rep, had managed to raise a memorial to these brave men and women from the towns and villages of North Lanarkshire who left their homes and families to go to Spain to fight against fascism.

I was proud again at conference this year that, in what was possibly the most ill-tempered and often divisive conference I have ever attended, all of the factions had come together to unanimously support our union in affiliating to the IBMT.

The song is about Glasgow International Brigader James Maley who died several years ago, but I’m sure he would have thanked PCS for supporting the memory of him and his comrades by passing this motion.

“No Pasaran!”