

# NASUWT

A recent letter to the TES by a long-serving NASUWT school representative gives as good a picture of why so many serving teachers join NASUWT as **anything I've seen** With his permission the letter is reproduced on the right.

Geoff Branner  
National Executive Member  
District 28  
Oxon, Bucks & MK

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## NASUWT

You can join  
By phone: 0121 453 6150  
Via the web:  
[www.teachersunion.org.uk](http://www.teachersunion.org.uk)  
E-mail:  
[nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk)  
In writing: NASUWT  
Hillscourt Education Centre  
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B45 8RS

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# NASUWT

# Every wondered why you joined the NASUWT?

Sirs,

While I genuinely appreciate the humorous articles on your back page I do regret the encroachment of comedy onto the letters page with the publication of **Richard Knights' letter (May 2<sup>nd</sup>)** with its bizarre travesty of **the history of the NAS/UWT. While I don't wish to comment on events** before my birth (though NUT did once famously go on strike for an 11% pay cut) I wonder how Mr Knights explains the fact that when I left NUT (as so many have since done) in 1974, they claimed 450,000 members and NAS/UWT less than 60,000, but now the numbers are in practice even.

Here are a few hints, with one example from each subsequent decade. In 1974 the NUT opposed the Houghton Inquiry, which gave teachers their biggest pay rise ever. In 1986 after the most successful period of joint **action ever, despite their infamous 'conscience clause', the NUT gave** away a week of our holidays (now known as INSET days) in return for a pay rise which was swallowed up within 18 months at the then rate of inflation; NAS/UWT voted over 90% against this.

In the 1990s NUT warned that NAS/UWT industrial action against the KS3 SATs ( the original proposals being that teachers would mark them unpaid and produce dozens of pages of evidence for the teacher assessed level) was illegal and would result in our assets being sequestered; we won in the high court. Finally, as everyone knows, the NUT has opposed the introduction of PPA time, the elimination of cover and the other gains from Workforce Reform over the last few years.

I have been proud to attend NAS/UWT national conference twice and listen to colleagues with no ideological straightjackets discuss practical **ways of improving teachers' pay and conditions; NUT conferences by contrast appear to take delegates by timewarp to a 1968 Poly Students' Union** debate on how to hasten the crisis of capitalism.

No doubt teachers will continue to vote with their feet (and direct deb-its) **for sensible policies, as opposed to NUT ballots where they don't** seem to vote at all.

Yours etc.

Mike Matejtschuk

NAS/UWT workplace representative for over 30 years

John Mason School

Abingdon