

YELLOW PAGES

Annual Conference 2024 **TUESDAY 24.09.24**

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Labour should not be an anti-immigrant party

Conference today should reject the composite on “Border Security Command”. It is framed with anti-immigrant rhetoric, describing immigration as a “problem” and calling for a “speed up in returns”.

Right-wing parties attack asylum and immigration to divide people and draw attention away from the damaging effects of their other pol-

icies. Our Government should reject such an approach and instead counter the racist myths about migrants.

On the issue of the channel crossings, we need to establish safe and legal routes for asylum-seekers. Italy’s punitive treatment of migrants is not something to emulate.

The moral case for opposing anti-

immigrant politics is clear, and it ought to be sufficient. But there is also an electoral case for our Party to reject it. If Labour concedes ground to the racist mythology, it is our right-wing and far-right opponents who will benefit electorally, and we will lose support from the large parts of society that oppose racism.

Labour must reduce, not increase, poverty

Yesterday, some unions voted against the CAC Report because their important motions have been shunted to the end of Conference, rather than being heard yesterday.

The party leadership may not want Conference debating its unpopular decisions – removing the universal Winter Fuel Allowance (WFA) and retaining the two child limit on benefits and tax credits – but campaigners will continue to call on the Government to do the right thing.

The two-child limit is a major driver of child poverty. 1.5m children live in families affected by the policy, with minority-ethnic families and single-parent families disproportionately affected. Abolishing the limit would cost approximately £1.3bn pa, but the Women’s Budget Group estimates that lifting 250,000 children out of poverty could save roughly £2.3bn in societal costs. Keeping the limit is a false economy.

Conference will, thanks to Unite and CWU, have the chance to vote against the Government’s disastrous WFA decision. Delegates have pointed out it is deeply unpopular on the doorstep, as pensioners on relatively low incomes will be hit by this cut. As Maggie Roberts, Unite Retired Members Vice-chair, points out: “Pensioners on as little as £220 per week will be missing out on the winter fuel payment this year... This is a policy which takes from pensioners to pay for a crisis not of our making.”

New government ministers assert there will be no return to austerity – but if it looks like austerity and feels like it to ordinary people, it is austerity. If there are ‘tough’ choices to make, focus on those with the broadest shoulders, not on children and pensioners!

Support the Unite/CWU motion when it is debated.

TODAY CLPD Fringe meeting Review of Conference and A Look Forward

Tuesday, 24th
September, 6.30pm
Quaker Meeting House,
22 School Lane,
Liverpool L1 3BT

Speakers:

Mark Ladbrooke, SHA
Jack Ballingham, NPF
Jean Crocker, former member,
Women’s CAC
Carol Turner, Labour CND
Chair: Christine
Shawcroft, former
member, NEC

Daily briefing for Conference
delegates published by:



CAMPAIGN for
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The Chancellor's real tough choice

Sadly, Rachel Reeves' speech yesterday, despite its soaring rhetoric, gave little hope that the fundamental economic plans inherited from the Tory Government are being abandoned. As Unite's Sharon Graham and others point out, plans to rely on private sector investment to restore crumbling public services and deliver clean infrastructure do not work.

Our Government needs to dramati-

cally step up public investment and halt the Treasury's current plans to further cut public investment. But that requires prioritising the goal of economic growth over the demands for more hand-outs from the private sector. The alternative is to carry on implementing the private sector's agenda: austerity, attacks on the poor and privatisation – but this won't lead to a "decade of national renewal". Tough choice!

"Rules are Rules"

So says Wendy Nichols, Chair of Labour's Organisation Sub-Committee in the only point of order that was actually allowed to be heard at Labour's Women's Conference on Saturday. (How the other attempted points of order were ruled on by the Chair, as per standing orders, when they didn't make it beyond the desk, is another matter).

This was welcome news, as the platform attempted to push through the motion on Women in the Economy despite the movers not being present. Sadly the longstanding de-

mand of the women's movement for a fiscal lock did not become policy within Labour's women's organisation.

Thanks Wendy: if only this commitment extended to other areas, too many to list but including committees and conferences for BAME and Disabled members, where rules are ignored. This was no clearer than in the rule change motivations where we were asked to change the rules to match practice – an update on the "it's not in the Rule Book because it's an 'unwritten rule'" classic!

Queueing in the rain

A delegate writes... There have been queues from Albert Dock to Manchester of people waiting in the pouring rain to pass through security. But with 20,000 pass-holders, fewer than one in 10 queuers are delegates. As a consequence, the Conference hall is sparsely filled.

Delegates who can bear it are subjected to large numbers of "platform plants" from Labour First giving fawning speeches to hymn the new

Government. At times the Chair has been pleading for speakers to fill up time.

So desperate are the leadership to avoid genuine policy debate that nearly every Cabinet member and devolved nation Leader is given a speech to showcase their Ministerial team. As for security, why don't they install "delegates only" channels to ensure the most important attendees can actually get in?

Boundary pushing

On Sunday Ellie Reeves paid tribute to the outgoing General Secretary for "pushing the boundaries of what was even considered possible". That was certainly the experience of grassroots members!

We saw:

- unprecedented crackdowns on member engagement in selections;
- factional vetting cranked up, with bril-

liant local candidates excluded while dubious candidates sailed through;

- the Rule Book ignored on key issues and the ability of CLPs to discuss key issues curtailed.

Let's hope the incoming General Secretary redraws the boundaries in line with the Rule Book and basic democratic norms.

Special Measures

The number of CLPs suspended from operating has steadily risen under the current leadership. CLPs in "special measures" are prevented from sending delegates to conferences, submitting motions, selecting candidates, and holding AGMs.

Suspension is supposed to last while an audit of members is carried out, but in effect it is a stick used to punish longstanding members without any reason.

There appears to be no right of appeal, and a disproportionate number of suspended CLPs have a large BAME membership.

"QUOTE" – "UNQUOTE"

"The spectre haunting Europe is far-right extremism... The far-right poison will have to be countered with a progressive agenda."

Gordon Brown, in *The Guardian*

"...under Keir's leadership we changed the party' Changed it into an organisation whose leaders are in the pocket of millionaires?"

Diane Abbott MP



Yellow Pages is produced as a service to delegates by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD).

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