



Suggested motions for Labour Party Annual Conference 2019

Conference motion - For a democratic choice in Labour leadership elections

Conference notes:

the 9.6 per cent increase in Labour's general election vote share (from 2015 to 2017) under Jeremy Corbyn's Leadership.

continual Tory Government attacks on people's living standards, which Labour is committed to halt and our plans to improve people's lives, combat racism, implement a progressive international agenda and tackle climate change.

current Labour leadership election rules (when there is a vacancy) are not ideal, in that they require a candidate to receive a minimum of 10 per cent of Labour MPs' and MEPs' nominations for a place on the ballot paper - allowing MPs to veto who can stand and potentially block the preferred choice of Labour's Members, Affiliated Supporters and Registered Supporters. Within living memory, a candidate merely required one nomination and seconder from the PLP.

Conference believes:

a potential leadership candidate who resolutely defends people's living standards and could command the support of the majority of the party, must be allowed to stand for Party Leader. That is basic democracy.

it is vital when a vacancy next arises for Leader that a candidate with such progressive policies and commitment can stand for election and be elected Leader - if that is the choice of Labour Members, Affiliated Supporters and Registered Supporters.

Conference notes the Democracy Review contained a proposal in line with this motion.

Conference therefore asks the NEC to bring forward to 2020 Conference a range of options, including the Democracy Review proposal, to widen the range of potential candidates.

245 words

Labour leadership election nomination thresholds rules - a short briefing

Under current Labour Party rules (in 2019), when there is next a vacancy for Leader there is no guarantee that a candidate with a progressive agenda, similar to the current leadership, would be able to stand for the post of Leader. MPs have, in effect, a veto over who can stand for Leader.

The recommendation put forward by the 2018 Democracy Review - which would have reduced the threshold of MPs/MEPs nominations to five per cent - was not voted on at the 2018 Conference.

Under the current rules, any potential candidate requires nominations from at least ten per cent of MPs plus MEPs, in order to secure a place on the ballot paper. That would allow MPs and MEPs to block a popular progressive candidate from standing in a leadership election.

The ten per cent threshold of MPs/MEPs would currently mean 26 nominations from MPs/MEPs, far more than the number that supported Jeremy Corbyn in 2015, when only approximately 15 MPs voted for him to be Leader. Jeremy

Deadline for submissions is Thursday 12 September 2019 at 12 noon

Corbyn got on the ballot paper that year because right wing Labour MPs 'lent' him their nominations anticipating his defeat – they do not intend to repeat this 'mistake' in future.

The rules for leadership elections have been altered many times over the past 40 years. The main changes to the nominations stage have been as follows:-

- 1) Prior to 1980s the nomination threshold was just two MPs (Nomination and Seconder). Then, till 1988, the threshold was 5% of MPs. In 1988 it was raised to 10% of MPs.
- 2) By the time of the 2015 leadership election the nomination threshold for when there is a vacancy had risen to 15% of MPs. Then at the 2017 Labour Conference this threshold was lowered from 15% MPs and MEPs to 10%.
- 3) In 2018, the Democracy Review put forward a proposal which could be loosely described as '10% PLP/EPLP **OR** 10% CLPs+5% PLP/EPLP **OR** 10% Affiliates + 5% PLP/EPLP'. The proposal was not agreed at Labour's NEC on 22 September 2018 and an alternative formula (which could be described as '10% PLP/EPLP **PLUS EITHER** 5% CLPs **OR** 5% Affiliates') was agreed by the NEC and put to the 2018 Conference. This latter proposal was agreed by the Conference - however 69.16% of the CLP vote was cast against it.
- 4) The current rules ('10% PLP/EPLP **PLUS EITHER** 5% CLPs **OR** 5% Affiliates') require a potential candidate to secure the nomination of ten per cent of MPs plus MEPs, plus **either** five per cent of CLPs **or** five per cent of affiliates (the precise formula being: at least 3 affiliates - at least 2 of which shall be trade union affiliates - comprising 5 per cent of affiliated membership).

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Anti-austerity policies can deliver economic growth and a Labour victory

Conference notes:

- 1) Nine years of Tory austerity have reduced economic growth and people's living standards.
- 2) In 2017 Labour achieved a 40% share of the vote in the general election – 9.6% above the 2015 General Election and an increase of 3.5 million votes.
- 3) Labour's sister parties across Europe who have failed to oppose austerity have seen their electoral support plummet.

Conference recognises Labour's electoral advance is because of its clear focus on people's living standards - the anti-austerity framework and economic strategy of public investment.

Conference welcomes:

- 1) Jeremy Corbyn's leadership of Labour on an anti-austerity, pro-growth agenda.
- 2) Labour's commitment to substantially increase public investment and establish a National Investment Bank to raise growth and living standards, create good jobs, expand infrastructure, shift to renewable energy and improve public finances.
- 3) John McDonnell's plans to bring the railways, utilities and postal services into public ownership – to deliver better, cheaper, more efficient services for the public, and policies to direct all tax increases to the highest-paid and big business.

Conference calls on all Labour-led local and regional authorities to protect the services they provide, and to publicly campaign against Tory government cuts to funding.

Conference agrees that to win, Labour must build on its current policies to make people better off and gives strong backing to the leadership that has crafted these policies. The need for a Corbyn-led Labour government is urgent and Conference resolves to unite behind that priority.

242 words

Implement the Good Friday Agreement

Conference notes:

- 1) The Good Friday Agreement is now more than 20 years old
- 2) The Labour government, along with many others internationally, played an important role in establishing the Agreement
- 3) That many provisions of the Agreement, and others such as the St Andrews Agreement have yet to be implemented
- 4) The current Labour leadership has always supported peace, democracy and equality in Ireland

Conference recognises the importance of the Agreement in establishing peace, power-sharing and greater equality. It enshrines the principle that Irish unity can be achieved by consent, and that consent can be tested through a border poll.

Conference notes:

- 1) The anti-democratic nature of the agreement between the Tories and the DUP, and public funds used to secure it
- 2) The unwillingness of the Tory government to address the issues that led to the collapse of the NI power-sharing Executive
- 3) The political impasse created means key inequalities remain in place, including on language rights, citizenship, a woman's right to choose and equal marriage
- 4) The undue influence DUP red lines have had in the government's Brexit negotiations

Conference calls on Labour to continue to respect the Good Friday Agreement and to implement it in full. It further calls on Labour to use the mechanisms of Agreement to redress inequalities. Conference resolves that Labour, in line with international law and its moral obligations, will always respect the will of the majority of the population.

238 words

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NHS

Conference reaffirms Labour's commitment to an NHS which is publicly owned, publicly funded, publicly provided, publicly accountable and free at the point of use.

Conference is therefore concerned to see under-performance in some services (e.g. A&E waiting-times and commencement of cancer treatment) met not with the necessary improvements but with a questioning and undermining of proper standard targets. Conference believes that targets based on patients' needs should not be abandoned or replaced by targets based on financial or other non-clinical considerations.

Conference now calls on all sections of the Party to join with patients, health-workers, Trade Unions and all other NHS supporters in sustained and visible public campaigning for:

- adequate funding for all NHS services, including Mental Health services;
- an end to privatisation and PFI-related indebtedness;
- no selling-off of NHS sites;
- tackling causes of ill-health, e.g. poverty, austerity, poor housing and poor education;
- adequate numbers of properly-paid staff;
- no service closures / 'reconfigurations' without proper local consultation and consent;
- excluding the NHS from free trade agreements.

Conference opposes the reclassification of free NHS services as means-tested Social Care. Our publicly-owned NHS need to be fully integrated with Social Care systems which should themselves be publicly owned, provided, funded and accountable.

200 words

We need a Green New Deal to stop climate change

Conference notes:

- 1) Humanity has 12 years to stop catastrophic climate change by keeping global temperature rises below 1.5°C, according to the UN.
- 2) Already 1°C of global warming has taken place, causing: floods, droughts, heat waves, rising sea levels and pollution.
- 3) The Tory government's failure to act on climate change – cutting support for green energy, pursuing fracking and failing to tackle air pollution.
- 4) The working class and the poorest people will be the hardest hit by climate change.

Conference supports:

- 1) Millions of school students who have participated in the global climate change strikes. Young Labour must be given adequate resources to take a leading role in this movement.
- 2) Calls for a 'Green New Deal' and a 'just transition' in Britain. This would deliver:
 - Massive state investment in renewables and green public transport
 - Thousands of new, highly-skilled, well-paid green jobs
 - Ambitious actions to reduce emissions in building and waste
 - Divestment from and the ending of subsidies to fossil fuels

Conference welcomes the Labour Party leadership's commitments on climate change including:

- 1) Pursuing efforts to keep global temperature rises to 1.5°C.
- 2) That the next Labour government will aim to decarbonise the economy with a target of net zero emissions by 2050.
- 3) Labour's manifesto pledges to clean up illegal levels of air pollution and to ban fracking.
- 4) Labour's industrial strategy: for 60% of energy to come from low carbon or renewables by 2030 – this plan would create thousands of green jobs.

246 words

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End the war on Yemen

Conference notes the UN has characterised the current situation in Yemen as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today. Approximately 80% of the population is dependent upon emergency food and medical aid. 1.8 million children are enduring acute malnutrition; and 85,000 children under the age of five have starved to death in the past three years.

This situation is entirely due to the Saudi led war upon the country, reinforced by a siege of all points of access. After four years of systematic bombardment, and occupation of large parts of the country, the Saudi coalition has destroyed much of the infrastructure of the poorest country in the Middle East.

Conference condemns the Tory Government's support for the war. There is no military solution, yet the Tories are licensing arms sales, supplying intelligence, logistics and British military personnel to the Saudi coalition. Nearly £5 billion in arms licenses has already been granted. We call for the immediate suspension of such sales. We call for a halt on all conventional UK military operations in Yemen.

Conference condemns the government for refusing to support an independent investigation into breaches of international humanitarian law by the Saudi coalition. This is despite well documented evidence of continuing attacks upon civilian targets including schools, medical facilities, markets, etc.

We commend Labour's Front Bench for challenging the Tories' complicity in the suffering of the Yemeni people. We welcome the commitment of an incoming Labour government to embargo arms sales and support an independent enquiry.

248 words

Investigatory Powers to be subject to Human Rights Law

Conference notes the absence from the NPF Report 2018 of the surveillance society.

Conference notes the continual use of surveillance powers in the private and public sectors authorised by law, or government programme including:

- Investigatory Powers Act 2016,
- Immigration Act 2014
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Digital Economy Acts 2017/2010,
- Data Protection Act 2018

Conference notes that the IPA 2016 and DEA 2010 were both interdicted by the CJEU as contrary to Human Rights Law and/or the EU acquis.

The intrusive programmes include Prevent and 'get it right from a genuine site'.

Conference believes that freedom of expression and the right to privacy are universal human rights, that the current surveillance and investigatory powers regime is in breach of these rights.

Conference resolves that a Labour Government will ensure that private and public surveillance technologies and systems will conform to laws that meet the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights, including a need to prove reasonable suspicion before collecting evidence and the right to a fair trial with the principle of innocent until proved guilty.

Conference calls on the Labour Party to draw up a Human Rights based policy for the regulation of British Law Enforcement authorities and their investigatory powers. This to include the abolition of Prevent, the repeal of the 2014 Immigration Act and the repeal of the immigration data exception established by the DPA 2018.

Conference instructs the relevant Policy Commission to launch a consultation on Surveillance and Justice to report to Conference 2020.

249 words

Shadow Defence Diversification Agency urgently needed

Conference acknowledges:

- a) the defence industry is increasingly capital intensive and employment is in long-term decline;
- b) urgent attention is needed to ensure skilled, secure and well-paid employment for defence workers.

Conference welcomes:

- a) Jeremy Corbyn's commitment to establishing a Defence Diversification Agency 'jointly between workers, industry and government to ensure that jobs and skills are not just maintained, but also expanded';
- b) Motion 17 passed by TUC 2017 which 'calls on trade unions and the TUC to lobby the Labour Party to establish a 'shadow Defence Diversification Agency' and 'urges trades union councils, trade unions and the General Council of the TUC' to assist it work;
- c) Unite's 2018 policy conference decision to 'provide resources to develop a defence diversification strategy' including promoting cross-sectoral work within the union, and working with other unions, the TUC and Labour Party.

Conference recognises that securing jobs for defence workers is best achieved by the establishment of a Shadow Defence Diversification Agency as part of a national industrial strategy, which must encourage workers and communities to take the lead in a broad partnership of all stakeholders.

Conference resolves to:

- a) encourage discussion about defence diversification at all levels of the party;
- b) work with the TUC, Unite and other unions to encourage research on defence diversification; and
- c) establish a Shadow Defence Diversification Agency as a matter of urgency.

226 words

Rail

Conference notes the Conservatives' September 2018 appointment of a 'Rail Review' to consider the future of Rail services.

Conference further notes the March 2019 announcement by the leader of this 'Review' that public ownership of Rail services should not be an option, even though public ownership is the model preferred by over two-thirds of the population.

Conference condemns the government's ideological insistence that the greed of private shareholders should continue to take precedence over the interests of long-suffering passengers and transport-workers.

Conference therefore reaffirms that the transport policy of a Labour government will include the commitment to take our railways into public ownership.

Conference also reaffirms Labour's commitment to:

- a) oppose the introduction of 'Driver Only Operation' (DOO) on any passenger services;
- b) oppose reduction of ticket-office staff and other station-based staff.

The past few months have provided tragic reminders of the need for our society to prioritise the safety of all its members, including those who are most vulnerable.

Labour must consistently and publicly campaign against the government's refusal to recognise such priorities.

Considerations of safety and access are particularly vital for those passengers (both existing and potential) who suffer from disabilities. Conference resolves to ensure that their equal rights are respected.

203 words

Opposing racism and the far right

Conference notes:

- 1) The alarming rise of racism, Islamophobia and antisemitism and far right forces across Europe, America and elsewhere.
- 2) The growth of a far right street movement in Britain, with UKIP giving open support to Tommy Robinson.
- 3) With dismay, the 'hostile environment' initiated by Theresa May when she was Home Secretary and the its adverse impact on the Windrush generation, other migrants and refugees.

Conference believes that it is not migrants and refugees who undermine wages and public services, but cuts and austerity.

Conference supports:

- 1) The stand taken by the Party Leader and Shadow Home Secretary in opposing Tory scapegoating policies and the party's campaign against the Tories' 'hostile environment' policies against migrants.
- 2) An incoming Labour government scrapping the Immigration Act of 2014 which enshrined the 'hostile environment' in law.
- 3) The ending of indefinite immigration detention.

Conference also urges local Labour Parties and affiliates to support mobilisations against the far right and to participate in the annual UN anti-racism day marches.

167 words

Developing large IT projects in the public sector

Conference notes that public sector custom software (IT) projects are notorious for late delivery and running over-budget, if they are actually delivered at all.

Conference further notes that large IT projects are difficult to bring to fruition because so much depends on getting specifications right, but it is not in the interests of the private companies who now develop all public sector IT, for government departments to do that because they make more money by constantly having to make changes.

Conference recognises that software engineering is highly skilled work and provides interesting and fulfilling careers; that the civil service used to employ its own software engineers but now most of the work is outsourced to countries where the labour is cheap.

Conference resolves that the next Labour government will establish software engineering resources within the departments and help maintain these skills in the UK.

144 words

Tax landlords and take their houses into public ownership

Conference recognises that it is not possible to build all the council houses required to fix the affordability problem in the short term and that reducing rents is the best quick fix.

Conference deplores the fact that £10 billion plus of housing benefit is paid to private landlords, many of them MPs. All these homes should be council houses which would give local authorities an income stream of rents.

Conference understands that land value is over 50% of the UK's wealth and that land value would not exist without public investment in infrastructure and services paid for by taxpayers, including tenants, and that if landlords had to contribute in full towards for the real benefit they receive from landownership they would not be in business. They would be forced to sell up and the flood of these houses on the market would massively reduce prices. Local authorities could then buy them up with sitting tenants.

Conference also recognises that Council Tax is the most regressive tax we have where the owner of a Westminster mansion pays the same as the tenant of a Weymouth bedsit.

Conference therefore resolves that the next Labour government will replace Council Tax and all property taxes with a land value tax, with landlords paying the full amount.

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Peace and Justice for Palestine

Conference notes:

Recent actions by US and Israeli administrations are destroying prospects for peace in Palestine - by recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital, stopping funding UNRWA for Palestinian refugees, the continuing siege of Gaza, expanding illegal settlements and announcing plans to annex illegally large areas of land occupied in 1967.

The proposals in Trump's "deal of the century" are a one-sided attempt to impose an unjust outcome destroying core Palestinian rights.

Conference believes:

Labour's ethical foreign policy must prioritise Palestinians' rights to freedom, justice and equality, including by applying these principles based on international law to all UK trade with Israel.

An internationalist Labour Party has a special responsibility to redress the ongoing injustices against the Palestinian people, denied their right to self-determination during the British Mandate, because of the role Britain played as a colonial power during the 1948 Nakba when Palestinians were forcibly displaced from their homes.

Conference resolves:

To oppose any proposed solution for Palestinians, including Trump's 'deal', not based on international law and UN resolutions recognising their collective rights to self-determination and to return to their homes.

To adhere to an ethical policy on all UK's trade with Israel, in particular by applying international law on settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories and stopping any arms trade with Israel that is used in violation of the human rights of Palestinians.

To work globally for an alliance with progressive sister parties rejecting trade agreements with Israel that fail to recognise the rights of the Palestinians.

No US intervention in Venezuela

Conference notes comments from US President Trump, Vice President Pence, and Secretary of State Pompeo that have regularly included threats of military action in Venezuela.

Conference believes:

- that a US-led military intervention in Venezuela may go the same way as previous disastrous wars, such as in Iraq.
- the future of Venezuela is a matter for Venezuelans alone to determine.
- Trump and his far-right allies such as Bolsonaro in Brazil offer no hope to Venezuela or to the majority of people in Latin America.
- US interventions in Latin America, and their support for military juntas, have a bloody history with Chile under Pinochet as a prime example.
- The way forward for Venezuela is the call for dialogue from Mexico, Bolivia, Uruguay and others.

Conference resolves to oppose any U.S. military intervention in Venezuela and any UK government support for it.