

# YELLOW PAGES

Annual Conference 2014 WEDNESDAY 24.09.14



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# Give voters real hope and we will win

Conference will end today with the Party expressing confidence in victory. But we must also acknowledge the significance of the collapse of working class support in the Scottish referendum, especially in Glasgow. People want to see their living standards recover and need to see commitments to ensure this.

The six goals Ed set out yesterday, including commitments on the NHS and green issues, do offer hope to our voters. Unfortunately Ed Balls's earlier announcements, of cuts to child and pensioner benefits with no commitment to finance extra investment, won't win any votes.

Austerity has proved to be self-defeating, both across Europe and, as predicted, here with the Tories. It's failing to cut the deficit. The US, in contrast, has not followed this reactionary neo-liberal path, and is having a faster recovery. Millions suffered under 1930s austerity and we should not repeat the same mistakes. Of course it's our voters that suffer disproportionately from austerity, while the rich benefit.

Labour should re-build public services, not cut them. Nor should Labour pander to a reactionary agenda on immigration. Scapegoating minorities is not just morally wrong but damages our electoral support among our most reliable voters.

## Party democracy

When it comes to party democracy, the Special Conference was hardly a good start to the year. But we have made some progress. For the first time the NEC has supported all rule changes on the agenda from CLPs so there will now be a more democratic representative

CAC with a vote for every member. Plus the procedure for amending the Rule Book has been improved by clarifying the "three year rule".

Anna Dyer's victory in the NCC election, supported by the Centre Left Grassroots Alliance, was particularly significant, following on from the most successful ballot for CLP representatives on the NEC since the 1980s. Under New Labour our Party's internal procedures were subverted on a systematic scale. The book launched this week by Professor Lewis Minkin, *The Blair Supremacy*, spells out in detail this sorry saga. In the New Labour years, full time officers were often effectively instructed to fix elections. This directly contravenes the staff code of conduct.

Unfortunately this malpractice recurred in the CAC election at last year's conference. Shining a light on these abuses has put the party machine on the back foot. So this year, at last, party staff have been doing what they should be doing rather than undermining our internal democracy. Anna's victory symbolises the ending of the dark days! Nevertheless we need to remain eternally vigilant.

Conference is beginning to re-assert itself, with delegates wanting more control. Sofa sessions are fewer. When they did happen, delegates voted with their feet. Although the spirit of the Rule Book is to have four contemporary motions from the unions and four more

from the CLPs, every effort is made to frustrate this. CLP delegates are conned by party apparatchiks into voting for the unions' subjects already guaranteed to appear on the agenda. Thus CLP votes are wasted. Consequently this year ASLEF and many CLPs had their motions on Palestine consigned to the dustbin.

The CAC, where unions have a majority, could easily resolve this situation. The unions should vote on their four subjects on Sunday morning. Those four subjects could then be removed from a CLP ballot on Sunday afternoon. We would then have the full eight subjects. The spirit of the rules would at last be upheld and the New Labour machine neutralised.

Now that party members are regaining some control over their own conference, it's also time for us to have more control over General Election policies and the programme for office. Labour needs a progressive agenda that offers real hope and will deliver real change.

## A free press?

*Yellow Pages* is produced by volunteers - who are out today with our buckets. Please be generous. *Yellow Pages* has a cover price of £3 for the week.

The *only* daily briefing for delegates at 2014 Annual Conference.

Published by CLPD

**CLPD**  
**Campaign for Labour Party Democracy**

# NHS: we have to be bold

The NHS has been pushed into crisis by Tory cuts and privatisation. The treatment waiting list is at a six year high at 3.2 million. Shadow Health Secretary Andy Burnham has so far made good moves in pledging, at Unite Policy Conference in July, to repeal the Tories' destructive Health and Social Care Act, exempt the NHS from privatisation directives from the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, and make the NHS the preferred provider of treatment and care.

However Labour needs to be even more bold in its health policy. The NHS should not simply be the "preferred" provider but the *only* provider of state healthcare and Labour should commit

to end extortionate PFI contracts in health.

Ed Balls pledged to conference yesterday to "do whatever it takes to save" the NHS, so Labour should commit to halting and reversing Tory cuts to the NHS. Our NHS cannot afford for Labour not to win in 2015, and equally it cannot afford for Labour to do anything less than totally reverse the privatisation agenda of the past decades once we return to government.

## Housing Motion Hokey Cokey

Imagine our surprise when we discovered that the CLPD-backed housing motion, ruled out by the CAC, found its way back in to the Composite that goes before the conference today. No doubt this development is also a surprise to the CAC, which had three times in the past week insisted that it was out.

This inclusion is welcome, but it remains a mystery in view of the absence of the submitting CLPs from the compositing meeting. So thanks to whoever put our motion back on the contemporary dance floor.

We hope that the mover and seconder of our motion will call for a far more ambitious and radical housing policy than is currently offered by the Shadow Housing Team. This should include a commitment to build the millions of council homes our communities so desperately need as a matter of urgency.

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"Continued spending cuts, particularly in the NHS, in the sixth year of austerity with unemployment still over two million, is plain crackers... It's not as though Osborne's 'recovery' offers an alternative. Hardly anything has recovered except financial services. Wage levels, business investment, productivity, private debt and the trade gap are all strongly negative."  
*The Guardian*, 10.09.2014

  
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**Memorial Meeting for Vladimir Derer, 1919-2014**  
Founder member and Secretary of CLPD for some 30 years  
6-8pm, Thursday, 30th October  
Attlee Suite, Portcullis House, Embankment, London SW1.  
Adjacent to Westminster Tube.  
(Please allow 15 mins to pass through security)  
Speakers will pay tribute to Vladimir's life and his work establishing CLPD

**CLPD AGM 2015**  
11.30am  
Saturday, 28th February  
Conway Hall,  
Red Lion Square, London WC1  
For more information, go to:  
[www.clpd.org.uk](http://www.clpd.org.uk)

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