

## **Suggested contemporary motions for Labour Party Annual Conference 2018**

### **Brexit: living standards and jobs must remain Labour's priority**

Conference notes:

- 1) that following the UK/EU talks on 16/17 August the government still has no agreement on departure terms from the EU, despite the departure being scheduled for March 2019.
- 2) on 23 August the government started publishing some 'technical notices', advising people what to do in the event a 'No-Deal' Brexit.
- 3) the 6 August publication of ORB's poll, indicating disapproval of the government's handling of the Brexit negotiations has reached an all-time high of 76%.

Conference deplores the Prime Minister for prioritising negotiations within the Cabinet over those with the EU and her ministers for talking up the possibility of a 'No-Deal'.

Conference notes any agreement the government negotiates is unlikely to protect the economy and people's rights.

Conference continues to support Labour's six tests, the commitment to a customs union and seeking full access to EU markets.

Conference calls on the Shadow Cabinet to continue with its policy of securing living standards and jobs, which requires free trade between Britain and the EU.

Conference agrees that Labour should vote against any agreement the government reaches with the EU which does not secure this objective, and how Labour achieves its objective should be decided in light of the situation at the time of the conclusion of any agreement negotiated between the government and the EU. At this stage in the UK/EU negotiations Labour should not exclude in advance any means or tactics to prevent a Brexit outcome which hurts jobs or living standards.

*246 words*

### **Anti-austerity policies can deliver economic recovery and a Labour victory**

Conference notes August 2018 reports indicating a deteriorating economy and further declines in people's living standards:

- 1) The 10 August Office of National Statistics (ONS) report that industrial production and manufacturing output declined in the April to June quarter and are now back in recession,
- 2) The 10 August ONS report that the trade deficit more than doubled to £8.7 billion in the 3 months to June, attributed to falling exports of aircraft and cars,
- 3) The 14 August ONS report that real wages, after inflation, are falling once more and are once again lower than when the Tory-led Coalition came to office in 2010.

Conference notes:

- 1) The Tories' eight year-long austerity drive needs to be ended and replaced with policies that will expand the economy and make people better off.
- 2) Labour achieved 40% of the vote in the 2017 General Election, with a clear anti-austerity manifesto – a 9.6% increase from the 2015 General Election.

Conference welcomes:

- 1) Jeremy Corbyn's commitment to replacing austerity with a plan to invest for growth and create an economy that works 'For the many, not just the few'.
- 2) John McDonnell's plan to bring the railways, utilities and postal services into public ownership. Public ownership is an "economic necessity" that would deliver better, cheaper and more efficient services for the public.
- 3) Labour's commitment to substantially increase public investment and establish a National Investment Bank to stimulate growth, create good jobs, expand infrastructure, raise living standards and improve public finances.

*250 words*

**Deadline for submissions is Thursday 13 September 2018 at 12 noon**

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### **NHS: maintaining and strengthening Labour's commitment to public ownership**

Conference notes the NHS performance figures published on 9 August. Only 89.3% of A&E attenders were seen within four hours, well below the government's own (already reduced) 95% target.

Chris Hopson (NHS Providers) points out that the NHS is now 'running at boiling-point all year round'; while Dr Taj Hassan (Royal College of Emergency Medicine) warns that 'the recent heatwave...should not be used to excuse inappropriate funding'.

Labour's Shadow Health Minister points out that waiting-lists are 'well above 4 million' and that 'it is essential that every penny is going to frontline services and to improving patient-care rather than padding out private profits'.

Yet, according to research published by *The Guardian* on 6 August, Virgin has over the past 5 years been awarded NHS contracts worth almost £2bn.

Conference therefore reaffirms its commitment to:

- ensure that our NHS is publicly owned, provided and funded;
- oppose creeping privatisation and the Naylor Report's call for a fire-sale of NHS assets;
- reverse existing privatisations, Private Finance Initiatives and the debts which they entail.

The government's 'Integrated Care Providers' (ICPs) and 'Accountable Care Systems' (ACs) involve limited services on restricted budgets, replacing NHS hospitals with de-skilled community units.

Conference therefore calls on all sections of the Labour Party to join with NHS patients, staff and others in publicly campaigning against ACs and ICPs and actively advocating an NHS which is not exploited by the private sector but is properly funded and genuinely accountable.

239 words

### **Build more homes**

Conference notes:

1. The Conservatives' 'Social Housing Green Paper' published on 14 August, offering no funds to build council housing, is a pitiful response to the housing crisis and severely declining levels of affordability in the private rented sector.
2. Shelter's recent research evidences that private renters spend on average 41% of income on rent; and many are unable to meet housing costs. Shelter has, therefore, called for a new plan for social housing to address the crisis of affordability.

Conference supports Shelter's call and welcomes many of the recommendations in Labour's Green paper, but in light of government indifference and the worsening crisis, Labour must go further and faster.

Conference, therefore calls for Labour's commitments to:

- delivering 100,000 genuinely affordable homes a year,
- half of all new homes built to be genuinely affordable,

to be an urgent priority and delivered in Labour's first years in government.

Conference welcomes the commitment to end 'affordable rent' but proposals for a two-tier rent structure are socially divisive. We call for one social rent category for all social housing.

To achieve this more ambitious plan Conference calls upon Labour to commit to:

1. Ring fencing all surplus public land for building council homes to meet housing need.
2. Rebalancing the government's housing budget in favour of social housing by setting a national housing grant of at least £50 billion.
3. Replacing all property taxes with Land Value Tax to remove exploitative landlords and give councils control over local land.

246 words

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### Shadow Defence Diversification Agency demand of TUC now urgent

Conference notes the announcement on 13 August 2018 by the Ministry of Defence to expand the role of the MOD Career Transition Partnership into the technology and cyber security sector.

Conference acknowledges the defence industry is increasingly capital intensive and employment is in long-term decline. Urgent attention is needed to ensure skilled, secure and well-paid employment for defence workers.

Conference welcomes:

- 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'.
- 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.
- 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

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

247 words

### Stop and Scrap Universal Credit

Conference deplores the rollout, against numerous warnings, of Universal Credit (UC); a draconian system leaving many facing debt, eviction and hunger.

Conference notes the 11 August report in the *Guardian*, following a successful Freedom of Information request, showing that the proportion of UC claimants whose payments are being subject to deductions of up to 40% of a standard monthly UC payment to pay off arrears in rent, council tax and utility bills, has risen from 10% to 33% in the year up to May 2018.

Conference notes that this coincides with a big increase in the numbers of UC claimants due to the initial roll out and that the majority of claimants have not been migrated yet.

Conference further notes the report from the Child Poverty Action Group on 6 August highlighting the problems due to the monthly assessment period with one family whose UC payment varied from £0 to £1,185 since last year, and others losing up to £258 work allowance per month.

Conference believes that these and numerous other documented issues with UC demonstrate that it is beyond fixing and therefore calls on an incoming Labour government to:

1) Stop and scrap UC

2) Carry out a far-reaching social security reform that truly makes work pay and protects those unable to work;

and on the Party as a whole, under the leadership of the Shadow Secretary of State Work and Pensions, to campaign for this policy until such time as 1) and 2) are achieved.

247 words

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### Step up campaign against schools academisation

#### Conference notes

1. The report in the *Times Educational Supplement* on 10 August that Academy heads in Kent are refusing to accept looked-after children into their schools.
2. That this is symptomatic of the regressive nature of the unaccountable, inefficient academisation programme that is continuing apace across England.
3. That the majority of secondary schools are now academies or are part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) but two thirds of primary schools still remain under Local Authority control.
4. That academisation is incompatible with an egalitarian and democratic education system serving the many, not the few.

Conference welcomes Labour's commitment to ensure that all schools will be taken back under local democratic control under a Labour Government; and applauds those Labour controlled authorities who have resisted academisation; but believes that the Labour Party should adopt a more robust policy of opposition to the continuing academisation of schools, especially our Primary schools.

Conference notes that there are many local campaigns of opposition to the academisation programme involving parents, teachers and local community activists and believes Labour should offer support and encouragement to these activists in resisting academisation in line with our commitment to community organising.

Conference agrees that in government, the Labour Party will bring all schools back under local democratic control, abolishing Academy Trusts including all Multi Academy Trusts, and that therefore proposals to wind up MATs and turn over control and management of their schools to local democratically controlled structures should be developed urgently.

246 words

### Ending the 'hostile environment' - justice for the Windrush generation

#### Conference notes:

1. The 10 August *Guardian* report that dozens of Windrush citizens wrongly targeted by the government over their immigration status are still waiting for their cases to be resolved.
2. On 9 August representatives of 20 churches wrote to the Home Secretary condemning the hostile environment as inhumane, unjust and causing racist discrimination.
3. On 7 August Labour-run Hackney Council became the first local authority to pass a motion pledging to oppose the criminalisation of Windrush families, celebrate annual Windrush Day and press central Government for a public enquiry into the scandal.

Conference demands the government resolve the outstanding cases now. Commonwealth citizens who came here before 1973 are British citizens. They and their relatives should not have been detained, deported, denied re-entry to this country, lost their homes, jobs and livelihoods.

Conference condemns the 'hostile environment' policy that treats these British citizens, and others entitled to be here, as illegal immigrants, and deplores the role of Theresa May in developing the policy of 'deport first, appeal later.'

#### Conference supports:

1. The Labour leadership's success in exposing these cruel and discriminatory policies and of forcing the resignation of a Tory Home Secretary.
2. Labour's policies to end the 'hostile environment' policy; close some detention centres and end indefinite detention; fully compensate the victims; and to demand that the Government makes immediate interim hardship payments.
3. The incoming Labour government scrapping the Immigration Act of 2014 which enshrined the 'hostile environment' into law.

244 words

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### End Unfair Evictions: Abolish Section 21 of 1988 Housing Act

Conference Notes:

- 'No fault evictions' were introduced under Section 21 of the 1988 Housing Act. This introduced short-term tenancies of six months and gave landlords the power to evict tenants at the end of this period with just two months' notice and without reason.
- On 11 August, Communities Secretary James Brokenshire MP launched a government drive to end homelessness by 2027. The £100m 'strategy' will offer help with mental health and addictions, as well as targeted support to get rough sleepers off the streets and into long-term accommodation.

Conference welcomes a commitment to ending homelessness but notes that whilst issues of mental health provision play their part in exacerbating the crisis, evictions are in fact the number one cause of homelessness in Britain and 80% of evictions are on no-fault grounds.

Conference believes that just as temporary employment contracts make workers insecure and tip the balance of power in favour of bosses, insecure tenancies make it difficult for renters to complain and organise for their rights. The Labour movement does not tolerate insecure contracts at work, and nor should it accept short-term, insecure tenancies in housing.

Conference therefore calls on the Labour Party to commit to ending section 21 of the 1988 Housing act. This would help to make renting more secure, improve standards and give renters the dignity and quality of living they deserve.

*This motion is being circulated by CLPD Youth*

*220 words*

### An ethical foreign policy

Conference notes:

- As a result of the Saudi-led airstrike on Yemen on the 9 August, 43 people were killed including 29 children under the age of 15, a further 63 people were injured. This is not an isolated incident and the Saudi-led coalition undertook 258 airstrikes on Yemen in June alone, one third of which were in residential areas.
- Under international humanitarian law, civilians must be protected, and the actions of the coalition are in breach of this law.
- Millions of civilians have become displaced as a result of the military action and thousands are dying through disease and malnutrition.
- The Campaign Against the Arms Trade confirms that the UK Government has licensed £4.7 billion worth of arms to the Saudis since the start of the conflict in 2015, including £2.7 billion spent on aircraft, helicopters and drones and a further £1.9 billion on grenades, bombs and missiles.
- The Conservative Government continues to ignore their responsibility in this human tragedy by failing to prevent the sale of arms to Saudi Arabia.

Conference calls upon the Shadow Cabinet to condemn the ongoing atrocities in Yemen and to demand that the Conservative Government immediately halts the sale of arms to Saudi Arabia while this conflict continues.

Conference calls upon an incoming Labour Government to reinvigorate Robin Cook's ethical foreign policy and, in so doing, prevent the sale of arms to any country involved in an ongoing conflict or involved in human rights abuses.

*241 words*

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### Introducing Land Value Tax

In its 2017 manifesto Labour pledged to consider Land Value Tax (LVT) for sustainable funding of local government. With reports in August 2018 that Somerset, Norfolk and Lancashire are the latest local authorities heading for bankruptcy, the issue has become increasingly urgent.

With the planned withdrawal of all funding from central government by 2020 the onus falls on local property taxes, all of which have severe defects.

- Council Tax is a regressive tax where billionaire owners may pay less than bedsit tenants whose landlords pay nothing at all.
- Business Rates punish businesses for investing in their properties.
- Section 106 Agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy reflect the asymmetrical relationship between private and public sector, with the former systematically running rings round the latter.

LVT is an annual tax levied on the owners of land according to the assessed value. Land values reflect the benefits which accrue to ownership of individual locations and depend on natural attributes, local facilities – mostly provided from public funds – and statutory permitted use granted by local authorities.

Land is our common inheritance and we collectively create its value. It is, therefore, a democratic right for citizens to know who owns it and demand that payment is made for its exclusive use.

The provision and maintenance of public goods and services feed local land values. LVT would establish a virtuous circle where increased investment increases land values which increases LVT revenue which allows increased investment.

Conference therefore calls on Labour to abolish all current property taxes and replace them with LVT.

*Motion supported and circulated by the Labour Land Campaign*

231 words

### Rail: Tories make passengers pay more for less

Conference notes:

- The 15 August announcement that fares will rise in January by up to 3.2%, far outstripping any limited increases in earnings.
- Passengers have already had to endure appalling overcrowding, delays and cancellations, which the government has consistently failed to address.
- Transport Secretary Grayling actually suggested on 14 August that fare-rises could be modified by imposing curbs on railway-workers' pay. He seems to think that rail-staff should pay the price for his government's anti-social policies and private sector greed.

The ongoing crisis will not be solved by replacing one private company with another. We need instead an acceptance that every pound paid by passengers and other taxpayers must be spent not on subsidising the profits of private shareholders but on improving services, making them more accessible to all and holding fares at reasonable levels.

Conference therefore reaffirms our 2017 commitment to bring Rail into public ownership, to the benefit of both passengers and the environment.

Conference also reaffirms its commitment to oppose Driver Only Operation (DOO) on trains carrying passengers and to ensure that all such trains carry a safety-critical guard in addition to the driver. The safety needs of all passengers, including those with disabilities, must be fully respected.

Conference accordingly now calls on all sections of the Labour Party to join in campaigning vigorously and publicly for a high-quality rail service. Even the Tories can't defend their downward spiral of greed and disorganisation.

236 words

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### Investigatory Powers to be subject to Human Rights Law

Conference notes the report in the *Register* on 6 August that US Senators are challenging the NSA destruction of four years of phone usage records as they believe that this is in order to destroy evidence of illegal collection.

Conference notes that the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 legalised the use of bulk powers to allow the UK intelligence services to collect all the UK phone usage and internet usage records.

Conference notes that the intelligence services have made data on UK citizens available to the USA.

Conference notes that the exact terms of the data sharing between the UK and US are unknown

Conference notes that the Investigatory Powers Act has been ruled as contrary to EU law as it contravenes the Charter of Fundamental Rights which is the EU's commitment to the European and Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Conference notes the complete absence from the NPF report on the surveillance society and the illegal investigatory powers regime introduced by the Tories in 2016.

Conference resolves that a Labour Government will ensure that private and public surveillance technologies will conform to laws that meet the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights.

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.

220 words

### Step up the action against climate change

Conference notes:

- 1) Summer 2018 saw an unprecedented heatwave, including devastating fires and drought. On 13 August, the *Independent* reported that '2018 will be fourth-hottest year on record' according to climate scientists.
- 2) The 7 August letter from two doctors accusing the Tory Energy Minister of using the people of Lancashire as 'guinea pigs' in fracking despite scientists' uncertainty over the impact on human health.
- 3) The 9 August report revealing that spending four days in London may have similar health effects as smoking almost three cigarettes. In Britain there are 40,000 annual premature deaths because of air pollution.
- 4) Investment in renewables fell by 50% in 2017.

Conference condemns the government's reckless pursuit of fracking and neglect of renewable energy.

Conference supports:

- 1) Labour's commitment to the Paris Agreement goal of keeping global temperature rises below 1.5°C.
- 2) Bold action to raise living standards and build a cleaner future including:
  - a) Taking the Big 6 energy supply companies into public ownership
  - b) A public program of insulating 12 million homes by 2030
  - c) Taking rail and buses into public ownership
  - d) Major expansion of public transport
  - e) Banning combustion engine car sales by 2030 and supporting the UK's car industry to make electric vehicles
- 3) Labour's manifesto pledges to urgently clean up illegal levels of air pollution and ban fracking.
- 4) Labour's industrial strategy: for 60% of energy to come from low carbon or renewables by 2030 – a plan which would create hundreds of thousands of new green jobs.

250 words

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