

Campaign Briefing

SUNDAY

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Conference must debate Iraq - make it top priority in the ballot

Thanks to the rule change promoted by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy passed at last year's conference, the top four issues prioritised by CLP delegates will be automatically timetabled for debate as well as the top four issues prioritised by the affiliates.

The 'big four' unions have agreed to prioritise Better public services, Better rights for workers, Pensions, and Protecting British Jobs. These subjects are therefore guaranteed to reach the conference agenda and do not need added support from CLP delegates. If any of the TU sub-

jects are also chosen by the CLPs, it will mean that fewer issues important to party members will be debated.

Iraq

The party must prioritise Iraq for debate this week. Last year it was manoeuvred off the

agenda. This must not be allowed to happen again. In addition to the British hostage crisis the general situation on the ground in Iraq has been deteriorating since the invasion. It is the most contentious area of government policy and has already led to a significant loss of Labour votes. The only way conference will be able to debate and take a position on the situation in Iraq is if CLP delegates vote to prioritise it in the ballot.

A Guardian/ICM poll on 22 September indicated that seven in ten voters want the government to set a date for withdrawal of troops from Iraq – even higher amongst Labour voters. British involvement in the US-led invasion and occupation has meant losses for Labour at the elections on 10 June and the subsequent loss of the Leicester South by-election. This week conference has an opportunity to give effect to the public will.

Other key issues for CLPs

Conference must also debate the dramatic increase in support for the British National Party. The BNP now have 22 councillors across the country, following

PRIORITIES BALLOT

Under the new 4+4 system—for which we campaigned for five years—constituency parties can choose four subjects to debate *in* addition to the four chosen by the trade unions. There is, therefore, no need to vote for the the topics which the “big four” trade unions have agreed to support: “Pensions”, “Better rights for workers”, “Protecting British jobs” or “Better public services”. These are guaranteed to reach the Conference Agenda.

Constituencies—vote for:

- Iraq
- BNP/Roger Roberts
- Corporate Manslaughter (Railtrack)
- Hunting with dogs

Continued over

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Prioritise Iraq

continued from front

their recent success in London in Barking & Dagenham. On 10th June they achieved an eight-fold increase in support in the European elections, winning over 800,000 votes across the country. They came close to gaining four seats in the European Parliament and a seat in the London Assembly—and would have done so were it not for the surge in support for UKIP. The BNP is on the verge of a major breakthrough and a massive effort is needed to stop this. CLP delegates should prioritise the BNP for debate.

Delegates are also asked to support Corporate Manslaughter (Railtrack) for debate which calls for a draft Bill with the aim of making company directors open to criminal prosecution for manslaughter. This legislation is long overdue.

Delegates should prioritise Hunting With Dogs, which despite seven votes in the House of Commons in favour of a ban, will still not be outlawed for another eighteen months. The Contemporary Motion calls for an end to further prevarication.

ON THE FRINGE

LABOUR AGAINST THE WAR

'The war between the terrorisms'
Friends Meeting House,
Ship Street (J12)

Chair: Christine Shawcroft

Speakers: Alan Simpson MP;
Alice Mahon MP; Tony Benn
Jeremy Corbyn MP; Jo Wilding -
Eyewitness

Defend Council Housing – Give tenants real choice!

This afternoon Conference can stop the process that effectively compels council tenants to vote to change their landlord if they want to have their homes refurbished. Once outside Council control they face higher rents.

In June the Office of Deputy Prime Minister's Select Committee concluded that the government was intent on selling off up to 200,000 council houses a year, and was using such means as the 'decent homes' target to force through either direct stock transfer, PFI or ALMOs (arms length management organisations – a half-

way house to privatisation). The ODPM select committee called for a level playing field in which tenants had the opportunity to keep their council as landlord and also get improvements done. The July National Policy Forum voted to put this option before Conference as an alternative position. If carried this would help restore the party's standing with council tenants - an important part of the party's core support.

**Vote for the alternative position –
Vote for the fourth option.**

DIRTY TRICKS (PART 1)

The Socialist Educational Association submitted a perfectly good contemporary motion based on the report *Selective Education: Who benefits from Grammar Schools?* From Bristol University's Centre for Market and Public Organisation, reported in the *TES* on 3 September. This was ruled out as 'not contemporary' as selection has been extensively discussed over the past two years. Sedgefield CLP submitted a supposedly Contemporary Motion that was simply congratulatory of the government's record in reducing unemployment and attacked the Tories. The motion quoted unemployment figures, published on 11 August, which, in the view of the CAC made it 'contemporary'. Has no-one told them that unemployment has been discussed for rather longer than selective education?

Luke's on another planet

"I am very proud if the second term of this Labour Government comes to be remembered for Tony Blair's decisions on Iraq." Luke Akehurst, Labour PPC, Castle Point. Extracted from *Labour First* newsletter, September 04.

DIRTY TRICKS (PART II)

In the past it has always been the practice that candidates for the Conference Arrangements Committee would have all their nominating bodies printed in the Delegates Report. This year this has not happened. Only a list of the candidates is shown. Readers will be forgiven for thinking that this is due to the fact that whereas every other candidate only received one nomination, Alice Mahon amassed no less than 36 nominations from CLPs..

**Monday CAC ballot:
vote Alice Mahon MP**