

CAMPAIGN BRIEFING

Published daily at Labour Party Conference and online at www.clpd.org.uk

CLP delegates – Sunday's Priorities Ballot:

DON'T WASTE YOUR VOTE

On Sunday, each CLP will have four votes in the Priorities Ballot. The rules for the Priorities Ballot guarantee that the top four contemporary issues voted for by the unions are timetabled, together with the top four voted for by the CLPS. This means that in order to ensure that the widest range of issues are debated by this conference, (i.e. eight issues), the CLPs must vote for four issues that are separate from the four supported by the unions.

If the CLPs were to vote for the same four issues as the unions then only four subjects would be

timetabled, instead of a possible eight.

The unions vote as a block and have already decided on their four issues. These are Employment Rights (T&G); Assisting British Industry (Amicus); Pensions (GMB); and Health Service (Unison). It is therefore guaranteed that these four issues will be debated. Thus, if a CLP votes for any of these four they are wasting their vote.

Campaign Briefing is recommending that CLPs vote for the following vital subjects: Iraq, Housing, Royal Mail and Fighting the BNP.

CLP delegates –

Vote for:

- Iraq
- Housing
- Royal Mail
- Fighting the BNP

Don't vote for:

- Employment Rights
- Assisting British Industry
- Pensions
- Health Service

These are **guaranteed** to be timetabled by the unions



Sunday 25 September

CLPD rally and delegates' briefing

10am, Quality Hotel, West St, Brighton
 Speakers: Tony Benn ● Jeremy Corbyn MP ● Steve Kemp, Gen Sec NUM ● Alice Mahon ● Dennis Skinner MP ● Pete Willsman (NEC)

Wednesday 28 September
 (not Thursday as it says in fringe guide)

Conference assessment and the next steps

1pm, Belgrave Hotel, Kings Rd
 Chair: Ann Black. Speakers: Mohammed Azam ● Billy Hayes, Gen Sec CWU ● Christine Shawcroft ● Pete Willsman.
 Organised by CLPD and Labour Reform

Elections at Brighton

Conference Arrangements Committee (CLP Section):

Alice Mahon
Pete Willsman

National Constitutional Committee (CLP Section)

Teresa Pearce *
Aktar Beg

* = sitting member

The Centre Left Grassroots Alliance are supporting:

National Policy Forum:

WALES:	Fran Griffiths John Lewis Shirley Newnham Darren Williams	NORTHERN:	Matthew Teale
EAST:	Daniel Blaney Lorna Trollope	SOUTH EAST:	Helen Ingram Carol Hayton* Mick Moriarty*
E MIDLANDS:	Gary Ransford* Helen Skinner Ann Syrett*	SOUTH WEST:	Dave Doyle
LONDON:	Laura Bruni Dorothy Macedo Francis Prideaux	W MIDLANDS:	Pat Tough David Williams
Youth:	Liz Hacker	YORKS AND HUMBERSIDE:	Martha Hanson* Eddie Hart George McManus*

Late Tuesday afternoon...

Support rule changes from CLPs

After the leader's speech, delegates should stay in their seats for the debate on rule changes from CLPs. The following rule amendments would greatly increase internal democracy in the Party.

● From Faversham and Mid Kent CLP, North East Beds CLP, Bristol West CLP, six other CLPs and CWU

This is a very important reform. It would give CLPs, unions and other affiliates the right to directly amend the final stage NPF documents. These documents form the basis for the general election manifesto. At present everything is done through the filter of the NPF, where CLPs and unions are under represented. Conference only votes for whole documents on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. The only amendments that are tabled are the few that come from the NPF as minority positions.

The CWU proposal would return some powers and influence to CLPs and thus help to rebuild an active membership.

The platform are likely to pretend that it would be difficult to handle so many amendments. This is not true. The amendments would be composited and the main ones tabled for debate by the elected Conference Arrangements Committee. A somewhat analogous arrangement operated perfectly successfully from 1920 until 1997.

● From Bolsover CLP

This is very similar to the above rule change proposed by the CWU and 9 CLPs. Bolsover's proposal should be

supported as an important democratic reform to benefit CLPs. Bolsover lays down certain conditions that do not appear in the CWU's proposed rule amendment.

● From Birmingham Selly Oak and four other CLPs

This rule change would give Annual Conference the right to refer back any part of a policy document, rather than only being able to vote for the whole document on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. This is an important democratic right, which would give conference more control over policy making.

● From Plymouth Sutton CLP

This rule change would increase the number of the CLP Seats on the NEC from six to eight. At Annual Conference

CLPs have voting parity with the trade unions. But on the NEC the unions have twelve seats and the CLPs only six. (Up until 1997 the CLPs had seven seats but the 'modernisation reforms' of that year, whilst considerably increasing the size of the NEC, reduced the CLPs by one seat). The long term aim should be parity with the unions. This rule change is a step in that direction.

● From Kingswood CLP

This proposed rule change seeks to stop the trend towards control freakery that has been associated with the national panel. Bona fide party members are sometimes refused inclusion on the national panel or, if nevertheless they seek nomination (as provided in the Rule Book), are found 'unsuitable' as they are not on the national panel.

Report of NEC meeting on 20 September

● The unions raised Gate Gourmet with Tony Blair and he accepted that the sacked workers had justifiable grievances but he opposed changes to the trade union laws. Tony Blair strongly supported a flexible labour market and felt that this was the key to economic success.

● A paper was circulated proposing a 50% increase in subs to £36. Unison proposed that further consultation was required and proposed a postponement. This was supported by

five of the six CLP reps but the increase went through by 15 votes to 11.

● The unions, supported by CLP reps, headed off a proposal that all CLPs shift to all-member General Committees. It was pointed out that this undermined the trade union link at a local level.

● The matter of the New Forest East Labour candidate who had effectively supported the Liberal Democrats was raised. This is being investigated.

For more information about CLPD, write to 10 Park Drive, London, NW11 7SH or phone 020 8854 7326

Campaign Briefing

SUNDAY

25 September 2005

Briefing for delegates published daily at Labour
Party Conference and online at www.clpd.org.uk
Tel. 07767 761338

CLP delegates – Sunday's Priorities Ballot DON'T WASTE YOUR VOTE

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If the CLPs were to vote for the same four issues as the unions then only four subjects would be timetabled, instead of a possible eight.

The unions vote as a block and have already decided on their four issues. These are Employment Rights (T&G); Assisting British Industry (Amicus); Pensions (GMB); Health Service (Unison). It is therefore guaranteed that these four issues will be debated. Thus, if a CLP votes for any of these four they are wasting their vote.

We are recommending that CLPs vote for the following vital subjects: Housing, Fighting the BNP, Equality/sexual orientation and Hugo Chavez/Venezuela.

The government needs to give council tenants a real choice by allowing a level playing field for direct investment in council housing as an alternative to privatisation and implement the "fourth option" agreed last year.

The party needs to immediately launch a campaign against the racism of the BNP in order to prevent it from further advancing at next May's local elections.

Conference should support anti-discrimination measures for lesbians and gay men in the provision of goods and services.

The United States is seeking the overthrow of

the Venezuelan government, which is engaging in a huge wealth redistribution programme. President Chavez should be given Conference's strong support.

CLP delegates: Vote for

- **Housing**
- **Fighting BNP**
- **Equality – sexual orientation**
- **Hugo Chavez/Venezuela**

There is no need to vote for

- **Employment Rights**
- **Assisting British Industry**
- **Pensions**
- **Health Service**

These are *guaranteed*
to be timetabled by
the unions

Wednesday 28th September

(not Thursday as it says in the fringe guide)

CLPD and Labour Reform fringe meeting

*Conference assessment
and the next steps*

1pm Belgrave Hotel, Kings Road

Campaign Briefing is published by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, the Centre-Left Grassroots Alliance and the Socialist Campaign Group of Labour MPs

Defend the Trade Union link

Today delegates will discuss *Building a Party for the future* produced by the NEC Party Development Taskforce.

Between being agreed by the taskforce and being considered by the National Executive Committee on 20 September, a foreword had been added from Tony Blair and Ian McCartney saying that a key question is 'how quickly can all parties shift to all-member general committees', which is not a proposal ever considered by the Task Force. This enforced abolition of representative local party democracy was widely opposed at the NEC meeting, in particular by trade union and CLP representatives. This would severely undermine the trade union link at a local level.

NEC members were promised that this foreword would be withdrawn and a statement to this effect would be made to conference.

As the document stands, delegates should vote AGAINST.

Robin Cook

A significant number of CLPs chose a contemporary motion marking the passing of Robin Cook and pressing for a commitment to his progressive principles. However the Conference Arrangements Committee ruled all these out. The CAC's decision was made easier by a petition from some 57 delegates who seemed to believe that it was inappropriate to have a motion centred on the death of a senior Party figure.

Shenanigans

Among the Iraq contemporary motions there is one in the name of Burnley CLP. This gives full support to the Government's policy of occupying Iraq. Comrades in Burnley have informed Campaign Briefing that this motion was never discussed or agreed at any committee of the CLP.

Respect conference policy – Renationalise the rail

Today Conference will discuss the transport section of *Creating Sustainable Communities* National Policy Forum document. Last year conference overwhelmingly endorsed an alternative position to the pre-election National Policy Forum document calling for railways to be returned to public ownership.

Not only was this commitment not contained in the manifesto and but it is not even mentioned in the document before Conference. Indeed the Government is in the process of re-privatising South East Trains!

Delegates should use the opportunity to raise this issue.

Help!

Could you help distribute *Campaign Briefing* in the morning?

If so, please phone 07767 761338

Pip Review

The review of the National Policy Forum process, *A Stronger Voice for Members* should be rejected.

The Review dangles a carrot in front of members by proposing that CLPs and Unions will be able to submit amendments at the final NPF meeting of the manifesto cycle. This will be at the equivalent of the 'Warwick' stage in the previous cycle. But this is a closed meeting of only 170 odd members with little accountability. CLPs won't be able to lobby for their view.

Late on Tuesday afternoon delegates will get the opportunity to vote for a Rule Change to allow Conference – not the NPF – to debate and vote on amendments to the final NPF Report, setting policy for the next manifesto.

Vote against *A Stronger Voice for Members*. The opportunity for a really Strong Voice will be debated late on Tuesday in the CWU rule change proposal.

Elections at Brighton

The Centre Left Grassroots Alliance are supporting the following candidates:

Conference Arrangements Committee (CLP Section):

- Alice Mahon
- Pete Willsman

[voting 9am - 4pm Monday]

National Constitutional Committee (CLP Section):

- Teresa Pearce (sitting member)
- Aktar Beg

[voting 9am - 4pm Tuesday]

Sunday 25th September, 7pm—Labour Against the War

IRAQ: END THE OCCUPATION, BRING THE TROOPS HOME

Quaker Hall, Ship Street, Brighton - Chair: Alan Simpson MP

Speakers: Tony Benn, Michael Meacher MP, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Gerry Doherty (TSSA), Reg Keys, Sami Ramidani, Christine Shawcroft (LP NEC)

Campaign Briefing

Monday

26 September 2005

Briefing for delegates published daily at Labour Party Conference and online at www.clpd.org.uk
Tel. 07767 761338

Vote Alice Mahon and Pete Willsman

A vote for Alice and Pete is a vote for democracy

Alice Mahon and Pete Willsman are standing for election in the CLP section of the Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC). The ballot takes place today (9am to 4pm). All CLP delegates have a vote for this section of the CAC. *Campaign Briefing* urges you to vote for Alice and Pete.

They will both be a strong voice for CLPs and democracy. They will speak up for the right of delegates and be fully accountable by regularly reporting back to CLPs.

This year – once again – many resolutions on subjects which members consider vital were ruled out of order by the CAC. They covered issues such as Iraq, Trident, Robin Cook's legacy and public ownership of the Post Office. Emergency motions on key issues were also ruled out.

For Labour to regain its public esteem requires the Party to have confidence in, and listen to, its own members. A fully democratic conference is an essential part of this process.

Alice and Pete will be a much needed voice for delegates, members and for democracy.

For a democratic conference and a fair say for members Vote Mahon and Willsman

"If elected I will strive to ensure that Conference is delegate-led, with a real opportunity for full discussion on the critical issues facing our party. Those include the national health service, Iraq and Trident." ALICE MAHON

"My guiding principle will be that Party members should have ownership of conference. This means having proper democratic debates about our direction and policies. I will uphold the democracy of conference, vigorously pressing every issue raised with me by delegates." PETE WILLSMAN

Guantanamo: Labour and the responsibility for torture

Speakers: Tony Benn MP, Moazzam Beggs (former Camp V detainee), Yvonne Ridley (former Taleban captive), Jon Rogers (Unison)

6pm Tuesday 27 Sept
Friends Meeting House, Ship St
Support the hunger strikers
Organised by the Brighton-based Save Omar Deghayes campaign

Justice for Gate Gourmet workers

Support justice for the Gate Gourmet workers by voting for the TGWU motion.

On 10 August, Gate Gourmet management sacked 667 workers allegedly for attending a canteen meeting. The workers – primarily Asian women – were concerned at the hiring of temporary workers when redundancies were being proposed.

The next shift of workers was sacked by megaphone in the car park. More workers were subsequently sacked, including people on holiday, off sick or on maternity leave.

Staff at BA took immediate, brief unofficial supportive action.

The T&G is trying to win back the workers' jobs. They have no legal protection, no job and not even redundancy entitlement under current law. Earlier this month they won unanimous support from the Trades Union Congress.

To avoid a repeat of this, Conference needs to support proposals to:

- 1 *Permit lawful solidarity action at least where there is a close connection between those involved, as permitted by ILO conventions,*
- 2 *Simplify balloting procedures,*
- 3 *Protect strikers from dismissal*
- 4 *Bar the replacement of workers in dispute.*

Swift implementation of the EU temporary agency worker directive, to prevent agency workers being paid less than permanent staff, is needed.

To caricature these proposals as a

Continued over

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Campaign Briefing

Tuesday

27 September 2005

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Tel. 07767 761338

More say for members

Stay in your seats after the leader's speech! That's when crucial rule changes – that will affect your rights as a party member – will go to the vote.

Support the CWU rule change giving the right to amend NPF documents

Support the rule change from the CWU and nine CLPs. It would give CLPs and unions the right to directly amend the final stage NPF documents at Conference. At present everything is done through the filter of the NPF, where CLPs and unions are under represented. Conference only votes for whole documents on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. This proposal would return some powers to delegates and thus help to rebuild an active membership. It would not be hard to implement: amendments would be composited and the main ones tabled for debate by the elected Conference Arrangements Committee. Vote to re-engage the membership.

Support Chichester CLP's proposal for voting on NPF reports by section

This rule change would allow Conference to vote on separate sections of the final National Policy Forum report instead of 'all or nothing'. The NEC maintains that this would undermine the NPF process, but it would actually add to it while respecting the sovereignty of Conference.

Support Orpington CLP & Islington North CLP on the right to refer back

Orpington and Islington North CLPs would give Annual Conference the right to refer back any part of a policy document, rather than take-it-or-leave-it. This is an important democratic right. It would let delegates adjust and improve documents. It is a proposal for a more engaged and more considered debate.

Support Kingswood CLP on choosing Parliamentary candidates

This rule change would return to CLPs their right to choose Parliamen-

Continued over

Wednesday 28th September (not Thursday as it says in the fringe guide)

Campaign for Labour Party Democracy & Labour Reform fringe meeting

Conference assessment and the next steps

1pm Belgrave Hotel, Kings Road

Vote for Aktar Beg and Teresa Pearce for the National Constitutional Committee

The National Constitutional Committee needs members who understand and will uphold the Party's rules and who will give all cases equal and impartial consideration. There are two places to be filled today through election by CLP delegates only. *Campaign Briefing* urges you to vote for Aktar Beg and Teresa Pearce.

'Membership of the NCC requires a sense of fairness but with a discipline of purpose to apply the Party rules in all cases. My experience as a Councillor gave me a detailed insight into how and when potential problems arise. I have more than 30 years experience in the Party.'

Aktar Beg

'I have served three terms on the NCC elected by the membership to make sure that the rule-book is adhered to and that all members have equal treatment under those rules. I would like to continue that work. I believe that constituency members are the life blood of the party and their experiences are valuable sources of information.'

Teresa Pearce

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Support rule changes *continued*

tary candidates without interference from the NEC. Currently the NEC is the gatekeeper to the National Parliamentary Panel. Pressure is put on CLPs to select PPCs from the Panel. The role of the NEC should be to ensure due process and not interfere in the choices of members and CLPs.

Already on the agenda?

The contemporary resolution from Manchester Central CLP entitled 'Party membership' was ruled out by the CAC for supposedly being 'already on the agenda'. This resolution specifically called for an early leadership contest because of falling membership, falling votes, loss of control of councils, Iraq and privatisation. Manchester Central looks forward to seeing where this demand is "already on the agenda".

Pensions

Following a further marathon session the pensions composite has been strengthened to develop policy on compulsion and index-linking.

Support the GMB Composite.

Sshhhh: don't talk about...

The Tory candidate in former Tory-held North Ward on Canvey Island was driven into third place in a recent by-election won by Labour. "New Labour" and "Blair" were omitted from the election literature.

Lorna Trollope and Daniel Blaney,
delegates, Eastern Region.

The Agenda Against Racism in Labour's 3rd Term

5.30pm, Quality Hotel

**Speakers: Claude Moraes MEP,
Shami Chakrabarti - Director Liberty,
Dr Richard Stone, Lee Jasper,
Michael Abatan, Pav Aktar - NUS Black
Students Officer**

☐ Palestine Solidarity Campaign and War on Want Fringe Meeting

Israel—time for sanctions

12.30, Tuesday 27 September

The Old Ship Hotel, King's Road

Speakers:

Richard Burden MP—Rt Hon Clare Short MP

Peter Hansen, UNRWA

Karma Nabulsi, Nuffield College

Crime and Justice: taking liberties

The Crime and Justice proposals which will be discussed under today's *Creating Sustainable Communities* NPF report includes issues such as ID cards and anti-terror measures. The document repeats the claim, now dropped by the government due to lack of evidence, that 'ID cards will also help tackle...terrorism'. On anti-terror steps, there has been widespread expressions of concern that the measures recently published by the government go too far and infringe basic civil liberties. They include extending detention without charge from two weeks to three months, outlawing the 'glorification' of terrorism, insisting that those applying for British citizenship must be of 'good character' and a new offence of indirect incitement to terrorism. Expressions of concern have been widespread. ***Don't back these measures.***

Making history, not decisions

Yesterday, probably for the first time ever in the party's history, the NEC decided to make no recommendations on all the resolutions on this year's agenda. At the NEC's scheduled 7.30am meeting, the chair, Ian McCartney successfully proposed an adjournment in order, he said, to avoid dividing the NEC and to give him time to have further talks with the unions. This delay was no doubt linked to the fact that a majority of the NEC were poised to give support to the T&G resolution on Gate Gourmet. In the afternoon, the NEC was reconvened and Ian McCartney adopted another tactic, proposing that for the whole of this week the NEC voluntarily gag itself and make no recommendations on the resolutions before conference. This was carried overwhelmingly, McCartney adding that, of course, next year will be business as usual.

Don't hike the subs

Conference should vote against the little-considered proposal to raise standard membership by 50% to £36. This is being sprung on delegates; constituencies have not been consulted — and if passed it risks contributing towards a further decline in party membership. It was bounced through the NEC by 15 votes to 11. As several NEC members pointed out, the working class are being priced out of their own party.

Guantanamo: Labour and the responsibility for torture

Speakers: Tony Benn MP, Moazzam Beggs (former Camp V detainee), Yvonne Ridley (former Taleban captive), Jon Rogers (Unison)

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Campaign Briefing

Wednesday

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Price for the week: £2

Stop private sector expansion in NHS

The government is increasingly committed to private sector involvement in the NHS and the establishment of markets. A further £3bn worth of funding for treatment sectors from the private sector was announced in May. Now there is a programme to open up primary care to private sector providers, including services such as district nursing, health visiting and occupational therapy.

Instead of providing services based on need, increasingly decisions will be based on profitability. Contracts with the private sector are more expensive than providing services within the NHS. Experience shows that outsourcing and the creation of markets leads to higher costs, service failures and lack of accountability. The government should suspend private sector expansion in the NHS, at least until proper evaluation of the current situation is evaluated.

**Support Composite 6
Reject Composite 7**

'Instead of wasting hundreds of millions of pounds on identity cards as the Tory right demands, let that money provide thousands of extra police officers... Let the internal market that pits hospital against hospital cease.'

From Tony Blair's speech to annual conference 1995

Withdraw from Iraq

It is important that Iraq is addressed when Conference discusses international policy this morning. The occupation must be ended – it is clearly part of the problem not the solution. UK troops should be withdrawn. The government should end its policy of assisting US objectives in the Middle East. US determination to establish its military domination in the region is provoking increasing instability. Iraq was a major factor in Labour's share

Continued over

TODAY

1 pm, Belgrave Hotel

CLPD & Labour Reform

Conference assessment and the next steps

Chair: Ann Black NEC

Speakers: Billy Hayes, Gen Sec, CWU,
Mohammed Azam NEC—Mark Seddon NEC
Christine Shawcroft, NEC—Pete Willsman, NEC

National Policy Forum

Support the following candidates:

(* indicates sitting member)

Wales:

Fran Griffiths
John Lewis
Shirley Newnham
Darren Williams

Eastern:

Daniel Blaney
Lorna Trollope

East Midlands:

Gary Ransford*
Helen Skinner
Ann Syrett*

London:

Laura Bruni
Dorothy Macedo
Francis Prideaux

Youth: Liz Hacker

Northern:

Matthew Teale

South East:

Helen Ingram
Carol Hayton*
Mick Moriarty*

South West:

Dave Doyle

West Midlands:

Pat Tough
David Williams

Yorkshire & Humberside:

Martha Hanson*
Eddie Hart
George McManus*

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Withdraw from Iraq *continued*

of the vote falling in May and it continues to weaken the party's standing.

Conference today should be debating a clear proposal to end the occupation of Iraq. But unfortunately, while a small number of resolutions calling for early withdrawal made it through the tight rules defining "contemporary motions", others did not make it. While *Campaign Briefing* opposes the restrictions these rules impose, they are a fact and, with effort, resolutions can be drafted to fit within the rules and stand a better chance of getting through the CAC. Help ensure conference has the debates it needs by being aware of the rules and passing resolutions accordingly. (If in doubt, get in touch with CLPD, 10 Park Drive, London NW11 7SH.)

Delegates who support early withdrawal should seek to speak in the debate on the *Britain in the World* NPF document.

Defend London's Democracy

Delegates interested in defending democracy should visit the Standards Board for England stall (stand 60). The Board, which has the power to remove elected politicians from office, is currently investigating a row between London Mayor Ken Livingstone and the *Evening Standard*. Delegates could remind them that in a democracy voters should decide when a politician's time is up not an un-elected quango.

Best wishes to Tony Benn for a speedy recovery

Blair ignores electors' message

In a speech with no recognition of the reality that in May Labour got the lowest share of the vote for any winning party, Tony Blair yesterday laid out an agenda sure to drive down the Party's support even further.

His core message – that there is no alternative to capitalist globalisation – shaped an agenda sure to please Bush but not potential Labour voters. Conference was told: 'the European social model is a thing of the past'. So forget rights at work and the welfare state. Members should clearly expect

more health sell-offs, City Academies and an attack on Incapacity Benefit.

His final message capped an entirely negative policy agenda with a potentially disastrous electoral one: 'never under-estimate the Tories and never over-estimate the Liberal Democrats'. In fact, the Lib Dems have made steady and growing inroads into Labour's vote - for every one Labour vote lost to the Tories in May, eight were lost to the Lib Dems.

Ireland

Tony Blair began his speech by welcoming the historic act of IRA decommissioning which took place this week – and today Peter Hain will address conference on the peace process. Delegates should now press the government to seize the momentum created by this hugely significant move, and rapidly move to reinstate the Northern Ireland Assembly. They must tell the DUP and others that they have no veto over the peace process.

Yet more shenanigans

Party officials in some regions have been up to their usual tricks. On key issues such as the T&G resolution and the internal party elections they have been bending the ears of their region's delegates and laying down the platform line. In at least one region new technology has been turned to - with delegates being texted their instructions.

Campaign Briefing notes that several Policy Seminars have been chaired by CLP reps standing for the NPF on the establishment slate, giving them a chance to garner votes for today's election. Needless to say candidates supported by the Centre Left Grassroots Alliance have not been let anywhere near the platform at these seminars.

If you missed any issues, or want copies they can be found on www.clpd.org.uk/cb2005.htm. If you do not have internet access, write to *Campaign Briefing* at 10 Park Drive, London NW11 7SH with a cheque for at least £3.

Sympathy Strike

Photographers at Conference were told only some of them would be allowed into the hall for the Leader's speech, provoking a total snappers walkout. *Campaign Briefing* is delighted that the direct action was a success.

Sinn Fein Fringe Meeting

Irish Unity - the way forward

1pm Wednesday, Royal Albion Hotel, Old Steine

Speaker: Conor Murphy MP, Sinn Fein

Wednesday 28th September, 7:30pm

Labour Representation Committee / Socialist Campaign Group

Rally & Social, incl. live entertainment & late bar

Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Kings Road, Brighton

Chair: John McDonnell MP

Speakers: Katy Clark MP, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Bob Crow (RMT), Gerry Doherty (TSSA), Kat Fletcher (NUS), Steve Gribbin, Billy Hayes (CWU), Paul Kenny (GMB), Alice Mahon, Michael Meacher MP, Linda Riordan MP, Mark Serwotka (PCS), Alan Simpson MP, Tony Woodley (TGWU)

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**Price
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week:
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Thursday

29 September 2005

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daily at Labour Party Conference
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Tel. 07767 761338

Defend Council Housing: Give tenants real choice! Implement party policy

Last year Conference voted overwhelmingly to give a level playing field to council house tenants who vote to retain the local authority as their landlord, and to allow direct investment – the ‘Fourth Option’. The government has so far avoided implementing this. Composite 8 reinforces party policy and calls for the government to fund local authorities improving their own housing stock. Under local councils, rents can be controlled through democratic means. In housing associations, tenants have little control. The ODPM is intent on bullying tenants and councils into transferring council houses to unaccountable associations or private companies – contrary to party policy – and a more expensive option to the taxpayer and tenants. Many tenants have expressed strong support for the Fourth Option and for retaining the council as their landlord, including in Sedgefield. The Fourth Option accords with most tenants’ views and should be implemented by the government without further delay.

**SUPPORT COMPOSITE 8
REJECT COMPOSITE 9**

Rebuild party support

Labour’s ability to achieve a fourth term will depend on rebuilding the electoral coalition which brought Labour to power in 1997. Conference’s task is to equip the party with the necessary policies to regain the voters we have lost. This year it has taken a step forward by agreeing progressive policies - to link pensions to earnings, retain health treatment in the public sector and support the right to trade union solidarity action.

Whilst the trade unions have led the way, there has been good support from the CLPs. The leadership had responded by attempting to divide the constituencies from the unions. It has also dismissed these policies and laid out an agenda that threatens to further reduce the Party’s support. On Iraq we are told Britain will remain the US’s “strongest ally”. On climate change and the need for sustainable energy Conference was told it meant “considering nuclear power”. A counterproductive policy that curtails civil liberties is being promoted to combat terrorism – locking up people without charge for 3 months and creating the widest ever speech offences. This can only alienate those whose assistance is needed if we are to address this threat.

However, for the first time the party Leadership was unable to obtain the NEC’s support for its stance on the main Conference resolutions. Delegates need to seek to ensure that in next Spring’s NEC elections candidates that reflect grassroots party opinion (those backed by the Centre-Left Grassroots Alliance) are elected.

Again at this Conference a number of important issues were not discussed, such as Robin Cook’s legacy, Trident and Iraq. To rectify this requires changing the composition of the CAC - this year’s CAC election results, with Centre Left Grassroots-backed Alice Mahon’s strong vote, make this prospect closer.

Whilst rule changes giving members more say in policy making were not agreed this year, the CWU and CLPs that moved the rule changes should be applauded for their valiant efforts on Tuesday evening.

In next May’s council elections local parties will try to reverse the inroads that were made into Labour’s vote this year – primarily by the Liberal Democrats. This means having an active and involved membership. In turn this demands an increase in democracy and accountability in our party.

Equality under attack

The creation of the Commission for Equalities and Human Rights by the Equality Bill currently in parliament provides no provision for representation, accountability or security of resources. With the exception of disability, there is no guarantee that CEHR commissioners will have any representative

Continued over

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Equality attack

continued

of the communities involved. Yet the government is opposing Lords amendments that would ensure 'no less than one half of the Commissioners must have personal or direct experience of one or more of the causes of discrimination' and the creation of six decision-making committees covering the CEHR's six equality strands. Lumping everyone together will not create a new, cross-cutting homogeneity of experience - it will set one equality group against another. The CEHR will also effectively have a reduced budget - £70m for seven areas compared to the £50m the three commissions currently receive.

With these reservations, delegates should support composite 10. With civil partnerships coming into effect this December, several local authorities, such as Bromley, have announced they will refuse same-sex couples ceremonies. Alongside this, there are numerous examples of homophobic discrimination by bodies such as hotels and insurance companies. Delegates should vote to make clear that tackling discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities and services is an urgent priority and the government must amend the Equality Bill now and outlaw homophobic discrimination.

The Respect Agenda?

Last year a delegate was forcibly expelled from conference because he held up a sheet of paper on which he had written 'I'm sitting down for peace'. This year two visiting party members were bundled out. The first was an 82-year-old CND Vice-President and refugee from the Nazis who had dared to heckle Jack Straw. The other had objected to the way the elderly comrade was being manhandled. Later the matter was raised at the NEC and the Party has apologised for the heavy-handed treatment. The members are seeking to return into Conference.

NEC update

A formal complaint was lodged at yesterday's NEC that David Blunkett, replying on behalf of the NEC to the pensions debate urged delegates to support composite 12 and oppose composite 11. He was not entitled to do this as the NEC had no view.

MP snaps

Keen amateur snapper Austin Mitchell MP was experimenting with a new digital camera by photographing the long and winding queue outside the Late Accreditation office. The police approached Austin and confiscated his camera and deleted the pictures. He was told that the Party had ordered that photos of queues were off-limits.

"Despite what you may have heard, the Party is not entering a Synchronised Compositing team in the Olympics."

Jeremy Beecham,
Conference Chair

Still more shenanigans

A few years ago the party establishment introduced us to a new manoeuvre. This involves regional officials herding delegates together to enable ministers to bend comrades' ears and inveigle them to vote in a platform-friendly way. This manoeuvre has been employed in relation to housing. Delegates were told that they should only vote for composite 9.

Autumn meetings

Unite Against Fascism National Conference

Stop the BNP in 2006

Saturday 5 November — 9.30am - 5pm
TUC, Great Russell Street, London WC1

Speakers include: Ken Livingstone, Sir Iqbal Sacranie—
Muslim Council of Britain, Mick Connolly— SERTUC
Regional Secretary, Kat Fletcher— NUS President,
Henry Guterman MBE— Holocaust survivor
UAF, PO Box 36871, London WC1X 9XT for details

DEFEND THE TIME LIMIT

Defend a woman's right to choose

Wednesday 26 October 7-9pm

Committee Room 3, House of Lords

Speakers from Britain and the US including:

Polly Toynbee; Melody Drnach- Nat Org of Women, USA;
Baroness Joyce Gould- Chair All Party Parliamentary Pro-
Choice and Sexual Health Group; Chris McCafferty MP,
Laura Moffat MP, Emily Thornberry MP; Diana Holland-
TGWU; Jo Salmon- NUS Nat Women's Officer

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