

Campaign Briefing

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Important message to CLP delegates: how best to use your vote in the Priorities Ballot

In the Priorities Ballot, CLPs are allowed to pick four priority issues for debate, and the Trade Unions also pick four. To maximise the number of important subjects that are debated the four subjects the CLPs choose should be different from the four subjects chosen by the trade unions.

The trade unions four priority issues will automatically get on to the agenda, so CLPs should not waste their votes on the same topics, but vote for four different issues. That will ensure that at least some of the topics CLPs consider important will be discussed.

Below we list the four subjects that the Unions will put on the agenda and the four separate subjects that we recommend CLPs should vote for.

This Conference should have the opportunity to discuss the August

riots. The Tories deny any responsibility arising from their government's policies for the discontent that exploded on the streets. They fear if the public concludes these policies make people worse off and are accompanied by rising civil disorder and crime, Tory support will drop further.

The government is failing to address the housing shortage and instead is threatening security of tenure and seeking to drive low-income households out of more affluent communities. This should also be discussed this week.

Government plans to privatise the postal service need to be opposed and campaigns to defend rural post offices and a post office bank supported. Also Conference needs to show Labour's relevance to the next generation by supporting the

provision of more services for young people.

CLPs are urged to vote for:

- August Riots
- Housing
- Post Office
- Services For Young People

CLPs should not squander their votes on:

- Jobs, Growth, Employment Rights
- Health and Social Care
- Phone Hacking
- Public Services

as these important topics are guaranteed to be put on the agenda by the unions as their four priorities.

Refounding Labour: why the rush?

This afternoon Conference will vote on the documents and proposed rule changes circulated last week and today. Given the importance of the changes, their wide range and the really short notice given, it is unfortunate that Conference is only being permitted a very restricted discussion rushed through on the first day. Then instead of each of the major rule changes being voted on separately, they are all to be squashed into one single omnibus vote. Changing the Party's

Constitution is one of the most important duties of Annual Conference. It should not be conducted in this cavalier fashion.

The rule change proposals being put to Conference do little to increase internal Party democracy; significant ones simply strengthen the powers of elected representatives and the Leader relative to the Party's members and affiliates. Replacing the Party's democratic local government

committees with slimmed-down Local Campaign Forums can cut off elected Councillors from grassroots opinion, weaken accountability and policy making.

The proposed new vote for registered supporters in Leadership elections will not strengthen the membership, but reduce its value. At the same time we need a supporters' network that is engaged with and consulted.

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CLPs still denied a hearing

This year CLPs have responded to Ed Miliband's commitment to a more open and inclusive Party and have submitted a wide range of Contemporary Motions covering many vital subjects. Unfortunately the Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC) seems not to be listening to our new leader. They have accepted the advice of senior officials and ruled out most of the subjects and consigned them to the dustbin (or as they say 'referred them to the to the National Policy Forum', which effectively amounts to the same thing). Subjects that have been denied a hearing at this Conference include: objections to one omnibus vote on all the Refounding Labour rule changes; media ownership; Boundary Commission; Trident; Global Markets; Planning; EMAs; Finance and Banking; Sustainable Energy Strategy; NHS Drugs Programme; Welfare Reform; Wholesale Energy Prices; Northern Rock; Land Value TAX; Sure Start; 6th Form Education; Work Capability Assessments for the Disabled; Future of Rail.

At first sight, It might seem strange that so many Contemporary motions have been ruled out this year, when in previous years very few were rejected. The answer may

Refounding Labour

continued

The proposal to continue discussing our policy and decision making process may prove to be a distraction. Labour must focus on the policies and campaigns needed to defeat the Tories. Labour's opponents in the media will continue to press us to reduce our engagement with trade unions; the Tories understand the central role unions play in ensuring there is a Party that can remove them from government. Any attempt to reduce unions' and constituencies' share of Conference vote should and will be resisted.

lie in the fact that last year the rules were changed permitting CLPs to submit 'Contemporary MOTIONS' this year rather than 'Contemporary ISSUES.' The significant point is that Motions are voted on by Conference whereas issues are not. When the Blairites were in control, the Party apparatchiks were expected to ensure that Conference was simply a happy clappy rally. Regrettably it seems that elements of that control freakery linger on.

CLPs might well ask 'where was Stephen Twigg?' Twigg was elected to the CAC, from the right wing slate, on a promise to fight for the

rights of CLPs. On Tuesday CLP delegates vote for 2 representatives on the CAC. As usual there is a right wing slate and a centre-left slate. The latter are Cllr Catherine Donovan and Gary Heather. Catherine and Gary certainly will fight for the rights of CLPs. Unfortunately in the past it has not been unknown for Party officials illegitimately to point delegates in the direction of the right wing slate. Any such illegitimate interference with Party democracy should be immediately reported to NEC member Ann Black.

CLP Rule changes: last minute rule out

In Spring 2010 the following important rule changes were submitted by CLPs – to give CLPs and Unions the right to amend NPF documents at Annual Conference (from Bridgend, Burnley, Cardiff Central, Chingford and Woodford Green, East Devon, Gower, Mid Beds and Nottingham South CLPs); to have four contemporary motions from Unions at Conference and four separate ones from CLPs (from Bristol North West and Hemsworth CLPs); to give CLPs and Unions the right to submit a rule change AND a Contemporary Motion (from Buckingham, Harrogate and Knaresborough, Hitchin and Harpenden, Holborn and St Pancras, Horsham, Ilford South and NE Beds CLPs); to give Conference the right to vote in parts on documents (from Islington North CLP); to increase democracy in leadership Elections (from Slough CLP).

Under an obscure Conference convention, these rule changes were not taken at the 2010

Conference but referred to the 2011 Conference . About 4 weeks ago all of these CLPs were contacted to be told that the Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC) had now ruled them out under the 'three-year-rule'. The argument that the CAC is using is that issues within the clauses that the CLPs are seeking to amend were voted on within the last three years. The CAC could not have given the matter proper attention. The rule actually states that when a Conference decision has been made on a rule change proposal, no further amendment to that 'part' of the rule will be permitted for three years. A 'clause' is not a 'part'. A clause can contain many parts. If the Rule Book designers had meant 'clause' they would have put 'clause', but they put 'part'. The CAC is using an illegitimate blanket application of 'clause' to yet again prevent CLPs from having a fair hearing at Conference. Aggrieved CLP delegates may object at the rostrum. They should be given maximum support.

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