

CAMPAIGN

Briefing

Annual Conference 2012

Wednesday



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Working class MPs: the path to victory!

Parliament doesn't represent our society and is in danger of becoming out of touch. Following the last General Election just 4% of MPs had experience of manual work, while 55% come from backgrounds in PR, politics or the media. For a country with such a proud working class political tradition – that delivered figures like Nye Bevan – this just isn't good enough.

We need a political system that stands up for working people, rather than being run in the interests of the City and a ruling elite. In order to achieve this, we need to get far greater numbers of women and men in Parliament who know what it is like to get their hands dirty at work or worry about how they will pay the rent.

This means getting ordinary working people back into Parliament to represent the interests of hard

Steve Hart
Political
Director,
Unite the Union



pressed families, rather than the current cabal of lawyers, spin doctors and career politicians.

That is why Unite is committed to ending the discrimination against potential MPs from working class backgrounds. We are doing this by identifying potential parliamentary candidates from within the trade union movement, who are genuinely representative of their communities. By giving them intensive training and support we will provide a real platform that gets working people back in to parliament. It's also good to see that Labour, from the Leader down, is committed to making this happen.



Support the Health Composite!

Patrick Smith, Hull North CLP

Both Andy Burnham and, yesterday, Ed Miliband have said that Labour will repeal the Health and Social Care Act and end the free market experiment in the NHS.

This is very good news to all those who are concerned about what the Tories are doing to the NHS. However, in conference today we have a chance to do much more.

Composite 4 on health and social care lays out a number of commitments to rebuilding the NHS in order to provide quality, comprehensive healthcare for all in a publicly owned, publicly funded, and publicly accountable system.

On behalf of the 17 CLPs that submitted these motions on the NHS, I'd like to **urge all delegates to support Composite 4**. The public are looking to the Labour Party to take a stand on the NHS. **We must not let them down.**

Conference Assessment.. and the way forward for Labour

6 pm, Wednesday, 3rd October

Purity Bar (formerly Bar 38: upstairs), Peter Street (adjacent to the secure area).

Entry £2 (conc 50p)

Chair: Peter Willsman (CLPD)

Tony Benn; Ann Black (NEC); John Cryer MP;

Billy Hayes (CWU); Kelvin Hopkins MP;

Martin Mayer (Unite & NEC); Kate Osamor

(CLPD); Christine Shawcroft (NEC);

Cat Smith (Next Generation Labour)

A free press?

Campaign Briefing is produced by volunteers. When you see us today (and Thursday) with buckets in hand, please be generous. *Campaign Briefing* will have a cover price of £2 for the week.

“Contemporary? Emergency? The CAC don’t think so!”

ASLEF has today presented a copy of an English dictionary to the Conference Arrangements Committee as they obviously have difficulty with the language. They seem to be unfamiliar with two words in particular: “contemporary” and “emergency”.

A couple of dozen CLP’s put in motions about rail franchising following the fiasco of the Virgin-First Group farce over who should be allowed to make a fortune out of the West Coast main line. The decision was made on 15 August. Would that be contemporary in your view? Well, it wasn’t in the CAC’s. They decided against allowing conference to debate it.

And they also found the word “emergency” difficult. It took too much time to get an emergency motion onto the order paper that was intended to add the voice of

**says
ASLEF’s
National
Organiser
Simon
Weller**



Labour to those calling on President Santos to order a ceasefire in Colombia while peace talks with the FARC progress. Santos has instead told his forces to “intensify the military offensive”. This means that innocent Colombians will die over the coming weeks.

Happily the CAC has now made the right decision and agreed to its inclusion – I urge every delegate to lend it their support.

But the CAC could still look up the word “contemporary”!

Leader’s speech

Conrad Landin, Cambridge CLP, considers the Leader’s Speech.

Ed Miliband’s speech today is certainly his finest – and the finest of any Labour leader in some time. The spontaneity of the first half and the sheer power of the second fitted perfectly. With Ed, unlike Blair, the “natural” feel seems very genuine.

Ed’s Labour is the party to take on vested interests in our society – a welcome departure from New Labour. This has seen him sympathise with the Occupy movement and, in his greatest moment, take on Murdoch. However, in the longer term, we will need something more than overtures and single issue campaigns to return us to office.

Yet Ed’s reference to “one nation” is what will stick. This Tory-led Government, Ed hammers home, is more disconnected from ordinary people than any of its (Tory) predecessors for a long time. “One Nation” can chime with the “Spirit Level” thinking Ed espoused on Saturday. For New Labour, the problem was only poverty – one of Ed’s most significant departures from Blairism has been shifting the focus to reducing the gap between rich and poor.

Labour’s mission, as a wise man once said, is not to start the class war, but to end it. So we must not allow our “One Nationism” to be mistaken for the crumb-throwing of the term’s previous incarnations – or Labour will become the party of the status quo, and not the radical, innovating Government that our Party wants to see.

Hollowing out the Scottish Party

By Maria Fyfe, NPF member for Scottish CLPs

The review of party structures in Scotland recommended abolishing branches and GCs in favour of all-member meetings. After objections, it was accepted that members can now argue for their preferred alternatives, but these must be approved by the Scottish Executive Committee.

If a constituency party decides to comply, affiliates are advised to inform the CLP secretary which members represent the views of that affiliated organisation. These members will be eligible to be union reps on the constituency executive. But exec places will not be reserved for unions, who will be subsumed in the general category of “affiliates”.

If we are serious about ensuring the link is meaningful and works effectively at local level, surely we

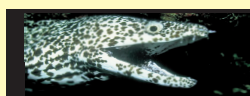
should reserve places for trade union members?

We have also been informed that local parties should limit the number of officers they have. This means, for example, that parties won’t automatically have Women’s Officers, who could challenge the Scottish Nationalist agenda for women (or lack of it) in the run-up to the referendum in 2014. This is a loss, as *Women for Independence* already exists. If you want a Women’s Officer, propose your CLP has one.

Greetings to Conference
from
Beverley CLP

Sign the petition to stop cuts to benefits and services which hit disabled people.
See: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/20968>
Twitter: @patspetition
Facebook: patsepetition

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Biteback

“Ireland is a shining example of the art of the possible in long-term policy-making.”

George Osborne 2006, quoted in Paul Krugman, *End this Depression Now*, 2012

“Labour MP Keith Vaz says G4S is a ‘fiasco.’” So why on earth is Labour still using G4S for its conference this week?

Letter in *The Guardian*, 2nd October 2012

Wednesday, 3rd October 2012

