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Defend party democracy: Vote against NEC rule changes!

Today's rule changes from the NEC would shift power in the Party from the many to the few – weakening the role of members and tightening the grip of the PLP. Again, delegates will have far too little time to read and digest them. They reverse many of the progressive changes that followed the mass consultation of members and trade unions during the 2018 Democracy Review.

The leadership may not have persuaded the unions to renounce OMOV this year, but the NEC is still putting forward rule changes that would have stopped Jeremy Corbyn becoming Leader in 2015 and prevented a broad field of candidates in any recent leadership election.

- The increase in the MPs nomination threshold, when there is a vacancy for Leader, from 10% to 20% (being voted on today) would let MPs decide which candidates members and trade unions would be allowed to vote for.

- Removing Registered Supporters from leadership elections and the proposed

changes to freeze dates will prevent Labour supporters who are enthusiastic about a popular leadership candidate from joining the Party to vote for them, as happened with Jeremy in 2015.

- The proposed new composition of the National Policy Forum reduces the weight of CLP representatives relative to MPs.

- The proposed changes to trigger ballots for MPs will drastically cut the power of members to select parliamentary candidates.

- Reducing the number of subjects that CLP and affiliates can prioritise, from 20 to 12, will further reduce the input of members and unions into Conference.

- The proposals to restrict members' rights to seek legal remedies for injustices perpetrated by the Party smacks of a new control freakery.

These rule changes will disengage members in party activity and drive even more of them out of the Party. They will do nothing to help Labour win elections.

Vote against them all!

End violence against women and girls

Yesterday Conference paid tribute to Sabina Nessa, the young teacher murdered in South East London. This was a fitting start to the discussion of motions sent by the Women's Conference, including one on Violence Against Women and Girls which contains some of the actions necessary if we are to address male violence. There was far too brief a time for discussion on this and for an important motion calling for measures to address "Women's Equality after the Coronavirus".

That the suggestion for the minute's silence came from the new Women's Committee, that motions from the Women's Conference are now such an important part of Conference agenda and that Conference yesterday approved new rule for equalities structures demonstrate that Jeremy's Democracy Review outcomes are not yet dead, despite the new Leadership's best efforts, and can make a real difference.

The right wing's spin is very different from reality

The rule changes on discipline are billed as implementing the recommendations from the Equality and Human Rights Commission report published last autumn. But the proposals would not create independent disciplinary processes. The NEC would become not just judge, jury and executioner but also police and prosecution. Under the principles of natural justice, tribunal members should be unbiased and impartial.

Such changes would remove layers of accountability and introduce a less democratic process than we currently have. These are not measures that will help the Party address anti-semitism or other forms of racism, sexism or prejudicial conduct. They appear designed to get rid of as many members as possible with no proper scrutiny.

Oppose the disciplinary rule changes

Rule Changes to the Disciplinary System will be discussed at Conference this afternoon. Delegates: please do not miss this session!

The National Constitutional Committee (NCC) was set up as an independent body after a court ruled that the NEC should not be acting as both prosecutor and judge in Disciplinary cases. The recent EHRC review did not criticise the NCC – the NEC was accused of political interference in individual cases.

The NEC's proposed rule changes would concentrate power in the hands of the General Secretary (GS). The GS would appoint the members of the so-called Independent Complaints Board and the Independent Review Board. The NCC has successfully fought over the years against attempts to allow the GS to appoint panels.

Under the proposed changes, the NEC would determine all cases with protected categories. All cases will be on paper only and members will be no longer be able to ask for an oral hearing.

The NCC would be effectively sidelined. Currently the NCC is supposed to hear appeals, but so far with the 'Fast Track' process there has been only one appeal.

To protect all members, vote against the NEC's proposed changes.

Daily briefing for Conference delegates published by:



**CAMPAIGN for
LABOUR PARTY
DEMOCRACY**

Let's walk the walk, not just talk the talk



By **MICK WHELAN**,
General Secretary of ASLEF,
Chair of Labour Unions
(representing the 12 affiliated
trade unions) & NEC member

For years we have heard politicians talk the talk about the need for an industrial strategy. But they haven't walked the walk and done the necessary.

As we emerge from the pandemic, we must focus on two key issues: how we recover from the financial implications of the coronavirus crisis, and how that recovery will support our fight against climate change. Going forward, we need a new industrial strategy that deals with both.

The cost of this pandemic must not be met with more failed austerity measures, but by growing our economy in a way that not only doesn't exacerbate the climate crisis, but actually reduces carbon emissions. Rail is an essential part of a green economy, especially moving freight on rail, as it means 76% fewer emissions than the equivalent journey by road.

Public bodies procure a wide range of goods and services each day and the guidelines governing their procurement could ensure that jobs are protected, and ensure that goods and services used here are made here.

Changes to deal with the climate crisis, and as we move to a digital economy, cannot be at the expense of unionised jobs. That's why we want an industrial strategy based on investment in infrastructure, including into a fully publicly-owned railway, and a procurement strategy that supports green jobs across the UK.

CLPD Conference Review

Tuesday 28th September, 6pm
The Old Ship, King's Road, BN1 1NR

Entry: £2, £1 concessions

Diane Abbott MP,

Andrew Gwynne MP,

Nadia Jama (NEC), Mish Rahman (NEC),

Billy Hayes (CAC), Mick Whelan (ASLEF),

Ruth Hayes (NWC), Jean Crocker (WCAC)

Chair: Gemma Bolton

First-Past-The-Post YES Proportional Representation NO

Proportional Representation (PR) would get us into a right mess.

- Our Labour Party would split into at least two smaller and less effective parties (i.e. a left party and a centrist party).

- There would be no more majority Labour Governments. Look at the Euro-Elections in the North-West. Labour won all the seats under First-Past-The-Post (FPTP). Under PR we went down to only two seats, and the extreme right gained a seat. If the 2015 General Election had been held under PR, UKIP would have gained over 80 MPs (including Farage!).

- As in other countries with PR, there would be permanent coalition governments, i.e. governments that NO ONE voted for! Labour would be stuck in a back room, scrabbling around with the discredited Lib-

Dems, non-socialist Greens and the opportunist SNP, trying to scramble together a policy programme for coalition. The trade unions would lose interest in working with ineffective bits of the former Labour Party, and eventually perhaps set up their own party – again. Talk about a backwards step.

A recent pro-PR article by Luke Akehurst (leading light of the hard-right Labour First) and Laura Parker (once a top Momentum official under J. Lansman and now a fan of Sir Keir) maintained that PR is the way forward since the Tories and SNP would form fewer Administrations. But Laura and Luke failed to address any of the above political points – namely that PR would see off a united Labour Party, backed by the trade unions, and any prospect of majority Labour governments.

Conference has the right to vote!

Conference witnessed some shocking chairing yesterday. After some clear opposition to the CAC report, no vote was taken – not even a show of hands. When Margaret Beckett tried the same trick with the NEC report, delegates rightly questioned the lack of adherence to the rule book and standing orders. Delegates pointed out that a murmuring in response to a statement cannot be reasonably interpreted as support or opposition!

Beckett suggested she didn't want to waste time with niceties such as voting – or indeed Points of Order, it later emerged. Many delegates were dismissed, including the well-known President of the Bakers' Union – who Beckett suggested must be a first time delegate when he "naively" pointed out that many delegates did not yet have their voting papers for the General Secretary vote. Delegates are encouraged to speak up loudly to ensure this doesn't happen again today. If references back or objections are raised to the CAC report, delegates can and should vote **AGAINST**.

NCC CLP Section election

CLPs are asked to vote for **Rheian Davies, Anna Dyer, Annabelle Harle, and Emine Ibrahim**.

These candidates are backed by the Centre Left Grassroots Alliance (CLGA) and are committed to:

- applying fair and just procedures
- exercising independence from the NEC
- uphold and apply the Rules as determined by Annual Conference
- defend the independence of the NCC and to retain an accountable disciplinary process

Campaign on housing now!

According to Shelter, 17.5 million people are in hardship because of the lack of decent, secure and genuinely affordable social rented housing. Labour must challenge the Tories' indifference to those struggling with finding or paying for decent housing and demand urgent action.

We need 150,000 social rent homes a year, including 100,000 council homes; to end the right to buy; and to review council housing debt accrued by under-funding housing revenue accounts. These policies were in our 2019 manifesto and were warmly welcomed by housing campaigns, charities – and communities where the crisis is so keenly felt.

From this Conference, Labour must lead the campaign for an urgent resolution of the housing crisis and for decent homes for all.

The Yellow Pages is produced as a service to delegates by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD). To receive the Yellow Pages by email, visit: <https://bit.ly/CLPD-delegates>



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