

The Society We Want

It's time to be clear about what the left stands for in this election campaign and in any post-election negotiations. A few weeks ago the Left Platform brought together Left MP's, PPC's, Trade Unions, Labour Left Rank & File Groups and many progressive social movement organisations. This is a summary of just some of the main policies advocated at that meeting of the Left.

On the left we have a vision of a society that is thoroughly democratic in all aspects of our life, which is more equal so that the extremes of wealth and poverty are eliminated, where our core economic assets are held in common to serve the whole of society not a rich few, where everything we do now ensures a sustainable future for the generations to come and where we pursue peace, reject war and secure a world free of weapons of mass destruction.

This is What We Stand For

The Labour Party in Government is still the only means of securing a governing administration that can assist in moving towards that vision of a socialist society we aim for.

By adopting a number of extremely practical policies, Labour in Government after May could have as radical an impact on our society as the Attlee Government in 1945.

To the Labour Party leadership and to any others that may be a party to post election negotiations, these are the policies that the Labour Left will place on the table.

Tackling the Deficit. All the talk about tackling the deficit has been about the level and timing of cuts to public services. We reject the need for austerity cuts when £120 billion is lost to public to public revenues as a result of tax avoidance and evasion. We say collect the taxes and end austerity.

Share the Wealth. Over the last three decades a huge gap has opened up between the rich and the rest of the population. This inequality grotesquely disfigures and divides our society between a super-rich establishment and a million families a year forced to rely upon food banks and 30,000 pensioners still dying of cold related conditions every winter. We need a wealth tax and to tackle speculators we need a Tobin tax.

End Poverty Wages. The Tories boast of a miraculous economic recovery but they have used the economic crisis to create an economy based upon low pay, zero hour's contracts and insecurity at work, especially for young people. That's why we call for a living wage of £10 an hour, the outlawing of zero hours contracts and the restoration of trade union rights.

Full Employment. In a society that needs so much work to be done to meet the needs of our community and to secure our future, it is counterproductive to have unemployment and underemployment at the current level. We need to commit to full employment as a Labour government policy and invest to put people back to work in decent jobs. That includes implementing the Green New Deal to invest in renewable energy and energy conservation resulting in one million new jobs, and providing an alternative to the current government's dangerous, headlong rush into fracking.

End and Reverse Privatisation. The sell off of our national assets has been a national scandal in which large corporations have ripped off the general public and profiteered at our expense. The first steps of an incoming Labour government must be to end all privatisation of the NHS immediately and to start the process of bringing back into public ownership and democratic control the assets that have been stolen from us, including rail, water, energy, and postal services. We reject TTIP which will hinder an incoming Labour government's ability to restore services to democratic ownership and control.

Education is not a Commodity. Education is a gift from one generation into another and not a commodity to be bought and sold. Labour must restore free education as a right by abolishing tuition fees, restoring grants, reversing the cuts to FE and adult education, and re-establishing democratic planning of education by bringing free schools and academies back under community control.

Everyone, a Decent Home. Homelessness, overcrowding, high rents, land speculation, empty properties and unaffordable homes are all the hallmarks of the present Government's housing policy. The key elements of the Left's housing strategy are the building of half a million council houses, rent controls, the right of local councils to compulsory purchase of properties left standing empty more than 6 months and the introduction of a land valuation tax to control land speculation and release the land for productive use.

Halt the Attack on the Poor. The ruthless implementation of the Work Capability Assessment combined with the bedroom tax and the massive escalation in the use of sanctions have caused untold misery to people with disabilities and many of the poorest in our society. Labour must save the ILF, scrap the WCA, abolish the bedroom tax and halt the punitive attack on the poor, ensuring that benefit levels are set to provide a living income.

Tackling Inequality. New and effective equalities legislation is required to eliminate discrimination that results in women still being paid less than men, the failure to recognise the work undertaken in the home and by carers, shouldered disproportionately by women and

the inequalities that many still face on grounds of ethnicity in work, education and on our streets.

A Governing Party of Peace. Labour can help wipe out the stain of New Labour's Iraq war by committing itself as a party of peace, leading the world in its investment in conflict prevention and resolution whilst scrapping Trident and becoming a non-nuclear country.

We believe that this Left Platform provides an agenda of positive hope to all those millions in our country who want change.