

- Keep Women Only shortlists and promote further positive action within the Labour Party for minority groups
- Restore the democratic rights of the women's organisations within the Party, including the National Conference of Labour Women and create new structures for minority groups; BME, LGBT, Disabled people.
- Bring in free personal care for disabled people
- Monitor conformity to 'reasonable adjustments' by employers to give access to employment for disabled people
- Tackle homophobic bullying in schools
- Extend hate crimes legislation to include homophobic hate crimes
- End the anomaly whereby transgendered people have to divorce to obtain their rights
- Give funding and support for local projects that encourage grassroots campaigning against discrimination and inequality
- Ratify Protocol 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights which commits governments to extend the equal protection of their laws to everyone
- Improve benefit levels for severely disabled people
- Legislate against age discrimination

20 Fighting Racism

The New Labour Government has introduced a welcome statutory duty on public bodies to combat racism, but a Labour Government should go much further, and would:

- Extend the duty of public bodies to combat racism to the private sector (possibly within the framework of a Single Equality Act);
- Make auditing and monitoring of pay compulsory and then address the race pay gap
- Work toward rooting out institutional racism throughout society, both by using the criminal justice system and by promoting and resourcing political campaigns and community initiatives to tackle racism from the grassroots of society to the top echelons of public services (the use of third party hate crime reporting by local authorities is an example of the kind of work we need);

35 Asylum and Immigration

The New Labour Government has made some positive improvements to the laws on immigration:

- The Primary Purpose rule has been scrapped
- People in same sex relationships now find it easier to get recognition from the Home Office
- Women who have been the victims of domestic violence, but have yet to be granted indefinite leave to remain when they leave the marital home, are less likely to be threatened with removal from the UK
- The work permit system has been opened up, making it easier for both skilled and unskilled workers to come to the UK for work (although part of this agenda of "managed migration" is also to be seen to be tough on asylum, as if that was the only way it could be justified, and the number of migrants held in detention centres around the UK has increased massively).

50 However, the New Labour Government has encouraged and collaborated with the Sun/Daily Mail agenda of hysteria over asylum seekers in a way which has demonised asylum seekers, migrants and immigrants alike and stoked racism towards all Black and Asian people in the UK:

- The measure of success of asylum policy has become how few people manage to reach Britain to claim asylum.

- It has made irresponsible boasts about planning to deport 30,000 refused asylum seekers per year (which it subsequently abandoned).
- It has failed to point out that the UK shelters far fewer refugees than poor countries in the developing world and that fewer refugees are coming to the EU now than a decade ago.
- Senior figures in the New Labour Government have made outrageous and unjustifiable remarks about “swamping” and how female asylum seekers who take their children with them while begging are “vile”.
- The Prime Minister, at the July 1999 Labour National Executive Committee, claimed that the asylum system was “fraudulent and corrupt”.

The New Labour Government has also introduced some truly illiberal and repressive measures:

- Asylum seekers’ appeal rights have been cut back and many are now left entirely without support.
- Those asylum seekers who do claim asylum here have been forcibly dispersed, taking them away from London and the south east where their friends or families or people who speak their languages may live and into communities not familiar with people from other countries.
- The number of hours lawyers can devote to asylum cases has been drastically cut, forcing many lawyers to withdraw from asylum work, leaving asylum seekers without adequate advice.
- Many countries (the ‘white list’) have been designated as safe, despite ongoing repression.
- ‘Failed’ asylum seekers awaiting deportation are to be forced to work for no pay – effectively slave labour.

A Labour Government should take a principled stand in favour of the right of people to migrate and to claim asylum when they are forced to flee persecution, poverty, oppression or war. It would sweep away all the restrictive measures enacted by previous governments and enact a set of positive rights for migrants and refugees, including rights to family life, to social support, and access to healthcare.

A Labour Government should challenge the claims of the right wing press, not collude with them. In particular a Labour Government should take the following steps:

- Adopt a socialist, internationalist foreign policy to reduce the factors that cause people to flee their countries and seek safety elsewhere
- Confirm its commitment to the right to asylum under the Geneva Convention and the right for each individual asylum claim to be considered on its merits
- Create an independent body to make decisions on claims for asylum and make proper, independent legal representation available to asylum seekers
- Raise the standard of decision making at all levels of the immigration and asylum system with the presumption that any application not decided within six months should be granted in favour of the applicant
- Establish parity of welfare benefits for asylum seekers with UK citizens and afford asylum seekers the right to take employment while any asylum claim is decided.
- Adopt a charter of rights for migrant workers to include the right of admission to seek and take up offers of employment and the right to a residence permit of definite duration leading to permanent settlement thereafter if desired
- Stop recruiting qualified people, such as health professionals, from developing countries, which cannot afford to lose them

- Restore the right to British citizenship to all children born in the UK and extend the right to family reunification to all protected persons given the right to stay in the UK
- Co-operate with the countries of the European Union and more widely to repudiate all carriers' liability legislation and facilitate legitimate avenues of entry to rich countries

Constitutional affairs

In 1997 Labour came to power committed to the most radical changes to the constitution in living memory. In office, it has fulfilled its pledge to introduce devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and to incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights into British law, but in other respects it has diluted key Manifesto commitments. The Freedom of Information Act was greatly curtailed in scope and came into force this year – five years after becoming law. Lords reform remains bogged down, with 92 hereditary peers kept on in an otherwise wholly appointed chamber. Britain remains one of the most secretive countries in the democratic world, not least because of the continued existence of the Royal Prerogative powers, whose abolition senior Labour ministers once demanded, but which continue to be used to bypass Parliament and the rule of law, especially on foreign policy issues.

A real Labour Government would:

- Seek the extension of devolution, including a Welsh Parliament with similar powers to that of Scotland, if it were supported by the Welsh people
- Introduce a major Parliamentary reform bill to greatly enhance the scrutiny and legislating powers of the Commons, and create an elected second chamber with clearly defined powers of scrutiny and amendment only
- Develop a more effectively resourced House of Commons, with greater powers for Select Committees to subpoena witnesses and documents
- Introduce a much wider 'right to know' under a strengthened Freedom of Information Act
- Drastically curtail the Official Secrecy Act and abolish the Royal Prerogative powers
- Abolish the monarchy and replace it with an elected figurehead president
- Restore security of voting and public confidence in the electoral process by reforming the law on postal ballots, which are not a solution to low electoral turnout but could be an engine for fraud
- Disestablish the Church of England, ending its anomalous position (which includes its senior clergy sitting *ex officio* as members of the legislature) and promoting the law's equal treatment and protection of religious beliefs

Towards a Democratic Europe

A Labour Government will work for a people's Europe not a Europe for Business. Our approach to Europe will be entirely internationalist and pro-European, but we recognise that as presently constructed the EU is fundamentally anti-democratic and serves the interests of capital rather than Labour. Europe can be a positive force for progressive change but it needs to be based upon the close cooperation and mutual solidarity of independent democratic states, not the formation of a superpower run by the dictates of an unelected bureaucratic capitalist elite.

A Labour Government will campaign against the EU constitution as proposed because it will centralise even more power into the hands of the Commission and the unaccountable European Central Bank and remove the democratic rights of the people of Europe to determine their own political and economic future.

5 We recognise that the EU constitution would enshrine the principles of neo-liberalism as constitutional obligations for member states and create the legal framework for the Commission to impose privatisation and liberalisation of public services wherever it wishes. The LRC is opposed to the creation of the sort of capitalist super-state that the EU constitution envisages, with its own army, police force, currency, criminal justice system, central bank and unelected Government, with its consequent ambitions of territorial expansion and military intervention.

10 We are also concerned that current proposals within the Constitution threaten basic civil liberties throughout Europe, and we will oppose any moves to allow for the restoration of the death penalty 'in times of imminent danger of war' and to expand the role of Europol into wide-scale surveillance and intelligence gathering operating with complete legal immunity within all member states.

15 We will support moves within the EU to set minimum standards of employment protection, equal opportunities, social provision, civil liberties, environmental protection and commercial regulation. But we will resist those aspects of EU policy that prevent radical European Governments, including a UK Labour Government, 20 from carrying out their democratic mandates and economic programmes designed to favour ordinary members of society rather than trans-national corporations. If that means challenging EU rules, so be it.

25 Much of the programme we propose would put a Labour Government into conflict with the present body of EU legislation on public ownership of utilities and telecommunications, State aid for industry, and free movement of capital. We will work with other progressive governments to challenge and remove such EU legislation and promote constitutional reforms to the EU that address the democratic deficit of its institutions and tilt the balance of power back towards national elected 30 Parliaments. We will build strong alliances with labour movements across Europe to campaign in all of the member states against the neo-con agenda of privatisation, and cuts in jobs and services.

35 We will join forces with progressive organisations such as the European Social Forum to develop internationalist policies for Europe, and campaign against the exclusive trade barriers of 'Fortress Europe' which have done so much damage to the economies of the third world. In particular we will work to oppose the imposition of GATS by the Commission in all trade deals, which compel the liberalisation of 40 markets and public services upon poor countries and enable trans-national penetration of indigenous economies.

45 A Labour Government will not consider joining the Euro without far-reaching and fundamental reform of the rules for the currency and European Central Bank. Whatever the potential benefits of a single currency, we recognise that the euro-zone has become a world economic black spot, with unemployment in Germany reaching five million. This is the result of the extreme monetarist economic policies within single currency rules, enshrined in the Growth and Stability Pact. The sole remit of the unelected European Central Bank is a harsh anti-inflation policy, enforcing cuts in public expenditure and driving down wage demands and punishing member states 50 that do not obey. If Britain joined the Euro it would be like signing up to permanent Thatcherism.

55 Since 2001 the euro has risen in value by 50 per cent against the dollar, making exports vastly more expensive and imports markedly cheaper, leading to low growth, high unemployment and recession. All the various ways to get out of recession, i.e.

cut interest rates and the cost of borrowing, devalue the currency, increase public spending or cut taxes are impossible or forbidden within the rules of the single currency. Within the euro-zone it is illegal for governments to even try to influence decisions of the European Central Bank, deliberately insulating it from democratic pressures in setting interest rates.

Unless the Growth and Stability Pact is completely re-written to focus upon support for job creation, economic growth and investment in public services, and the Central Bank democratically elected and made accountable to national Governments, a Labour Government can not countenance joining the Euro. But we will campaign with other progressive European governments to re-define the Euro and reconstitute the European Central Bank, so that member States could jointly exercise control over the Euro exchange rate and Euro-zone interest rates. The remit of the Bank could also include investing in EU-wide public sector capital projects.

A Labour Government will argue for a return to the 2001 Laeken Declaration, which launched the process of writing a new constitution and talked of popular concerns about too many powers being exercised at EU rather than national level, and to initiate a genuine debate on the kind of Europe people really want.

We will support the idea of a new convention being called on a more democratic basis to consider how to bring about a more democratic Europe, where national parliaments and voters have their democratic rights restored and where democracy and representative government are re-established for the peoples and nations of our continent.

International Policy

World events are dominated by a rapid growth of instability reaching crisis proportions. This crisis has been intensified in the short term by the unilateral doctrine of the United States of launching pre-emptive strikes against 'rogue states' in breach of international law. In the longer term, it has been fuelled by the policies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank towards poorer indebted countries, which have driven them into deep poverty, creating food insecurity, conditions for sharp social conflict and a fertile base for anti-western terrorism.

Labour's foreign policy needs to face these realities. This requires a break with Atlanticism, the unswerving support that British governments have given to US Administrations for the last sixty years. In particular, a Labour Government must end the practice of subservience to this neo-conservative Bush Administration. The NATO Alliance, created in the conditions of the Cold war, has outlived its purpose and should be dismantled.

Labour needs a foreign policy that returns to the core principles of our movement – peace, democracy, universal human rights, human solidarity and self-determination for oppressed peoples: a genuinely ethical foreign policy that faces up to and tackles the economic, political and military obstacles to the achievement of this.

To this end, a Minister for Peace would work to abolish war and eliminate the arms trade, by promoting research into understanding conflict and developing expertise in its non-violent resolution. It will work to resolve regional conflicts on the basis of respect for human rights and the rights of national minorities.

A Labour Government should seek an end to unilateral military intervention in foreign policy and work to end the palpable hypocrisy of requiring other countries to renounce their weapons of mass destruction while retaining Britain's own. We seek a

global end to such weapons through a transparent and democratised United Nations. The UK should enthusiastically support the UN protocol on Explosive Remnants of War, working towards a ban on the use of landmines, cluster bombs and depleted uranium weapons. A Labour Government will close US military bases in Britain and pursue the aims of non-proliferation and disarmament for nuclear weapons states. It rejects the policies of pre-emptive war and nuclear first strike, and will withdraw from joint US/UK research into “useable” nuclear weapons that appears to be taking place at Aldermaston. We should more generously support research and development into alternative forms of energy production, reduce our dependence on nuclear energy, and better resource the UK Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, established in 2003.

A Labour Government should end arms sales to brutal regimes and reduce arms sales overall, expanding resources for global conflict prevention and resolution and promoting a defensive defence policy. Working with the trade unions, a Labour Government should significantly increase its investment in research and development for alternative technologies that can use skills developed by arms manufacturers. It will promote public education and information to help dissuade trade unions, local authorities and charities from investing in arms companies. The end-use of arms exports and dual use goods needs to be closely monitored, and the granting of arms export licences and export credits suitably restricted. The activities of the Defence Services Export Organisation, the Government agency that promotes arms exports, should be curtailed, and Government subsidies to arms companies and involvement in Arms Fairs should be withdrawn.

Specifically, a Labour Government should withdraw troops from Iraq, and work for the end of the unlawful Occupation of that country. It will promote an international peacekeeping force acceptable to the Iraqi people and support the right of the Iraqi people to determine their own future, free from international interference and from the debts of the former regime, which should be cancelled.

A Labour Government should support a resolution of the Middle East conflict based on a recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and of the right of refugees to return.

A Labour Government should work to secure the return of the Chagos Islanders to their homeland and adequately compensate them for their illegal expulsion. It will discontinue all support for the US Plan Colombia which has led to a sharp deterioration of human rights in that country.

A Labour Government should work for a more equitable international trading system, support the integration of human rights considerations into trade negotiations and work the strengthening of the International Labour Organisation to defend workers’ rights.

A Labour Government should end the linking of overseas aid to policies of economic liberalisation and privatisation by DfID and move immediately to raise aid expenditure to 1% of GDP.

A Labour Government should seek to bring greater democracy, accountability and transparency to the European Union, opening up to the public and media meetings of the EU Commission and establishing the right of MEPs to introduce legislation. We oppose the corporate and exclusionary agenda of the right and promote a social Europe that advances workplace and welfare rights. This means opposition to the current EU constitution and to joining the euro, which would entail a loss of democratic control over key aspects of economic policy.

A Labour Government should work for a binding code of conduct governing the behaviour of international corporations.

- 5 A Labour Government should continue to seek a lasting peace in Northern Ireland, based on the right of the people of Ireland as a whole to determine their future and on the fundamental human rights of all the communities living there.

Disarmament

10 Britain is still the world's fourth largest arms exporter. The Defence Export Services Organisation, established within the Ministry of Defence to maximise "legitimate" defence exports, still has a staff of 600, a cosy relationship with Government Ministers, and projected operating costs for 2004/5 of £14.5 million.

15 The Tory Government sold Scorpion tanks and Hawk fighter jets made by Alvis/BAE Systems to the Suharto regime in Indonesia. The bill was never paid by Indonesia, and the DTI's Export Credits Guarantee Department, which underwrites overseas deals by British companies, instead paid out a total of £645 million to UK arms companies for Indonesian bad debts. A more recent £1 billion ECGD guarantee to

20 BAE Systems for aircraft sales to Saudi Arabia has been described by the Chair of the Trade & Industry Select Committee as "foolish".

25 Meanwhile, mercenaries have become big business, with an estimated annual world turn-over of \$100 billion. There are currently up to 40,000 personnel working for US and UK private security companies in Iraq, the majority officially as guards, but increasingly being sucked into combat roles.

30 US military bases in Britain remain a key political concern. The Government has already given the US permission to use British bases such as Fylingdales and Lakenheath for its Star Wars project and nuclear weapons deployments.

A Labour Government would:

- 35 • Close down the Defence Export Services Organisation and ensure that companies requiring arms export licences or export credits should be able to demonstrate robust anti-bribery and corruption procedures
- Push for an international agreement to register and limit the operations of UK brokers operating overseas
- 40 • Mount a vigorous campaign for an International Arms Trade Treaty, which would control the proliferation and misuse of small arms, which in many parts of the world make a major contribution to human rights violations, conflict and poverty. It will also push for an international ban on the use of landmines, cluster bombs and depleted uranium weapons
- Impose tight controls on the activities of "private military companies"
- 45 • Pursue the aims of non-proliferation and disarmament for nuclear weapons states. It will withdraw from the Trident project, oppose the policies of pre-emptive war and nuclear first strike and withdraw from joint US/UK research into "useable" nuclear weapons that is apparently taking place at Aldermaston
- 50 • Provide more generous moral and financial support for research and development into alternative, peaceful technologies and provide public information materials to help dissuade trade unions, local authorities and charities from investing in arms companies