



NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2009

RESOLUTIONS BOOKLET



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1. LRC and the industrial situation

LRC Northern Region

This conference recognises the terrible effects of the capitalist crisis on jobs and working conditions internationally and in Britain. Not only have many jobs been lost but many workers have been put under tremendous pressure and uncertainty. Many bosses have used the economic situation to savage terms and conditions, tear up national agreements and undermine wage levels. Redundancies and plant closures have been announced without notice with catastrophic effects on workers and their families.

This is the background to a whole series of disputes; strikes and even factory occupations. These defensive struggles have been militant actions that have undermined the attempts of the bosses and the media to sow divisions among workers, as in case of the Lindsey dispute, where the attempt by the press to portray a trade union dispute as issue of British Jobs for British workers was cut across by the workers themselves.

Conference notes the importance of these disputes and recognises the need for maximum unity between the political and industrial wings of the movement. We recognise that the probable election of a Tory Government will only exacerbate the situation.

Conference acknowledges the need to strengthen the influence of socialist ideas within the trade union movement, as a counterweight to the pressures of the bosses and the bourgeois press.

As such we resolve that:

- The LRC should actively support trade union struggles and campaigns
- The LRC should promote the development of direct links from LRC groups with groups of workers in struggle
- The National Committee should promote affiliations to the LRC from trade union branches and other trade union bodies
- The LRC should establish supporters groups where possible within the trade unions.

2. Economic crisis

Socialist Appeal

In the face of the ongoing fallout from the biggest financial crisis since the Great Depression and the inevitable attempt to make the working class pay for this mess, this LRC conference believes the Labour movement must rearm itself with an action programme that can provide a real way forward.

The bailout of the banks, which used up billions of pounds of public cash, must be met with the demand to nationalise the entire banking system, including the insurance companies. The ongoing actions by the government to nationalise the losses and privatise the profits, as with the proposals at Northern Rock, must be opposed.



This conference notes with anger the price that has been paid by the working class as a result of the recession, including pay freezes, wage cuts and reduction in paid working hours. Unemployment – not least amongst the young, the so-called “lost generation”, has risen sharply over the twelve months.

We repeat the point agreed at the last LRC conference that where work is scarce, there should be work sharing with no loss of pay. Companies should be forced to open their books for inspection to see where they have squandered their profits. Where workers are threatened with redundancy, the company should be nationalised, with compensation based on proven need.

Since last year it has also become clear that the bill for the banks bailout is to be met by severe cuts in public expenditure alongside cuts in benefits and support for the most needy in society. It is a disgrace that Labour has joined the Tories and the Lib-Dems in announcing that such cuts will have to be made “in the public interest.” We note that Labour’s poor standing in the opinion polls and disastrous election results this summer are a direct consequence of the failure of the party leadership to address the real problems facing working people. It is most likely that this will result in a defeat for Labour at the next general election and the coming to power of a right-wing Tory government. Whilst we should fight to prevent the Tories getting into office the LRC should also prepare to pull together party activists and trade unionists from across the movement to mobilize a fight to raise socialist policies inside the party and to call for an emergency party conference after the election, whenever that may be.

This conference must make clear that the responsibility for the crisis lies with the capitalist system. Either we can continue to uphold this system – as the leaderships of all three main political parties seek to do at our expense – or we can fight for socialism. We repeat our call for the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy, to be run under workers’ control and management as part of a socialist plan of production as the only clear way forward for the labour and trade union movement.

3. Royal Mail

CWU London West End Amalgamated Branch

The LRC recognises that the introduction of the “liberalisation” of postal services by the government is forcing Royal Mail to cut its costs in order to compete with private companies. This, in turn, has meant management cutting jobs and introducing changes with no reference to union representatives at either local or national level. To push through these changes they have resorted to extreme bullying, intimidation and harassment of the workforce.

Adding to the pressure on Royal Mail is the deficit in its pension fund, caused in significant part by the pension “holiday”, when profits were paid to the government rather than the pension fund.

In his attempt to privatise Royal Mail, Mandelson was willing to have the government take on the pension fund deficit in order to make the sale attractive to a private bidder. However, despite it winning the unanimous support of Labour Party Conference, the government to date refuses to do so while Royal Mail remains wholly publicly owned.



All this has meant both a deteriorating service to the public and a major attack on the jobs and conditions of postal workers.

This AGM agrees to:

- Fully support the postal workers in their dispute with Royal Mail;
- Encourage LRC supporters to help to build and get involved in local support work for the postal workers, supporting picket lines; getting postal workers invited to labour movement meetings and winning support from other trades unionists and the public;
- Encourage support at every level for the CWU hardship fund;
- To raise the role of the Communication Managers' Association section of Unite in strikebreaking;
- To support the CWU in continuing to raise the need for the government to take on the deficit in the pension fund;
- Oppose any moves to privatise (or "part privatise") Royal Mail, and to make the case for the scrapping of competition in postal services.

4. Media Crisis

LRC National Committee

This conference notes the huge profits made in recent years by the big media companies and the fact that profits continued to increase while jobs were cut.

Conference also notes the dramatic effect of the "credit crunch" and recent recession which has meant the loss of hundreds of jobs for journalists in local media, the closure of many newspapers titles, and for some towns the loss of all local media.

Conference believes that local media can and should play an important role in their communities - informing, exposing and acting as a forum for debate.

Conference also believes that big media companies aren't interested in this public service role just in making huge profits.

Conference resolves to:

- Lobby in the Labour Party for policy and action to support the creation of new media co-operatives.
- Lobby in the Labour Party to oppose further mergers of big media companies.
- Support alternative models for media organisations that put communities at the heart of their business models.
- Support the media unions' fight against job cuts and title closures and their campaign to defend quality journalism

5. Opposition to the Cuts in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme

PCS Labour Left

We note that that the Government is planning to implement the cuts to the Civil Service Compensation Scheme on its' employees from January 1st 2010. These proposals are a



catastrophe as people who have worked in the Civil Service for up to 30 years or more will find their compensation payments cut to two years if they are made redundant. In addition, if these proposals are implemented, a future Tory Government would be able to sack tens of thousands of civil servants on the cheap.

Therefore, we ask the Labour Representation Committee to carry out the following measures:

1. To support PCS in their campaign in order to prevent these cuts to the Civil Service Compensation Scheme from being implemented.
2. To lobby the MPs and the TUC in order to pressurise the Government into scrapping these proposals.

6. Welfare benefits

New Communist Party

The Labour Representation Committee notes with alarm proposals in the latest Green Paper on welfare benefits, *Shaping the Future of Care*, a proposal to stop Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance, which are paid by the Department of Work and Pensions to disabled people – both in work and out of work – in recognition of the higher costs of living that disability causes. The Green Paper proposes moving the funding from the DWP to local authorities to be awarded by local social service departments after they have assessed the needs of the claimants.

Almost certainly the benefits will be cut in the process; much will be lost in the extra costs of administration and criteria of eligibility and rates of benefit will vary from borough to borough. Claiming will become more bureaucratic and difficult than it already is.

Furthermore certain sections in the Tory party have proposed doing this with all welfare benefits in order to reduce the DWP budget.

These changes are not likely to happen overnight but they are clearly part of the ruling class agenda to dismantle state welfare and return us to the Victorian days where paupers – the unemployed, elderly, sick, long-term disabled and unsupported single parents – were forced to claim benefit from their local parish or borough. The criteria for eligibility varied from one locality to another but boroughs were anxious not to be seen as generous because this would attract paupers from outside the area and create an extra burden on the rates. Claimants were often refused benefits if they tried to claim outside the parish or borough where they were born as local authorities tried to shift responsibilities from one to another.

The LRC must oppose any return to this system. It must raise awareness of the threat and work with disability and pensioner organisations like the Disability Benefits Consortium and the National Pensioners' Convention to campaign to defend existing welfare benefit rights and to extend them to provide decent living standards for all those who have to claim benefits.

7. London Transport

Islington LRC



The Labour Representation Committee calls on The Mayor of London in his capacity as Chair of Transport for London (TfL) to seriously redress the flawed policy making decisions he has made which as a direct consequence impact negatively on the daily lives of Londoners.

The Mayor's decisions to cancel the Western Extension of the Congestion Charge will cost Londoners £50-70million a year, on top the end of the oil agreement with the Venezuelan government, and the scrapping of the £25 CO2 charge on gas-guzzlers add another £50million a year. All Londoners are paying for this with an above inflation price hike.

Some Londoners are paying for this with the scrapping of step-free access improvements which were planned for busy railway stations like Finsbury Park. These decisions are impacting on the lives of disabled Londoners who are unable to access the public transport system their taxes support.

8. People's Charter

RMT

Conference agrees to support the People's Charter, which sets out a programme for challenging the economic crisis and for a fairer society including:

- i) a fair economy: taking leading banking, insurance and mortgage industries into public ownership; ending raids on pension funds, asset-stripping and corporate tax loopholes; restructuring tax so big business and the wealthy pay more
- ii) more and better jobs: building full employment, protecting existing jobs and investing to create new jobs with decent pay; raising the minimum wage and ending the lower rate for young workers
- iii) decent homes: stopping repossessions, controlling rents, giving local government the power and funds to build and renovate millions of affordable quality homes and buy empty properties
- iv) saving and improving our services: ensuring energy, transport, water, post and telecommunications are in public ownership; ending profiteering in public services; stopping EU privatisation directives
- v) fairness and justice: free heating and transport for every pensioner; linking state pensions and benefits to average earnings; protecting pension schemes; ending child poverty; enforcing equal pay for women; ending racism and discrimination; no scapegoating migrant workers; guaranteeing training, apprenticeships and education with grants and no fees; restoring trade union rights
- vi) a secure and sustainable future: ending the cost of war and nuclear weapons; bringing our troops home; getting rid of the debt economy and cancelling the debts of the poor of the planet.

Conference welcomes the support of the TUC for the Charter and those MPs who have signed John McDonnell's motion backing the campaign.



Conference agrees to build support for the Charter in workplaces and communities to assist in achieving a million UK signatures to demonstrate that the Government must put people first.

9. People's Charter

Alliance for Workers' Liberty

LRC notes the launch of the People's Charter, and welcomes many of the ideas proposed in that Charter. LRC believes, however, that to deal with capitalism today the LRC should agitate for and advocate something more on the lines of a workers' plan, geared around working-class struggle and forthright socialist demands such as those adopted by the LRC conference in 2008.

We note with concern that the People's Charter has proved sufficiently loose to be endorsed by three Lib Dem MPs, two SNP MPs, and a maverick ex-Tory ex-UKIP MP, and that the People's Charter movement advocates voting for all MPs who back the Charter.

10. Local People's Conventions

Lambeth & Southwark LRC Unite Croydon & Crystal Palace Branch

This LRC Annual Conference recognising that the scale of public sector cuts proposed by all the main political parties will demand urgent action to unite the resistance to their impact, both before and after the general election, agrees to campaign for the creation of local People's Conventions/Parliaments, with the purpose of:

- a) developing our work around the People's Charter
- b) providing local organisational frameworks for those resisting the cuts and the impact of the economic crisis
- c) discussing the crisis of democracy and the challenge in relation to political representation facing working people

These forums, drawing support from the labour movement and all sections of our communities under attack, will provide experience, analysis, education and programmes of planned resistance, which will enable working people to move away from actions solely of protest, to that of building a social movement for change.

11. Iraq & Afghanistan

LRC National Committee Colchester & District TUC

This AGM agrees to make the call for a complete withdrawal of occupying troops from Afghanistan and Iraq a major priority for the LRC over the next year, and for all money saved, be spent on hospitals, social services and education.



12. Iran

Socialist Youth Network

This conference notes with concern:

1. The continued threat of a direct military attack on Iran, whether by the United States or by Israel acting as a proxy.
2. The sheer hypocrisy of the US, British and Israeli governments in seeking to increase sanctions on Iran under the pretext of Iranian nuclear programme
3. The impact of such sanctions in exacerbating the realities of high unemployment and inflation for the mass of the Iranian population.
4. The effect of the sanctions programme on Iraq in the 1990s in killing millions of people and softening the country up for invasion in 2003

This conference further notes:

1. That the ongoing political crisis within the Iranian regime sparked by the fraudulent presidential elections in June is also likely to see an increase in imperialist intervention inside Iran (sanctions, 'regime change' funds etc) in an attempt to bring about a regime subservient to US/UK interests
2. That the ongoing protests of the Iranian masses in workplaces, universities and football matches is a beacon of hope for genuine democracy from below and a consistent struggle against imperialist intervention in the region
3. That whether under the sway of the 'reformist' Mir Hossein Moussavi or the 'hardliner' Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Islamic Republic remains a theocracy bitterly opposed to workers forming trade unions, women's and LGBT rights and democracy more generally and should be opposed implacably
4. That sanctions and the war threat actually serve to buttress a hated Islamic regime desperately clinging on to power, and - as in the case of militant oil workers looking to go on strike - act as a brake on class struggle
5. That the political approach of the Hands Off the People of Iran campaign in struggling both against has been vindicated by the events of the last year

This conference believes:

1. The recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have demonstrated that western military actions, whatever their supposed rationale, have caused untold death and infrastructural damage while doing nothing to enhance the democratic rights and living standards of the local populations. Imperialism has no progressive role to play in Iran or anywhere else - it exports destruction and chaos
2. Activists in Britain have a particular responsibility to actively oppose the threat of an attack on Iran as well as maintaining pressure for the withdrawal of all forces currently still occupying Afghanistan and Iraq
3. At the same time, activists also need to be in the forefront in providing material support and solidarity to fellow workers in Iran both through opposing the current sanctions programme and raising the profile of Iranian strikes and protests, as well as the oppression, imprisonment and torture of the regime's opponents

This conference resolves to:



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1. Continue to work closely with Hopi in initiatives such as the August 1 solidarity cricket match, which raised £1500 for our brothers and sisters in Iran
 2. Send an LRC speaker to the Hopi AGM on November 28 and other representatives to report back for LRC members, affiliates and sympathisers
 3. To raise affiliation motions at local trade union branches
 4. To support the 'Solidarity Day for Iranian workers' taking place in February 2010

13. Sex Work

Greater London LRC

The criminalisation of those who work in the sex industry helps to divide the working class. It separates illegal workers from legal workers and drives people into clandestine situations where they face dangerous and exploitative conditions.

Moral panic over trafficking has created a smokescreen behind which the state has intensified its policing of all migrant workers, particularly women. Increasing police powers to raid workplaces and enforce inhumane migration controls is not in the interests of any worker.

Whilst we accept some people have more choices than others at different times in their lives, we recognise that under capitalism all working class people are driven by circumstances to make a living and survive.

We are committed to organising in our workplaces and communities to fight this exploitation and to struggle for dignity in every aspect of our lives. We demand better social provision and a welfare state than can tackle the poverty and hardship many of us face.

We recognise that many sex workers are women and that women, especially migrant women, are amongst some of the most exploited people in our society.

We believe that as feminists, socialists and trade unionists we should stand in solidarity with sex workers, not collude with the state in their repression.

Therefore, the LRC calls for the decriminalisation of sex work. We support the unionisation, the self-organisation and liberation of sex workers because we stand in solidarity with all workers organising for their rights.

14. Social Ownership and Workers Self-Management

The Commune

The Labour Representation Committee notes this year marks the twentieth anniversary of the fall the Berlin Wall, and the beginning of the change of regimes in the USSR and Eastern Europe in the years 1989-1991.

Conference salutes the great freedom struggles by the working people, of the communist and socialist oppositionists to the dictatorships which ruled in the name of "actually existing socialism", such as the rebellions of 1953 in Berlin, 1956 in Hungary and Poland, 1968 in Czechoslovakia, 1980-1989 in Poland, the myriad struggles in the USSR.



Conference recognises that the legacy of the Stalinist regimes continues to hinder the struggle for a new society today. As part of developing the vision of a viable alternative to capitalism in the 21st century, our movement needs to learn the lessons of their historical failure, including of the previous state socialist conceptions.

The Labour Representation Committee conference recognises that:

1. State ownership, no matter what pseudonym it goes under is not social ownership – they are two counter-opposed things – one cannot equate the state with society.
2. The state is not a neutral force concerned only with the welfare of society. The state is not a vehicle to achieve ‘socialism’ or can be relied upon to act a protective shield against capital.

The capitalist system, whether in its private or state forms of appearance, does not and cannot work in the interest of the majority.

It is an unjust system, an economic tyranny where the rulers at all levels make the crucial social and economic decisions that affect our lives, solely on the basis of what will increase its profits and promote its interests. The Labour Representation Committee considers that the people who should have the deciding voice on the economy and its problems - are the people most directly connected with it, the workers who produce the good and services.

As such the Labour Representation Committee sets as its goal a system of genuine social ownership, organised on the basis of workers self-management, a system of participatory democracy based on the sovereignty of those who produce the good and services in society.

Conference recognises if we are to realise the slogan ‘another world is possible’, that workers self-management is a necessity in the creation of a new cooperative, society – genuine socialism/communism - based on common, social ownership.

Conference agrees:

1. To hold a series of forums and conferences on the question of social ownership and workers self-management, with LEAP and fraternal organisations.
2. To publish a series of pamphlets on making the case for social ownership and workers self-management, drawing on historical, international and contemporary experiences of the working class.
3. To develop with affiliated trades unions the case for workers self-management in specific industries.
4. From these discussions and debates to take forward a campaign for workers self-management and social ownership.

15. Labour Party democracy

Islington North CLP

This LRC conference welcomes the rule-change victory at Labour Party conference, whereby our policy of electing the 55 constituency National Policy Forum Representatives by One Member One Vote (OMOV) was carried.



This victory was a move in the right direction towards enhancing democracy within the Labour Party; but there is much more that needs to be done to extend: democracy, political involvement and socialist policies within the party and the wider world.

The LRC project is to develop socialist policies and to promote, popularise and achieve them both within the Labour Party and the wider world; to do this the LRC need to step-up its activity on:

- Labour Party membership recruitment and organisation;
- organising within the Labour Party to take control of positions and structures, e.g. officerships and General Committees;
- supporting socialist candidates in Labour Party selections and elections;
- promoting and implementing LRC policies in: the Labour Party, trade unions, our communities, etc.;
- maximising trade union affiliations to the Labour Party, where possible;
- enhancing Labour Party democracy by making and supporting the case for: resolutions at party conference; amendment, reference backs and voting on policy and NEC documents section by section at conference; a much more open, transparent and accountable policy making process.

16. The BNP

CWU

The LRC notes

- The political legitimacy given to racist and homophobic views by the appearance of Nick Griffin on BBC's Question Time.
- The increasing confidence of reactionary commentators in the media and elsewhere to express their support for discrimination as "free speech"

Unless this open prejudice is challenged we know this will lead to an increase in racist and homophobic attacks in local communities. Therefore the LRC renews its commitment to:

- Socialist economic policies on housing and employment
- The rights of immigrants and asylum seekers
- Campaign against the BNP and other far right reactionary organisations"

17. General Election campaigning

CWU Central London Branch

The LRC will approach Labour candidates, CLPs, and trade union bodies to come together for a socialist campaign at the General Election. This campaign will organise for a Labour vote and make the case for a government that supports the interests of working class people. The LRC National Committee will draw up a short and clear platform, based on existing LRC policy. This will include

- Support for public ownership and opposition to privatisation and competitive marketisation



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- Support for workers rights, including agency employees, and the repeal of the anti trade union laws
 - Increase of National Minimum Wage to current European decency threshold of £10.45
 - Increased rights for workers threatened with redundancy
 - Welfare benefits and better care services not bonuses for rich bankers
 - Progressive taxation of the rich not public service cuts
 - An urgent programme of Council House building to reduce waiting lists and provide employment
 - Restoration of the right of asylum: affirm that the UK has benefited from immigration economically, socially and cultural
 - Defence of positive equality policies that have given rights to working parents, black and ethnic minority people and disabled people, women, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people.

18. LRC Recruitment/Reorganisation/Affiliations

Greater Manchester LRC

We believe that for the LRC to grow as an organisation it must support and accommodate new techniques for regional development. We need to reach out to groups previously not involved with the LRC and organise innovatively.

New alliances in the Party need to be forged and how we organise together needs to be readdressed. A broader approach to local level organisation will help with struggles going on at CLP and BLP level.

Working with new groups and strengthening relationships can stimulate an organisation and increase co-operation in the movement.

The AGM and NC should consider how to organise locally, taking into consideration the following:

- a) at least an extra £5000 in funding should be raised for a regional development programme in order to stimulate and help to form more local groups to increase the effectiveness of the organisation
- b) The LRC should affiliate to the Unemployed Workers Union and offer full support to the organisation with a donation of £250
- c) The LRC needs to build regional links with activists at every level in a non-sectarian way across a broad political spectrum - participating at events and discussions with local Co-op Parties, bodies like the Fabians, CND, Stop The War, and Defend Council Housing etc etc

