

RESOLUTIONS BOOKLET



Resolutions

1. Campaign for Socialism

Economic Crisis

“Despite the depth of the crisis that finance capital has provoked in pursuit of profit, the Left has not been able to win mass support for an alternative strategy which takes us in a socialist direction away from individualised solutions to the crisis. In view of this, the LRC acknowledges that we need to construct the widest possible coalition of the Left, from within and beyond the Labour Party, that builds on the work of LEAP and other left strategies with a view to leading a serious campaign against the grip of neo-liberal ideas and practices in our society.”

2. Lambeth & Southwark LRC

Economic Crisis

This conference recognises that we have entered into a period of severe crisis in the capitalist system both in Britain and internationally. The era of neo-liberalism is over with unprecedented financial guarantees being given by governments to try and stabilise the global financial system. Despite unparalleled expenditure the world economy faces severe economic recession.

New Labour has no answers to the ongoing financial crisis which they are trying to manage on behalf of capitalism. Despite the anarchy in the financial markets they have not nationalised or even partly nationalised the banks which continue to operate independently under the control of their boards and not the government. Privately owned banks have simply been backed financially by the state.

The crisis in the real economy is just beginning. It is already clear that the working class will bear the brunt of the recession. This has been underlined by Lord Mandelson's proposed curtailment of the introduction of new family friendly rights and the attacks on welfare rights and immigration.

The economic catastrophe provides the socialist left with both a challenge and a historic opportunity. We should not limit ourselves to measures designed to provide a softer landing to those affected by the economic crisis only for the system to be handed back when times improve to the rich and privileged elite in whose interests it has always operated.

Instead, the LRC should initiate a major campaign in conjunction with the widest possible sections of the labour movement and other groups in society for democracy in the economy based on accountable public ownership of the main sections of the economy. An equivalent to 'Stop the War' (with possibly a major demonstration(s) against the speculators).

The current economic crisis underlines that the economy can no longer be trusted in the hands of speculators and profiteers. Their stewardship has led to disaster. In particular, the LRC should campaign for democratic public ownership of the:

- (a) banks and financial institutions;
- (b) utilities;
- (c) transport;
- (d) food distribution which is currently controlled by a powerful oligarchy of supermarket chains;
- (e) what is left of industry.

The LRC should also campaign for a major programme of public works including building schools, houses and renewing the infrastructure of society to help revitalise the economy.

The LRC National Committee are mandated by this conference to develop the details of the campaign as urgently as possible. We should all be clear that if we fail to rise to this historic challenge others perhaps from the far right will seize the initiative as was the case in the 1930s.

3. Socialist Appeal

Economic Crisis

In the face of 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 attempts to bail-out the banks by using billions of pounds of public cash must be met with the demand to nationalise the entire banking system, including the insurance companies. The actions by the government to nationalise the losses and privatise the profits must be opposed.

The crisis in the housing market must be met by the nationalisation of the building industry and land to allow us to build the houses we need. The industry should then be placed under democratic workers' control and management. There must be no house repossession by banks as workers are forced into arrears. All empty properties should be taken over and used for social housing.

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.

The energy companies, together with the privatised public utilities should be brought back into public ownership with no compensation for the fat cats. Again these should be placed under workers' control and management as part of a programme to take over the commanding heights of the economy and the institution of a socialist plan of production.

Accordingly, in light of the economic crisis, this LRC conference calls for an immediate recall of the TUC to work out a plan of action which can unite the whole

trade union and labour movement to fight for measures such as those listed above to defend jobs and conditions in the face of the current recession.

4. Group of International Communists

Social Ownership and Workers Self-Management

After years of being told 'There is No Alternative', the crisis of global capital has shown that the entire system can be brought into question. Furthermore the widespread state intervention to preserve finance capital has brought into question previously conceived ideas of nationalisation and "public ownership" traditionally accepted in the labour movement.

As part of developing a vision of a viable alternative to capitalism our movement needs to develop new ideas of social ownership and abandon statist conceptions which have proven to be an historical failure.

1. State ownership, no matter what pseudonym it goes under is not social ownership. They are in fact two counter-posed things: one cannot equate the state with society.
2. The state is not a neutral force concerned only with the welfare of society and possessing the ability and the means to take measures suited to this end. The state is not a vehicle to achieve 'socialism' and cannot be relied upon to act as 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 economic decisions that affect our lives, solely on the basis of what will increase their profits and promote their 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 goods 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 goods and services in society.

Conference recognises that if we are to realise the slogan 'another world is possible' workers' self-management is a necessity in the creation of a new cooperative society based on common, social ownership. Workers' self-management is not something which can be proclaimed or enacted from above, nor is there a blueprint. It requires a process of social self-organisation and creativity from below.

The publication of *Building a new common sense, Social Ownership in the 21st Century* is a welcome initiative in helping rejuvenate discussion of these issues in the movement. 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

5. CWU

Royal Mail

The LRC AGM notes that the policy on Royal Mail agreed by the Labour Party National Policy Forum, and endorsed by Annual Conference 2008, includes "... a vision of a wholly publicly-owned, integrated Royal Mail Group in good health, providing customers with an excellent service and its employees with rewarding employment."

We believe that this is under threat from two directions. Firstly, from the Hooper review which may well propose privatisation, perhaps via a joint-venture. The new Secretary of State for BERR is known to be supportive of privatisation. Secondly from the possibility that the contract for the Post Office Card Account replacement may be awarded to another firm. This would result in another 3000 Post Offices closing.

The AGM agrees:

1. To oppose all attempts to privatise and break up Royal Mail
2. To support the initiatives of the CWU in defence of the policy adopted by the Labour Party Conference 2008
3. To support the initiatives of the CWU in defence of postal workers' pensions and jobs.
4. To raise the matter inside CLPs, Trades Councils, and other bodies."

6. PCS Labour Left

Joint industrial action

The Labour Representation Committee is well aware that PCS and the NUT have been balloting for continuous action over their appalling levels of pay below inflation. Undoubtedly, other Union Members within the TUC, and particularly employees in other sectors of industry are vastly affected in the same way over their pay, terms and conditions. Although the PCS and NUT intend to plan for joint industrial action over pay, there is no guarantee that the larger Trade Unions such as UNISON, GMB and Unite will strike on the same day.

We note that this nature of attitude amongst other such Trade Unions is unacceptable during the grim period of the "Credit Crunch" and a looming economic recession. It is time that we make more demands for joint national action from as many Trade Unions as possible. Conference, therefore, instructs the LRC to carry out the following measures:

- a) Ensure that all our LRC members exert enormous pressure on the leadership of other Trade Unions to join with the PCS and the NUT for industrial action over pay on the same day.
- b) Lobby all existing Trades Union Councils to publish the case for joint industrial action over pay.
- c) Support the re-building of Trades Union Councils in areas where they have no longer been in existence as means for further planning of joint action, especially in terms of any future local strikes.

- d) Present our case for such further action to favourable representatives in the local authorities, regional and national assemblies as well as sympathetic MPs.
- e) To further our aims for joint action inside the Labour Party

7. Unison North East Essex Mental Health Branch

Low pay and trade union rights

This conference calls on the LRC to campaign on low pay, and acknowledges that the campaign on pay has been hindered by Anti-Trade Union legislation and calls for the Trade Union Freedom Bill to be implemented as soon as possible, and future negotiations by the Unions should be substantial and across the board.

8. BFAWU Rathbones 558 Branch

EU and trade union rights

"Over the last 18 months there have been a number of European Court of Justice rulings in the Viking, Lavel, Ruffert & Luxembourg cases that have set a legal precedent which will give employers a licence to "social dump" foreign workers across borders in the EU undermining & seriously damaging the ability of local Trade Unions in each country to negotiate and uphold collective agreements for their workers. These rulings along with legislation such as the "Posted Workers Directive" pose the most serious threat to Trade Union Independence since Taff Vale.

As was seen at this years TUC the RMT, Unite, & Unison delegates all spoke out and successfully brought motions to demand that the TUC take action to oppose and campaign for the reversal of these rulings.

We deny the institutions of the European Union the right to put any of our gains whatsoever into question!

We deny the government the right to transpose those rulings into national law!

We reject all supranational legislation that puts our rights into question!

The LRC therefore resolves to work with affiliates and other campaigns to ensure these abhorrent rulings are reversed."

9. Nottinghamshire NUM Ex & Retired Miners Association

Anti-Trade Union Laws

We, the Notts NUM Ex and Retired Members Association, deplore the continued implementation by a Labour Government of the employment laws, the most draconian anti-trade union laws in the whole of Europe.

We demand the repeal of all anti-trade union laws, in line with Gordon Brown's policy of fairness for all.

10. Alliance for Workers' Liberty

Workers' representation

The LRC notes the following decision by the 2008 AGM of the rail union RMT, affiliate of the LRC:

"This union notes the disastrous results for the Labour Party in the May 1st elections. We believe that working class voters have deserted the Labour Party because it has abandoned working-class people through its policies of cuts, privatisation, war and lining the pockets of the rich at the expense of the poor and low paid.

"We are also appalled at the advances made by the fascist BNP in these elections.

"The union must respond to this by reasserting our socialist politics and by fighting for working-class political representation.

"To that end we resolve to:

- * Convene a national conference on the crisis in working class political representation similar to those organised previously
- * Encourage our regional councils to organise similar conferences on a regional basis
- * Initiate and support the setting-up of local Workers' Representation Committees which can identify and promote candidates in elections who deserve workers' support".

We resolve to join with the RMT in this drive to set up local Workers' Representation Committees, especially through Trades Councils, and to support the national conference now called by the RMT for 10 January.

We further note the resolution passed by LRC conference 2007, which evaluated the ban on political motions to Labour Party conference adopted at Bournemouth in 2007 as follows:

"We cannot pretend that it is business as usual. As currently constituted the Labour Party is no longer a vehicle for promoting progressive or socialist ideas. We need to re-found Labour as a party of radical change.

"The Labour Representation Committee is best placed to take this work forward because it has the capacity to bring together different agents of social change. To do this the LRC must become a campaigning organisation that can reach beyond the Labour Party Left and create the basis of a mass Labour Party..."

We further note, in recent months:

1. The huge public discrediting, through the current capitalist crisis and the consequent government measures of "bankers' socialism", of the dogma that "the markets" must and should rule economic life.
2. The need to pose working-class socialist alternatives both to the discredited market orthodoxy and to "bankers' socialism". Such a comprehensive vision is

necessary to give direction and coherence to the fight back against the coming job cuts, evictions, and cuts in real wages.

3. The risk, if that is not done sufficiently, that the crisis will redound to the political benefit of the BNP and the far right.

4. That no union leadership has challenged the 2007 Bournemouth decision to ban political motions to Labour conference, and that therefore for now the fact that the organised working class cannot express itself politically through the official Labour structures must be considered an accomplished fact.

5. The duty of the LRC to play a leading role in breaking through this barrier to working-class political representation, especially in the situation of political emergency created by the capitalist crisis.

This conference resolves:

1. The LRC should start to work as a Workers' Representation Committee - a broad organisation committed to creating a political voice for the working class.

2. To mandate the incoming National Committee to discuss and prepare, for the next LRC AGM, constitutional amendments reflecting these priorities.

3. To mandate the incoming National Committee to formulate and campaign for a workers' plan of socialist measures in the crisis.

The independent political representation of the working class must be the work of the organised working class itself. There is no substitute or short-cut. The LRC's specific priority must remain the revitalisation, reorganisation, and reorientation of the organised working-class movement in order to achieve accountable, responsive, principled independent political representation of the working class.

Conference resolves to campaign with the RMT and others to rebuild and reinvigorate Trades Councils, and win them to help build, or to become, local workers' representation committees - active campaigning bodies which draw together socialists, trade unionists, social movements and working class communities, and which affiliate to the LRC.

As noted in last year's LRC conference decision, the LRC must "reach beyond the Labour Party Left". This means that in elections the LRC must be ready to support not only official Labour candidates who are loyal to the labour movement, but also non-Labour socialist candidates adopted with the support of local workers' representation committees or other substantial bodies of the local labour movement.

11. Leeds Campaign Group

Labour Party policy

The Labour Representation Committee is concerned about the steady decline in Labour's popularity since the last general election. It believes that this is largely due to the government's failure to adopt and implement sufficient policies to close the gap between rich and poor, reduce fuel poverty, protect public services and the welfare state and distance itself from certain aspects of Tory ideology and philosophy.

In order to reverse this decline and to increase substantially the Party's chances of winning the next general election, the Labour Representation Committee believes that the government should adopt the following measures as a matter of urgency:

1. Introduce a windfall tax on the utility companies.
2. Re-nationalise the gas, electricity and water companies, as well as the railways and the buses.
3. Restore the link between pensions and earnings;
4. Halt all further privatisation and PFI schemes and the continued use of the private sector in our public services.
5. Prohibit executive bonuses and introduce a progressive taxation system, with those on the highest incomes paying tax at a higher rate.
6. Abolish the Tories' anti-trade union laws.

As well as campaigning on the above issues in the short term, the Labour Representation Committee will also campaign, in the longer term, for the government to:

1. Return council housing to full local democratic control, with the right of councils to buy, own and manage their properties, and the abolition of the right to buy, in its present form.
2. Return local education services to full democratic control, with the abolition of city academies and funding for faith schools.
3. Abolish tuition fees and loans for higher education and restore grants and benefit rights to students.
4. Abolish the Jobseeker's Allowance and replace it with Income Support at a percentage of the minimum wage.
5. Abolish prescription, dental and optical charges.
6. Embark upon a programme to increase significantly the public and democratic control of the economy.

12. Nottinghamshire LRC

Transport policy

Government action on transport has to be at the heart of Great Britain's efforts to tackle climate change. Some of to-days proposals such as investment in small scale local measures are welcome but continuing support for motorway widening and airport expansion will increase emissions. If the Government is serious about tackling transport and climate change its policy must be coherent and not contradictory.

13. Islington North CLP

Education

"1. The LRC supports the principle that schools should provide an education for all their pupils which will prepare them for life, not solely for work. We believe that this education is best delivered in a mixed, secular, publicly accountable comprehensive state education system. We believe that private finance has no place in the state education system.

2. This LRC opposes the Government Policy that allows Local Education Authority schools to turn into independent Trusts. We support the provision of state education via LEAs, which can ensure that schools develop in complementary rather than competitive directions to offer pupils and parents real choice. We believe that competition does not offer more "choice", but merely starts a battle for admissions to the schools which appear to have the highest examination results, which the most articulate parents will win. We believe that parents want better schools, not more hurdles to jump over.

3. The LRC believe that admissions policies should be decided by LEAs and not by individual state schools. In particular, we oppose any facility for state funded schools to admit pupils on the basis of aptitude tests should be withdrawn (which would also help to reduce the burden of testing on children). This LRC believes there should be national, fair and objective admissions policy, which does not permit schools to be wholly or partially select on grounds of faith, academic ability or aptitude. To facilitate this, the publication of school "league tables" based on examination results must end.

4. LRC are against private companies or religious groups running state-funded schools, and are even more concerned that such organisations can appoint the majority of school governor, this is fundamentally undemocratic, and could undermine local accountability and threaten diversity.

5. This LRC believes that selection on religious grounds should be phased out. In the interim it should be restricted and there should be a nationally fixed quota of places in faith schools available to children of other/no faith. The LRC values the right to freedom of belief. However, it is not the job of publicly funded schools to instil a religious faith in children and the state is not obliged to provide schools catering for every shade of belief or philosophy. The state has its own interest in ensuring that children grow up to be responsible and capable citizens, and this is best done by requiring schools to teach about religion and philosophy in an objective, critical, and pluralistic manner.

6. The LRC believes that academic selection at 11 should be completely ended because it is unfair and detrimental to the esteem of individual children who are branded as failures or pushed misguidedly in an academic direction and there is no evidence that it produces better results overall.

7. The LRC believes children or parents shouldn't have to choose a specialism at the age of 11 and the continued increase in the specialist school should be halted and then phased out.

8. The LRC opposes the academy programme, which has led to half the Academy Schools mainly specialising in Business Studies and at least two schools providing an education based on creationism.

9. The LRC believes that a schools system with high levels of segregation of children by family income, social class, ethnic group, disability, gender or religious group affiliation is more likely to create a society with high levels of inequality, insecurity and intolerance and a low level of mutual respect and social cohesion."

14. Islington LRC

Housing

"This LRC conference agrees that because of the downturn in the economy, and due to the desperate need for more Council housing, the LRC should campaign for:

- increased public expenditure on Council housing and other public sector projects, with more jobs and apprenticeships in the construction industry;
- Councils to be allowed to purchase repossessed properties and offer the former owners a Council tenancy;
- Councils to be allowed to purchase hard to sell properties to house the homeless;
- Councils to be enabled to take ownership of the housing stock of a Registered Social Landlord should they go out of business;
- the aims of Defend Council Housing.

The LRC National Committee are instructed to draw up a detailed campaign plan of how the above aims could be implemented."

15. New Communist Party

Combating the threat of fascism and racism

This conference recognises that the current economic crisis is likely to lead to political instability, creating both opportunities and dangers for the working class in Britain. In particular, remembering the global events that followed the stock market crash of 1929, we are concerned about a resurgence of fascism, racism and extreme right wing policies both globally and domestically.

We recognise that ultimately the only real defence against fascism and racism comes from the organised and mobilised working class. We acknowledge that already the trade unions are giving leadership and support with their involvement in the Hope not Hate and Stop the BNP and UAF campaigns.

We believe that the most effective way of combating fascist lies and hatemongering is through locally-focused campaigns involving volunteer campaigners knocking on people's doors and talking directly to voters, dealing with their concerns and countering racist and fascist lies. The BNP puts most of its political energy into door-to-door campaigning because it knows that this is effective and it must be countered in the same way.

We call on all LRC members and supporters to involve themselves in their local anti-fascist and anti-racist campaigns.

We are also very concerned about the growth of creeping state fascism through anti-“terrorist” legislation, a succession of draconian immigration and asylum Acts and through increased monitoring of the general population. This takes the form of proposals for identity cards and the database needed to support the scheme;

creating a database to store records of all phone calls, emails and other electronic communications and so on; the compiling of a huge DNA database.

We are also concerned at the extent to which this growing surveillance state is being outsourced and administered by the private sector.

Therefore we call for:

- the repeal of all unjust immigration and asylum legislation;
- the repeal of all “anti-terror” legislation;
- the scrapping of the identity card scheme;
- the restoration of *Habeas Corpus*, in other words no suspect to be detained without charge or trial for more than 48 hours;
- the scrapping of plans for a general communications records database;
- DNA records to be held only in respect of persons who have been convicted of a serious crime;
- An end to private sector involvement in all government record-keeping (inland revenue, passports, national insurance, benefits, military and civil service personnel, health records, education records and so on).
- An end to private sector involvement in policing, in the prison service and in mental health care.
- An end to the demonisation of certain sections of the population: immigrants, asylum seekers, Muslims, Gypsies, Irish and other minorities. An injury to one is an injury to all!

16. LRC Anti-War Commission

Iraq

“The LRC continues to call for an immediate end to the US-UK occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq and supports initiatives to this end. It endorses the “Justice for Iraq” statement (appended below) that was issued by the 19th July Justice for Iraq conference and will campaign on its demands wherever possible”

“We call on those states responsible for the invasion and occupation of Iraq to terminate their illegal and immoral war, and express our solidarity with the Iraqi people in their struggle for peace, justice and self-determination. In particular, we demand:

1. An immediate end to the US and UK-led occupation of Iraq.
2. Urgent action to fully address the current humanitarian crises in Iraq, including the more than 3 million people who have been forced to leave their homes.
3. An end to all foreign interference in Iraq's affairs, including its oil industry, so that Iraqis can exercise their right to self-determination.
4. Compensation and reparations from those countries responsible for war and sanctions on Iraq.
5. Prosecution of all those responsible for war crimes, human rights abuses, and the theft of Iraq's resources.

We demand justice for Iraq.”

17. Socialist Youth Network

Iran

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 continued and intensified programme of economic sanctions against Iran, and backed by Britain and the European Union, despite US intelligence agencies concluding in late 2007 that Iran's nuclear weapons programme was in abeyance and currently posed no credible threat.
3. The impact of such sanctions in exacerbating the realities of high unemployment and inflation for the mass of the Iranian population.

This conference further notes:

1. The ongoing and particularly harsh oppression experienced under the Tehran regime by women, LGBT people, and the country's national minorities.
2. The violent repression faced by progressive movements among students and by trade unionists, who have endured prolonged imprisonment and even the threat of execution for participation in peaceful protests and strikes. Recent examples include the Tehran bus workers' leader, Mansour Ossanloo, Saquez bakers' union president, Mahmoud Salehi (now released) and Farzad Kamangar, a Kurdish teacher trade unionist and human rights activist, who currently faces the death penalty.
3. The Hands off the People of Iran (HOPI) campaign, which is committed to opposing the threat of war and lending solidarity to the radical opponents of the regime, and has gained the support of the national conferences of ASLEF and the PCS.

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.
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 immediate withdrawal of all forces currently 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:

1. Affiliate to HOPI at a cost of £50

2. Support the Socialist Youth Network HOPI event in the New Year.

18. Northern Region LRC

LRC and regional representation

“This conference recognises the growth of the LRC in the provinces and needs to correct the relationship between the National Committee and the newly established groups and formations. To this end we call for the establishment of a new National Committee which reflects this growth. Until such times as we see the emergence of several groups in the regions and the need for further restructuring, then this conference calls for the inclusion of delegates from the regional/city/local branches to sit on the NC. One delegate per affiliated region/city/local branch should be sufficient for the coming year and new arrangements to be reviewed on an “as and when needed” basis in the future. The National Committee should discuss the makeup of the regional structures as the LRC grows.”