

LRC National Committee statement

Resistance is our role

The vast majority, 'the 99%', is being expected to bail out a system for whose crisis they bear no responsibility. The failure of mainstream politics to give expression to the anger that people feel has led to resistance movements like the mass occupation of city squares around the world, campaigns highlighting tax avoidance by companies and rich individuals, and widespread industrial action. The riots in Britain showed the level of alienation that exists within our society.

This same drive for accountability and democracy is behind the struggles in parts of the Middle East and North Africa. These struggles are far from over, whether on the level of democratic elections, women's and trade union rights, or against neo-liberal economic policies and the plundering of their resources by multinational corporations. While supporting these struggles in whatever ways we can, we oppose opportunist imperialist intervention under the guise of liberal interventionism.

Here in Britain the unions are on the brink of mass co-ordinated action to resist the attacks on their members' pensions, while disputes against cuts, pay and privatisation are intensifying.

The Labour Party leadership has totally failed to connect with the new movements and new mood of resistance. Worse still, it has continued to support largely the same economic strategy as the Coalition with only marginal differences over the speed and severity of cuts.

From a position where it initially recruited tens of thousands of new members in the aftermath of the 2010 general election in reaction to the coalition government, the Labour leadership is blowing this goodwill by its refusal to speak up on behalf of the 99%.

The election of Ed Miliband as Labour Leader reflected a rejection of New Labour by Party members but this has not been repaid in any way since. With rare exceptions he has pursued the same agenda as Blair and Brown economically, politically and in terms of Party democracy. The opportunity presented by 'Refounding Labour', for instance, was abandoned in favour of a continuation of centralised control.

The task of the LRC is to play the role that the Labour Party has failed to grasp – to be an essential part of building the resistance and to assist in giving it political expression.

This means ensuring that we are not simply a Labour party pressure group, campaigning internally for changes within the Labour Party but an organisation that mobilises Party members to support the resistance campaigns, whether or not supported by the party, and takes the resistance into the party; working with those inside and outside the Party.

The only prospect of a turnaround in the position of the Labour Party is if the resistance struggles are reflected in the Party, and the affiliated unions and rank and file party members are mobilised to take a stand against the policies of the leadership.



This means in practice that over the coming year:

- We will oppose the austerity drive and attacks on services, supporting all community and strike action – local, sectoral and national – whilst arguing for them to be generalised;
- We will support the building local broad-based anti-cuts campaigns, bringing together trades unionists and service users;
- Although we regret that there is no single broad democratic campaign against the cuts we will continue to work with all serious initiatives resisting the austerity measures, especially fighting alongside the campaigns representing women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and members of the LGBT community; and we will step up the argument for one broad national democratic campaign, based on local campaigns and union branches
- We are an anti-capitalist organisation and in campaigning against the attacks from government and employers our aim will be to demonstrate that the only long term solution is to replace this corrupt and crisis ridden system with a system based on common ownership, democratic control of our society and production for need not greed need, not profit – socialism;
- We have to link those occupying city centres and taking direct action to highlight tax avoidance by the rich and powerful with those defending their pensions or opposing the closure of their library or day centre;
- We need to step up our presence in the unions and Labour Party, with a drive to win the affiliation to the LRC of union and Labour Party bodies at all levels, and to continue to increase our membership. Within the unions we need to network LRC supporters, not counterposed to other formations, to encourage support for the LRC and its initiatives;
- We should also strive for the election of socialists at all levels within the party, the trade union movement and in parliaments, assemblies and councils – the latter being particularly significant if we are to resist the next wave of the government's cuts to local communities.
- Finally we need to work to improve the LRC's own representation and democratic engagement in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation – equality auditing our membership so that the incoming National Committee can address this issue.

Above all else the onus is on us all as members, affiliates and local groups, with the full support of the national structures, to campaign and build the resistance over the coming year.

