



SUN 26

BULLETIN #2

VOTE AGAINST NEC RULE CHANGES!

SUN. 26 SEPTEMBER

Rule changes

Today conference will hear the results of the card votes on the NEC's block-buster disciplinary-procedures rule changes, and on the (generally good) rule changes proposed by CLPs.

It will (probably) also vote on the NEC's late rule changes, to:

- require nominations for 20% of MPs for leadership candidates;
- raise the trigger threshold for open selections where there is a sitting MP to 50%
- cut the number of policy debates at conference from 20 to 12.

These rule changes, in essence, put up high barriers to keep the Blair-era holdover MPs safe in their jobs, and give them exaggerated weight in deciding the leadership.

Before Blair motions were blocked from conference mostly only by their content getting lost in compositing. From 1997 to 2003 only four policy debates (chosen by the unions, without CLP input) were allowed at conference. The number was then gradually increased, with a zig-zag in 2007-9 when motions were banned altogether.

In 2003 and 2009, unions were decisive in expanding or restoring debates at conference. The battle for Labour Party democracy passes through unions as well as CLPs.

Immigration, Afghanistan

Compositing meetings will be held today, Sunday, on immigration and on Afghanistan. Text to look out for:

On Afghanistan, committing to open borders for Afghan refugees and

stopping deportations of undocumented Afghans.

On the immigration motion, ending no recourse to public funds and detention, guaranteeing safe routes for asylum seekers, introducing an easy process for all UK residents to gain permanent residency with equal rights, and rejecting immigration systems based on migrants' incomes or utility to employers.

Climate composites

We urge delegates to vote for the composite on climate led by the FBU (bit.ly/s-gnd) which includes public ownership of energy companies.

It also includes repeal of all anti-union laws, which is highly relevant so that workers can effectively defend ourselves against the effects of climate change and so that we can have workers' climate strikes as well as school students' climate strikes to win the policies we need.

We urge delegates to back the FBU-led composite against the composite led by the GMB, which looks to a fos-

sil fuel, gas, as a staple energy source (see bit.ly/cc-gas for arguments on this).

We regret that, despite arguments from delegates from Edinburgh Central CLP, the composite "lost" public ownership of high finance, which was in the FBU's original text, and is TUC policy.

Tackling the climate emergency demands democratic control of the huge investment flow deployed by the big banks. Setting up auxiliary green investment banks is not enough.

Labour's only General Secretary ever to be nearly voted out

The CAC initially scheduled no vote on confirming David Evans as general secretary, despite that vote being mandated by rule. Then the word was that the platform would try to rush it through without a card vote. Cornered, and having secured enough union votes, Evans finally called for a card vote himself, and gave out the

6PM, SUN 26 SEP: MI FRINGE MEETING

Afghanistan: open borders to refugees, solidarity with Hazaras

With Hazara activists Abbas Ghaznawi and Maida Askari.
6pm-8pm at The Walrus, 10 Ship Street, BN1 1AD.

Join us to swap notes on the conference so far

After the Afghanistan meeting, from 8pm at The Walrus. ☘

word that his 59/41 victory was a great triumph. (Seems to have been about 65/35 unions, 50/50 CLPs). No previous Labour general secretary ever has even suffered a contested vote on their confirmation.

Voting by murmur

We've heard of voting by hand, card and even by acclaim - but voting by murmur is a new one on us.

Yesterday, the chair asked if we were OK to approve the NEC report, to be met by a murmur (as far as this delegate can tell, mainly of people asking their neighbour what was going on). On the basis of that murmur, the report was declared approved and the chair moved us to next business.

It then didn't matter how many delegates got up and said that they wanted a vote on the NEC report. That ship had sailed.

Democracy? Hmmmmmm. (That's a murmur of disapproval).

Referring back the National Policy Forum report

Neurodivergent Labour will move a reference-back on the National Policy Forum report on Monday because it contains nothing on neurodiversity despite ND Labour's submission being the second most popular in this section: bit.ly/ND-ref

Uyghurs and Hong Kong

Motions to conference on Uyghur rights and Hong Kong have not got through the priorities ballot. And this at the very time that the independent trade union movement in Hong Kong is being crushed by Beijing repression. Leaders of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions are in jail,

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and those remaining at liberty have felt so threatened that they have proposed dissolving the movement. The other issues prioritised are all important. Realistically, though, some debates will be little more than rehearsing already-agreed sentiments. We can lose an urgent issue from the agenda even with 20 topics debated. It will be even worse with a reduction to 12.

Another urgent issue "lost" is Brexit. It's not all "done". The Tories are trying to renegotiate their "Northern Ireland protocol" even before it comes into full effect, and thinking of easing their curbs on workers coming in from the EU.

Aberavon and Neath CLPs had motions calling for UK re-entry into the Single Market and the Customs Union. That would restore free movement with Europe and remove the threat of hardening the border in Ireland.

Outside conference on day one

Yesterday, Saturday, Momentum Internationalists were out distributing leaflets and pamphlets, and we helped organise protests outside conference against China's treatment of the Uyghurs, and for Afghan migrant rights. XR were visible, and green new deal activists held a rally.

But on day one, the boldest and loudest presence outside conference was not from the left. The left as a whole, in the aggregate, seems so far quieter than previous years. The biggest presence was anti-vaccine, anti-mask, climate-denying conspiracy theorists. We must be more numerous, louder, more visible!

To add to the worry, policies against

Working with campaigns

We have worked with a range of other campaigns, including the Labour Campaign for Free Movement, the Uyghur Solidarity Campaign, the Hong Kong campaign LMSHKUK, Free Our Unions, the UK support group for the Jewish-Arab movement for equality and justice in Israel-Palestine Standing Together bit.ly/uk-st, the Labour Homelessness Campaign, and Neurodivergent Labour. ♪

Covid didn't even get through the priorities ballot. (There was a sound motion, called for a public inquiry on Covid policies, from York Central CLP). Radical "Build Back Fairer" motions from Newark and Newcastle East CLPs, covering issues like adequate sick and isolation pay for all, have been ruled out for being too wide-ranging (supposedly "not on a single subject").

There is a motion on reconstruction after the lockdowns, from Unite, which is ok as far as it goes, and there are some good motions on the NHS and on social care. ♪

Who are Momentum Internationalists?

Momentum Internationalists was formed by activists from the left anti-Brexit campaign Labour for a Socialist Europe, L4SE, in early 2020 to continue the fight for left-wing and internationalist politics after the Tories finally forced through Brexit. We ran candidates in the Momentum NCG elections of 2020 and promoted motions in the Momentum policy priorities ballot of 2021. We are not just a caucus within Momentum. We have been active on the streets, for example in the Black Lives Matter and NHS pay protests of 2020. We have run public Zoom meetings on the farmers' movement in India, on the resistance in Myanmar, and on the EHRC report and antisemitism in Labour (we reckon there is a real problem there, not just a concocted smear). At this Brighton conference we are organising activities to support Afghan refugees, as well as pushing our favoured motions on conference floor. ♪

