

Socialist Labour Party



MANIFESTO for Socialism

*'Our demands most moderate are,
we only want the Earth'*
James Connolly

£5

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Introduction

The manifesto of the Socialist Labour Party is fundamentally different from the manifestos of all other political parties standing in General, Devolved or Local Elections and all other political parties or organisations whose policies are based on retention of an outdated, corrupt, capitalist system.

Our world totters from crisis to crisis. We are witnessing in real time a genocide of Palestinians in the first instance in Gaza but also through Israeli government policies in the West Bank. The murderous assault on innocents by Israeli armed forces is an atrocity opposed by the overwhelming majority of countries throughout the world, yet the British Government continues to aid and abet this atrocity supported by the Labour Party. This issue is one that could lead to a conflagration not only in the region but worldwide. The SLP supports the Palestinian right to a free and sovereign state unequivocally. We welcome the South African intervention at the United Nations and the International Court of Justice and we also welcome the call from the International Criminal Court to issue an arrest warrant for the Israeli Prime Minister and its Defence Minister.

SLP policies do not seek to ameliorate the austerity caused by the capitalist system by cutting public expenditure and imposing further misery on working people; but to make those responsible pay for the crimes they have inflicted.

In recent years we have witnessed the banking system collapse, resulting in the Government handing over billions of pounds to help the banks and the bankers responsible for the collapse and the austerity which adversely affected millions of people throughout the United Kingdom.

No loans or grants have been made available to help people pay off their mortgages or debts; they have been used to increase the massive salaries and bonuses of the bankers responsible for the crisis and help international shareholders continue to have a slice of the cake.

We are living through an ongoing cost of living crisis wreaking misery upon millions of people throughout Britain whilst at the same time the wealth of billionaires exponentially grows and the number of food banks increases.

Our transport system is decrepit and dysfunctional due to it being run as a going concern rather than as a public service intended to meet the needs of people.

The Socialist Labour Party is not prepared to collaborate with any government which supports the capitalist system. Our Party wants to see the end of capitalism, a system which has caused unemployment, zero-hours contracts (better known as modern slavery), homelessness, cuts and privatisation of our health and social care systems, education and pensions resulting in poverty and poverty related illness and disease not seen since the 1930s. These facts alone demonstrate that capitalism has no place in the twenty-first century.

The only way which Britain can rid itself of the austerity caused by the capitalist system, its banks and financial institutions is for the British people to own and control the means of production, distribution and exchange, a policy which would take Britain's economic and political control out of the hands of these corrupt oligarchs and place that ownership and control of our nation's future in the hands of all its citizens.

James Larkin and James Connolly, the legendary leaders in Ireland, warned that independence from an oppressor will not free people if that independence is simply based on replacing one set of international capitalists with home grown capitalists who continue to believe in the concept of the “free market” and “globalisation” of that system.

There are those who would suggest that this idea is revolutionary, and they would be right. Compromise with crooks is no solution. It requires the removal of the small elite who control Britain’s economy, employment, health service, education system, pensions, and social care systems. The mad obsession with the production of nuclear and conventional weapons of war, designed to destroy life, should be replaced by a commitment to save and improve the quality of life for people everywhere.

Today’s world is wracked by unjust, unlawful wars, racism, xenophobia and the rise yet again of organisations and political parties who preach fascist doctrine.

The policies outlined in this manifesto deal with the injustices which currently face our citizens and in particular the young and the old.

Our Party demands Britain’s immediate withdrawal from NATO, an organisation which continues to threaten our very lives as demonstrated by NATO’s intervention and occupation in wars across the globe.

The Socialist Labour Party wants to see a world free from war, free from want and free from oppression. We want the right to the freedom of assembly, speech and association. We want a world which promotes and protects the environment and the earth’s resources, not just for human beings but for all other forms of life.

Our Party wants to see a world at peace with liberty, justice and prosperity for all; above all we want a Socialist world. We want to see the dreams and aspirations of all those who fought for rights and freedoms become reality; a world where leaders are answerable to the people as a whole. These demands are not excessive; they are most moderate. We only want the earth!

Jim McDaid, Party Leader SLP



Peace

The slaughter of innocents, ethnic cleansing, apartheid, and genocide in Palestine/Gaza has been condemned by the United Nations, supported by the overwhelming majority of countries throughout the world. The SLP welcomes the January 2024 judgement of the International Court of Justice condemning the genocidal action of Israel in Gaza. We also welcome the May 2024 call by Karim Khan, prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to issue arrest warrants for Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Yoav Gallant. We support the isolation of the Apartheid Israeli state, Britain should withdraw diplomatic and all other relations, refuse to have any financial dealings with and indeed fully sanction the Israeli state until a Palestinian state is established with the right of full return for all exiled Palestinians and their descendants. The SLP stands in full solidarity with the Palestinian people.

The world is in a perilous state – in danger of nuclear annihilation. We have been driven to this situation by increasingly desperate, warmongering elites and governments. The conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine have their roots in this approach by western governments and there is the potential for more war and destruction because of US aggression towards China. The SLP opposes all this madness and stands for internationalism, friendship between nations and peoples and against war.

The SLP does not adopt a position in support of any capitalist country. However, we are aware of the origins of the Ukraine - Russia conflict. In short, it is because of NATO expansion, the 2014 CIA organised coup against the democratically elected Ukrainian President and government, and the civil war launched by the Ukrainian coup leaders against their own citizens in the Donbass region of that country. Even after Russia's intervention in 2022 the then Ukrainian government had an opportunity to come to a settlement with the "Minsk" accords. Their own negotiators signed but goaded by then British Prime Minister Boris Johnson (seen recently in a leaked video lauding the openly fascist AZOV brigade) the agreement was reneged on by President Zelensky. Unfortunately for Ukraine any future deal is likely to be so much less agreeable.

The SLP is clear; we oppose globalisation as we do NATO expansionism and US aggression - we say stop funding war. Let us begin working towards a world truly at peace with liberty, justice and prosperity for all.

Economic and political austerity

Since the end of the Second World War the people of Britain, Europe and the world have been fed a monumental lie. People have been told that globalisation of the capitalist system is the only solution to the economic problems facing an increasingly competitive world. The population in Europe was told that only a European Common Market could help resolve issues such as unemployment and poverty.

Globalisation has been determined, not by sovereign nations and their peoples, but by secretive economic and political meetings involving major political figures and major financial figures in confidential discussions at events such as the World Economic Forum in Davos each year.

It is at events such as this that economic and political decisions have been and are being formulated. They are not formulated in the interests of working people but in the interests of the multi-national corporations; bankers and financial institutions such as Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan, AIG and the industries and services that they own and control which support the interests of profit, not need.

The billionaires and politicians meeting in Davos revealed that the richest 10% of the world's population own 90% of the world's wealth – a situation that continues and worsens year by year. This fact begins to explain the cause of austerity.

Austerity can be consigned to the dustbin of history by using 90% of the wealth owned and controlled by just 10% of the world's population to finance the policies essential for an equitable society.

What would this mean? It would spell the end of unemployment in Britain. It would see Britain's youth have free education from primary school to a university degree. It would provide Britain's pensioners with an index-linked pension equal to the average wage.

It would provide a National Health Service available at the time of need, upon demand, and completely free. It would end all private health care schemes and it would take into public ownership all the private pharmaceutical companies who currently make drugs available, not on the basis of need, but on the basis of cost and profit.

It would result in the building or refurbishment of local authority and council housing each year until homelessness is eliminated. This policy meets a basic human need which society owes to all its people.

It would spell the end of zero-hours contracts: these so-called contracts are nothing more than twenty-first century slavery. Workers would be employed on a fair wage with fixed eight-hours per day, five-days per week contractual hours, paid statutory and annual holidays together with sickness benefits.

On a world scale it would end the suffering of people in Africa, the Middle East, South-East Asia, the Indian sub-continent, and South America. The richest 10% has robbed the people of these continents of wealth for centuries, now it is payback time; the people of these continents have the right to receive a standard of life equal to that of the wealthiest nations, wealth which was stolen from them.

The Socialist Labour Party has identified the cause of austerity and has also identified how it can be eliminated. Its cause is globalisation and institutions such as the European Union, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank which for too long have dictated the economic policies of countries whose sovereignty has been eroded and, in some cases, eliminated altogether.

The solution is to put right the wrongs caused by the richest 10% owning 90% of the world's wealth, and implement the proposals in this manifesto with the commitment to take into common ownership the means of production, distribution, and exchange within a socialist society.

Our economy is in a mess that cannot be fixed by cosmetics. The real problem goes deeper than the terrible damage done by the Tories between 1979 and 1997 and by New Labour, the Coalition Government and then the Tories from 1997 to the present day.

The unemployment crisis in Britain is worse than anything experienced since the 1930's. It is a disgrace that in an age of modern technology we have 1.49 million people aged 16-plus officially registered as unemployed – and even that figure is untrue. The unemployment statistics deliberately omit that there are 9.38 million people aged between the ages of 16 - 64 who are unable to get a job and are registered as "economically inactive", a term used by government to hide the real figures.

The real figure of unemployment in 2024 is 10.87 million. The Socialist Labour Party deplores the fact that the Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat and other mainstream parties have no policy to provide nearly 11 million people with the dignity of work, using modern technological means to provide for a shorter working week which could be paid for by the policies contained within this manifesto.

It is capitalism that is responsible for the destruction of our industries and services, mass unemployment, homelessness and the tragic social problems which follow. We can only begin to solve these problems by attacking their root cause, and that means the eradication of capitalism itself.

The privatising of key industries and services, telecommunications, gas, water, electricity, coal, railways and health and welfare care has devastated our economy, which has been in poor shape for over 25 years.

The Labour Party's acceptance of austerity condemns millions to poverty and the ongoing demise of our NHS and other essential public services. Labour used to be accused of simply trying to run the capitalist system better than the Tories; now that is indisputable fact. The Labour Party, Liberal Democrats and the Tory Party simply disagree on the degree of cuts in public services and the time scale whilst all continue to support membership of NATO, the IMF and the World Bank who are responsible for the chaos which is now rampant in countries worldwide.

The capitalist system and its 'free market' policy on which our economy operates is not only corrupt but fundamentally incapable of meeting the needs of the British people. The fact is that nearly half (48%) of the United Kingdom's privately held wealth is in the hands of just 10% of the population. The myth of a share-owning democracy has long since been exposed.

The sell-off of key industries and services has been a major factor in Britain's economic decline. We see what privatisation has done to our railways. Privatisation means not only lack of investment, but it also means low pay, poor conditions, falling of safety standards, the destruction of jobs - and all that, in turn, means higher unemployment and further economic stagnation.

Energy, water, public transport, telecommunications are all vital to any society's welfare. Like health care they are **services** on which we all depend. They belong by right to us all and they must be returned to public ownership. *This time, however, they must be properly managed, so that our industries and services are controlled by the people for the people.*

The Socialist Labour Party is firmly committed to taking all the industries and services privatised in the past 36 years back into public ownership. We want to see Britain's banks - which record £billions in profits - and insurance companies and other industries and services which have been privatised since 1979 returned to public and municipal ownership.

With proper management operating for the common good, public and municipal ownership can always out-perform private enterprise. Nearly 90% of the British people support the policy of taking back the entire rail system into public ownership, whilst the vast majority support the taking back into municipal ownership buses and trams which, together with rail, should be at the heart of an integrated transport system. Experience has shown that privatisation results in chaos and disaster.

The solution is a commitment to public and municipal ownership where industries and services are owned and controlled by the people as a whole.

National Minimum Wage

One of the most terrible indictments in this society is the ever-growing gulf between poor and rich - not only in Britain but throughout the world.

Workers, young and old, are ruthlessly exploited in Britain's so-called service industries, and child labour is back with a vengeance. In Britain today, almost 11 million people live on or below the poverty level. Zero-hour contracts and a so-called 'living wage' are not the answer to the austerity now suffered by millions.

The Socialist Labour Party is totally committed to setting a proper statutory minimum wage as the first essential step in putting things right. We call for the introduction of a minimum wage of £20 per hour (in line with average earnings in the UK for January 2024) – a figure which would give workers £800 for a 35-hour week, or an annual wage of £41,600.

Women workers, including those who work part-time, must be guaranteed equal pay (along with equal conditions and promotion opportunities) and young workers must have the same pay and conditions as other workers.

The introduction of a national minimum wage of £20 per hour is a figure which could be easily met out of the profits of Britain's major companies. Those companies' payments to central government could be doubled without any trouble, particularly if those companies are taken into public ownership.

National Health Service

The Socialist Labour Party is committed to a National Health Service available to all at the time of need, on demand and free of all charges – including prescriptions, dental care, and eye care. Our Party wants all NHS workers to receive wages and terms and conditions that reflect the social importance of their jobs.

Between 2001 and 2024 there has been a continuing loss of hospital beds and closures of hospitals. There have been cutbacks in those areas which specialise in the treatment of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental health and accident and emergency (A&E). In addition, one of the first lines of care has been decimated: namely the number of ambulances and paramedics. These cuts explain why Britain lags far behind other European health care systems.

Meanwhile private health care has continued to flourish on the back of NHS resources as it did under the Labour Government. It is a scandal that a person with sufficient financial resources or a private health insurance provider can get immediate appointments, diagnosis and treatment using in many cases NHS consultants undertaking private work. The Socialist Labour Party would stop all private health care. It is obscene that the NHS is paying between 50% and 100% more to employ agency doctors, consultants, and nursing staff because the NHS is understaffed and underfunded.

Our objectives involve the abolition of all contracting-out services; the strengthening of primary care, not at the expense of secondary or specialist doctors but properly funded health care based on community, family and individual needs; increased training and recruitment in Hospitals and GP practices; the re-opening of all 'mothballed' hospital wards and re-establishing district and cottage hospitals; restricting nurses and doctors hours to the average

working week without loss of pay; the provision of N.H.S. nursing homes free of charge for those who need them and care homes owned and operated by local authorities and not by private owners.

The Socialist Labour Party is committed to the public ownership of the pharmaceutical industry, so that the provision of essential drugs is not determined by profits to shareholders - many of which are multi-national companies - but by the needs of all patients. Most recent available figures (2021) suggest the Government allocated £233 billion for the Health Service that year but the NHS and GP practices only received around 75% of that - the rest being siphoned off to private interests including so-called 'big pharma'.

According to the most recent budget the Government claims that in 2024 the NHS will receive £192 billion plus £12.6 billion for capital funding, a total of £204.6 billion. The cost of restoring the NHS to the best health service in the world requires an immediate further investment of £35 billion with an annual increase equal to the increase in the Retail Price Index.

This sum could easily be met by cutting Britain's defence budget by two-thirds and scrapping the Trident nuclear program. These cuts in defence would provide £200 billion on Trident alone and £35 billion annually from the current conventional expenditure. Our Party is committed to the preservation of life and not to the destruction of life.

Europe

The Socialist Labour Party was totally committed to complete withdrawal from the European Union. This is a first step for the people of Britain beginning to regain control of our economy, sovereignty, and our political power. The EU free movement of capital and labour regime threatened the independence of not only Britain but of all countries which are members of this United States of Europe. The European Union is a capitalist club that makes it easy for multi-national companies to exploit workers throughout its member states, while the sovereignty of those states is increasingly meaningless. We are best out of that vast, faceless bureaucracy.

Withdrawal from the European Union was a central part of the Socialist Labour Party's international policy. Britain's withdrawal from the EU allows our country to develop and expand links with nations in Asia, Africa, South Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean - including Cuba, which has endured 54 years of economic blockade and sanctions because the United States fears Socialism.

The political positions adopted by NATO and the EU with respect to Gaza and all Palestine, and the conflict in Ukraine have further shown both NATO and the EU to be increasingly reactionary organisations in the pocket of US imperialism.

The fact that Britain has not developed an independent foreign policy distinct from NATO, the EU and the US to make fundamental changes in the interests of working people such as abolishing the iniquitous Value Added Tax (VAT) is one more reason for the need to vote SLP.

Immigration and Asylum Seekers fleeing war and persecution

The Government and the media continue to attempt to brainwash the people of Britain regarding the increase in the number of people coming into Britain seeking asylum from persecution in their own land.

The SLP policy on immigration and economic migration is based on the understanding that the crisis facing Britain is caused by the EU's adoption of the Nice Treaty in 2001, resulting in the open borders within the EU which it needs for globalisation.

When the Nice Treaty was signed in 2001, the population of Britain was 59 million and the number of asylum seekers and immigrants roughly equalled the number of people emigrating from Britain.

The policy introduced by the EU removed border controls, resulting in people from 25 countries being able to freely enter other EU countries. This has been the major factor in increasing the British population to 70 million, having a dramatic effect on budgets and public spending designed for a smaller population.

Other countries have also been affected by problems created by overcrowding – problems which include the intensified rise of right-wing elements, which we warned would happen.

The Socialist Labour Party policy on immigration/emigration is clear. A sensible and fair immigration policy should give priority to asylum seekers, citizens of countries previously 'ruled' by Britain, limited to the number of people emigrating from Britain each year.

A sensible policy requires the reintroduction of controlled borders, an issue already being tackled in Ireland which is experiencing a major problem with the UK, as migrant labour crosses over from the North of Ireland to the Republic of Ireland. The Irish government has effectively re-introduced a border between the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Housing

Affordable, adequate safe housing is a fundamental human right. We say that homelessness and housing unfit for habitation are products of the capitalist system. Housing should not be seen as or be a source of private income by private landlords. Homes for rent should be owned and operated publicly through councils or other municipal organisations. In our towns and cities, thousands of properties lie empty and unused – from derelict homes and flats to office blocks which have never been occupied.

Yet thousands of families try to cope day after day with temporary and hostel accommodation, while still more individuals are completely without shelter of any sort. It is the responsibility of government to provide and regulate housing based on need. We want a full programme of local authority housing, homes built and renovated, employing building workers hired directly - using the capital receipts at present still held by local authorities from the sale of council housing. Such a programme would provide not only homes but jobs for building workers currently under-or-unemployed.

It would result in the building or refurbishment of local authority housing each year until homelessness is eliminated. This policy meets a basic human need which any society owes to all its people.

In the short term, we propose measures that could immediately improve the lives and welfare of many people including the abolition of the deplorable 'bedroom tax'; an end to the transfer of public housing stock to the private sector, the reinstatement of housing benefits so that anyone can afford adequate housing. We would integrate housing association properties into local authority ownership and control.

We are committed to a 'fair rents' system so that it again becomes unlawful for any authority or landlord to charge above a level set by an independent rent officer. All tenants must not only have security of tenure but be able to help determine their environment, and legislation should ensure that all authorities maintain high standards of upkeep and repair. The Tories spent £28 billion on house building and the environment yet only provided just over 100,000 new homes over a three-year period. The Socialist Labour Party policy is to provide a million new or refurbished-from-empty homes per year, a policy which will cost £80 billion, with the added value of direct socio-economic benefit including benefit directly to the exchequer. It is a policy for eradicating homelessness and providing homes at an affordable rent.

The cost of providing a million new or empty refurbished homes per year is £80 billion which could and should be paid for out of the obscene profits of Britain's major banks. This policy could eradicate homelessness in Britain.

Education

The Socialist Labour Party is committed to a policy for ensuring the basic right of all people to free, high-quality education from infancy through to old age. We want free crèche, play group and nursery provision for all children, and full-time school-based nursery provision from the age of three.

Children must be taught by qualified teachers; this can only be achieved if teachers' pay, and conditions are substantially improved. The propagation of free schools and academies must be reversed, the changes imposed by the Government have been and are undermining the comprehensive education system.

School services and facilities are being privatised, a policy which must be reversed otherwise eventually only families able and willing to pay for their children's education will be able to access a *full* and proper education.

In addition, the Government continues to destroy the comprehensive school system through public spending cuts and ideological opposition to an education system which provides a first-class education for all, as opposed to the Tories' policy of second-rate education and a third-rate education system for the vast majority of children.

School selection by so-called 'ability' must end, this only furthers the reality of some schools creaming off the best-performing pupils which then leads to other schools being earmarked as failures as they teach those that remain. Britain's education system must be funded according to need, which means radical changes in the way resources are distributed. The Socialist Labour Party is committed to abolishing all private (so-called public schools); 'independent' schools, faith schools and private colleges.

These schools produce a class divide where pupils from public schools secure the majority of places at university, whilst faith schools by their very nature inculcate children with religious beliefs which result in intolerance and prejudice simply because of a child's religion.

If Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish students and those from other religious backgrounds or of no religion can study together at our universities then they can study together in our state Infant, primary and secondary schools.

All privatised education services and their assets must be returned to local public control. Proper administration of nurseries, schools, colleges, or universities is utterly incompatible with privatisation in any form, including competitive tendering.

The Socialist Labour Party is committed to the full restoration of trade union rights for all education workers, whose pay and conditions must be determined through proper negotiating structures.

We believe that class sizes must be sharply reduced, and more teachers employed, thus ensuring educational standards for our children that will benefit the nation as a whole.

We are also committed to promoting full democratic participation by students as well as teachers and governors in decision-making structures. School communities should be more involved in the appointment of head teachers, and accountability should be shared by teachers, parents, students, and pupils.

In higher education, student grants must be restored and the student loan system - which has kept so many young people from education - must be abolished. The Socialist Labour Party believes that grants in line with minimum wage levels should be available for all full-time students. All benefits (including housing and unemployment) that have been withdrawn from students since 1979 should be restored.

Education should be available to all at whatever age. All adults should have the right to planned study leave during their working lives – and effective campaigning by the Labour movement to reduce the working week can turn such an opportunity into reality for millions.

There have been some positive moves in Scotland in terms of its education system, particularly insofar as student grants are concerned. All students should have the right to free education and have the right to receive full grants in respect of the costs of accommodation. These rights should apply to all students at colleges and universities in Britain, part of a system which pays students an income equal to the national minimum wage during the period that they are attending a college or university.

The cost of education (2023) is £105 billion, a sum totally inadequate to pay for an education system capable of meeting the needs of children and young adults in the 21st Century. OECD analysis puts UK public spending on education at 3.9% of GDP in 2018. This was 19th out of the 37 OECD members with data on this measure and below the OECD average of 4.1%. Our education system requires an immediate increase of £20 billion in education expenditure. This cost can be paid for out of the profits of industries and services privatised over the past 35 years.

Pensions

The SLP supports the introduction of a state pension based on equivalence with the national living wage. We also support the right to retirement at a younger age rather than the ever-increasing older ages proposed by governments in Britain both Tory and Labour. We support the retention of the 'Triple Lock' but insist that it should be based on keeping pace with the Retail Price Index (RPI) rather than the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as proposed by the main parties - the CPI rate is consistently lower than RPI.

In Britain there are around 12.4 million people of pensionable age, many growing old in poverty, unable to buy sufficient food or heat for their homes: in many cases, pensioners are having to choose whether to eat or to heat and many must go to food banks to exist. Pensioners are worse off in real terms than they were in 1978. To add insult to injury, the Government, and local authorities 'steal' the savings, assets and homes of pensioners who have to go into a care home. These pensioners have paid for their health and welfare care by paying tax throughout their lives.

The proportion of employees in a public sector occupational pension scheme was 91% compared with 75% in the workplace pension scheme in the private sector.

UK state pensions account for £112.5 billion, but private UK pension schemes now hold assets valued at a massive £3 trillion – more than enough to help pay for every pledge outlined in this Manifesto. The SLP wants a national state pension for all, payable at the age of 65; a national state pension equal to the national average wage with a guarantee that future pension increases are in line with any increase in the national average wage.

Our Party is opposed to the Tory workplace pension scheme which is, basically, based on a money purchase arrangement and in effect on stocks and shares, profit and loss – as opposed to pension entitlement for every person who has earned the right to a standard of living after retirement which recognises the contribution they have made throughout their life.

The WASPI (Women Against State Pension Inequality) issue arising from the 1995 Pensions Act which led to women born in the 1950's being financially disadvantaged through inadequate notice and advance notice of pension age qualifications is an open wound requiring address. The SLP supports full financial reparation to all women affected by this iniquitous act.

The Socialist Labour Party condemns the pension changes as a cynical attempt by the Government to reduce its obligation to pay decent pensions. Our Party rejects all the recommendations and proposals which have already been thoroughly discredited.

Our Party's commitment is to a pension equal to the national average wage. This would give all pensioners an annual pension of £41,600. The additional cost of the pension arrangements proposed by the Socialist Labour Party can easily be met out of the £3 trillion currently invested in private pension schemes.

Energy and our Environment

Britain has never had an integrated energy policy. As a result, our economy has never been able to plan energy supply and, more important, plan the cost of such a policy.

It is a scandal that in the twenty-first century people - mainly unemployed, low paid and pensioners – are having to endure fuel poverty. It is an affront to human dignity that our society compels a person to choose whether to eat or heat yet that is exactly what thousands of people are having to do.

The SLP's policy is to eradicate fuel poverty by taking all forms of energy production and energy supply into public ownership. The cost of providing heat and power should be subsidised so that people have one standard affordable supply of energy which is not designed to make profits for shareholders or pay millions in salaries and bonus to people who control energy industries.

The situation has become worse during the past 10 years, particularly because of the slaughter of Britain's deep mine coal industry, the most efficient and economic deep coal industry in the world. We were told that the closure of Britain's 170 coal mines with the loss of 170,000 jobs and the destruction of mining communities should improve our environment by reducing CO2 emissions.

The Government and those who advocated and supported the closure of Britain's coal mines and coal-fired power stations assured everyone that through a combination of measures, the environment would be cleaner and CO2 emissions would be dramatically reduced, below any other form of energy generation apart from geothermal, wind, wave, barrage, and solar power. It is therefore surprising - to some - that in 2015 the level of pollution, in particular the level of CO2, in cities like London, Birmingham, Glasgow and Cardiff saw an increase in CO2 levels.

Coal-fired power stations in countries such as Italy and the USA, which have been fitted with the minimum of new technology, are producing less CO2 emissions than the gas-fired power stations currently operating in the UK.

The technological developments by the National Coal Board in the UK in the 1970s and 1980s produced coal liquefaction from which oil, gas and other petrochemicals could be extracted; this technology together with fluidised bed and carbon capture eliminates CO2 and other gases. Britain developed coal liquefaction at the Point of Ayr coal mine in North Wales, which could have led to this country being self-sufficient in energy needs as well as providing the basis for the production of many synthetic materials.

However, all this technology has been abandoned. As a result, the UK is now dependent on imported coal (4 million tonnes per year), imported gas including LPG gas, imported oil and imported electricity from French nuclear power stations, a policy which is costing UK taxpayers a fortune.

Coal mines in Wales, Scotland and England have been closed because the Government claimed closure was essential on economic and environmental grounds. Government papers released in 2014 and 2015 prove that the real reason for pit closures was political. Whilst the UK has closed its most valuable resource, other countries have been given money from the United Nation's Fund to spend on coal-fired power plants. Countries which have been authorised to invest in coal production include South Korea, Bangladesh, India and Japan. In March 2015 Japan designated \$1 billion for coal plants in Indonesia.

Coal plants in India and Bangladesh have been permitted loans totalling \$630 million; at the same time Germany has been closing its nuclear power stations and now produces 30% of electricity in coal-fired power stations; no wonder Germany's economy became the strongest in Europe. Germany has pursued this policy unfettered by any EU Directive!

Having taken the decision to destroy our valuable indigenous deep mine coal reserves we now see 80% of CO₂ emissions directly related to the use of oil and gas - while the Government desperately continues to pursue a nuclear power programme, apparently oblivious of the nuclear disasters at Windscale (now called Sellafield in 1957); Three Mile Island (1979), Chernobyl, (1986) and Fukushima (2011); disasters which resulted in Germany, Italy, Japan, and many other nations abandoning nuclear power.

The price for deadly nuclear power is astronomic. It is more expensive than coal produced with carbon capture, and more expensive than gas. For years Britain subsidised its nuclear power industry to the tune of £1.3 billion a year and is now subsidising the development of a new nuclear power station at Sizewell with others mooted. This is despite further serious nuclear incidents in Ukraine and particularly in France in a nuclear power station which is the same type as the Sizewell project.

Most recent estimates (probably in themselves underestimated) point to the Government having to subsidise £1.9 billion per year from 2006 on decommissioning nuclear power stations together with clean-up costs.

The very concept of developing and using nuclear power is terrifying. To store Britain's highly dangerous useless plutonium, a new storage facility costing at current estimates £53 billion is proposed - this cost excludes annual running costs of such a facility running into £tens of millions or the projected £260 billion cost of 'fully' decommissioning Britain's existing 20th century nuclear waste. More than a quarter of a ton of plutonium has been discharged into the Irish sea and the radiation level at the discharge pipes at Sellafield into the Irish Sea are 56 times higher than the nuclear test area in the Pacific Ocean.

Nuclear energy has been and is a catastrophe in economic, energy and environmental terms. If the nuclear power subsidy had been applied to clean coal technology Britain today would be self-sufficient in cheap indigenous energy

The proponents of pit closures have in recent years come up with a new proposal: the system known as **fracking** to extract gas from underground. This system is dangerous both geologically and environmentally. Fracking not only causes earthquakes but releases dangerous pollutants into the atmosphere and contaminates our water. Fracking for gas is far more dangerous to the environment than the production of coal, oil or natural gas, or gas produced by clean coal technology.

While developing properly our renewable energy sources – in particular, solar power - Britain needs a long-term integrated energy policy based on a deep mine coal industry, publicly owned and controlled, fitted with carbon capture technology which would produce the cheapest electricity from reserves that would last a thousand years.

An energy policy of this kind would result in the employment of 100,000 people, and our negative balance of payments would disappear as a direct result of Britain no longer having to purchase expensive subsidised coal, oil and gas from abroad, a policy which drains the United Kingdom's balance of payments.

Our policies are based on environmental concern. We argue that 'global warming' should not be confused with climate change. The climate has been changing for millions of years. The earth's climate will continue to change, but the main reason why we have global warming is that mankind has demonstrated yet again its irrationality by deforestation which has already destroyed large areas of rain forests and woodlands worldwide. If one traces back CO2 emissions to a time before de-forestation worldwide it can be seen that the rainforests and woodlands generally were the main protector against CO2 emissions.

Our planet's naturally changing climate together with the destruction of the world's rain forests is also resulting in rising sea levels. The rise in sea levels can be used by constructing Desalination Plants which turn sea water into clean water and would (as the scientist and peace campaigner Professor J. D. Bernal said) make the deserts bloom.

The Socialist Labour Party's energy policy is not only cost effective but a policy which would provide cheap energy and a cleaner and safer environment for people. Our proposals would **reduce** CO2 emissions and energy costs, not increase them.

The introduction of this integrated energy policy would cost £10 billion per year. This would include the cost of new technology for coal-fired power stations and moving away from nuclear power. This policy involves development of alternative environmentally acceptable forms of energy such as wave, tide, barrage, geothermal and solar power.

The cost of developing a properly integrated energy policy could easily be met by closing our nuclear energy power plants as Germany and Japan have done and at the same time imposing an import control on all imported fuel.

Transport

For social and economic reasons, the Socialist Labour Party believes that all transport systems and industries - on land, sea, rail, inland waterways and air - should be in public and municipal ownership, managed in a fully accountable way and complementing, not competing with, each other. This means that all transport (public or freight) and transport networks (roads, rail, waterways) would operate on behalf of the British people, our communities, our regions and the environment.

Even our class enemies agree that the sell-off of Britain's rail network has been an unmitigated disaster. Since the rail system was privatised by the Tories it has required the intervention of the state to save the rail system when rail franchise companies collapse.

Government has had to take privatised rail companies back into public ownership. This government nationalisation - using taxpayers' money - produced a profitable and efficient system, as with East Coast rail which the Tories then sold off to Richard Branson. This policy resulted in taxpayers' paying for the investment and Branson taking over a nationalised rail network which on any test means it was privatised on a subsidised basis to Virgin.

The Tory Government also sold off its share in the nationalised Eurostar rail system which it jointly owned with France and Belgium for £60 million. This idiotic policy sold off an efficient share which was bringing the UK £7 million profit each year. Capitalism argues that this is value for money. We say it is tantamount to giving away the family silver or the equivalent of assigning an asset which was developed and owned by Britain's taxpayers.

The Socialist Labour Party wants to see the entire rail network taken back into public ownership and control. At the same time we want to see Britain's bus and tram services taken into or back into municipal ownership. This requires massive public investment. The development of a nationalised integrated rail, bus, tram, motorway, air transport system and waterways should be funded by the government.

Experts now acknowledge the detrimental effects of the car and heavy duty lorries on our environment, our roads, our villages, our countryside. Only Socialist policies for an integrated public transport system can tackle the problem.

Long distance road haulage should be replaced by rail, sea and/or waterway. Regenerating our railways, bus and tram networks and our badly disused inland waterways – would save us all from much of the hideous juggernaut lorries that do so much environmental damage.

If the freight which is currently transported by thousands of juggernauts on Britain's roads was transported by rail the effect would be incredible. For example, one train would remove 700 juggernauts from the roads in Britain. Just think how positive that would be in terms of road safety and environmental pollution.

Eighty percent of the UK's pollution – including CO2 emissions – is produced by road, airlines and shipping transport which use oil, gas, diesel, and other petrochemicals.

A Socialist policy means not only taking all the railways, buses, and trams back into public ownership, but putting into place low fares or free travel which result in greater use, stimulating local economies while liberating people from the congestion, chaos and pollution created by high-cost transport.

This means creating or restoring public transport networks to serve isolated areas and communities. A sensible integrated transport policy must also involve the introduction of environmentally friendly trams or trolley busses in all our cities and towns.

Encouraging the safe use of bicycles and the protection of pedestrians, especially in our towns and cities, would further help to reduce our dependence on cars. This system can only work provided Britain establishes cycle ways which are separate from roads.

The SLP makes clear that re-nationalising all forms of transport which have been privatised, taking them into public ownership and control means that not one penny compensation will be paid to the companies - many are foreign owned - whose shareholders have made a fortune out of assets which should belong to the British people.

Other countries - France and China being notable - sustain first class public transport systems; there is no reason why Britain could not do the same, instead of wasting billions on the disastrous failure of the HS2 project..

Developing a policy which ensures that all our rail, bus, tram, airline and waterways are in municipal and public ownership, with accountability at all levels, will require an investment of £200 billion.

Repeal All Anti-Trade-Union Laws

The anti-trade union laws which were introduced by the Tory Government between 1979 and 1997 were intended to emasculate the trade union movement, prevent trade unions and workers taking industrial or strike action. The object was to have a compliant workforce and to remove rights which trade unions and trade unionists had won in 1906. The legislation was designed to allow low pay and disgraceful working conditions, now embodied in zero-hours contracts and companies using gang masters.

The Socialist Labour Party is committed to scrapping these laws altogether. They have been a weapon used to frighten workers and their unions and are designed to stop them taking action to protect jobs, decent wages, and good conditions – including hours of work, holidays, sick pay, and pensions.

We believe that trade unions, controlled democratically by their members, are vital for a free and just society. British workers are being denied their human rights set out in the United Nations Charter and the International Labour Organisation conventions. Trade union activity has become in many cases a criminal offence. Workers are denied the right to effectively defend themselves or other workers without facing prosecution, and more than two decades into the 21st century we still have no legal right to strike in Britain.

Trade unions which seek to defend jobs, services or industries face massive penalties, including the freezing of union funds (sequestration) or even receivership - all designed to stop unions from functioning effectively on behalf of their members, or in support of members of other trade unions.

Tragically, too many trade union leaders are failing to defend their members against exploitation, abuse and loss of jobs. The Socialist Labour Party makes clear that trade unions should adopt a policy of non-compliance with unjust laws.

Our forebears had a policy of **non-compliance** with such laws, a policy which brought about trade union recognition and decent wages and working conditions – like the non-compliance by the suffragettes, which secured the right of women to have a vote.

Defiance by the trade union movement as a whole would render government anti-trade union legislation totally ineffective - as it did when the workers of Birmingham joined Britain's striking miners and stopped work to secure victory for the National Union of Mineworkers at the Saltley Coking Plant in Birmingham and, later, securing the release of the Pentonville Five, in 1972.

Non-Compliance with unjust laws would have saved and protected industries such as coal, steel, car production, farming, shipping, heavy and light engineering and thousands of jobs throughout Britain from the butchery inflicted by both Tory and Labour governments between 1979 and 2024.

The Socialist Labour Party's policy is for a programme of positive trade union rights in line with the United Nation's Charter and the Conventions of the International Labour Organisation. Despite Britain being a signatory, the UK's governments and its courts have acted over decades in clear breach of UN and ILO Conventions.

Military Expenditure

Britain's military expenditure is recorded by Government sources as £57.1 billion per year. However the Government deliberately misleads the British people by withholding information about its incurring costs on 'adventures' in different parts of the world. For example, Britain's bases in Cyprus, the Falklands and European countries such as Germany and its ventures in the South China sea and around the world (so-called "peacekeeping operations") cost Britain further £billions per year.

The real costs in military expenditure are hidden from the British people. For example, official Government sources for the Trident replacement project give a figure of between £15-20 billion with a lifetime cost of £37.5 billion but other authoritative projections put the real cost at £205 billion and rising! There are further costs amounting to £billions for ineffective status symbols like aircraft carriers, plus additional £billions in annual maintenance costs. Taxpayers' money is committed to increasing Britain's NATO contribution from 2% to 2.5% of GDP - in monetary terms an increase of £11 billion on current GDP figures, spent on what can only be described as insanity.

The unlawful war inflicted on Iraq in 2003 by the United States and Britain resulted in over 1,000,000 deaths and thousands of men, women and children suffering severe injuries. The invasion of Iraq was a war crime; Tony Blair, who was Prime Minister at the time and those Government ministers who supported him should be charged by the International Criminal Court as war criminals.

Britain has joined with the United States in supporting Israel – and Saudi Arabia - by providing weapons which have been used against the Palestinian, Syrian, Iranian and Yemeni people. This has led to the widespread destabilisation of a whole region of the world. The objective is the same as it was in Iraq and in Libya in 2011: regime change, and compliant governments which do the bidding of the US and Western nations.

Along with the US, the British Government does nothing to stop the fascist state of Israel occupying land which belongs to the people of Palestine, effectively condoning the bombing and slaughter of men, women and children in Gaza, an action condemned by the overwhelming majority of people throughout the world, as demonstrated by votes at the United Nations General Assembly which has called for Israel to withdraw from all the Palestinian territories it has occupied since 1967.

Nor has Britain challenged the US (which publicly preaches that countries should not occupy the sovereign territory of any nation) in its continued occupation of Guantanamo, an integral part of Cuba, using that area of Cuba as a prison to hold people from all over the world who have not even been charged with any offence.

Another intervention is in Ukraine, where in 2014 a coup (backed by the West) overthrew a democratically elected government, replacing it with forces who are neo-fascist and act in the same way as fascist forces in the Ukraine acted during the Second World War when they supported the Nazi invasion of what was then the Soviet Union.

The Socialist Labour Party would cut defence expenditure by two thirds. This includes scrapping the £205 billion cost of replacing the Trident nuclear programme based on the Clyde in Scotland. This money should be used to save and improve the quality of human life and help make Britain's National Health Service and its social care the best in the world.

Taxation

The Socialist Labour Party is committed to the introduction of a completely new tax system – one which would abolish the iniquitous VAT, and transfer tax liability from indirect to direct taxation.

Our Party would increase corporation and capital gains tax by 100 per cent; these measures together with a graduated income tax system would wipe out the European Union-initiated VAT/indirect tax system, as well as ensuring that the ‘fat cats’ and all those on very high incomes would have to pay income tax directly in accordance with the income they receive: a fair policy based on Socialist principles.

The Socialist Labour Party is committed to the implementation of a taxation policy which is fair, equitable and provides the funds necessary for all Britain’s social policies including health, welfare, pensions, and benefits that protect our people as a whole. Public sector receipts for 2022/2023 produced £1,095 billion, of which £273.3 billion was collected in income tax, and £176.5 billion National Insurance Contributions.

The Socialist Labour Party would abolish the iniquitous Value Added Tax (VAT), a tax introduced as a result of a Directive from the European Union. In 2023 the amount of VAT paid by the taxpayers of Britain was £170 billion. This tax is patently unfair, paid for by the poor while benefiting the rich. VAT results in multi-millionaires paying exactly the same tax in VAT for goods or services as someone who is unemployed, or on a zero-hours contract or a pensioner struggling on a pension.

To add insult to injury, both Tory and Labour Governments have been allowed to ‘steal’ the savings, assets and homes of pensioners or people who have to face long-term hospitalisation or who have to go into care homes.

Our Party is committed to stopping this outrage. To take someone’s home, their savings and assets simply because they have to go into care is tantamount to theft. The seizing of a person’s home to pay for care tramples on the human rights of people who during their working lives have paid taxes and national insurance contributions so that the State would cover the cost of their health and welfare care at the time of need.

Meanwhile, Inheritance Tax impacts on families adversely; for example, in the event of both parents of a family dying together in an accident their assets are taxed. The SLP supports inheritance tax only for any person who leaves sums or assets of more than £10 million.

We would introduce the following tax bands which are fair to all:

Band	Income per annum (£)	% payable
1	Up to 40,000	0
2	40,000 - 60,000	20
3	60,000 - 75,000	30
4	75,000 - 80,000	35
5	80,000 - 100,000	40
6	100,000 - 175,000	45
7	175,000 - 300,000	50
8	300,000 - 500,00	70
9	500,000 - 1,000,000	80
10	Over 1,000,000	90

These tax calculations are based on Treasury statistics and do not include national insurance contributions or other forms of income which are not specifically taxable.

The taxation bands in our Manifesto would increase income tax on the basis that billionaires, multi-millionaires and those who are receiving the most income would pay the most tax.

No tax is levelled at Band 1 as this is the level set for our proposed minimum wage.

Our system of taxation would help ensure that austerity and unemployment would be eliminated, and people would receive a minimum income based on the national average wage.

The Socialist Labour Party's taxation policy would help to provide sufficient monies to fund its policies thus ensuring that never again should a person's home be stolen from him or her to pay the costs of social welfare or care home facilities, costs which workers have already paid for during the course of their working lives.

The income tax bands set out are similar to the successful tax bands in force in 1945 to 1951.

The Socialist Labour Party's tax bands would produce an annual tax income sufficient to help pay for all the policies outlined in this Manifesto.

Equality

This is a time of rising violence in our society and throughout Europe; an increase in hate crime and knife crime in particular is linked to intensified racism, xenophobia and homophobia alongside other social evils which are tragically affecting our young people. The SLP opposes discrimination in any form be it based on race, sex, disability, age, religious belief or sexual orientation; we set out below some of our key policies.

Equality for Women

Despite comprising half of humanity, women in the 21st century still struggle for equality with men. Obviously, the position of women varies greatly in different societies around the world, but they have a right to expect equal rights in the fourth richest, so-called developed country in the world.

In the UK great strides have been made since the early 20th century when the Suffragettes fought for women to have the right to vote. All professions have become open to women, equal pay acts laws have been passed to give rights at work and divorce laws have been simplified.

Women apparently can now 'have it all' as the saying goes. Why is it, then, that there is still a large gender pay gap, with TUC statistics showing that women earn on average 15% less than men? Part-time workers, the majority of whom are women, earn 35% less per hour than men working full time. The biggest pay gap was shown to be amongst health service staff where women earn on average £16,000 a year less than male counterparts. In the Arts, Media and Sport the gender pay gap is 27.5% and in manufacturing it is 24%.

Low-paid jobs such as carers, cleaners, nursery assistants and teaching assistants are most frequently the preserve of women. It is largely women who have to work part-time because they are the most likely to be suffering the constraints of juggling children, looking after elderly relatives, running a home and having to earn a living.

This burden has increased in the past 36 years because of Government attacks on welfare services, including the Government implementation of Care in the Community.

With the Government now imposing 37% cuts on local government funding, services are struggling even more, and increased responsibility is falling on the unpaid labour of women to care for the vulnerable.

The SLP would seek to ensure flexible maternity/paternity leave on full pay and paid leave for women and men to care for sick dependants.

Socialist Labour believes in providing real options for childcare, ranging from free, good quality nurseries to financial support that enables parents to care for children at home.

All communities should provide good quality care and support for elderly, disabled and mentally ill people thus relieving the caring burden carried by relatives.

Women and girls must have equal access to education and training including crèche facilities for parents returning to work or study after time off to care for children.

It is SLP policy to defend women's right to choose whether to have children. Undoubtedly, the lives of women have been made safer since abortion has been legal, but this hard-won gain has to be fiercely guarded.

70% of women prisoners have mental health problems.

37% of women in prison have attempted suicide.

20% have been in the care system as children compared to 2% of the general population.

70% of women in prison are drug addicts.

30% of all adult women in prison have had no previous conviction.

When women are sent to prison one third of them lose their homes and often their possessions. They also often lose their children. Just 5% of women prisoners' children remain in their own homes and only 9% are cared for by their fathers. Home Office research shows that 66% of women imprisoned have dependent children and at least a third are lone parents.

Incarceration is not the most efficient means of dealing with these social problems and finances should be diverted to targeting the causes of the numerous problems.

Meanwhile, violence, pornography and sexual exploitation continue unabated. If anything, there has been a shift backwards over the past generation in ideas about women's dignity, independence and freedom. On average two women a week are killed by a male partner or by a former partner; this constitutes around one-third of all female homicide victims whilst domestic violence accounts for up to a quarter of all recorded violent crime. Each year there are up to 13 million separate incidents of physical violence or threats of violence against women from partner or former partners.

Although it is, of course, true that men also suffer physical violence and abuse, women are much more likely than men to be the victims of abuse and sexual violence and are far more likely than men to suffer multiple incidents of abuse and sexual violence.

Despite decades of high-profile campaigning, attitudes to rape have scarcely changed. There are countless examples of women being blamed for rape. It is either what women wear or how women behave and or it is who women sleep with or it's what women drink. 'Blame culture'

attitudes towards rape victims are widespread. The onus is constantly put on the woman to protect herself and yet there is a consistently low conviction rate in rape cases. The Socialist Labour Party has always argued that a victim of an alleged rape or attempted rape should remain anonymous. Because the SLP believes in the principle that any person is innocent until and unless proven guilty, the Party also believes that the accused in alleged or attempted rape should also remain anonymous until proven guilty.

Despite legislation to protect them, thousands of women from ethnic minority backgrounds face the threat of forced marriages, honour killings, and female genital mutilation. It is estimated that 66,000 women and girls, mainly of British/African descent have been mutilated in this 'cultural' ritual, and thousands are at risk. That this barbaric behaviour cannot be prevented in 21st century Britain is an absolute disgrace.

Sexual harassment in the workplace has been and remains a real problem. Women should be fully aware that there is recourse in law in the event of sexual harassment. All employers should display details in the same way as they display details of health and safety.

Only a real shift in attitudes across the whole of society can change these situations and socialist policies would help provide a more caring society.

Equality for Youth

You just have to look at the type of apprenticeships that are available to realise that the many of them are simply ways that a company can pay their young staff less. *Recent Government initiatives have been unscrupulously utilised by employers to call almost anything related to employment training such as induction training an 'apprenticeship', thus accessing Government funds and subsidies.*

These meaningless apprenticeships have gone hand in hand with attacks on every area of real education and training. What hope for the future can young people have in British society today?

Hopelessness leads to despair, which is not solved by the 'law and order' outlook of both the Tories and Labour. Young people must be able to participate fully in our society and in the world, while they themselves are growing and learning.

Full employment and equal pay policies are necessary to help achieve a fair chance for all Britain's young people. Such policies would help rebuild Britain's industrial and manufacturing base – provided there are policies to restore Britain as an industrial and manufacturing nation. It is essential to establish proper apprenticeship schemes, paying a full wage during the period of apprenticeship. A reduction in the working week with no loss of pay would not only help maintain jobs but create more jobs for our youth (and create more purchasing power).

Proper funding would be restored in further education too, with student grants and a payment equivalent to the minimum wage, and by restoring benefits during vacation.

The civil rights and liberties of youth must be respected by society as a whole. We support voting rights at age 16. We believe in comprehensive sex education in schools, with contraceptive advice and contraception available to all. Young people should never be forced or coerced into parenthood whilst they still need parenting themselves. Abortion on demand, based on the right to choose, must be available.

In today's society the young are especially vulnerable to the abuse of police powers; Socialist Labour's policies (including scrapping 'stop and search' laws) would end that abuse.

Young people - including Black, Asian and Irish youth, those involved in the peace and animal rights movements and in anti-globalisation campaign groups - have been specifically targeted by the counter terrorism units of the police and the security services. We are committed to ending this intrusion and injustice, and to scrapping the laws and the agencies responsible for all surveillance of innocent citizens.

Children's Rights

Every child has a right to live in peace and comfort with decent education, housing, free health care and caring adults to provide a safe, nurturing and loving environment.

Unfortunately, despite the UK being amongst the most prosperous nations in the world this is not always the case. In 2024 it is estimated by the charity Child Poverty Action Group that 4.3 million children live in poverty in the UK.

- **30%** of children in an average classroom live in poverty.
- **70%** of children in poverty have at least one parent in paid work.
- **47%** of children from Black and minority ethnic groups are in poverty, compared to **24%** of white children.
- **44%** of children living in lone-parent families are in poverty.
- **900,000** children in poverty in England alone miss out on free school meals.

This is unacceptable in one of the wealthiest countries in the world.

Ongoing austerity measures have meant a cut in public expenditure on children's social services and support systems as well as the criminal justice system thus leaving the most vulnerable constantly worse off.

The full human cost of child poverty is impossible to estimate. Nobody can measure adequately the cost in physical or emotional suffering of growing up in a damp or overcrowded home, of having a parent who relies on charity to put food on the table or of going to school in shabby second-hand clothes.

But alongside the human cost, research has shown that child poverty has a huge financial cost which it is possible to estimate, and which is borne by us all.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report on UK poverty estimated that poverty cost the country £78 billion in 2023.

About half this cost stemmed from the fact that adults have lower productivity and a higher risk of unemployment if they suffer the disadvantages associated with growing up in poverty. The other half was the additional public spending required to deal with social problems resulting from high levels of child poverty.

If this £78 billion were to be used to provide jobs, housing, and social programmes to support poor families then child poverty in Britain could be eradicated.

Children have a right to be protected from all forms of violence and abuse. Historical cases of child abuse have been much in the news recently, but children still live with these problems inside and outside the home.

According to a study by the NSPCC young people aged between 13 and 18; 33% of girls and 16% of boys experience sexual violence and as many as 250,000 teenage girls suffer from abuse at any one time. Only educational programmes designed to teach respect and consideration for one another can help improve this situation.

Every year thousands of British school girls are spirited abroad to marry men they've never met. According to Department for Education statistics, each year at least 8,000 British girls at risk of a forced marriage are brought to the attention of schools, police forces and social services. These children are in UK schools, and it is essential that more efficient measures are implemented in the event of their absence from school.

A civilised society can have no higher goal than to do its best to ensure that every child is cared for physically and emotionally throughout childhood into adult life.

Disability Rights

Those of us who are in any way disabled want rights, not charity, and the Socialist Labour Party wants provisions that enable everybody with disabilities to play a full and active role in building a better society. To achieve this, we want to outlaw all discrimination in employment, services and amenities. Disabled people are best able to help themselves through control over their own lives.

There must be full and equal access to transport, services, and activities. We want provision of 'self-assessment' so that those who depend on aids such as wheelchairs can be involved in deciding what equipment is best for them to use. We want an end to segregated education, and provision of resources to ensure that integrated education works properly.

The Socialist Labour Party wants an end to institutionalisation; people with disabilities should be able to live and participate fully in the life of our communities.

For those of us struggling with forms of mental illness there must be support that meets inner and outer human needs. Mental ill health takes a variety of forms, which are affected by class, age, gender and race. We demand policies that acknowledge these differences and provide care which aims to help and heal.

Devolved Nations and Regional Assemblies

The creation of the Scottish Parliament and the Assembly for Wales in 1999 have not altered the nature of capitalism in Scotland and Wales and the need for Socialist policies that apply to those countries as well as England. Whilst in both countries there have been significant policy decisions - particularly in Scotland - these in themselves are not enough. In Wales, devolution has not brought primary law-making powers. During the past 26 years, Wales has lost nearly all its coal industry, an industry which at its height employed 140,000 people and which was the envy of the world, producing the finest anthracite coal available anywhere.

Alongside this destruction, thousands of other jobs have been butchered, first by the privatisation of British Steel and then by decisions of the new private steel industry owners to close plants throughout Wales, Scotland and the Northeast of England.

The Socialist Labour Party has warned in General Elections previous to 2024 that there would be steel plant closures at all the steel plants in Wales. The picture in Scotland has been the same with the butchery of the steel industries, including the closure of the giant steel plant at Ravenscraig, whilst shipbuilding in Scotland - once the envy of the world - is now a rump. The docklands in Scotland, as in Wales, and the Northeast of England, have become theme parks rather than bustling centres of international trade. In both Scotland and Wales, as in England, health care, education, housing, employment and community life have continued to deteriorate.

In 1997 the Socialist Labour Party warned that the policies of both the Tories and the Labour Party would lead to more closures and lost jobs in Wales, Scotland, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and the Northeast. Tragically, our predictions have proved to be accurate, as the Labour Party followed the Tories and slavishly adopted the 'free market' system which has destroyed not only people's jobs but their communities and way of life.

The Socialist Labour Party acknowledges and celebrates the history of both Scotland and Wales with their rich and specific cultures, ours is a *Socialist* and not a nationalist perspective. We believe that only the people of Scotland and Wales have the right to vote for or against independence. The issue of devolution or full independence for Wales, Scotland and/or devolution for regions in England can only be determined by the people of Wales and Scotland and by the people in the regions or counties of England.

Devolution has demonstrated over the years that it can be a power for good; the policies for example operated by the former Greater London Council (GLC) and the South Yorkshire County Council implemented efficient transport systems by using subsidies which saw thousands of people using public transport as opposed to travelling by car.

The Tories hated these devolved County Councils (and, in particular, the use of subsidies for transport) whose transport systems were more efficient and more economic than the commercial policies of County Councils which followed the Government's line.

For example, the cheap efficient subsidised South Yorkshire County Council transport system was more economic than the West Yorkshire County Council commercial transport system which cost far more than South Yorkshire's (Socialist) subsidised system.

Constitutional Reform

The Socialist Labour Party is firmly committed to a written Constitution which incorporates a democratic proportional representation voting system. Proportional representation, like common ownership, is a Socialist demand. It was a demand advocated by outstanding Socialists such as Jim Larkin, James Connolly, John McLean, and Keir Hardie.

It has for years been a cornerstone for Socialists arguing for a democratic electoral system in the UK. If proportional representation had been in force at the end of the Second World War, no Tory Government would ever have been subsequently elected. The significance of a proportional representational system – even one as weak as the system used for European Union elections – has demonstrated that the elected representatives more accurately represent the will of the people than the ‘first past the post’ system which allows the election of MPs with who could get elected by less than 20% of the vote.

There are many people - including people on the Left - who oppose proportional representation on the grounds that it would always result in a coalition government. This argument is not only wrong but has been proved to be wrong. For example, in France a French Socialist Party was elected in the 1980s with over 50% of the votes. In the UK the Labour Party achieved its highest vote of nearly 50% in 1951 when it lost the election to the Tories who polled a vote well below. Ironically, in 1951 the Labour Party was supported by Socialists from the North of Ireland, who wouldn't have helped form a coalition but who would have supported the Labour Party which had secured a majority of votes.

The Socialist Labour Party would *abolish* the House of Lords whose members are appointed and not accountable. Members of the House of Lords are paid £342 per day just for turning up for a few minutes and then leaving. In addition, they also receive substantial subsistence and travel allowance. ***It is time they were consigned to the dustbin of history.***

Our Party is committed to the establishment of a republic with an elected Head of State. If most countries in Europe are republics there is no reason why our country should not become a republic with a Bill of Rights.

The Case for Socialism

The policies set out in this Manifesto outline the case for Socialism; the Manifesto deals with the injustices and inequalities that people currently face in our society. Our policies deal with issues of immediate importance, but throughout we stress that the problem facing our people can only be resolved by abolishing capitalism and replacing it with a Socialist system whose institutions represent people as a whole, and which are democratically controlled by and accountable to the people.

We want to secure for the people a full return of all the wealth generated by our industries and services based on common and social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

We are committed to establishing the most equitable distribution of that wealth, re-establishing a free national health service available at the time of need and upon demand available to all.

The Labour Party's Shadow Chancellor's policy announcement on 28 May 2024 that:: 'Today I want to put forward a simple proposition: that this changed Labour Party is today the natural Party of British business' means that Labour is now no different from the Right-wing Conservative Party which has wreaked havoc on the British people over the past 14 years. It also announces the destruction of a Labour Party which was formed to change Britain from a capitalist society into a Socialist one.

It is a statement which should persuade people to vote for the Socialist Labour Party - a Party committed to freedom of assembly, movement, speech and association, and to promoting and protecting an environment in which the Earth's resources are properly used – not just for human beings but for all forms of life. In simple terms, we want a Socialist world.

The Socialist Labour Party wants to see a world that is truly at peace, with liberty, justice and prosperity for all.

Our demands are not excessive; our demands most moderate are, we only want the Earth.

Appendix

The Socialist Labour Party was re-established in 1996 by leading figures of the Left in the Labour & Trades Union movement, foremost amongst them Arthur Scargill, National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) President 1982 - 2002, who is current President of the International Energy & Mineworkers Organisation (IEMO) and Deputy Leader of the SLP.



Arthur led the miners' strike of 1984/85, the greatest industrial struggle in Britain for 100 years. He has always led from the front as he did on 18 June 1984, when he was among the hundreds injured and/or arrested in the Battle of Orgreave.

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