

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

Conference Resolution 1989-1994 & Party Poll Results 1986-1991

CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS 1989-1994

1989

1. This Conference rules that all election manifestoes, statements and propaganda material related to elections, both national and local, must be endorsed by the EC.
2. That this Conference instructs the EC that in future local and national election manifestoes be vetted by the EC before publication.
3. That this Conference instructs the EC to ensure that in future no photograph of the candidate appear on the election material.
4. This Conference resolves that in the event of any future charge against a member or Branch, no further statements or letters be sent after the discussion at Conference or Autumn Delegate Meeting. Further, that the voting papers be circulated only after the official report of the relevant discussion and recommendation of Conference or Autumn Delegate Meeting has been sent to Branches and Central Branch members.
5. This Conference affirms that the socialist mode of production and distribution cannot gradually evolve within capitalism. Whatever may be the effects within capitalism of the growth of the socialist movement, production for use - and the consequent disappearance of money-commodity relations and wage labour - cannot begin until *after* the socialist movement has won control democratically of political power and has established the common ownership of the means of production by and in the interest of the whole community.
6. This Conference reaffirms the Party's position on co-operatives as set out, for instance, in the chapter on "The Co-operative Movement" in the 1942 edition of *Questions of the Day*, that is:

"In the minds of many workers the Co-operative movement is regarded as being in some way linked up with socialism. When the co-operators take up this attitude they claim in justification that Robert Owen, the co-operative pioneer, was actively concerned for some part of his life with possible means of escape from the capitalist system (...)

Robert Owen's solution was that small groups of workers should try to establish self-supporting 'villages of industry', in which there would be no employer, no master. They would constitute, as it were, little oases in the desert of capitalism, owning the 'land and means of production common'. He anticipated that the movement would grow until finally the workers would have achieved their emancipation (...)

The Co-operative Movement cannot solve the basic economic problems of the workers as a whole, or even of the co-operative societies' own members. Its success is merely the success of an essentially capitalist undertakings (...)

Co-operation cannot emancipate the working class. Only Socialism will do that. The workers cannot escape from the effects of capitalism by retiring into Owen's 'villages of industry'. They must obtain for society as a whole the ownership of the means of production and distribution, which are the property of the capitalist class. For this they must organise to control the machinery of government. Once possessed of power they can then reorganise society on a socialist basis of common ownership. Owen's original aims can only be achieved by socialist methods."

1990

7. Re New Voting Procedure at Conference. Whilst members should make every effort to attend special meetings to discuss and instruct on Conference Agendas. in view of the new arrangements whereby actual votes cast in Branches are recorded in Conference voting, this Conference rules that at the 1991 and subsequent Annual Conferences, votes cast at inquorate meetings shall be counted. This means that members attending and voting

at inquorate meetings will henceforth be enfranchised in the same way as all other members attending Branch meetings and Central Branch members.

8. In view of the proceedings at the 1989 ADM where a vastly disproportionate amount of time was spent discussing organisational and internal matters and one issue in particular, to the detriment of important items in the propaganda, publicity and policy sections of the agenda; and in view of the importance of discussion at ADM in formulating party policy, this Conference instructs that at all future ADMs a time limit be allocated to each section of the agenda in a similar way to current Conference procedure. The Executive Committee and relevant sub-committees to take action on this.
9. That the function of Head Office Assistant be renamed Head Office Organiser, and that full terms of reference be regularly updated by the Executive Committee with a view to the eventual extension of this work from its present 3 days a week basis.
10. In view of the importance of the layout and design of the *Socialist Standard*, and of the need to provide training and experience for future SSPC members (both editorial and layout), this Conference therefore resolves that from January 1991 the Socialist Standard Production Committee shall consist of: three editorial members, one layout-design member and one secretary, all of whom shall be appointed by the Executive Committee from nominations specifying for which of these functions the nominee is being nominated: and that the SSPC Terms of Reference shall be as follows:
 - (a) to ensure the efficient monthly production of the *Socialist Standard* and to report to the EC twice a year, at the end of June and December. The various committee members shall liaise with the printers according to practical requirements and mutual arrangement.
 - (b) The editorial members and layout-design member shall each as far as possible co-opt other members, with EC ratification, to assist with these functions familiarising potential committee members with the work.
 - (c) The three editorial members shall be responsible for all written content (including titles etc), its textual accuracy and theoretical soundness, including the order in which the contents appear and the setting of any articles in larger or smaller print.
 - (d) The lay-out member shall be responsible for the design of the front cover (including its wording), pictorial content and captions, typeface style and any other questions relating to the visual appearance of the journal. He/she shall work in close liaison and co-operation with the editorial members, but without any involvement in any textual decisions other than the pictorial and front-cover captions.
11. (i) That this Conference instructs the Executive Committee that any increase in the price of the *Socialist Standard* must be authorised by the Annual Conference prior to the increase.
(ii) That in future the price of the *Socialist Standard* shall be determined by the delegates to Autumn Delegate Meeting or Annual Conference and not by the Executive Committee. (Note: Delegates agreed that the second resolution should take precedence over the first).
12. This Conference re-affirms the stand taken in the September 1939 *Socialist Standard* and repeated in the September 1989 *Socialist Standard*, that the Socialist Party of Great Britain wholeheartedly supports the efforts of workers everywhere to secure democratic rights against the powers of suppression. Whilst we avoid any association with parties or political groups seeking to administer capitalism we emphasise that freedom of movement and expression, the freedom to organise in trade unions, to organise politically and to participate in elections are of great importance to all workers and are vital to the success of the socialist movement.

1991

13. That the chair be given authority to ask any person, delegate or otherwise, acting in an unruly manner to leave the Conference room subject to a vote in favour by Conference delegates, and that Conference Standing Orders be amended accordingly.
14. That the Standing Order of Conference, Delegate Meetings and Special Conferences be amended as follows:
Rule 14, Addendum: "In the event of a vote of censure being carried, a vote to suspend the member may be taken. If carried, the suspension not to exceed 15 minutes duration".

15. That this Conference recognises that rules and regulations, and democratic procedures for making and changing them and for deciding if they have been infringed, will exist in socialist society. Whereas a ruling class depends on the maintenance of laws to ensure control of class society, a classless society obtains social cohesion through its socialisation process without resorting to a coercive machinery. However, in view of the fact that in socialist theory the word "law" means a social rule made and enforced by the state, and in view of the fact that the coercive machinery that is the state will be abolished in socialist society, this Conference decides that it is inappropriate to talk about laws, law courts, a police force and prisons existing in a socialist society.

1992

16. In the event of the amendment to Rule 13 concerning monthly EC meetings being carried, the newly-worded Rule shall come into effect immediately after Conference and a ballot shall be held for any vacancies that might exist on the EC as at 29 April 1992.
17. This Conference instructs the EC to appoint, in accordance with Rule 17, a General Purposes Subcommittee of five members, with a quorum of three, whose remit shall be to deal, in between meetings of the EC, with such routine financial and purely administrative matters as the EC may decide. This subcommittee shall only take decisions by consensus and shall submit Minutes of its business to the next following EC Meeting and all branches. EC Members and Party Officers may be nominated for this General purposes Committee.
18. This Conference calls for a volunteer to run a new and secondhand bookshop at the front portion of Head Office.
19. This Conference calls upon the EC to appoint a national literature sales organiser or committee and that the party, as part of a strategical approach to propaganda seek to double the present sales of the *Socialist Standard* by this time next year.
20. That as inadequate theoretical and historical knowledge (especially about other movements purporting to oppose capitalism) can lead frustrated and isolated members to seek erroneous alternatives to sound socialist activity, this Conference instructs the EC to arrange without undue delay, the distribution to new members, and other members requesting them, of articles from the *Socialist Standard* listed (see Annex), together with any other important theoretical articles of which new members should be made aware.
21. This Conference instructs the EC to buy advertising time on local radio to invite workers to purchase socialist literature by post or telephone, even if such advertising can only be carried out without using the Party's name.
22. This Conference notes that circumstances have led to the transfer of the Irish comrades to membership of the Socialist Party of Great Britain for the time being. In view of the political work put in since 1949 under their previous name, Conference agrees that, if Belfast Branch so desires, it can continue to operate under the name of "The World Socialist Party (Ireland)".
23. That this Conference instructs the EC to ensure that the SSPC, the Publicity Committee, the Meetings Committee and all writers and speakers in the presentation and content of our case lay stress upon the positive aspects of it, i.e. they should ensure that we are understood to be advocates of a new *world* society, where sound ecological values underlie productive activities, and where real democracy, local to global, exists. Furthermore, our message should not be confined to the exposition of our primary aims but should express the necessity to build a socialist movement in practical and realisable terms, i.e. the immediate need to build an active competent party before being able to have any significant influence among the majority of the working class. In addition, the subsequent political, economic, cultural and other problems of the transformation to Socialism should be given informed and imaginative treatment within the bounds of practical necessity.
24. This Conference instructs the EC to set up a Committee to further examine the deepening world crisis and to report to the Autumn Delegate Meeting.

1993

25. As the EC now only meets once a month, this Conference instructs that minutes are sent out as soon as possible and before they are adopted at the next EC meeting on the understanding that any amendments to the final agreed minutes be sent to branches as soon as possible.
26. That the following note be appended to the D of P: "This Declaration is the basis of our organisation and because it is also an important historical statement dating from the formation of the Party in 1904, its original language has been retained.
27. That this Conference is of the opinion that the Object (although not necessarily the D of P) should appear on all Party lit.

1994

28. That this Conference is of the opinion that the use of recycled paper for election leaflets, handbills, internal party use and for the *Socialist Standard*, be phased in, as soon as and as far as is reasonably and economically practicable.
29. That the 1974 Conference Resolution "that membership of Women's Liberation organisations is incompatible with membership of the Party" be rescinded.

PARTY POLL RESULTS 1974-1994 (other than on disciplinary matters)

JAN-FEB 1986: Ate you in favour of changing the name of the Party to World Socialist Party (Britain)? Lost 72-229.

FEB-MAR 1988: Should Rule 23 be amended in line with Hammersmith Branch resolution V33 at Conference 1987, viz. "Delete the whole of the last line of the present rule and replace it with 'at which voting shall take place on the Final Agenda. The actual number of votes for and against each Amendment to Rule and Resolution as cast at Branch meetings shall be the vote recorded at Conference. Similarly Central Branch members' actual votes for and against shall be recorded as cast'." Carried 115-50.

FEB-MARCH 1991: (A) Shall branches and members be required to abide strictly to the terms of the 1988 Conference resolution (V51/2.18)? or (B) Shall members and branches revert to the previous practice of using the full or shortened version of the Party's name at their own discretion? A: 131. B: 116.