

Defend Trade Unions, Defend Our Movement

London Young Labour believes:

- 1) That the Labour Party was established by trade unions as a vehicle for working-class political representation at a time when politics was dominated by two ruling-class parties - the Tories and the Liberals.
- 2) Trade unions are the first and foremost bodies in the UK that can defend the basic rights of workers against attacks from the Tories and the bosses - through both industrial and political action.
- 3) That the Collins Review of 2014, which Young Labour opposed, undermined unions' collective affiliation and representation in the Labour Party by moving to an individual "opt-in" system for trade unionists and abolishing the electoral college for leadership elections.
- 4) These changes mean that by 2019, the number of "affiliated supporters" who opt in could be considerably less than the current 2.7m trade unionists collectively affiliated. This could drastically reduce unions' affiliation to the Labour Party and have a severe effect on party finances.
- 5) This arrangement is echoed by the Tories' new anti-union bill which seeks to attack Labour Party funding by requiring trade unionists to opt-in to their unions' political fund, rather than opt-out of the collectively and democratically agreed political affiliation.

London Young Labour further believes:

- 6) That we must resist attacks on trade unions' involvement in politics by the Tories, the right-wing press and even from some within our own party.
- 7) That these proposed legislative changes are a direct attack on the Labour Party and therefore democracy as a whole. As a Unite spokesperson has said: "Political funds are already subject to approval being given in regular ballots by unions. Tory hedge fund and multimillionaire donors will face no similar restrictions, leaving boards free to write hefty cheques backing the Tory party."
- 8) That we need to oppose the new Tory anti-union bill which also includes a deeply harmful minimum turnout requirement for strike ballot, and the removal of the ban on using temporary workers to cover striking staff.
- 9) That a Tory government elected with 24% of the electorate has no right to tell trade union members that they cannot go on strike unless they achieve a majority ballot from a minimum of 40% of the potential electorate. The TUC has said that this condition will make legal strikes 'close to impossible', which means a fundamental attack on the right of workers to withdraw their labour.
- 10) That existing anti-union laws banning solidarity action, imposing overly-stringent rules for balloting and restricting the right to picket, should be abolished.

London Young Labour resolves:

- 1) To issue a public statement against the new anti-union laws, calling for a labour movement campaign against them.
- 2) To lobby all potential leadership and deputy leadership candidates to commit Labour to opposing the new anti-union laws.

- 3) To support any campaign launched by labour movement bodies against the new anti-union laws.
- 4) To continue to be vocal against the current anti-union Laws that Thatcher brought in to legislation. It is not only the new ones that threaten unions.