



For the Moneyed Not the Many: Labour's Real Manifesto

Usually people want justice and a fairer society. At present some of those people are feeling inspired. We have an opportunity to change Britain they say, if we could only unite behind 'New' Labour. Unite, in fact, behind its 2017 general election manifesto.

Who wouldn't in today's harsh world feel a little excited at the prospect of a government that will roll back austerity, improve the quality of public services, place 'human rights' at the centre of its foreign policy and defend hard won social benefits and political rights?

No. Those on the radical left who are drifting towards Labour are repeating old mistakes; the result, empowering the pro capitalist 'consensus', is predictable and sets back the wider struggle for a just world. In our view, those following the Labour lead need to face the true nature of the 'hope' they have embraced.

Offering no formula for the redistribution of economic wealth or political power, Labour's 2017 manifesto is a slick but transparent re-statement of the post 1945 ideology of the political class.

None of the mainstream parties wants to enforce the dominance of either the private or the state sector over the other which means none favours fundamental change. They differ in how social or liberal or free they might like it to be, but none is interested in replacing capitalism's successful 'social' model (social democracy) with anything else.

According to its manifesto Labour 'understands that the creation of wealth is a collective endeavour between workers, entrepreneurs, investors and government'. Socialists understand that under capitalism governance is subordinated to the interests of the corporations and individuals who control resources. The effect of political change, while it can be worthwhile for a few, is largely cosmetic with no impact on the nature of the prevailing order. Labour's promise to the workers is not the fruits of their labour but 'partnership', the benefits of what it calls 'civil society'. The 'power of finance' will be 'turned' by honest and open governance to the 'public good'. Under Labour 'planning', the citizen will 'shape the kinds of high streets, homes and amenities' he wants. This isn't the principle of universality, according to our needs: this is 'fair' competition under the protection of Labour's 'responsible economic management'.

It is in the arena of international affairs where dissent from the natural order is most dangerous. And it is here where Labour's record is most damning. In 'support' of 'global and regional security' Labour's partners will be NATO, the UN and EU 'allies'. Its promise of a foreign policy 'guided by the values of peace, universal rights and international law' recalls Blair's 1997 'ethical' foreign policy.

While invariably it shouts its commitment to overseas aid and 'development', Labour is nowhere near conceding even a little of the principle of equality with western powers for other sovereign states. As is the case with all its foreign policy manifestos, Labour's 'values' driven approach is code for the coercion of poor countries by powerful super states and global 'coalitions'. Committed to spending 2% of GDP on 'defence' and to maintaining our nuclear 'deterrent', Labour will beef up the armed forces for deployment in 'a range of roles'.

Yes, we concede, it's hard not to feel a little flutter at the prospect of a government that 'embraces ... the good that government can do' promises 'fairer corporate governance' and 'vigorous action against tax avoidance' as well as 'a new deal for ordinary working people'. Who wouldn't support a foreign policy based on 'an international order in which rules govern state conduct ... in a principled way'?

Welcome to 'Forward Together', the manifesto of the Conservative Party!

National Executive Committee

24th July 2017