

Branch resolution on Defence Diversification

Proposed by: X

Creation of a Shadow Defence Diversification Agency

This branch notes:

1. The successful adoption at the TUC Congress 2017 of a resolution calling on the Labour Party to establish a Shadow Defence Diversification Agency (Resolution 17, TUC 2017).
2. A Shadow Defence Diversification Agency would develop plans to diversify and invest in the local economies of areas heavily dependant on the defence industry, in consultation with local workers, unions and businesses.
3. The announcement last year by BAE Systems of plans to axe 2000 defence sector jobs in Lancashire is part of a wider trend of insecurity and job losses in the industry. Lobby group ADS estimates that the sector employed 142,000 people in 2015, down from 300,000 in 2000/01 and 740,000 in 1980/81.
4. That key foreign policy goals in Labour's 2017 Manifesto, such as controlling the export of arms to regimes with poor humanitarian records and leading on multilateral nuclear disarmament, could have implications for defence industry employment.

This branch believes:

1. These issues have particular significance for people in the North West, where workers in towns like Barrow-in-Furness, Warton and Samlesbury, are rightly concerned about insecurity in the defence industry.
2. With long-term planning and investment, particularly in high-tech, growth areas like wind and marine energy, the creation of alternative, sustainable, socially-useful employment is possible.
3. There is a wealth of experience at the international level, including from Germany, the USA and the former USSR, to inform defence diversification policy approaches in the UK.
4. A Shadow Defence Diversification Agency will help deliver a future Labour Government's goals of an ethical foreign policy and secure, sustainable jobs.

This branch resolves:

1. To adopt the creation of a Shadow Defence Diversification Agency as branch policy.
2. To call on our CLP to adopt the creation of a Shadow Defence Diversification Agency as CLP policy.
3. To call on North West Labour to debate this issue at its Annual Conference 2018 and to adopt the creation of a Shadow Defence Diversification Agency as policy.
4. To call on Labour's National Policy Forum to adopt the creation of a Shadow Defence Diversification Agency as policy and to include plans to launch such an Agency in its report(s) to Labour's Annual Conference 2018.