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A modern welfare state

Our ten-year goals

Sustain a higher percentage of people in work than ever before, as we seek full employment in every region.

Child poverty halved and pensioner poverty tackled, as we extend opportunity for all children and security for all pensioners.

Our next steps

- An 'Employment First' interview for everyone coming on to benefits
- Expanded support for children through tax and benefit reform
- Extend and increase paid maternity leave and introduce paid paternity leave
- New pension credit for lower- and middle-income pensioners, and the Winter Fuel Payment retained
- £900 million Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for jobs, education and crime prevention

As society changes, so the welfare state must change. We have a ten-year vision for an active welfare state: to promote work for those who can, security for those who cannot, and rewards for those who save, volunteer, learn or train.

Since 1997, we have cut the costs of unemployment, saving £4 billion last year. As a result, we have been able to spend more on tackling poverty and raising family support within a social security budget that has grown, in Labour's first term, at the lowest rate since 1948.

Employment is not just the foundation of affordable welfare, it is the best anti-poverty, anti-crime and pro-family policy yet invented. After years of mass unemployment, full employment is now on the agenda. Our ten-year goal is to sustain a higher percentage of people in work than ever before. With more than one million more people in work than in 1997, and a million vacancies in the economy, we need to extend the New Deal, not abolish it as the Conservatives propose.

We judge our society by how we treat the young and the old. In this Parliament, over one million children have been taken out of poverty; our ten-year goal is to halve child poverty, ending it in a generation. We will transform support for children to achieve it.

For those in retirement, security depends on partnership between state and funded provision. We promise that, within two years, no pensioner need live on less than £100 per week, increased annually in line with earnings growth. On top of that, we will reward pensioners who save.

Government cannot achieve social inclusion for people, but it can help them achieve it for themselves, by transferring power and opportunity to local communities. That is our promise.

Employment for all is Labour's goal, with help for young people from the New Deal



Full employment Labour's goal

With Labour, the welfare state helps people into work, makes work pay, supports them at work, and demands responsibilities in return. Our ambition is full employment in every region – good for the economy and good for social justice.

The New Deal has already helped to cut long-term youth unemployment by 75 per cent – 280,000 young people have been helped into work. Long-term unemployment is down by over 60 per cent. The claimant count is the lowest for 25 years.

But too many people are still denied the opportunity to work. A million people remain unemployed: 100,000 lone parents have come off income support since 1997, but our target is to raise the current 50 per cent employment rate to 70 per cent. Many people with disabilities out of work say they would like to work. Older people, with a wealth of talent and experience, are a resource we cannot afford to waste.

Labour has ended the days of low-grade job schemes. The New Deal leads to real jobs, a lower benefits bill and higher tax receipts. We now need to build on its success, extending it to more people across the country.

We also need to ensure that the barriers to work are pulled down by delivering on our obligation to tackle discrimination so that all people can make the most of their talents.

Making the New Deal a permanent deal

The benefits system we inherited was fragmented, complex and contradictory. We are putting in place clear, consistent rules: those who can work should be in work or in contact with the labour market. As unemployment falls, we need further reform to help people into work. Labour will introduce a new principle of 'employment first', with rights and responsibilities balanced at every stage. The contract is simple: quality opportunities for real responsibility. 'Something for something' is the foundation.

Labour is pledged to create a new Working Age Agency, JobCentre Plus, merging the old Employment Service and Benefits Agency, and focusing on the key skill needs of areas of the country and sectors of the economy. Whoever you are, wherever you live, you will get the opportunities suited to your needs – from one office, one adviser, one system.

The New Deals for young people and older workers will focus on numeracy, literacy, IT skills and presentation. Where people are homeless or suffer drug or mental health problems we will offer specialist support. More than 140,000 adults aged over 25 have been unemployed for over 18 months. Labour will deliver more intensive and flexible help, with increased responsibilities for claimants.

We will offer greater flexibility to personal advisers and encourage greater engagement of employers, with IT training for all New Dealers. Employment Zones include funding geared to results and public-private partnership. On the basis of the evidence we will consider their extension to new areas and new claimant groups. We will build on the Action Teams for Jobs model, which is targeting 40 of the most severely disadvantaged areas, to tackle the employment gap for ethnic minorities, and devote £45 million to provide stepping stones into employment for the hardest to employ.



Skills for life... a young catering student works towards a vocational qualification

All lone parents will be invited to employment interviews to help them seek employment opportunities. We will build on the lessons of the Choices programme, which offers help with learning, work and childcare. Partners of unemployed people with children, like those without children, will also be asked to interviews to discuss their options.

Parents need good-quality and affordable childcare if they are to have real choice about work. For the first time, Britain has a National Childcare Strategy – covering cost, provision and quality. We have already created 300,000 extra childcare places. By 2004 our target is to have childcare places for 1.6 million children. Our vision is ambitious: safe and reliable

childcare nationwide, allowing all parents to combine home and work, confident in the childcare they have chosen. We will help with the costs of childcare through the Childcare Tax Credit – and will look to extend it to people looking after children with disabilities, and shift workers. We will support the commitment of community and voluntary groups to build up a diverse range of childcare – from Early Excellence Centres to neighbourhood nurseries and informal care (see 'World-class public services').

Many older workers now want to continue in

work full- or part-time. Yet one in three people between 50 and state pension age is not working. To help them we will build on the New Deal 50+. To help bridge the divide between work and retirement, we will examine ways to ensure that people will be able to draw on their occupational pension and continue to work part-time for the same employer, phasing their retirement without compromising their pension. We are exploring how to facilitate the transition from work to positive voluntary activity.

Our ambition of full employment is part of a deal: if you put in a fair day's work, the government will ensure you are able to support yourself and your family. The minimum wage is the foundation. But we offer a guarantee of

take-home pay too. For people with families, we promise to match your effort with support through the tax system. For those on low incomes without children we will create an Employment Tax Credit to boost their earnings, tackle poverty and improve work incentives.

People with disabilities

Our ambition is to enable people with disabilities to play a full part in the community. The Disability Rights Commission now ensures full civil rights for people with disabilities; we have legislated so those with special needs or disabilities have equal access to education. We are now committed to extending basic rights and opportunities, as indicated in our response to the Disability Rights Taskforce.

We are requiring different kinds of public transport to be made accessible, and introducing concessionary bus fares for the first time, for people with disabilities.

The New Deal for Disabled People pioneers new ways of helping people with disabilities into jobs. The opportunity to work is vital to civil rights; we are testing how best to offer help with rehabilitation and job retention. We will invest an additional £40 million to help people with disabilities into work, ensure that it is worthwhile to try out a job and stay in work if they have high care costs, and improve assessment for equipment and services as people move in and out of work.

We will not use disability benefits to disguise unemployment – the Tory approach in the 1980s. The number of people getting Incapacity Benefit (IB) has fallen by 11 per cent since 1997; but too many people are written off when in fact they could, with support, work.

We will help break down the barriers that keep people with disabilities out of work. We will continue to modernise the operation of the benefits system so that, if people can work, we help them to do so, and stop them slipping from lack of work to inability to work. Around 18 million working days are lost each year due to work-related illness – at a cost of over £17 billion. Many people on Industrial Injuries Benefit are helped into work by combining support with effective services, and we want to help as many of the rest as possible. But if people cannot work society has a duty to provide security for them.

For people unable to take up paid work, we are committed to offer security. We have increased support for children with parents on income support by 80 per cent in real terms since 1997. There is now a minimum income guarantee of £142 per week for people with disabilities under 60. Incapacity Benefit has been extended to people disabled from a young age. Disability Living Allowance has been extended to three- and four-year-olds. We will continue to keep the system under review.

Housing benefit

Although the number of people claiming housing benefit is currently falling, it remains the main way in which accommodation is made affordable. Our first priority has been to work with local authorities to drive up administrative standards and tackle fraud and error. But we must continue to reform it. So we will simplify housing benefit and its administration, distinguishing between people of working age and pensioners, reforming provision for private tenants, and examining the case for longer awards. We will spread best practice in administration. In the longer term, we will build on our restructuring of rents to ensure that for people of working age, housing benefit as well as the Working Families Tax Credit strengthen work incentives.

Children and families

Strong and stable family life offers the best possible start to children. And marriage provides a strong foundation for stable relationships. The government supports marriage. But it has to do more than that. It must support families, above all families with children. Our vision of the tax and benefits system for families with children is to provide help for all families; to give most help at the time families need it most; and to give more help to those families most in need.

The Conservatives stacked the tax system against families: over four million children lived in poverty; one in five children were growing up in households without work; the average income of households with children had fallen to 30 per cent below the level for those without children.

Labour has started to turn this round. We have raised child benefit for the first child by over a quarter. The Working Families Tax Credit has meant a tax cut averaging £31 per week for 1.1 million families. In 2001-02, an average of nearly £500 above 1997-98 levels will be invested in every child in Britain. Personal tax and benefit changes have made families with children an average of £1,000 a year better off.

We are pledged to go further – to eradicate child poverty in a generation and halve it by 2010. In the next Parliament we will make major changes. The Children's Tax Credit – the family tax cut – is worth up to £520 a year for five million families, with half a million families removed from paying tax altogether. It is paid until one parent earns more than £40,000 per year.

From 2003, the Integrated Child Credit will bring together all existing income-related payments for children, providing most help to the neediest children, building on the foundation of universal child benefit. With the new system of child support, every family will receive at least £15 per week, and those most in need £50 per week – over £2,500 per year.

For the first time, Britain will have a seamless system of child support, whether parents are in or out of work, paid to the main carer.

Our aim is to make the goal of ending child poverty in Britain a political litmus test for any political party running for office. The task for the next Parliament is to help another million children out of poverty.

Assets

Our active welfare state has so far been based on work, finance and services. It is now time to add a fourth pillar to the welfare state – a



Investing in the future... new babies to get our Child Trust Fund

programme to extend to all children the advantages that come from reaching adulthood backed by a financial nest-egg.

Nearly a third of individuals have no financial savings or assets at all. People without assets are much more likely to have lower earnings and higher unemployment, and are less likely to start a business or enter higher education.

The government already encourages people to save for a rainy day and save for a pension. We are determined to extend the savings habit to more people. But we are pledged also to use saving to promote opportunity for the next generation.

All newly born children will have an interest-bearing Child Trust Fund set up in their name with an initial endowment from the government, with more for poorer children. The endowment will be locked until the child reaches adulthood. We will provide incentives for extended family and friends as well as parents to contribute to the fund. All the next generation will have the backing of a real financial asset to invest in learning, buying a home or setting up a business.

Caring for children

A safe childhood is not just about financial security. It is also about care for children, especially the 58,000 children in care. Society is failing these children: 70 per cent leave school without any GCSEs and too many have been abused while in care.

Labour supports a national children's rights director to act as a champion for children in

need and we will consult on whether to develop and extend the director's role. The Criminal Records Bureau will help stop paedophiles and others who are a danger to children from working with them. From next year, all children's homes will, for the first time, be subject to independent spot checks. The level of educational attainment of children in care will be significantly increased. Every child leaving care will be guaranteed access to a job, training or education.

For many children in care, adoption offers the best chance of success in life. We will make adoption faster and fairer. Children who need new families will be placed within 12 months by 2004. We aim to ensure that at least 1,000 more children a year are adopted, with improved post-adoption support for parents.

Family-friendly working

For the majority of parents, time is precious. Many employers offer excellent schemes for family-friendly working. But we want to go further – with government funding to help parents devote more time to their children early in life. We want government to promote choice because, without our help, many people are denied the choices that should be theirs. A flexible labour market must work to the benefit of both employers and employees.

Statutory maternity leave is currently 18 weeks; we propose to increase it to six months. Statutory maternity pay is paid at a flat rate of £60 a week; we propose to increase it to £100 per week, as big an increase in the next two years as in the past 40 years. Fathers currently have no legal right to paid time off on the birth of a child; we propose to introduce it for two weeks, also paid at £100 per week. We need to do more to help parents balance work and family. Many parents, especially mothers, want to work reduced hours when they do go back to work. We will work with business and employees to combine flexible working with the needs of business.

Child Support Agency

Some families break up. Government's role is to ensure that both parents retain responsibility for the financial support of their children where they are able to do so. We have always supported the principle underlying the work of the Child Support Agency (CSA), but the Conservatives bungled its introduction. That is why we have already legislated to reform the CSA and these improvements will come on stream from 2002. A simple system will ensure a better deal for children, that fathers pay a fair share, that mothers benefit from their doing so, and that tougher action is taken against parents who do not comply.

Pensions and pensioners

In 1997 Labour made a clear commitment to ensure pensioners share fairly in the rising prosperity of the nation. At this election, we repeat our commitment to pensioners – we honour your lifetime of work by ensuring that you share fairly in the nation's rising prosperity, and are committed to tackling pensioner poverty. We will build a secure system on the foundation of the basic state pension.

As a result of Labour's policies, in this Parliament spending on pensioners will be £4.5 billion a year more in real terms than in 1997. Of this, £2 billion is going to the poorest third of pensioners.

Our first priority was to help those on lowest incomes: we have lifted the incomes of the 1.7 million poorest pensioners by at least £800 a year, and for some couples by up to £1,400.



Security in retirement... state pensions to rise with Labour

Pensioner households are on average £11 per week better off than they were in 1997; and over three million pensioner households benefit from free TV licences for those over-75s.

The pensioners tax allowance means six out of ten pensioners pay no tax. We have halved the rate of tax they pay on savings income. We have pledged to extend tax allowances further so that by 2003 no pensioner pays tax until their income reaches £127 per week.

We now need to go further. With Labour, the basic state pension will rise by 2003 to £77 a week for a single pensioner and £123 a week for a pensioner couple. We guarantee that the Minimum Income Guarantee will be uprated each year in line with earnings, throughout the next Parliament. In 2003, this will mean no

single pensioner will have an income below £100 per week and no pensioner couple an income below £154 per week. Labour introduced the Winter Fuel Payment. Its level is set each year. Last winter it was raised to £200. For next winter it will also be £200.

We will also do more to reward pensioners who have saved. Pensioners who work and save will find, for the first time ever, the government rewarding their saving. Pensioner couples with an income up to £200 per week and single pensioners with income up to £135 per week will be rewarded for saving – the government adding up to 60p for each £1 of savings income up to a maximum of £23. In the process, we will abolish the weekly means test for pensioners, along with removing the unfair test of savings, which penalises pensioners who have modest savings and whose thrift should be recognised.

It is also vital to have in place long-term pension reform. We support a fair balance of public and private provision. Occupational and personal pensions, properly regulated, will continue to offer security for middle and high earners. We will continue discussions on annuity reform to ensure tax rules do not unnecessarily restrict the development of annuity products and markets. For low- to middle-income earners, stakeholder pensions cap costs, guarantee value for money, offer flexibility, and drive down fees across the board. And for the lowest paid and carers, full-time parents and people with disabilities, the state second pension will top up their pension contributions to give a decent pension in retirement to 18 million people.

Today's pensioners have much to give to society. Labour's NHS Plan offers £1.4 billion of investment for older people to promote better health and support independence. Pensioners also need simple, accessible services that treat them with dignity and promote independence. We will build on Care Direct to provide a better integration of health, housing, benefits and social care for older people. This will be an integrated 'third age service' to help older people and those who care for them.

Carers

Not only are the large majority of people who require care older, but also the majority of carers are older people. Labour will tackle the problems faced by people requiring care and the problems of carers themselves.

The national carers strategy is the first step, with information, support and care for carers: Labour will spend £500 million over the next three years providing financial support for 300,000 carers through the benefits system, and £255 million for social care services for carers. More is being done for carers through income support; carers will be better able to combine work and care; and 75,000 more carers each year are now able to take a break

from their caring responsibilities. We are proud that, with Labour, care by qualified nurses will be made free to all, wherever it is received. One hundred and fifty thousand more older people will receive rehabilitation and convalescence through growing investment in the NHS and social services that the Tories refuse to match. We want to see carers given access to the cash and services appropriate to their service to their relatives and the community. The Carers and Disabled Children's Act gives carers a right to an independent assessment of their needs. We will examine the development of a fund to help local authorities produce tailored care packages to back up the results of these assessments.

Social inclusion

Social exclusion, affecting around ten per cent of the population, living in fewer than 1,000 of the most deprived wards in Britain, damages lives and wrecks communities. Before 1997, social exclusion was ignored. Now we have a new approach – improving the quality of mainstream services, preventing people falling between the cracks, and reintegrating them into society if things go wrong. We have targeted five priorities: **Homelessness** The number of people living on the streets is down by one third since 1997. Labour's target

How Labour helps pensioners:

- by boosting the basic state pension for a single pensioner to £77 each week in 2003, £123 for couples
- by retaining the Winter Fuel Payment, and free TV licences for over-75s
- by rewarding those who save with the Pension Credit
- by raising the Minimum Income Guarantee to £100 each week (£154 for couples) in 2003
- by tackling discrimination against over-50s in health care and in the workplace
- by boosting police numbers and cutting overall crime, and crimes like burglary that affect senior citizens the most



One million children lifted out of poverty

is to cut rough sleeping to two-thirds of its 1998 level by 2002. Beyond then, we will maintain the drive to keep the number as low as possible.

Teenage pregnancy rates are falling

Yet Britain has the highest rates in Europe. Labour's strategy tackles the causes of teenage pregnancy, provides mothers under 18 with access to supervised housing if they cannot live at home, and ensures that, if they do have children, teenagers get access to training, education or work. By 2004 we are pledged to reduce teenage pregnancy by 15 per cent.

Truancy and exclusion

Labour has a target of reducing truancy and exclusion by a third by 2002. The police are conducting truancy sweeps; parents are now subject to fines of up to £2,500; funds are being targeted towards pupils at risk.

16- to 18-year-olds

Nearly ten per cent of 16- to 18-year-olds are not in education, training or work. The new Connexions service will bridge the gap, providing a single adviser to ensure all young people receive clear advice on the transition to work.

Neighbourhood renewal

Over the next three years Labour is pledged to back reform, with £900 million of investment in deprived neighbourhoods. We want local people to lead renewal – a coalition of public, private and voluntary organisations specifying priorities, engaging local effort. Local Strategic Partnerships, which we have introduced to help coordinate public service improvement, will be properly inclusive of local people, involving them in decision-making. They will be backed by specific funds to engage the local community. Nearly £100 million has been set aside for business start-ups, and we will create a new tax credit for community investment to create £1 billion of investment in disadvantaged areas.

A popular welfare state

Labour's objective is to get the right benefit to the right people at the right time. We want those entitled to benefits to take up their rights to claim them. Fraud undermines confidence in the welfare system, so we are committed to reduce it.

We have been prepared to be tough – preventing fraud by tightening gateways, sharpening sanctions on fraudsters, and now with 'two-strikes-and-you're-out'. We have saved £1 billion in fraud and error over the course of the Parliament by tightening up the way we administer income support. The introduction of Automated Credit Transfer will save a further £100 million per year.

Labour is committed to clear targets for fraud reduction for each benefit, including a commitment to halve the rate of fraud and error in income support and Job Seeker's Allowance by 2006, and to incorporate fraud prevention into the design of new policies on benefits and tax credits. We are also committed to data sharing between government agencies and action to reduce to a minimum the number of 'spare' national insurance numbers that are a gateway to fraud.

Our welfare state is underpinned by clear values – we help you to help yourself, we invest in children, we support our pensioners, we insist that no community be written off, and we minimise fraud and error. Our reforms will build a strong and inclusive society.

4 Strong and safe communities

Peace of mind... Labour is pledged to raise police numbers to their highest ever level



Our ten-year goals

Halve the burglary rate and double the chance of a persistent offender being caught and punished, as we modernise the criminal justice system.

Reformed local government with higher-quality services, as we decentralise power.

Our next steps

An extra 6,000 police recruits raising

- **police numbers to their highest ever level**

Double the amount of assets seized

- **from drug traffickers and other major criminals**

Increased sentences plus education

- **and drug treatment for persistent offenders**

A bill of rights for victims

- **New freedoms with new targets for local government**

We all know the sort of Britain we want to live in – a Britain where we can walk the streets safely and know our children are safe. We have a ten-year vision: a new social contract where everyone has a stake based on equal rights, where they pay their dues by exercising responsibility in return, and where local communities shape their own futures.

Overall crime is down ten per cent in Labour Britain, recorded crime down seven per cent, and police numbers are now rising. Our strategy is clear and consistent – tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime.

Our ten-year goal of reducing crime depends on reform of the criminal justice system at every level, from police to courts to prison – to put crime reduction centre stage. And, because crime is changing, crime fighting has to change too – to tackle repeat offending, drug-related crime and organised crime. We are investing to raise police numbers to their highest level ever. Offenders must know they will be supervised in or out of prison until they can prove they have gone straight.

Safe communities reclaim their streets; then they can shape their own affairs. In the 19th century, local politics was the motor for economic and social change. Our purpose is simple: to create a Britain that is democratic, decentralised and diverse, with decisions always taken as close to the people as is consistent with efficiency and equity. Our ten-year goal is a new settlement with local government – over finance, structures and services.

Responsibility from all Winning the battle against crime

Recorded crime doubled under the Conservatives: burglary went up 105 per cent, car crime 110 per cent, violent crime 182 per cent. The number of offenders caught, convicted and punished fell. The criminal justice system, especially for young offenders, was in disarray. Anti-social behaviour was unchecked. And investment was falling.

The British Crime Survey shows crime down ten per cent in Labour's first two and a half years, including a four per cent drop in violent crime. Recorded crime is down seven per cent from 1997, domestic burglary down 28 per cent, car crime down 20 per cent. Investment in crime fighting is up. We have reversed the declining trend in police numbers, reformed youth justice, and supported every community to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. We have reduced by seven weeks the time from arrest to sentence for persistent young offenders, and are on track to meet our pledge to halve the time by May 2002.

But we are not satisfied. Drug-related crime is a menace. Recorded violent crime has risen, partly because more domestic and racial violence is being reported. And new crimes are being committed – fraud through the internet, human trafficking.

The only way to reduce crime is by being tough on crime and tough on its causes. Government can help families and communities prevent crime. But when people do commit crimes, we need an effective criminal justice system able to catch, punish and rehabilitate people.²

Supporting the police

The foundation is our police force. Police numbers started falling in 1993. Our investment in 2000-01 increased the number of recruits by an extra 3,000, boosting the number of officers in training by 77 per cent over the previous year. Now Labour pledges a further 6,000 extra recruits. Labour's pledge is that over the next three years annual funding for the police will rise by £1.6 billion, to £9.3 billion.

We also need to create a more effective police service. Basic command units are the heart of modern policing, and local commanders and senior detectives should be properly trained and rewarded. Strong leadership, modern equipment and specialist training and expertise are all essential. We will bring in new arrangements for the development and appointment of chief officers. We will introduce a new national core curriculum for officers at every level. We will ensure that specialist detective expertise is built up using outside experts where necessary.

Labour will ensure more people see more police in the community. We will discuss with the police how those on the frontline might be



Surveillance strategy... extra crime-fighting investment is targeting community crime

rewarded for their skills, experience and commitment. We will promote co-operation across force boundaries for common services like training. We are also committed to a new independent police complaints commission.

Persistent offending

About 100,000 persistent offenders, mostly young men, commit about half of all serious crimes. We need a new approach to catch, convict, punish and rehabilitate more of them:

- Youth offending teams will track up to 2,500 of the most persistent young offenders 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Every active offender will be on the DNA database by 2004.
- Persistent offending should lead to increased punishment. We will end the failed policy of repeat financial penalties: where offending continues, firmer measures will be taken. We will invest over £200 million over three years to reduce reoffending by those in custody. Sentences will combine time in prison and in the community, with proper supervision after release for ex-prisoners. In time, all offenders will have their own plan for return to lawful life, starting in custody with drug treatment or literacy training.
- New Review Courts will ensure that offenders who breach the conditions of their sentence will get extra community service, more intensive supervision or custody. Those who break their bail can expect to go straight into custody for the remainder of their remand period.
- To deal with the most dangerous offenders of all – those with a dangerous severe personality disorder – we will pass new legislation and create over 300 more high-security prison and hospital places.

Our proposals are based on a simple principle:

stay straight or you will stay supervised or go back inside. The continued modernisation of the probation, parole and prison services, so every offender gets punishment designed to minimise reoffending, will carry this forward. We will build on our youth justice reforms to improve the standard of custodial accommodation and offending programmes for 18- to 20-year-old offenders.

Crime in the community

Broken windows, graffiti and litter all send a signal about lawlessness. Labour supports fines for anti-social behaviour and new powers to tackle unruly behaviour and kerb crawlers. Every local authority should have an anti-social behaviour unit. We will tackle alcohol-related disorder, with an overhaul of licensing laws, greater flexibility over opening times, and tougher controls on rogue landlords. We will also streamline the system for removal of untaxed and abandoned cars.

Crime fighting now starts in every community thanks to new statutory Crime and Disorder Partnerships. Our Safe Communities Fund will target hundreds of neighbourhoods with the highest crime rates with extra crime-fighting investment. Domestic violence accounts for at least a quarter of all violent crime, so Labour is committed to expanding the safe hostel network.

Crime prevention requires that those most at risk of falling into a life of crime – children excluded from school, teenagers leaving care – are given real help and opportunity. That includes drugs education for every child at primary and secondary school, and youth inclusion schemes in high-crime areas. We will also take measures to tackle the problem of child pornography on the internet.

Drugs

One of the biggest contemporary drivers of crime is drugs. Access to effective treatment is essential. Prisoners are already subject to compulsory testing and offered treatment where necessary, which has led to a 50 per cent cut in the number testing positive. Drug Testing and Treatment Orders ensure people punished in the community stay drug-free.

We are pledged to raise spending on drug treatment by 70 per cent by 2004. We will roll out drug testing to cover offenders at every stage of the system. People in prison for drug-related offences will have to kick the habit before they are free from supervision on the outside. Drug dealers will be required to register with the police after leaving prison.

We will simplify the law on extradition to target organised crime including drug traffickers. The Criminal Assets Recovery Agency will target their ill-gotten gains. We will follow the money trail, through bureaux de change to offshore accounts, to convict them, and remove their money and passports.

Our ambition is to mobilise every neighbourhood against drugs. We will therefore ensure that crime-fighting partnerships, covering every locality, get over £200 million over the next three years to fight crime and drugs.

A modern criminal justice system

The UK's legal traditions are precious. But too much of our criminal law and the organisation of the courts are stuck in the past. Our ambition is to re-equip the criminal justice system to deliver justice for all – the victims, the public and the defendant, with a short-term target of 100,000 more crimes ending in a criminal brought to justice. Our White Paper *Criminal Justice: The Way Ahead* set out our initial views on reform. The Auld enquiry will also make major recommendations.

Prosecution

Despite an increase of 25 per cent since 1997, we have too few prosecutors. By 2004, Labour pledges 300 new prosecutors, including specialists in areas like serious and organised crime, paid on a level playing field with the defence. We will modernise and consolidate the whole criminal law system to promote public confidence and to speed up criminal proceedings. Law reform is necessary to make provisions against corporate manslaughter.

Courts

The current system, split between magistrates and crown courts, needs reform. A unified system, including lower or intermediate tiers of court, offers simplicity and flexibility. Lay magistrates as well as professional judges have their place in the system. We will remove the widely abused right of defendants alone to dictate whether or not they should be tried in crown court. For specialist cases such as those

involving domestic violence or fraud, there is a strong case for specialist courts and specialist judges. We will also develop late sitting, seven-day-a-week courts in high-crime areas to ensure there is no delay in getting people through the criminal justice system. We have established a Judicial Commissioner to scrutinise the appointments process, and will take forward reform on the basis of experience.

Rules of evidence

Our rules of evidence fail to trust the good sense of judges and jurors. Recent case law has extended the admissibility of evidence of previous conduct. If there is any remaining doubt, we will consider legislation to reinforce the judgment. Pending the findings of the Auld report, we see a strong case for a new presumption that would allow evidence of previous convictions where relevant. Currently only the prosecution must disclose all expert evidence and names of all witnesses. In the light of the Auld report, we will consider whether



Primary school children learn about safety

the defence should do so too. In addition, witnesses should be able to refer to their original statements in the witness box, as well as offer evidence by video-link.

Representation

We have created the Community Legal Service and will extend it to 90 per cent of the population by April 2002. We will continue to pursue the principle of best value for the benefit of the taxpayer and criminal defendants in the Criminal Defence Service. We will examine reforms of the tribunal system in the light of the Leggatt Review. We will subject restrictive practices in the legal professions to the closest scrutiny to ensure both the professions and the courts serve the wider public interest.

Victims have rights

In 1997, victims were the forgotten people in legal battles. That has begun to change. We have more than doubled the funding for Victim Support, taken powers to protect vulnerable witnesses in court, and prevented personal cross-examination by the defendant of rape

victims. We now propose further action. First, victims will be given the legal right to present their views on the impact of the crime to the court and other criminal justice agencies before sentencing decisions. Second, prosecutors will be able to challenge defence pleas in mitigation of the crime. Third, we will legislate for a Victims' Bill of Rights to give support, protection, and rights to information and compensation to victims.

Our diverse nation

Labour believes that Britain can be a model of a multicultural, multi-racial society. We have made major legal change; now is the time to build the inclusive society in tune with British values.

Our commitment to protection for every citizen is expressed in the 1998 Human Rights Act. It ensures that British citizens are able to enforce rights in our own courts. Other legal change was necessary too. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act learns the legal lessons from the shocking death of Stephen Lawrence and places a positive duty on all public bodies to promote equal opportunity. We abhor racism and shall continue to implement the recommendations of the Macpherson report, including the reform of the 'double jeopardy' law for murder. The repeal of Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act was grossly misrepresented as an attempt to use teaching to promote particular lifestyles. We will ensure that such teaching continues to be prohibited, based on the provisions of the Learning and Skills Act, while removing discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation.

The UK now has the most comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation in Europe. But an inclusive, tolerant, open society, where people rise on their merits, depends on culture and action as well as law.

We now need to reduce the barriers – to services, opportunities, institutions – that still hold people back. This applies in the public and private sectors. There are too few black and Asian staff in key public services and, in almost all organisations, far too few in middle and senior grades. This is why we now have targets for the diversity of central government and other public services.

Voluntary and community organisations are key to Labour's vision for Britain. From large national charities to local community groups and faith-based institutions, these sectors are a vital and diverse part of national life. We have changed the tax rules to encourage individuals and businesses to give to charity, supported initiatives to increase volunteering, involved voluntary and community groups in the design and delivery of key government programmes like Sure Start, and helped charities build up their capacity to do their job even better.

² The proposals on crime relate to England and Wales. See our Scottish manifesto for crime policy in Scotland.

Labour will build on its Compact with the voluntary sector, as we develop more far-reaching partnerships for the delivery of services and the renewal of our communities. We will also build on our financial incentives for volunteering, by developing an effective infrastructure to support voluntary work in every community in Britain. We welcome the contribution of churches and other faith-based organisations as partners of local and central government in community renewal. We will use a successor to the Lambeth Group to look at government's interface with faith communities.

Immigration

People from abroad make a positive contribution to British society. As our economy changes and expands, so our rules on immigration need to reflect the need to meet skills shortages. The primary purpose rule, which split families and did nothing to stop abuse, has been ended. A right of appeal for family visitors has been introduced. Immigration rules will remain clear, firm and fair, and help ensure that those who come and work here continue to make a major contribution to our economic and social life.

Asylum

It is right that people fleeing persecution are able to make a new life as hard-working citizens in a new country. Britain has a long record of providing a home for such people, and it is important that we maintain this position. But asylum should not be an alternative route to immigration.

The UK is ninth per head of population among European nations for asylum applications. The key is to hear cases swiftly as well as fairly. By cutting the decision time and increasing the processing of claims to over 10,000 a month, Labour has reduced the backlog we inherited. We have tightened controls against traffickers, and introduced a civil penalty for lorry drivers who bring in illegal immigrants. A national support system has been introduced to relieve pressure on local authorities. Asylum seekers and their dependants whose claims are rejected will be removed from Britain with the aim of more than 30,000 in 2003-04. We will also help those granted refugee status to integrate into the local community, supporting them so they can come off benefits and into work.

We support tough penalties for those who engage in the barbaric trade of human trafficking. We will bring forward proposals to ensure a common interpretation of the 1951 Convention across the EU and to improve the international response to regional crises.

Political renewal

Change comes from the bottom up as much as the top down. For the last 50 years, governments have failed to respect this basic truth.

Local authorities are responsible for the effective delivery of over £90 billion of public services a year. The staff and councillors who work for the community often have the hardest jobs and their expertise is a real resource when it comes to achieving reform. The best of local government is an inspiring example of what government can achieve.

Labour's ambition is a partnership of mutual respect and mutual responsibility. We want to combine additional rights and resources with responsibility and reform, working with councillors and officers to develop the structures, services and finance to help local communities.

The job of local government is to provide the leadership to improve quality of life, and offer the citizen a seamless, one-stop service. We have worked with local government to establish clear targets for standards of service; and to offer incentives for service improvement and innovation. Partnership with the voluntary and private sectors is key.

The foundation of effective service delivery is best value in every service. Year on year, local authorities and their staff will now work to achieve improvement in services, matching



Multicultural Britain... an inclusive society begins at school

themselves against the best. Citizens need a voice – we will work with local government to ensure that citizens' needs are the driving force in the procurement and delivery of local services. Electronic service delivery offers the prospect of greater convenience, access and quality, and we have set demanding targets for its use.

When public services are delivered in partnership with the private and voluntary sectors, this should be on the basis of best value not worst labour standards. The TUPE regulations protect the rights of any transferred

employees. Newly hired workers are protected by minimum standards at work. We will use a wide-ranging review of TUPE regulations to consider whether unfair disparities are being created between these two groups of workers.

We want to give successful local councils more leeway to meet local needs using a £400 million reward fund. We have piloted local public service agreements to offer new investment and greater financial flexibility in return for higher performance. We will extend this reform to all upper-tier councils. We will offer further flexibility for high-performance authorities, with reformed inspections and more local discretion to encourage civic renewal. We consulted last year on a range of reforms aimed at enabling councils to deliver key local services on the basis of transparent, stable and adequate funding. These remain our aims. We will give new freedoms to local authorities to enable them to invest in local capital projects.

Labour believes that local quality of life issues – from litter to parks – are vital issues, not peripheral. We will pilot home zones, redesigning local areas to enhance safety and the quality of the local neighbourhood. Local authorities should have the incentive and means to improve the local environment by recycling local fines into a local environment fund.

Our ambition is the development of active, in-touch local government, serving the people. We support the introduction of elected mayors for our cities, which is why every local council now

has the power to ballot citizens for a mayor.

Regional government

Some functions are best tackled at the regional level. Economic development is the core of regional policy today. In our first term, we have created RDAs to drive regional economic development. Regional chambers have been set up to provide some accountability for regional economic decision-making.

We are committed, as RDAs take on more power, to enhance the scrutiny functions of regional chambers. For some regions this degree

of political representation will be sufficient. However, in other parts of the country there may be a stronger sense of regional identity and a desire for a regional political voice.

In 1997 we said that provision should be made for directly elected regional government to go ahead in regions where people decided in a referendum to support it and where predominantly unitary local government is established. This remains our commitment.

The nations of the UK

Devolution has strengthened the UK, preserving the union on the basis of a fairer partnership. The nationalist lie has also been exposed: the UK is strong enough and flexible enough to devolve power while retaining the benefits of staying together.

The Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly have put power in the hands of local people. In Scotland the Parliament has power over primary legislation. In Wales we will build on the already successful legislative partnership with the Assembly, and continue to enact specific legislation for Wales, where appropriate.

The UK Parliament makes the essential financial allocations to all devolved bodies. English MPs make up 85 per cent of the UK Parliament so there is no case for threatening the unity of the UK with an English Parliament or the denial of voting rights to Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland's MPs at Westminster.

Northern Ireland

We have made working for peace in Northern Ireland a priority. The Good Friday Agreement was overwhelmingly supported by the people of Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland. While it has not brought a perfect peace, and while the peace process has not been smooth, it has made life immeasurably better.

Northern Ireland now has its own Assembly and Executive. They have produced their first programme for government and first budget on a cross-community basis. The security situation has been transformed. People can walk again on the streets of Belfast free from fear. Troops no longer patrol in most of the province. And the number of murders has been drastically reduced.

We will build on these foundations to ensure that the Good Friday Agreement is implemented in full and the new institutions take root. We will establish a modern, responsive and fully accountable police service properly representative of the two main traditions in Northern Ireland and enjoying their trust and support. And we will bring about the key reforms in the civil and criminal justice system which secure the respect and trust of both traditions.

Parliamentary reform

The House of Commons is now more representative than ever before, yet only one in



Towards peace in Northern Ireland... Tony Blair with David Trimble and Seamus Mallon

five MPs is a woman. Labour increased women's representation five-fold in the 1997 Parliament through all-women shortlists. We are committed, through legislation, to allow each party to make positive moves to increase the representation of women. Labour will continue to modernise the procedures of the House of Commons so it can effectively fulfil its functions

How Labour is tackling crime:

- by increasing police funding by 20 per cent over the next three years, and taking police numbers to record levels
- by targeting investment on fighting crime in the highest-risk areas and tough targets to reduce car crimes, burglaries and robberies
- by cracking down on local disorder and anti-social behaviour through local partnerships and measures to deal with the 'job culture'
- by implementing our ten-year strategy to tackle drugs, including tougher punishments for dealers
- by reforming the criminal justice system to deal with persistent offenders and ensuring the victims of crime have a greater say
- by tackling the causes of crime through measures like the New Deal and action on truancy

of representation and scrutiny.

The government has introduced major innovations in the electoral systems used in the UK – for the devolved administrations, the European Parliament, and the London Assembly. The Independent Commission on the Voting System made proposals for electoral reform at Westminster. We will review the experience of the new systems and the Jenkins report to assess whether changes might be made to the electoral system for the House of Commons. A referendum remains the right way to agree any change for Westminster.

We are committed to completing House of Lords reform, including removal of the remaining hereditary peers, to make it more representative and democratic, while maintaining the House of Commons' traditional primacy. We have given our support to the report and conclusions of the Wakeham Commission, and will seek to implement them in the most effective way possible. Labour supports modernisation of the House of Lords' procedures to improve its effectiveness. We will put the independent Appointments Commission on a statutory footing.

Whitehall

Our civil service is world-renowned for its independence. Labour is committed to maintaining the political impartiality of the civil service. But it needs reform to make it more effective and more entrepreneurial. There have been important reforms already. We want to take further radical steps to ensure the civil service has the skills base necessary to meet the challenges set out in this manifesto.

Equal rights for all, proper enforcement of the law, and reformed structures of self-government: these are the foundations of a strong civic society. Labour offers opportunity with responsibility – the right combination for Britain in the 21st century.

5 Britain strong in the world

Our ten-year goals

Europe to have the most competitive knowledge-based economies in the world, as British ideas lead a reformed and enlarged Europe.

Delivering Kyoto and international development targets, as we help tackle climate change and global poverty.

Our next steps

- Lead economic reform in Europe
- Work for the re-start of world trade talks
- Strong, effective and responsive armed forces
- Raise international aid towards the UN target
- Be the first country to introduce greenhouse gas trading to cut pollution

Britain needs a government ready to stand up for our interests and values. We have a ten-year vision for British foreign policy: a leading player in Europe, our alliance with the USA strengthened, using our global connections to help Britain and tackle global problems.

Unlike the Conservatives, we see Europe as an opportunity not a threat. Because we participate fully, we are able to work with our partners to shape an EU agenda that advances our national interests. We will put democratically elected national governments in the driving seat of EU policy. Our ten-year goal is to work with our partners for Europe to have the most competitive knowledge-based economies in the world. We hold to our promise: no membership of the single currency without the consent of the British people in a referendum.

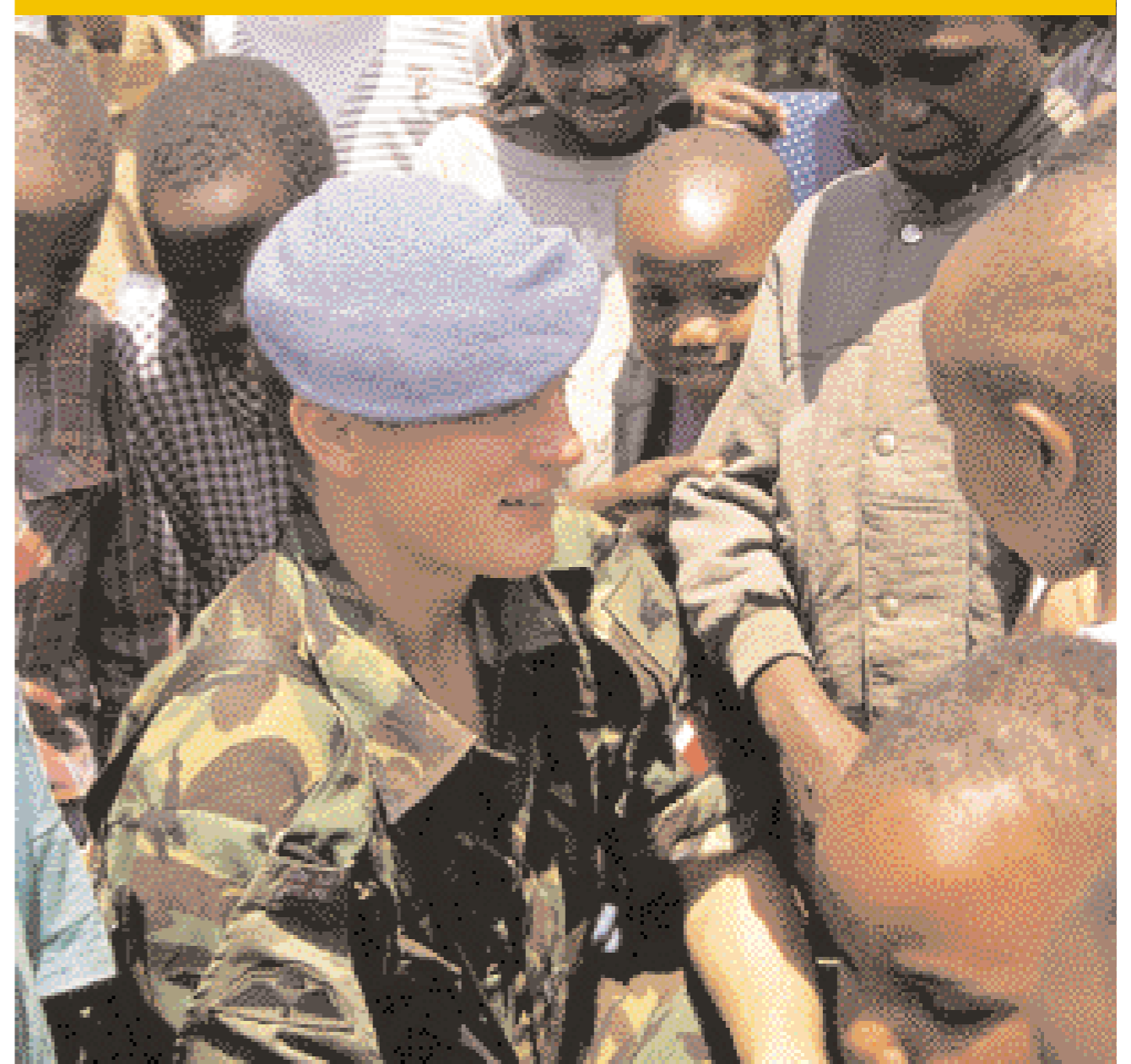
Britain has some of the best armed forces in the world. With Labour, they are being developed to meet the challenges of the post-Cold War world.

Labour is committed to lead the development of a comprehensive agenda for poverty reduction and sustainable development. We want to mobilise the international community to deliver the International Development Targets, generate growth and equity in developing countries, and help them benefit from global economic integration.

We are convinced of the science of global warming. We pledge to meet tough national targets for environmental protection, and we will work at international level to halt and reverse climate change.

We face a choice between an inward-looking chauvinism that leads to isolation and a modern patriotism where the British national interest is pursued through international engagement.

Global responsibility... Labour is increasing funding for our armed forces



Reform in Europe

Europe is changing. Economic reform is under way in the European Union, with over two million new jobs created last year. Many new members are going to join the EU. Co-operation is being extended in defence and security policy. A new way of conducting EU business has been born – comparing best practice to share the benefits of diversity in order to reduce over-reliance on centralised regulation.

We face a very simple question. Do we want to be part of the change, influencing its direction? Or do we want to opt out? We have spent 50 years on the margins; it is time to make the most of our membership.

We have seen the alternative. By 1997 Britain had retreated into itself: business was global, people travelled and worked around the world, our culture was open to new ideas, yet our government was closing itself off. And Britain got a worse deal. Because they were backward looking and divided on Europe, the Conservatives were weak and ineffective in Europe. And because of their weakness in Europe, Britain lost influence around the world. We lost our say over decisions that affected our lives.

In the last four years we have seen the benefits of engagement. Our rebate has been



Britain is leading economic reform in Europe

protected and our contributions are falling to similar levels as France and Italy. The Labour model of defence co-operation – giving Europe the option to act where NATO chooses not to – has won through. Economic reform is now helping the European economy. The veto on crucial issues of national sovereignty, such as tax, is safe. All this happened only because Labour had the strength to get involved, argue for its ideas, and persuade others to follow us.

Labour believes that Europe brings benefits for Britain, and a Europe reformed by British ideas, working with our MEPs, will be even better for Britain. Together with virtually all other European countries we do not support a United States of Europe. But we do believe a Europe

made up of nation states and offering a unique blend of inter-governmental co-operation where possible and integration where necessary, can be a major force for good – for its own members and in the wider world.

We want to take Europe forward, to meet British needs.

A Europe of prosperity

Europe is a crucial market, accounting for more than half of our trade. Britain has secured a shift in economic policy in Europe – away from harmonisation of rules and towards a system based on dynamic markets allied to comparison and promotion of best practice.

The key priorities are: to deliver more choice and lower prices through liberalisation of financial services and utilities; to promote business development with a common EU patent and cuts in red tape; to develop our common research effort in frontier technologies like bioscience; to cut delays and fares by establishing an integrated Air Traffic Control system for Europe; and to develop effective labour market policy to tackle unemployment in dialogue with the social partners.

We support efforts being made across the EU to reform welfare states, modernise social partnership and advance social inclusion. EU state aid policy should bear down on aids that distort the single market while supporting economic modernisation. We will keep the veto on vital matters of national sovereignty, such as tax and border controls.

Trade has been a vital source of prosperity for Europe's citizens. Our vision is of an open European economy. That requires a genuine single market, in an open world trading system.

A wider Europe

New countries joining the EU will give Britain a bigger market and Europe a bigger voice. Membership will help guarantee the freedoms of the new democracies in central and eastern Europe. Labour is pledged to do all it can to enable the first group of applicant countries to join in time to take part in the next European Parliamentary elections in 2004.

It is vital we ratify the Treaty of Nice which is essential to enlargement: Labour in government will do so. The Conservatives have said they will insist on trying to renegotiate Europe's treaties at the first summit after the election. No other country agrees with this. That means that a Conservative government would either have to back down in the face of opposition, or take Britain out of Europe altogether with disastrous consequences for Britain.

Our argument is that if Britain is stronger in Europe, it will be stronger in the rest of the world. We reject the view of those who say we must choose between Europe and the USA.

We shall remain the USA's firm ally and friend: but we are not going to turn our backs on Europe. The USA and Europe account for ten per cent of world population but 60 per cent of global GDP; working together we can tackle many problems and spread the benefits of freedom, peace and prosperity.

A Europe of the future

The main sources of popular legitimacy in Europe remain national governments and parliaments. So national governments should be seen to be setting the agenda of the EU, with the European Council setting the EU's priorities, a strong independent Commission ensuring that the European interest is heard and enforced, and an effective European Parliament improving draft legislation and holding the Commission to account.

Labour wants the next Inter-governmental Conference in 2004 to address public concerns about the way the EU works, spelling out in a clear statement of principles what should and should not be done at European level. Labour supports a stronger role for national parliaments in European affairs, for example in a second chamber of the European Parliament, with a particular remit to oversee the division of competences. We will also insist that the Commission completes its internal reform programme.

Defence

Britain's national security is based on the mutual support that comes from membership of NATO. That will not change. And although Britain has rarely been more secure from foreign invasion, there are new threats to our people from crime and terrorism. Instability around the world can affect us directly and we have a global responsibility to play our part in reducing international conflict, controlling the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and contributing to international peace-keeping and peace-making operations.

To enable the European Union to act where NATO chooses not to, the EU should improve its military capabilities for humanitarian, peace-keeping and crisis management tasks.

Our armed forces are the best in the world at fighting if they have to, and keeping the peace where they can. Labour is committed to investing more in real terms in our armed services over the next three years, the first year-on-year real increase in funds for over a decade. An important part of that investment will be in better service accommodation. We are determined to recruit and retain the best people, from all walks of life and all backgrounds.

We will look after the interests of Britain's

veterans. We have doubled funding for research on Gulf War illnesses, and will continue this important work.

In 1997 Labour promised a strategic defence review. Today, that review is admired around the world for its clarity, efficiency and foresight. We need more mobile and more flexible armed forces, with the ability to project force at distance and speed, to work closely with other nations and international bodies, and to fight and keep the peace. We have shown what this means in practice in Kosovo and Sierra Leone, and our servicemen and women have responded magnificently. We are determined to maximise resources for frontline use by disposing of surplus spares and promoting smart procurement and efficiency savings.

The European Defence Initiative is an important part of our defence policy. Europe spends two-thirds as much as the US on defence, but gets only a fraction of its effectiveness. European nations need to modernise their armed forces for rapid and flexible deployment. Improved EU military capabilities will not be separate from NATO structures and would only be deployed where NATO as a whole chooses not to engage. The launch of an EU operation will follow a unanimous decision, with each member state free to decide whether to take part.

We support Trident, Britain's minimum nuclear deterrent. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty commits us to work for the global elimination of nuclear weapons. We are enthusiastic signatories to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, whose coming into force will impede nuclear proliferation, and we want to see the USA and Russia continue to reduce their nuclear stockpiles.

We recognise the new dangers posed by the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and the need to combat them. Nuclear arms reductions and proliferation controls remain an important part of defence and security policy. We will seek effective inspections against the development of chemical and biological weapons. We will encourage the US to consult closely with NATO allies on its ideas for missile defence, and to pursue dialogue with Russia on a new framework for strategic arms control that will encourage further cuts in nuclear weapons.

The British defence industry is a vital part of our economy, sustaining some 350,000 high-technology jobs. We will continue to work closely with our best companies to get the best equipment for our armed forces – a good deal for the taxpayer as well as a secure future for high-technology jobs.

The UK has introduced the most open report on arms exports of any European nation and has led the EU to adopt a code of conduct on

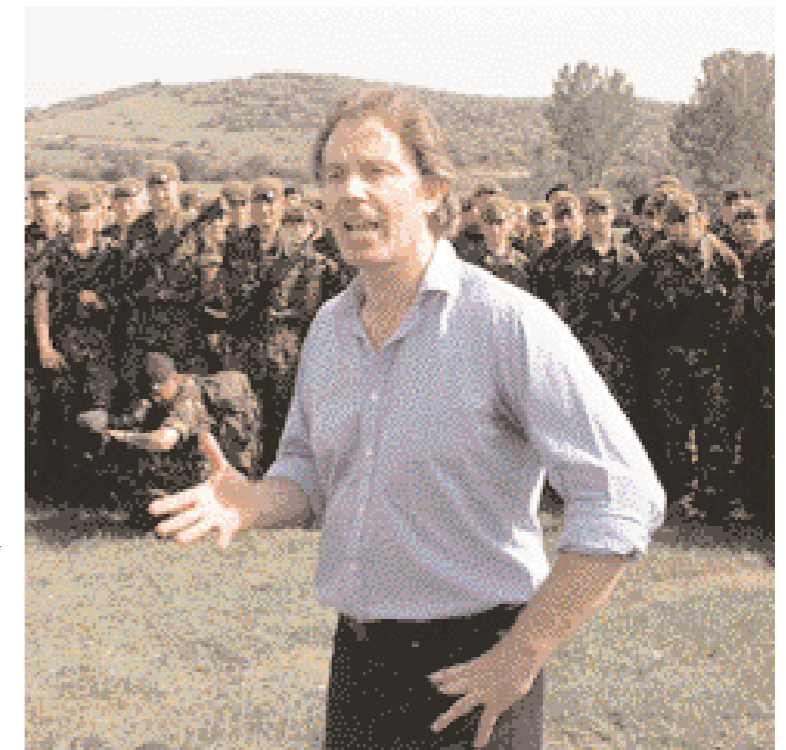
arms sales. Labour will lead efforts to control the trade in small arms, and work for a comprehensive action plan at this year's UN conference on small arms, including an international arms surrender fund to provide development aid in exchange for firearms. We will legislate to modernise the regulation of arms exports, with a licensing system to control the activities of arms brokers and traffickers wherever they are located. We will work with EU applicant countries to strengthen their capacity to control legal and illicit arms transfers.

The modern world

Britain belongs to a unique range of influential global organisations, giving us responsibilities and opportunities. Labour will stand up for Britain.

- At the UN, where we support a more modern and representative Security Council, with more effective peace-keeping.
- At the Group of 7 leading industrialised countries, where we will stay at the forefront of efforts to promote development.
- In the Commonwealth, where we will work to promote human rights and bridge the digital divide.

We will argue for an early, comprehensive world trade round, to the benefit of



Keeping the peace in Kosovo... Labour is investing in strong, effective and responsive armed forces

industrialised and developing countries alike. The World Trade Organisation must be reformed, not rejected. We will support fairer terms of trade for developing countries, and a reduction in protectionism in the developed world in areas such as agriculture. We will continue to help developing countries exercise their rights within the WTO.

We support the promotion of higher labour standards around the world, as well as respect for the environment, as we expand world trade. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is the place to set labour standards, but we believe there should be closer co-operation between the ILO and WTO through the creation of a joint standing forum of the two organisations.

We are committed to encouraging universal observance of human rights. Governments that are democratically elected will be firmer allies for peace; open societies that respect individual freedom will be more reliable trade partners. Labour will be a friend of those denied human rights and a supporter of steps to strengthen them.

Labour has played a leading role in bringing war criminals, notably from former Yugoslavia, to justice, and in establishing a permanent court to try war crimes. We will work to make the International Criminal Court a reality, with Britain as one of its first members.

International development

In 1997 Labour pledged to give new priority to tackling global poverty. Four years on, there have been real achievements – a cabinet minister heads an internationally respected department, the aid budget has been substantially raised, and tied aid abolished. Britain is playing a leading world role on debt relief, education, HIV/AIDS, and in responding to humanitarian disasters. With strong UK leadership, the international development effort is now increasingly focused on poverty reduction.

This is morally right, but also in our interest. Many of the world's biggest challenges – from violent conflict to rapid population growth to environmental threat – are caused or exacerbated by global poverty and inequality. There can be no secure future for any of us



Promoting human rights... Tony Blair with Nelson Mandela

unless we promote greater global social justice.

Labour will continue to focus Britain's development effort on the achievement of the international development targets by 2015 – including halving the proportion of the world's population living in extreme poverty, reducing child and infant mortality by two-thirds, primary education for all children, and sustainable development plans in every country.

With Labour the aid budget will rise to 0.33 per cent of GNP by 2003-04, reaching £3.6 billion – a 45 per cent increase in real terms since 1997 level. We remain committed to the UN target of 0.7 per cent of national income devoted to development and will make further substantial increases over the next Parliament. We remain committed to our bill, blocked by the Tories, to consolidate our poverty-focused approach to development

We are using this aid to support political and economic reform in developing countries. Our aid is an investment to help countries put in place policies to raise the growth rate with greater equity, crack down on corruption, promote human rights, including for women and girls, and develop effective governance and

democracy. We will legislate to toughen controls over UK nationals who commit offences of corruption abroad.

Labour will champion increased effectiveness and a stronger focus on poverty reduction within international institutions – particularly the EU, but also the World Bank, IMF, UN and Commonwealth – with full support for poverty reduction strategies where they genuinely prioritise poverty reduction. We are committed to international action to put the needs of children at the centre of these strategies. By 2006 we want to raise to 70 per cent the proportion of EU aid going to low income countries, and work with the Commission, Parliament and other governments to strengthen the EU's development effort.

Labour has led internationally on debt relief, providing 100 per cent relief for countries committed to spending the proceeds on poverty reduction. We will work to help more of the heavily indebted poor countries qualify for debt relief where this benefits the poor. And we will work to prevent new debt burdens through international agreement not to give export credits for excessive military spending or prestige projects.

Education has a special place for Labour. We will increase further our support for quality primary education for all, particularly for girls. Our Imfundo project, part of an £800 million education programme, will bring together public and private sector commitment to use IT to ensure effective teacher training and education management. We will give top priority to combating the spread of HIV/AIDS, which is inflicting massive human and economic costs across the developing world. We will work for the creation of a global health fund to make essential drugs and commodities more accessible to the poor, focusing on TB, malaria and HIV/AIDS. This will complement our existing support for the development of basic healthcare systems, and our new tax credits to incentivise research by the drug companies into the diseases of poverty.

Development goes much wider than aid and debt relief. It is also about how we manage the global economy. Our aim is to shape globalisation so that it works better for the world's poor.

Trade is key but so is private investment. We will promote socially responsible business practice through advisory services on codes of social responsibility, the ethical trading initiative, the Export Credit Guarantee Department's new code of business principles, the Commonwealth Development Corporation's partnership with the private sector, and our initiatives to encourage private investment in infrastructure.

Nowhere will our resolve be more tested than in Africa. Labour is committed to strengthening our partnership for development with Africa. We

will work with reforming governments, international institutions, the private sector and civil society in support of nationally owned development strategies. We will also redouble our efforts to prevent and resolve violent conflicts in Africa, using our new Africa conflict fund to provide help for security sector reform, demilitarisation programmes and tighter controls over small arms.

The environmental challenge

The poor make the smallest per capita contribution to climate change, but are often most affected when it happens. We are convinced by the scientific evidence of climate change – and convinced that now is the time to act. We need action at local, national and international level if we are to preserve the stability of our natural environment over the next 50 years. The principle of mutual responsibility that governs our approach to social problems also applies to environmental issues.

The healthy future of our environment is one of the world's great challenges. We must make substantial changes in the way we work and live to safeguard all our futures. The UK played a leading role in the Kyoto conference. The targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions agreed at that conference are a vital first step in the battle against global warming. It is critical that the whole international community plays its part in making a reality of sustainable development. We are determined to play a constructive role at the 'Rio plus 10' meeting in

How Labour is strengthening your voice in the world:

- by taking a lead in Europe, standing up for Britain's rights and reforming Europe to promote jobs and deepen democracy
- by supporting our armed forces, making sure our troops are always available and effective in times of crisis
- by working to tackle global climate change, meeting our own tough targets and pushing other countries to meet theirs
- by leading the fight against global poverty, with increased aid, better spent

South Africa next year.

We are one of the few countries to have met our 1992 obligations to hold greenhouse gases in 2000 below their 1990 levels. In 1997 we set a target of reducing CO₂ emissions by 20 per cent by 2010. We will meet our obligations arising from the Kyoto protocol and have set out a detailed strategy to achieve more – a 23 per cent cut in greenhouse gases by 2010. The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution has said the UK will need to cut CO₂ production by 60 per cent by 2050, so we need to press ahead with a radical agenda for the development of low carbon economic growth, embodied in our £700 million commitment to renewable energy.

- In addition to our proposals for environmental technology and renewable energy described in 'Prosperity for all', we must also make progress in the following areas:
- We must make the market work for the environment. Britain is developing the first national CO₂ emissions trading system in the world. It will help companies find the most efficient way of reducing emissions – and reward them for doing so. Once the system is established here we will seek to extend it around the world.
 - We will support hybrid and fuel cell vehicles, which already offer a halving of fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions, with cheaper motoring to match – and for cleaner fuels and

biofuels. By increasing demand for new technologies we can boost innovation and the vitality of the UK car industry.

- It is imperative that we use natural resources more efficiently and recycle more. We will continue to tax pollution and reward clean production. We will develop environmental productivity indicators. We have set a target for the recycling of 35 per cent of household waste by 2015, and will work with all local authorities to introduce kerbside recycling schemes wherever appropriate.
- Water management is a vital challenge for the future – for the environment and for the growing world population. We will continue to make our contribution at home: leakage is down by almost 30 per cent since 1997, bills have been cut by 12 per cent and disconnections have been ended.
- Environmental protection and sustainable development go hand in hand. We cannot protect the environment without addressing the development needs of the poor, and poverty reduction depends on safeguarding natural resources on which poor people depend.
- We will continue to provide leadership abroad, working for international agreement on climate change, improved integration of the environment in European policies and a strong global environment agency built around the current UN environment programme. We will work to improve marine and forest conservation overseas and in the UK.



International aid... education has a special place for Labour

Britain can be pivotal to world affairs, using our alliances to advance our interests and values. The key is to use our strengths of history and geography to engage with other countries, not retreat. That is Labour's promise.



Natural resources... Labour is committed to a healthy environment and renewable energy, taxing pollution and rewarding clean production

The choices for Britain

These are our ambitions for Britain – and how they can be achieved. Clear in our values, confident in our policies, we seek a new mandate from the British people.

We are proud of our record in government. But we are not yet satisfied. Labour is the party of reform and we fight this election as agents of change in Britain.

Change to our economy, so more people share the benefits of growth. Change in our public services, so that they better advance equality of opportunity. Change in our welfare system, so that we extend security, responsibility and independence. Change to tackle crime and its causes. Change to deepen our democracy. Change to Britain's role in the world.

The Conservatives were rejected in 1997 because they had failed. The national debt had doubled; crime had doubled; we were 42nd in the world education league; one in five households was on benefit; and we were marginalised in Europe.

Yet instead of learning, the Conservatives have become more dogmatic, more extreme, more divided. They are worse than ever.

The British people now face a choice. New Labour stands in the political mainstream, rooted in the best values of the British people. The Conservatives have veered to extreme positions.

This election will decide whether we continue the policies that have brought us economic stability, steady growth, investment in public services and targeted tax cuts for children and families, or whether we lurch back to boom and bust. It will decide whether we put our schools, hospitals and police officers first, or put them second after unaffordable tax cuts. It will decide whether we modernise the criminal justice system. It will decide whether we stand for a positive engagement with Europe and the wider world, or retreat to the sidelines.

We want everyone to vote in this election. But before you do, think of your job; think of your mortgage; think of your school and hospital; think of your children and your parents; think of police and crime prevention, think of the choice of leadership.

Think of who you want to succeed in Britain – the many or the few.

There is still much to do with new Labour – and a lot for you to lose under the Conservatives.

The choice is clear: for an ambitious and confident Britain, the choice is Labour.

25 steps to a better Britain

- 1 Basic skills for 750,000 people
- 2 Venture capital funds in every region
- 3 £180 billion investment in transport, with 25 local rail and tram schemes
- 4 Raise the minimum wage to £4.20
- 5 £1,000 tax cut – the Children's Tax Credit – for parents of newborn children
- 6 Every secondary school with a distinct ethos, mission or centre of excellence
- 7 Recruit an extra 10,000 teachers
- 8 More power to frontline staff
- 9 More health service workers – 20,000 more nurses, and at least 10,000 more doctors
- 10 Free access to national museums and galleries
- 11 An 'Employment First' interview for everyone coming on to benefits
- 12 Expanded support for children through tax and benefit reform
- 13 Extend and increase paid maternity leave and introduce paid paternity leave
- 14 New pension credit for lower- and middle-income pensioners and the Winter Fuel Payment retained
- 15 £900 million Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for jobs, education and crime prevention
- 16 An extra 6,000 police recruits raising police numbers to their highest-ever level
- 17 Double the amount of assets seized from drug traffickers and other major criminals
- 18 Increased sentences plus education and drug treatment for persistent offenders
- 19 A bill of rights for victims
- 20 New freedoms with new targets for local government
- 21 Lead economic reform in Europe
- 22 Work for the re-start of world trade talks
- 23 Strong, effective and responsive armed forces
- 24 Raise international aid towards the UN target
- 25 Be the first country to introduce greenhouse gas trading to cut pollution

The contract delivered

In the 1997 Labour manifesto Tony Blair said: 'We set out in the manifesto that follows ten commitments, commitments that form our bond of trust with the people. Judge us on them. Have trust in us and we will repay that trust. This is our contract with the people.' This is a summary of Labour's record since 1997. For more information on Labour's policies, please visit our website at www.labour.org.uk, or contact your local Labour campaign team.

1. Education will be our number one priority, and we will increase the share of national income spent on education as we decrease it on the bills of economic and social failure

The record: Key Stage 2 results for literacy and numeracy reached 75 per cent (up 12 per cent since 1997) and 72 per cent (up 10 per cent since 1997) in 2001. GCSE and A-level results have also improved. This September there will be no five-, six- and seven-year-olds in class sizes over 30. We have cut the costs of debt and unemployment by nearly £9 billion per year. Education spending has risen from 4.7 per cent of national income to 5 per cent this year.

2. There will be no increase in the basic or top rates of income tax

The record: We cut the basic rate of income tax to 22p in April 2000 and introduced the 10p band in April 1999. There has been no increase in the top rate of income tax. The direct tax burden on a single earner family on average earnings with two children is the lowest since 1972.

3. We will provide stable economic growth with low inflation and promote dynamic and competitive business and industry at home and abroad

The record: Net borrowing in every year from 1997 to 2003-04 is forecast to be lower than in any Tory year from 1992-93 to 1996-97. Inflation has been consistently under control and on target. Economic growth has been steady, averaging 2.75 per cent a year since 1997. Living standards are on average about 10 per cent higher in real terms than in 1997.

4. We will get 250,000 young unemployed off benefit and into work

The record: Over 280,000 unemployed young people have been helped into work by Labour's New Deal. There are over one million more jobs in the economy than in 1997. Youth unemployment now stands at its lowest level since 1975, long-term unemployment among under-25s is down

75 per cent. Unemployment is at its lowest level for 25 years.

5. We will rebuild the NHS, reducing spending on administration and increasing spending on patient care

The record: The next four years will see the biggest-ever sustained increase in NHS spending. Over £1 billion will have been released from administration by next year. The NHS is treating 620,000 more in-patients and is seeing over 650,000 more outpatients than in 1996-97. There are 17,100 more nurses and 6,700 more doctors than in 1997. There are 124,000 fewer people on waiting lists.

6. We will be tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime, and halve the time it takes persistent juvenile offenders to come to court

The record: The British Crime Survey shows that overall crime fell by 10 per cent from 1997 to 1999. Investment is now rising. The time from arrest to sentence for persistent young offenders is down from 142 days to 89 days – on track to halve the time within the five years promised in 1997.

7. We will help build strong families and strong communities, and lay the foundations of a modern welfare state in pensions and community care

The record: Child benefit has been raised by over 25 per cent for the first child. The Children's Tax Credit is worth up to £520 a year. We have introduced parental leave and rights to holidays. We have extended maternity leave. £4.5 billion extra in real terms is being spent this year on pensioners. The basic state pension will rise to £75.50 for single pensioners and £120.70 for pensioner couples next year, while the minimum income guarantee is helping over 1.6 million of the poorest pensioners. TV licence fees have been abolished for the over-75s, with free access to national museums and galleries for children and pensioners.

8. We will safeguard our environment, and develop an integrated transport policy to fight congestion and pollution

The record: With the private sector, we will invest a record £180 billion in transport infrastructure over the next ten years. We will achieve a 23 per cent cut in greenhouse gas emissions. We have legislated to promote protection for and access to the countryside. A £1.6 billion strategy for farming and rural enterprise will redirect subsidies to promote growth and the environment.

9. We will clean up politics, decentralise political power throughout the United Kingdom and put the funding of political parties on a proper and accountable basis

The record: The funding of political parties, campaign expenditure and conduct of referendums is now regulated. For the first time the UK has a Freedom of Information Act. The Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and Northern Ireland Assembly are now up and running, while local democracy has been returned to the people of London. The first stage of reform of the House of Lords has reduced the number of hereditary peers to fewer than 100.

10. We will give Britain the leadership in Europe which Britain and Europe need

The record: Labour has negotiated successfully for Britain in Europe. Our rebate is protected, enlargement is being taken forward. We have led the debate on European economic reform and on the development of a European defence capacity rooted in NATO structures. In Kosovo, our armed forces played a leading role in standing up against ethnic cleansing.

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Jobs. Interest rates. Education. Health. Crime. The choice at this election is clear – to make more progress or to dismantle the foundations laid since 1997. This manifesto sets out Labour's ambitions for Britain – and how they will be achieved.

Prosperity for all



Strong and safe communities



World-class education



Fast, high-quality healthcare



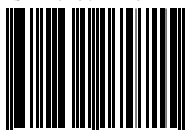
A modern welfare state



Britain strong in the world



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