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Scotland

Together we can change Scotland

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As we report here the Scottish Socialist Party is supporting the launch of the Scottish Left Project's electoral challenge on August 29. The Scottish Left Project was set up by forces involved in the Radical Independence campaign (RIC) after the Unionist Project Fear delivered a victory for the no side in the Scottish independence referendum in September 2014. The idea was to build on the energy that exemplified by the Yes campaign and especially by RIC. Its [launch statement](#) makes reference to the rise of Podemos as being another inspiration behind it. Below we publish the statement which has been the basis of the policy discussions throughout Scotland in the run up to the event.

On August 29th 2015 we will launch the Left Project's [highly anticipated electoral challenge for 2016](#). Before that event we are developing a people's policy platform which will tour the country, showing how the Left offers Scottish politics far more than a protest vote.

The policies we are working on can fundamentally transform the lives of millions of people by challenging the corporations, the rich and the powerful.

Our approach builds on the ideas popularised by radical social movements: participatory democracy, democratic public ownership, redistributing wealth and power, and full independence from the UK state and its monarchy. These capture the shared values that brought our project together: collectivism, equality, tolerance, education, grassroots democracy, and internationalism.

Our process for developing this work will be people led – rooted in dialogue and action. We want to hear what people want from a new politics. We want to have the widest possible discussion about how we can work together to ensure parliament represents the millions not the millionaires.

Scotland has already developed a new citizens' politics on the ground. Our challenge now is simply to use that energy to transform Holyrood. In coming months we hope to initiate this as part of the second stage of the independence movement. Hundreds of thousands of people in Scotland want radical change and their voices must be heard.

We will:

• Organise policy primaries all over Scotland. These events will be participative and open. They will be citizens' assemblies which discuss and refine a common programme for radical change. Some of these will be big, some will be small – all will be important.

• Set up consultation meetings with unions, anti-cuts groups, social movements and community organisers to inform our policy platform.

• Be ready to respond if you contact us with your views as an individual which we will add to the debate.

To ensure this nationwide discussion is rooted in radical left-wing politics, the [forces involved](#) in the Left Project have agreed to focus these events on the following seven themes which reflect our values. However, the discussions will

be open and not limited to these topics.

Our lives matter

â€¢ Housing

â€¢ Health

â€¢ Community

The system we live under prioritises profit over people, and our living standards are under attack like never before. We think Scotland has the wealth to make sure every citizen has equal access to the resources of a comfortable life. Our problem is faulty distribution, not scarcity. Recognising this, and offering the best possible living standards and life chances to all, will mean a powerful challenge to the real vested interests in Scotland. We are prepared to open that challenge, because the reward will be a brighter, healthier, happier, and more truly prosperous society.

Our industry in our hands

â€¢ Public ownership

Public ownership is central to our agenda for fundamental social change. Our daily work makes society possible, but we have no ownership, influence, or control over industry. This offers no basis for a genuine democratic society. On the grounds of democracy, morality, and efficiency, private profit should have no role in public services.

Our Scotland free from poverty

â€¢ Economic justice

â€¢ Security

â€¢ Trade unionism

â€¢ Redistribution through taxing the rich

â€¢ Anti-austerity

We live in a country of vast wealth and pervasive poverty. We can only change this by making citizens less dependent on markets for survival. People will not feel empowered in any area of life until they have guaranteed economic security and fair access to society's wealth. We fundamentally oppose the neoliberal idea, common to all leading Scottish parties, that you can have more markets and more social justice. Time and again, more markets means more poverty. The resulting social policy is simple: stop making people and their life necessities into commodities, or risk new generations of rising injustice and isolation.

Our place in the world

â€¢ Internationalism

â€¢ Peace and nuclear disarmament

â€¢ Anti-imperialist foreign policy

International solidarity with the oppressed is a core value for our movement. We want no part in NATO and we will build a new foreign policy framework that ends relations with arms companies and shifts military production to peaceful ends. Scotland should join an international alliance of parties, campaigns, and governments that back a new agenda of peace and cooperation. If we become the 21st century's newest state, we must avoid the 20th century pattern of spending more on wasteful military competition than on green investment.

Our Equal Scotland

â€¢ Feminism

â€¢ Anti-Racism

â€¢ LGBTI Liberation

The Left's agenda must have feminism, anti-racism and LGBTI liberation at the core of everything we do. That means they must feed into to our policy work as a whole. At the same time we must be truly radical about challenging the roots of sexism, racism, homophobia, and all forms of discrimination in our companies, newspapers, television, schools, and all public bodies.

Our Greener Future

â€¢ Ecology

â€¢ Energy

Capitalism is destroying our planet, and this is another reason for a clear left alternative. Pro-market forms of green politics are failing to challenge the roots of our ecological problems in the profit system. Only a different form of economic management can save humanity from the twin dangers of planetary crisis and authoritarian solutions to that crisis.

Our democracy, our republic

â€¢ Republicanism

â€¢ Scottish independence

â€¢ Workplace and economic control

â€¢ The justice system

Democracy has become the dominant principle of subversive, anti-capitalist politics. The obvious indifference of elite political parties in the era of austerity is driving new social movements across Europe. In Scotland, republicanism and independence are central to the case for economic justice. But we also want to see democracy thrive in our workplaces, justice system and in our economy as a whole. After decades of so-called apathy, the people have woken up, and they are demanding a radical change to the whole system, not just the routine of parliamentary elections.