



# RADICAL OPTIONS FOR SCOTLAND AND EUROPE (ROSE)

## CONSULTATIVE MEETING: A NEW STAGE

WEDNESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY at 7 p.m.  
UNITE BUILDING, 143 West Regent Street, G2

ROSE was formed in 2017 to campaign, in the new circumstances of the time, for the principles of public ownership and genuinely democratic popular control. It sought to bring together those who saw the continued importance of trade union and working class unity at British level and those who considered that there were greater opportunities for genuinely democratic control at Scottish level. It did so in the context of 2017 when the Labour Party at British level had a leadership committed to progressive objectives and when the process of leaving the EU had just begun – opening potential opportunities for greater democratic control over economic and regional policy.

Today we are in quite different circumstances. The character of the Labour Party leadership at British level has changed – while at the same time the trade union movement across Britain has demonstrated a level of militancy and solidarity not seen for many years. And while prospects for an independence referendum have receded demands for a greater devolution of economic powers have strengthened both from outside Scotland (from Wales and some English regions) as well as within. This is against the background of a Tory government in Westminster intent on ever greater control and centralisation – a government which has over the past three years seized powers over industrial policy which, among others, should have returned to Scotland, post-EU, under the Sewell convention.

Last month, at its 2023 Congress, the STUC moved much closer to adopting a ‘third option’ which in current circumstances would mean campaigning for the greater devolution of industrial and economic policy, for enhanced fiscal and borrowing powers and also a wider constitutional settlement based on the principle of a radical redistribution of income and wealth at British level. In February the Scottish Labour Party adopted a call for a national conversation on additional powers for the Scottish Parliament and since the recent crisis in the SNP some leading SNP figures like Ben Macpherson MSP have also supported increased powers, albeit *en route* to independence.

The Labour Party’s Commission on the Future of the UK calls for greater devolution, the abolition of the house of lords and the creation of a second chamber representing nations and regions. But compared with the stance adopted by the STUC it has far less emphasis on the redistribution of wealth or the delegation of economic policy powers across Britain. For local and regional government it appears to shadow existing Conservative proposals for more centralisation with elected mayors heading corporate-style cabinets.

This is the context for our proposal for a consultative meeting. It will be off the record with no recording or report – although, based on mutual agreement, there might be a general (and non-attributed) summary of positions. The objective would be to identify the campaigning objectives for ROSE over the coming period.

We very much hope that you would be able to participate on these terms – which will be, we hope, both in person and via zoom.

Vince Mills  
John Foster  
*Joint Secretaries*

Phil McGarry  
*Chair*