

**Minutes of the 10th Meeting of the 105th Executive Committee held at 52
Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UN, on the 4th of October 2008**

(These minutes are not official until ratified by the EC).

Present: A.Buick, J.Carter, P.Deutz, B.Johnson, P.McEwan, T.Miller,
H.Roberts, G.Thomas, S.Wigley.
Apologies: N.White.

The meeting started at 12.45pm.

Agreed that Comrade Miller chair the meeting.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting.

Motion 1 (Deutz/Buick) "That the minutes be adopted." Agreed 8-0-1
abstention.

2 Matters arising.

(i) Report from Premises Department, received 3/10/08.

(a) Report of the meeting with the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID) and attached quotation for £1,441.85+VAT for installation of loop system. The EC. felt that as ADM is so near, views of delegates would be helpful. The loop system is said by some to be good for those who wear hearing aids but not useful for the simply hard of hearing. Although the letter from Premises Department said that 'there was a good chance that the system could be fitted before ADM. if the EC were to make a decision to go ahead at the October meeting', the RNID letter with the quote said 'Current lead time for installation is 3/4 weeks from order receipt'.

Motion 2 (Johnson/Wigley) "That consideration of the RNID report be deferred one month". Agreed 9-0

(b) Fire Inspection Report.

The Department thought it strange that no members of the department were contacted prior to a report being undertaken and with none of them present. They have met with a company on the 15th of July, 2008. They continue with their assessment of the Fire Risk report made by Comrade Thomas in conjunction with a representative of the Insurance Company. (The Gen. Sec. would point out that Comrade Thomas, dealt with the matter as one person available at Head Office, at the time when two members of the Premises Department were unwell and the other was a distance away) .Comrade Thomas apologises if he has stepped on anyone's toes and would be happy to hand over the continuing arrangements. The Department take issue with the stipulation made by the assessor that no-one should sleep overnight on the top floor and suggests that anyone caught short in a fire situation would be able to use the designated roof hatch fire exit. However Comrade Thomas said that in the report the Fire Escape Officer said the roof hatch did not meet with safety requirements. The department refer to the requirement in the report to 'upgrade door sets on escape routes to 30 minute fire stopping'. They question what that means. Comrade Johnson reports that Comrade John Helps has been asked and has agreed to upgrade the doors in accordance with the requirement, if he is able. Quotes for a Fire Alarm System are being sought. The department suggest that those most frequently at Head Office are diligent in that they don't leave obstructions in front of fire exits and gangways, that smoke alarms are checked regularly, that members at Head Office are made aware of other people in the building, and as a general rule non-members should not be allowed beyond the orange door on the balcony.

Motion 3 (Buick/Wigley) “That Comrade Thomas be thanked for standing in for Premises Committee and that the Committee carry out the existing reports recommendations that have not already been arranged” Carried 8-0-1 abstention.

(c) Front of Head Office.

The Premises Committee think that the EC has put the cart before the horse, after being informed by the Committee of the methodology of how to go about changing the front of HO. The EC wanted plans to be submitted at the October meeting. The Committee think it best if they ‘weigh up’ the two different architects that they have had discussions with ‘then to pick one of those architects after discussions amongst ourselves’ and submit an approximate price for the completion of the whole project to the EC. ‘Then to discuss further with those architects once they realise they have been given the work’. The Committee then suggests that ‘two different plans would emerge that the could decide upon’. The Committee say that an opportunity might arise for their members to meet together at ADM, and although one of their members has been in hospital for two weeks this does not detract from their ability to resolve the matter.

The EC. would like to know what the Premises Committee are asking the architects to do, what they have in mind.

Motion 4 (Johnson/Wigley) “That the Premises Committee be instructed to clarify in detail their plans for the front by the next EC meeting”.

Carried 9-0.

(i) Report from Comrade Thomas on the Fire Emergency Plan (as on Spintcom).The terms of the insurance policy covering Head Office require that a Fire Risk Assessment be carried out and its recommendations implemented. One recommendation involves the safe evacuation of HO. in the event of a fire. The EC. felt that the procedures recommended were good, especially at times like Conference and ADM.

Motion 5 (Buick/Wigley) “The EC. endorses the Fire Safety announced for use at Head Office”. Carried 7-0-2 abstentions.

(iii) Letter from Comrade White for the Library committee, 13/9/08

(a) Many books have been returned and the Library Computer list updated. Some returned books had never been booked out. A list of books currently on loan is being prepared.

Motion 6 (Wigley/Deutz) “The matter be deferred until next month”.Carried 8-0-1 abstention

(b) Comrade White was concerned by a number of phone calls received whilst he was at HO.. which on being answered had no-one at the other end. The EC. reassured Comrade White that these were unlikely to be malicious calls. Cold callers and some Mobiles do not leave a trace.

(iv) Response to the call for nominations for the Campaigns Department.

There were no responses to this call, but Marie Chesham who is on the Campaigns Committee verbally nominated Jim Lawrie.

The EC had a long debate on whether this was valid as self-nominations are no longer accepted. Some thought it unnecessarily bureaucratic to refuse the nomination. Others had not heard that the Comrade was interested in the post. It was thought that nominations should come through a branch and although there is nothing to stop anyone helping out, there was no acceptance from the Comrade.

Motion 7 (Thomas/McEwan) “That the EC accept the verbal nomination of Comrade Jim Lawrie to the Campaigns Department as made by Comrade M. Chesham and that the Comrade be appointed” Lost 1-7-1 abstention

Motion 8 (Roberts/McEwan) "The EC affirms that nominations should be made through branches rather than by individuals". Carried 7-1-1 abstention.

(v) The question of the Socialist Standard Bar-Code, re price change. Comrade Miller reports that the bar-code is related to the International Serial Standard Number (ISSN) and not to the price of the Standard.

(vi) Notice of Business (Comrade Johnson): 'Why we should purchase the Xerox Photocopier.'

(a) Report from Comrade Johnson. 28/9/08

(b) Letter from Comrade Stair received 3/10/08

Notwithstanding the helpfulness of Comrade Stair's report, the issue of whose province it was to deal with this matter was raised.

Motion 9 (Johnson/Wigley) "That the EC purchase the photocopier from Xerox as per their proposals." Carried 5-1-3 abstentions.

3 Forms A and F

Form A for Gregory Jones from South London Branch. 2/9/08

Motion 10 (Wigley/Buick) "Moved acceptance of the Form A". Carried 8-0-0.

4 Accounts

Report of Jan-June for ADM. Report noted

Report of June Accounts. Agreed to note.

Motion 11 (Wigley/Deutz) "That the accounts be noted". Agreed

5 Reports of Party Officers, Appointees, Committees And Departments.

(i) Letter from the Electoral Commission 8/9/08. The Commission decided not to enforce the fine for the one day late submission, on this occasion. Noted with approval.

(ii) Campaigns Department October Update (as on Spintcom).

(a) On the Film Nights, they are going OK. The format with a break for refreshments announcements, a collection made, allowed a discussion period immediately after the ending of the film.

(b) The ADM meeting on the Economic Crisis.. The Campaigns Department asked for the views of the EC. On the feasibility of the activity in view of support for the idea from some members.

Motion 12 (Wigley/Miller) "That the Campaigns Department organise a meeting on the Saturday evening of ADM. Re the Economic Crisis". Carried 9-0

(c) On the Terence Kealey debate. An alternative venue is still sought.

(d) On the Germaine Greer debate, negotiations are on-going.

(e) The launch of the pamphlet on the Environment is to be the 6/10/08.

Motion 13 (Wigley/Johnson) "Moved next business". Carried 6-1-2 abstentions. However the meeting had generally misunderstood what the next business was to be and so a new vote was called for with the results that the motion was: Lost 1-6-2 abstentions

(f) On the Ian Bone Forum, some EC members thought the time allocation was miserly, we could have done with more time for discussion. One EC member thought that the definition of 'new' for some visitors was somewhat stretched.

The meeting had a tea-break from 2.45 until 3.05pm.

(iii) The report to ADM from the Ad-hoc Committee into the Party's Finances.

Motion 14 (McEwan/Buick) "That the report be adopted". Agreed 8-1

The meeting was referred to Rule 15 regarding accounts.

Motion 15 (McEwan/Buick) "The EC instructs the Treasurer to transfer the Party's money from Alliance and Leicester to a new deposit account with National Savings and Investments, leaving £50.000 in the A&L. account".

Carried 9-0

Motion 16 (Buick/Roberts) "That Comrades G.Thomas, P.Deutz and J.Carter be authorised to open and operate the NS&I account". Carried 9-0

Motion 17 (McEwan/Buick) "That the correspondence from the finance and investments sub-committee be circulated to all branches". Carried 8-1.

(iv) Department reports to ADM.

Motion 18 (Wigley/Roberts) "To adopt the Internet Department report". Carried 8-1 1 absent.

Motion 19 (Buick/Roberts) "Moved adoption of the Blog Department report". Agreed.

Motion 20 (Deutz/Wigley) "Moved to adopt the Education Department report". Agreed.

6 Correspondence

(i) Two letters from South West Regional Branch 27/9/08

(a) The first letter is with reference to item 6c on the August EC minutes: "This branch believes that individual members who use their initiative and own finances to promote the party should not be deprecated". Carried 4-0

Whilst this was a general motion it was directed in particular to the criticism the Head Office Organiser received especially on Spopen for the event he put on at Head Office after the Global Warming meeting.

Motion 21 (Buick/Wigley) move "to note". Carried 6-3

(b) The second letter is in response to item 5b in the August EC meeting and the subsequent motion 11: "This branch believes that the hostility clause does not necessarily mean that question and answer and interview type meetings are inappropriate"

. Carried 4-0

Motion 22 (Buick/Miller) "That SWRB's attention be drawn to Motion 4 of the September EC meeting". Carried 9-0

The General Secretary was reminded of her duty to carry out instructed correspondence.

(ii) E-mail from Edinburgh Branch re the report of two violent deaths.

Motion 23 (McEwan/Miller) "The EC is unable to confirm the deaths of Agoba Jackson and Bisigubabo Onesmus, but is able to confirm that they were not and had never been members of the SPGB." Carried 7-1-1 abstention.

(iii) British Gas Report 25/9/08. Agreed to refer this to the Premises Committee, 9-0.

7 Any Other Business

(i) Comrade Thomas regrets that he didn't refer British Gas to the Premises Committee.

(ii) Comrade Roberts presented a letter from Comrade Keith Scholey of the Archives Department asking that bound volumes of the Socialist Standard be sent to the Bishopsgate Institute. The archivist there Stephan Dickes is interested in the Party. The Standards should be boxed up for transport and then contact made for removal. The advantages would be freeing up space at Head Office and raising awareness of the Party at the Institute. (The Bishopsgate Institute holds the Archive collection of Robert Barltrop

papers.)

Motion 24 (Wigley/Deutz) “That the Archives Department report be agreed to and Socialist Standard bound volumes be prepared for despatch”.

(iii) Comrade Johnson reports that (a) the Environmental Pamphlet needs replenishing. (b) Comrade Nigel McCullough will provide free banners. (c) He has purchased for himself a tape conversion which the Party can use.

8 Chair for the next meeting Comrade Roberts .

9 Date of next meeting 1 November 2008

10 Meeting adjourned at 16.27

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