

Minutes of the 6th Meeting of the 104th Executive Committee of the of the Socialist Party

2 June 2007

Present: M Browne, J Carter, D Chesham, P Deutz, J Helps, T Miller, Stair, N White

Apologies: J Bissett, S Easton

Visitors: M Chesham, B Johnson, D Lambert, J Lawrie, L Stevens

The meeting was called to order at 13:14.

1. Election of Chair

(a) Agreed at previous meeting: Carter

2. Minutes of the previous meeting, business arising therefrom and the General Secretary's rising of Notices of Motion and Business from previous meetings

(a) Amendment and adoption of the May 2007 meeting minutes

Motion 1 (*Deutz & Miller*) BIRT in §2.iii, "8-0" be replaced with "7-1".

Agreed

Motion 2 (*Chesham & Deutz*) BIRT in §2.iii, "she had a meeting with Cde Chesham" be replaced with "she met with Cde Chesham after a propaganda meeting".

Agreed

Motion 3 (*Chesham & Helps*) BIRT in §2(a)ii, "his actions had not contravened the D of P" be replaced with "his actions had not contravened the D of P and Party rules", and that "he would apologise if it could be shown that he did wrong" be replaced with "he would apologise if it could be shown that he did something wrong".

Agreed

Motion 4 (*White & Chesham*) BIRT in §2(c)i, everything after "A lengthy debate followed" be deleted.

Agreed

Motion 5 (*Deutz & Helps*) BIRT the minutes as amended be adopted.

Carried 7-0-1

(b) Matters arising from the May 2007 meeting

i. The Assistant Secretary submitted a list of Party Officers, Appointees, and Department and Committee Members reflecting the latest successful nominations.

[At this point it was agreed to depart from the agenda to consider §6c, the Report from the Ballot Committee (q. v.).]

ii. Alan Brady Smith (§2(c)2)

- A. It was reported that Alan Brady Smith left Head Office the week of 6 May.
- B. Resolution from Swansea Branch (14 May): “In relation to the present circumstances of Alan Brady Smith should there be any adverse condition regarding accommodation that the Executive Committee offer temporary accommodation to him at Head Office, to be reviewed on a monthly basis.”

Motion 6 (*Chesham & Stair*) BIRT the EC note the resolution from Swansea Branch and consider that this matter is now closed.

Carried 8–0

- C. Chesham raised the issue that Smith still had keys to Head Office and indicated that they should be returned. Stair reported that he had attempted to get the keys back via the Central Organiser.

Motion 7 (*Chesham & White*) BIRT the Assistant Secretary send a letter to Alan Brady Smith asking for the return of the keys to the premises and requesting that he remove his personal belongings from Head Office at his earliest opportunity.

Carried 8–0

A discussion ensued regarding changing the locks on the inner and outer doors.

- D. Johnson claimed Smith was owed money for cleaning the premises. Stair & Miller said he was not.

- iii. Nominations for General Purposes Committee (§2(d)i). None received.

Members questioned the need for a GPC, suggesting that instead the Treasurer could do with another assistant.

Motion 8 (*Deutz & Browne*) BIRT the EC consult with the Treasurer and Head Office Assistant on the absence of nominations for the General Purposes Committee.

Carried 7–1

- iv. Security breach at Head Office (§2(g)ii).

The Assistant Secretary’s report indicated that he had contacted the member concerned, and that their version of events differed from those presented to the last EC meeting. A discussion ensued as to whether the Assistant Secretary should issue the warning in light of the discrepancies.

Motion 9 (*Miller & Chesham*) BIRT notwithstanding the explanations given by the member concerned, the EC considers that a formal warning should be issued to the member concerning the 24 April security breach.

For: Carter, Miller, White, Deutz, Browne, Chesham. Against: none. Abstaining: Stair, Helps.

Carried 6–0–2

- v. Auditor’s Report (§2(i)i) has been located; it had been filed on the Head Office computer prior to Conference.

Motion 10 (*Browne & Carter*) BIRT the report be circulated as part of the EC minutes.

Agreed

3. Forms A

- (a) Christian McCormack

Motion 11 (*Browne & Carter*) BIRT the Form A for Christian McCormack be accepted.

Agreed

4. Written report of the General Purposes Committee

- None received.

5. Accounts

Motion 12 (*Browne & Miller*) BIRT the accounts for January and February 2007 be accepted.

Agreed

6. Reports of Subcommittees and Departments; discussion of campaigns and *The Socialist Standard*

- (a) Report from the Publications Department (30 April; deferred in part from last month's meeting)

Motion 13 (*Miller & Browne*) BIRT the Publications Department be instructed to include in the forthcoming publications catalogue all those books and pamphlets listed in Table 2 of the May 2007 Publications Department report, along with a disclaimer indicating that the Party does not necessarily endorse them.

Carried 8-0

A member of the Publications Department orally reported that an artist had agreed to design at no charge a cover for *An Inconvenient Question*, and that feedback on the text had been received from Received comments from Deutz and Adam Buick.

- (b) Oral report from the Campaigns Department

Lawrie informed the meeting that there had been two Department meetings. Bissett was to have provided a written report to the EC on the Department's activity and on their questionnaire, but no report was received. Lawrie was concerned that other members did not seem to know the remit of the Department and some of them were holding up the work of the Department. He no longer wished to be in the Department.

Motion 14 (*Miller & Chesham*) BIRT the Campaigns Department be disbanded and a new call for nominations be made.

For: Helps, Miller. Against: White, Deutz, Carter, Stair, Browne. Abstaining: Chesham.

Failed 2-5-1

Motion 15 (*White & Stair*) BIRT in view of the Campaigns Department's present difficulties, they be asked to report to the July EC on their future plans and problems.

Carried 8-0

- (c) Report from the Ballot Committee on Conference voting (2 June)

Motion 16 (*Browne & Deutz*) BIRT the General Secretary contact the relevant Departments and Officers to implement the resolutions.

Agreed

- (d) Discussion of campaigns

- None.

- (e) Discussion of *The Socialist Standard*

Notice of Business 1 (*Miller*) The EC shall discuss copyright licences for images used in *The Socialist Standard*.

7. Correspondence

- (a) Matters of urgency

- None.

- (b) Correspondence from or concerning Branches, the Party in general, and members

- i. Conference floor resolution from Lawrie (Central London) & Johnson (Swansea): “This Conference urges the EC to organise a speaker’s class.” Carried: 7–4

Motion 17 (*Miller & Helps*) BIRT the resolution be referred to the Campaigns Department.

Failed 3–4–1

Motion 18 (*White & Carter*) BIRT the EC ask the Central Organiser to procure an up-to-date Party speakers list from the Campaigns Department and to convene an ad-hoc committee of competent Party speakers to set up speakers’ classes in accordance with the Conference floor resolution.

Carried 8–0

- ii. Letter from Fred Allen regarding the 2007 Conference (9 April). Allen thanked those who arranged the food at Conference but suggested that in future Head Office rather than the Manor Arms be used for the social evening.

Motion 19 (*Miller & Stair*) BIRT the EC thanks Cde Allen for his letter and endorses his recommendations.

Agreed

- iii. The following correspondence was received concerning committee nominations:

- A. Letter from Brain Johnson self-nominating for the Premises and Ballot Committees (26 April)
- B. Letter from Jim Lawrie self-nominating to the Premises Committee (4 May)
- C. Resolution from Swansea Branch nominating B Johnson for the Premises and Ballot Committees (15 May)

Motion 20 (*Browne & Deutz*) BIRT the EC accept B Johnson’s nomination to the Ballot Committee.

Stair said that he had heard that Johnson had interefered with a ballot in the past, and wanted to be apprised of the circumstances. Browne replied that that Johnson did not interfere with a ballot; the incident concerned the supporting statement for a nomination. Johnson and another comrade were both nominated for a position and submitted supporting statements. Johnson disputed the other candidate’s supporting statement on the basis that it was not factual, and as a result the EC cancelled the ballot.

Motion 21 (*Chesham*) BIRT the Chair be directed to allow consideration of a motion to defer the current motion.

Carried 5–3

Motion 22 (*Chesham & Stair*) BIRT the question of Cde Johnson’s nomination to the Ballot Committee be deferred pending contact with the other standing member of the Ballott Committee, and that the EC call for further nominations to the Ballott Committee.

For: White, Stair, Helps, Chesham. Against: Miller, Deutz, Carter, Browne. Abstaining: None.

Failed 4–4

Vote on original motion:

For: Carter, Deutz, Helps Browne, White. Against: Stair, Chesham. Abstaining: Miller.

Carried 5–2–1

The question of whether the Premises Committee needed another member was discussed at length.

Motion 23 (*Chesham & White*) BIRT the EC, in consideration of the two nominations to the Premises Committee, considers that in view of his proximity to the premises, Cde Lawrie be appointed.

For: Miller, White, Chesham, Browne, Helps, Stair. Against: None. Abstaining: Carter, Deutz.

Carried 6–0–2

- iv. Resolution from Manchester Branch (21 May): “That the EC consider installing a keypad lock system at Head Office.”

The EC supposed that this resolution arose out of the recent security breach, and agreed that the Assistant Secretary should reply in accordance with the facts.

- v. Report from the Assistant Secretary (26 May).

According to the report, the LSE Library would scan *The Socialist Standard* microfilm for 0.27 pence per frame, for a total of £22.16 + VAT. The electronic display in the Head Office front window had been installed but was currently in for repairs. The Head Office router malfunctioned and an emergency replacement was purchased for £99.

Agreed to note.

- vi. Letter from the General Secretary regarding film production equipment (26 May)

Motion 24 (*Miller & Stair*) BIRT the report be referred to the Video Production Department.

Carried 8–0

- vii. Letter from the General Secretary regarding absence from the next two meetings due in part to local activities (26 May)

There ensued a discussion about the nature of the community action groups the General Secretary was involved with, and about the propriety of the General Secretary suspending Head Office activity for two months.

Motion 25 (*Browne & Carter*) BIRT Cde Bissett be granted leave of absence for the two EC meetings.

Carried 6–0–2

- viii. Letter from Roy Beat resigning from the Library Committee (30 May). Noted.

White offered to serve as a librarian, but did not want to serve on the Library Committee.

Motion 26 (*Miller & Chesham*) BIRT given the Library Committee’s lack of activity and failure to report to Conference and to the EC, the EC hereby disbands the Library Committee and calls for new nominations.

Carried 5–0–3

Motion 27 (*Miller & Stair*) BIRT the EC appoint Nick White as pro-tem librarian.

Carried 8–0

- ix. Report on Actions Taken Pursuant to the 1995 Conference Resolution Concerning the Protection of the Party’s Identity and Funds.

According to the report, the *Socialist Studies* group publically proclaimed their intention to continue to use the name of the Socialist Party of Great Britain. They had resumed advertising in our name in magazines and via leaflets. These ads announced a public meeting at the Marchmont Community Centre, apparently in contravention of their contract. Members observed Harry Baldwin (also of the *Socialist Studies* group) speaking

from an SPGB platform in Hyde Park and using abusive language to members of the public. Finally, the World Socialist Party (India) published an online petition giving false contact details for the SPGB.

It was agreed that the Assistant Secretary should once again write to *The New Statesman* to attempt to persuade them not to allow spurious advertisements in our name.

It was agreed that the Assistant Secretary should write to iPetitions to have the false Party contact details removed from the online petition.

The EC discussed a proposal to prepare a leaflet disavowing any connection between the Party and Mr Baldwin.

Motion 28 (*Chesham & Helps*) BIRT the Assistant Secretary contact the manager of Hyde Park to resolve the issue of spurious Party speakers in Speakers' Corner.

Carried 7-0-1

Motion 29 (*Deutz & Carter*) BIRT the Assistant Secretary contact the *Socialist Studies* group to complain about Harry Baldwin's abusive behaviour in the name of the SPGB in Speakers' Corner.

Carried 7-0-1

Motion 30 (*Stair & Carter*) BIRT the question of issuing a leaflet about Harry Baldwin be deferred one month.

Carried 7-0-1

- (c) Forms F received for Pat Bentley (Central), lapsed; Phil Bentley (Central), lapsed; EW Pike (Central), loss of contact; P Lawrence (South London), deceased.

Motion 31 (*Stair & Browne*) BIRT consideration of the Bentleys' Forms F be deferred one month.

Agreed

Motion 32 (*Deutz & Browne*) BIRT Pike's and Lawrence's Forms F be accepted.

Agreed

- (d) Correspondence from Companion Parties and Groups

The following correspondence was received and noted.

- i. WSPNZ minutes for March 2007
- ii. WSPNZ minutes for April 2007
- iii. SPC Newsletter for April 2007
- iv. SPC Newsletter for May 2007

- (e) All other correspondence

- i. Notices of Business and Notices of Motion

Notice of Business 2 (*Stair*) The EC shall discuss the purchase of a hearing induction loop.

Notice of Motion 1 (*Miller & Browne*) BIRT the Executive Committee's Normal Order of Business be amended as follows:

- Replace "(c) Forms A" with "(c) Forms A and F".
- Replace "(f) Reports of subcommittees and departments" with "(f) Reports of party officers, party appointees, subcommittees, and departments".
- Insert after (g) "(h) Any other business".

- Replace “(h) That the Chair for the next meeting be nominated at the previous meeting” with “(i) Nomination of Chair for the next meeting”.

Notice of Motion 2 (*Stair & Helps*) BIRT the regular meeting of the EC shall be on the first Saturday of the month at 13:00, and that the EC’s Standing Orders be so amended.

- ii. It was agreed to hold the next meeting on 7 July at 13:00, and that the Assistant Secretary should notify *The Socialist Standard* Department of same.
- iii. White reminded everyone of a special South London Branch meeting on Saturday, 9 June at 15:00, the purpose of which is to discuss the prospects of holding a series of public debates.

8. Chair for next meeting: Dave Chesham

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 19:07.