

NCCL AGM 22-23/4/89
(NOT HEARD)

NEW EMERGENCY MOTION (NCROPA's)

The NCCL membership will need to be aware of the extraordinary series of events which surround our motion 34.

This motion was duly submitted with our other AGM motions to the CEC on 1st December last year. On 12th December the administrative officer officially notified us that all our submitted motions, including motion 34 (about terminating Catherine Itzin's membership) had been approved and accepted by the CEC ~~(even though the letter was addressed "Dead David Webb")~~.

On 18th February this year I received my copy of the NCCL's official printed list of AGM motions. Motion 34, as it has now become, was omitted. I wrote to the Chairperson of the EC asking for an explanation and what action she intended to take to remedy it. In reply, on 25th February I received a letter from the Chairman of the cec saying that they were responsible. That letter said that (READ) "After the CEC etc."

The suggestion that such a motion would be libellous was, as far as we were concerned, ridiculous. I therefore instructed the NCROPA's solicitor to obtain Counsel's opinion. This he did and, of course, our Counsel totally rejected the CEC's suggestion. Our solicitor thus conveyed his opinion to the Chair of the CEC on 4th MARCH demanding that our motion be re-instated within 14 days otherwise we intended to take appropriate legal action.

On 21st March our solicitor received a letter from the General Secretary in which she wrote (READ) "NCCL took the decision & etc to "in early April" She went on "It has been suggested & etc to "few days".

Our solicitor replied to this on 29th March informing the General Secretary that the NCROPA would be happy to accept this arrangement "provided that "early April" meant exactly that and he asked for written notification of the intended despatch date. The suggested removal of Ms. Itzin's name was refused since this would render the motion meaningless. The General Secretary never replied to this letter.

Having received no copy of 'Civil Liberty' with its printed enclosure of our now re-instated motion 34 as agreed and promised "in early April", on Friday 14th April I phoned Sarah Spencer. I was told that she was away until Monday. I asked to speak to her deputy. There wasn't one so I was referred to Paul Hunt one of the legal officers. He phoned back later to say that 'Civil Liberty' hadn't even been despatched yet, "but it was hoped it would go out today or if not at least on Monday (17th April).

Came Monday and still no 'Civil Liberty' + motion 34. Came Tuesday (now 18th April and only three more days to go & before the AGM itself). Still no 'Civil Liberty'.

Late on TUESDAY MORNING I phoned Sarah Spencer. Copies still hadn't been despatched. She apologised but said the delay was due to "circumstances beyond her control". When I reminded her that in her letter of 21st March she had said that it would go out "in early April" she said that that was her intention. Since this was, in effect, a legal agreement, I pointed out that it had not been honoured and that if there was a possibility that it couldn't be honoured, it should never have been made in the first place. We would then at least have had sufficient time to consider pursuing our intended legal action.

The NCROPA had already been severely disadvantaged by not having had its perfectly proper motion circulated to all the membership in common with all other motions way back in February and even the agreed remedy was not adhered to.

Also, during the long period between 12th December last year and 18th February this year, the period between the CEC accepting this motion and the distribution of the printed list from which it had been omitted, the CEC didn't even have the courtesy to write and inform us that it had been withdrawn and would not be debated!

This is a sad and long tale of gross incompetence and ineptitude on the part of both the CEC and the NCCL administration and there is no doubt that, had we not gone to law about it, nothing more would have been done about it and the NCROPA would have been denied its proper right to be heard.

The membership of the NCCL expects and deserves better than this and I ask you to express those sentiments by voting for this unhappy but necessary motion.