

LTB NO: 566/20

26<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**TO: ALL BRANCHES**

Dear Colleague

## **CWU SUPPORT FOR JEREMY CORBYN MP AND OUR WIDER CONCERNS ON DIVISIONS WITHIN THE LABOUR PARTY**

Branches will be aware that Jeremy Corbyn MP was suspended as a member of the Labour Party on the 30<sup>th</sup> October. Since that date, we have received hundreds of enquiries regarding this news. Once the news of Jeremy Corbyn's suspension became public, as General Secretary, I made statements demanding that he be readmitted to the Party following serious concerns regarding the process leading to his suspension and the political nature of it. I also made statements making clear my support for the EHRC report.

Branches will be aware that Jeremy Corbyn was readmitted to the Labour Party on the 17<sup>th</sup> November. It is our understanding that the panel convened to hear Jeremy Corbyn's suspension case found him to be not guilty of any breaches in a unanimous decision. Despite political briefings surrounding this hearing, the panel included representatives from all sides of Labour's left/right political spectrum.

Many hoped that this finding would lead to the Labour Party turning its focus to the important issues of the day including the economic outlook and the coronavirus crisis. This was also an important moment to begin implementing the EHRC recommendations on anti-semitism and doubling down on efforts to ensure that Labour becomes a truly anti-racist Party.

Instead, the Labour Leader Keir Starmer took the decision to suspend the Labour whip – a parliamentary term for admittance to the Parliamentary Party – from Jeremy Corbyn in a decision that flies in the face of the Party's rules and customs. This decision also goes against all forms of natural justice given that Jeremy Corbyn had been found not guilty of the charges made against him by the Party's formal processes.

Following these events, an emergency motion was presented to the CWU NEC. The motion read:

*"The NEC endorses the Terms of the Joint Statement agreed by seven TULO unions, including the CWU, with regard to the suspension of Jeremy Corbyn from the Labour Party and the call for him to be reinstated. The statement is attached.*

*The NEC will be aware that Jeremy Corbyn has subsequently been reinstated as a Labour member but that following this the leader of the Labour Party announced yesterday that he would not be restoring the Whip to Jeremy Corbyn. The NEC believe this is wrong and will support the call for the Whip to be restored to Jeremy Corbyn.*

*The General Secretary will bring forward a paper to the next NEC meeting to enable a discussion on this ongoing internal dispute within the Labour Party and the implications of it impacts on our political work.”*

The motion was passed unanimously by the CWU National Executive.

The CWU continues to support Jeremy Corbyn, who has been a long-term supporter of this Union's industrial and political work. However, beyond Jeremy Corbyn as an individual, we also believe there is a very serious issue developing regarding freedom of expression and natural justice and the views of the Union on this have equally been expressed directly to the Labour Leader. Additionally, we have also expressed our concerns over whether the current direction of Labour is truly representing the policies that Labour has previously agreed in supporting CWU members.

We are also aware that in relation to this issue a number of Labour Party CLPs, CLP Officers including a number of CWU members have been suspended from the Party as a result of them expressing their support for Jeremy Corbyn in the manner the union has at national level. We are led to believe that these actions have been instigated by the General Secretary of the Labour Party whom we understand is responsible for a directive informing Branches and CLP's that these matters cannot be discussed. Our view is that this only serves to deepen divides within the Party along factional grounds. Given the serious political issues that our members face industrially and in their day to day lives both the approach and its consequences are unacceptable.

We would be grateful if branches could inform of us of any CWU members who they are aware have been suspended by the Labour Party over this issue and the reason given for such suspensions.

We also wish to make clear that in our exchanges with the Labour Leader on this matter, we have focused on the need for these issues to be resolved and for an end from all sides to the factional fighting that is making Labour look unelectable.

Finally, you will see from the motion, that we are due to bring forward a further paper to the National Executive, which will consider the implications of this internal Labour dispute on our ongoing political work. Further developments will be reported in due course.

Any enquiries on the above should be sent to the General Secretary's Office at [jdunn@cwu.org](mailto:jdunn@cwu.org).

Yours sincerely



Dave Ward  
**General Secretary**