

All supporters of Labour Party welcome in Labour Party

The Labour Party Rule Book 2017, Chapter 2 Membership rules, Clause I Conditions of membership, sub clause 4 Exclusions, (B) reads as follows:

‘A member of the Party who joins and/ or supports a political organisation other than an official Labour group or other unit of the Party, or supports any candidate who stands against an official Labour candidate, or publicly declares their intent to stand against a Labour candidate, shall automatically be ineligible to be or remain a Party member, subject to the provisions of Chapter 6.1.2 below of the disciplinary rules.’

Amendment

Delete: ‘joins and/ or supports a political organisation other than an official Labour group or other unit of the Party, or’

Delete "automatically be ineligible to be or remain a Party member, subject to " &

Replace with "be considered for disciplinary action under the terms of "

Supporting argument

The Labour Party campaigns in and with communities and their organisations. It also works with other political parties although currently only the Co-op Party. Not all relationships of supporting & joining organisations other than official Labour organisations are prohibited by the rules.

Unity in electoral campaigns and compliance with the rules should be the required level of commitment. Registered supporters are asked to agree with the aims of the party and not belong to an organisation opposed to it. This should be the standard for membership.

Prohibition of support of organisations other than affiliates creates a chilling effect for joining and support of such organisations. It means working with organisations such as Hope not Hate, Liberty, Green Peace or Amnesty International may render members liable to automatic expulsion.

Automatic ineligibility is currently interpreted as allowing expulsion by administrative action. The accused is processed in secret, unable to challenge evidence, present a defence or request an appeal. These are all breaches of the rights to natural justice. This is unacceptable in a democratic party.

This has been used in a factional manner where long-term members and Green Party converts have been expelled. Disciplinary action taken varies; members of other parties who hold public office wishing to join are usually accepted.

The purpose of this rule change is to end the arbitrary, partisan and secret exclusion of Labour Party members, so that all members that abide by Labour's rules, are entitled to join and remain members of the Party.

(247 Words)