

**LIBERTY MEMBERS' CONFERENCE & AGM 2014**

**26 April 2014 at Senate House**

**Resolutions Passed**

**1. Mass Surveillance**

This AGM affirms the importance of freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of the press, the right to a fair trial, and the right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence as a fundamental human right.

This AGM recognises that electronic communication, in particular via the internet, has become a principal means of communication for billions of people across the globe.

This AGM therefore recognises the huge significance of the 2013 Snowden disclosures which revealed that the UK authorities are engaged in intercepting and retaining billions of personal communications every day.

This AGM is gravely concerned by:

- (1) Mass surveillance without suspicion being undertaken by British security agencies;
- (2) The woeful response of the UK Government and Parliament to the allegations of illegality;
- (3) The inadequacy of the current legal framework governing authorities' use of surveillance and the suggestion that security agencies from different countries share data in order to circumvent their domestic legal regimes;
- (4) The serious and continuing deficiencies in parliamentary oversight of the security agencies provided by the ISC.
- (5) The "chilling effects" of mass surveillance on freedom of speech and of association.
- (6) The threat to press freedom posed by surveillance of communications between journalists (including bloggers and other citizen journalists) and their sources.
- (7) The threat to the right to a fair trial posed by surveillance of communications between lawyer and client.
- (8) The inevitability of misuse when so much surveillance data is available to so many people, including agents of foreign governments and private companies.

This AGM considers that in a safe and fair society, the security agencies must be democratically accountable.

This AGM condemns any intrusion by the state into the personal lives of individuals that is not carefully circumscribed by law.

This AGM rejects as misdirection the “public debate about the balance between privacy and other competing interests” and instead recognises that mass surveillance strikes at the very foundations of a free and democratic society.

This AGM denies the effectiveness of mass surveillance against determined groups and individuals prepared to use violence to advance their political aims, and instead asserts that respect for human rights is the best way to prevent radicalisation and thus the best defence against terrorism.

This AGM resolves that Liberty will continue to publicise the threats posed by mass surveillance and campaign for the reform of the law governing surveillance powers and accountability of the security agencies.

## **2. Military Justice**

This AGM notes that the protections of the Human Rights Act apply equally to all – civilian or soldier.

This AGM welcomes the recent verdict of the inquest into the death of Anne-Marie Ellement. It also welcomes the recent decision of the Attorney General to allow the family of Cheryl James to apply for another inquest into her death at the Deepcut Barracks.

This AGM condemns the repeated failure of the Armed Forces to learn from these tragic deaths and to put in place adequate complaints handling mechanisms.

It regrets in particular the missed opportunity of the recent announcement of the creation of a Service Complaints Ombudsman, which heralds only a change in name rather than substance.

This AGM resolves to continue to defend the human rights of those who work in the Armed Forces and to fight for the creation of an independent military complaints system that commands confidence, transparency and justice.

## **3. Liberty80 Birthday Motion**

This AGM recalls that in 1934, in response to the oppressive policing of the National Hunger Marches, the National Council for Civil Liberties was born.

This AGM further recalls the NCCL’s foundational letter published in the *Manchester Guardian* which referred to the general and alarming tendency to encroachment upon liberty.

This AGM notes that over its 80 year history, Liberty has launched many important and successful campaigns to protect and extend the human rights of all in Britain regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation and other attributes.

This AGM further notes that despite Liberty's effective campaigning, many challenges that faced Britain in 1934 confront us again today. In particular, economic hardship, discrimination, xenophobic rhetoric, repressive policing tactics and attacks on peaceful protest.

This AGM therefore wishes Liberty a happy 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and every success for its next 80 years as it continues fighting for the basic freedoms of all those on our shores and contributes to the universal struggle for human rights around the world.

### **Liberty's Council**

**The following 15 members were elected to the Liberty Council to serve a two year period from 2014 – 2016:**

Camila Batmanghelidjh, Chris Bissell, Tom Cleaver, Dinah Crystal OBE, Marije Davidson, Katherine Hardcastle, Martin Howe, Greg Judge, Nicola Lacey, Baroness Doreen Lawrence of Clarendon OBE, Richard J Mercer, Sonali Naik, Richard Norton-Taylor, Simon Sapper, Mazin Zeki.

**They join the 15 members who were elected in 2013 to serve until 2015:**

Howard Beckett, Frances Butler (Chair), Louise Christian, David Enright, Shaheed Fatima, Fiona Horlick, Nikita Lalwani, Jean Lambert, Jeannie Mackie, Michael McColgan, Terry McGuinness, Nick O'Shea, Jo Shaw, Hannah Slarks, Amy Woolfson.

### **Liberty's Conference and Appeals Committee**

Judy Khan QC was elected unopposed to serve a further three year term on the Conference and Appeals Committee. She joins Deok Joo Rhee, who becomes Chair of the CAC and is now in her second year of her three year term and Alex Bailin QC who is now in the final year of his current term .

### **Liberty's Auditors**

MHA MacIntyre Hudson were re-appointed as Liberty's auditors for 2014 – 2015