Twitter Thread by Mat Flusk■Northern Republic Now



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@MatFlusk



I want to talk a bit about what's been happening in CLPs over these past weeks - but this isn't a rant about "free speech" or "stalinism".

It's about the real, human cost of a small group of people pursuing a vendetta and using everyday people as emotional cannon fodder.

For some months, I've been Acting Secretary of my CLP, one of the biggest in the country. Predictably it hasn't been easy, but these past couple of weeks have been almost unbearable and its down to one man: David Evans.

I've spent more hours than I can count in my head, hours of my own free time & accumulated hours I was technically on the clock working from home, going back and forth with regional officers and CLP members, as motion after motion was ruled "not competent business" by Evans.

For those not au fait with this bizarre language of internal Labour politics, "not competent business" basically means "shouldn't be discussed or voted on". Its presented as 'advice' but it is in effect a ruling, a diktat, and if you defy it you risk suspension from the party.

This has already happened to Chairs and Secretaries elsewhere in the country, and as a member of Labour I'm obviously minded to follow the rules.

Some of the rulings made sense, like not discussing disciplinary cases - everyone's a member from door knockers to NEC members.

It wouldn't be fair if a CLP meeting was having its own side-trial on a disciplinary case when a member who sits on the panel that rules on these cases is in the room.

We've been given quite complex legal reasons why we can't allow members to slate the EHRC - again, fair enough.

But all of this takes up time and head space. And this week it went from the frustrating to the farcical. We were told motions simply expressing solidarity with Jeremy Corbyn, or to restore the whip (not a formalised disciplinary process) were not acceptable. Much harder to sell.

Now tonight, @RiversideCLP were told we couldn't table a simple one line motion that we have no confidence in the General Secretary, by decree of the General Secretary. Again, under threat of suspension. You can expect the reaction.

My friends & family have seen the strain it's put me under, coinciding with challenging personal events. Some say suspension is a risk worth taking but for me it's not an option. My CLP (whatever you've heard or your views) doesn't just get suspensions - we get headlines.

Whatever things have been said in past meetings (none of which I said and indeed I wasn't even at those meetings) if the Secretary of my CLP gets suspended, it ends up in a news article and I get named.

I can't have that conversation with my boss and my managing director.

I truly feel like I have been treated by David Evans as disposable collateral damage in his campaign against Jeremy Corbyn in particular, but more importantly, the broad left of the Labour Party as a whole.

CLP officers are *volunteers*. We're barracked as if we're paid staff.

My ask is this - for @Keir_Starmer and David Evans to step back from this campaign and consider the impact they're having on lay-members lives by using them as shields. We have lives outside of Labour and they're being affected by these silly games.