

NATIONAL COMMERCIAL RADIO MOVEMENT

Note for Emergency Committee meeting
12th October 1969

On Sunday, 12th October 1969, a meeting took place at the NCRM headquarters between Fred Hasler, Alex McKenna (Free Radio Campaign) and Geoffrey Pearl (Free Radio Association). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of a merger of F.R.A., F.R.C. and N.C.R.M., and the proposals and suggestions put forward at this meeting are set out below for the Committee's appraisal.

Mr. Pearl put forward the following points:

1. Each organisation would keep its separate identity (for the time being) within a combined committee consisting of eight F.R.A., 6 N.C.R.M., and 4 F.R.C. current committee members. Newsletters would be compiled and despatched by N.C.R.M. to its members until January 1970, after which a 16-page letter would be released from Rayleigh for distribution to our members by us.
2. Finances would be kept separately by each organisation. Separate membership information should be kept by each organisation.
3. This point was agreed in principle by Alex and Fred: each organisation should work as a branch of the main organisation, i.e. F.R.C. would be the campaign branch, N.C.R.M. public relations, and F.R.A. administration.

Mr. Pearl suggested that the N.C.R.M. Committee would be redesignated as follows: Fred, Public Relations Secretary; David Prewett, political and parliamentary; Martin, press; Fred Bunzl, fund raising and liaison etc. with broadcasting authorities; Caroline, rallies; Valerie, local radio; Barbara Hiscock, television; Sue, liaison with radio stations.

Sir Ian would be President of the new organisation, Alex Chairman, Rosemary Barber (FRC) Distribution. On the F.R.A. side, Mr. Pearl would be Chairman of F.R.A.; Michael Tickner Socials and General Secretary; Margaret Stock: Treasurer; Linda Strang, membership; Tim Davies, legal station project; June Pearl, F.R.A. Admin secretary; Bob Craig, Branches; Tony Young, Sound Magazine.

In view of the large size of the combined committee, Mr. Pearl proposed that the committee voluntarily limits its size to definite national functions or positions, and its role to be one of (a) ensuring that every function is covered; (b) obtaining progress reports from each function; (c) document-signing and approval of major expenditure when necessary; (d) policy matters not previously decided; and (verbatim) with the exception of any new arrangements we agreed herewith, it is proposed that all current Free Radio activities shall be maintained in the present form and location, and by the people currently responsible for them, provided they are being carried out satisfactorily.

Fred put forward that the existing titles of the three organisations should disappear, and that the Chairmen of the individual organisations stand down in favour of the combined committee. He proposed that a Chairman should be elected by the members of the combined committee. All accounts should be open to scrutiny by any of the three member organisations, and all outstanding accounts should be settled before an amalgamation. Also that a policy document be drawn up and implemented. He suggested the new organisation might be called British Free Radio Movement.

Fred also raised the point that a new Constitution should be drawn up; Mr. Pearl said that the F.R.A. Constitution could not be changed, and he replied that neither could NCRM's. Mr. Pearl said that we could overcome this by mixing the committee members (?). Mr. Pearl also said that the name of the new organisation should be either Free Radio Association or Free Radio Campaign, both of which were well known; NCRM was not.

/Notes overleaf

Notes

1. On 7th March 1969, the N.C.R.M. Committee passed a resolution in favour of co-ordination with F.R.A. and F.R.C., and also with any other organisation which may be interested in independent radio. Co-ordinate, yes - amalgamate, no.
2. On 5th September 1969, the N.C.R.M. Committee passed the following resolution:

It is against our policy to support land-based pirate radio. In this light we find that any suggestion of amalgamation with F.R.C. is out of the question for the moment, free co-ordination and co-operation being preferable to a complete merger with the F.R.C.

To all members of the N.C.R.M. Committee

Friday 7th November 1969

As only Martin, Freddie, Fred and Caroline attended for the Committee meeting scheduled for this date, an informal discussion took place. The forthcoming meeting at F.R.A. Rayleigh was discussed, and some proposals were agreed upon as being essential to maintain in any forthcoming discussions on mergers or amalgamations. The basic policy to be adhered to would be as follows:

1. The NCRM is opposed to the principle of land-based pirate radio stations, and cannot therefore be officially associated or connected with any organisation or publication which is in support of land-based pirate radio. This means, unfortunately, that NCRM cannot aid or amalgamate with an organisation such as Free Radio Campaign (which produces 'Free Radio News') while FRC's policy supports these pirates.
2. Any actions taken must be in accordance with our constitution. Anything agreed or decided upon by an NCRM member of a joint F.R.A./NCRM committee should either have been previously agreed by the NCRM Committee, or agreed or decided ~~on~~ subject to subsequent approval of the NCRM Committee.
3. The new organisation must have a completely new name, and not use the name of any existing organisation. This point is absolutely essential.
4. The policy of the F.R.A. appears to be that they are in favour of completely 'free' radio, meaning that anybody should be able to start up a radio station in Britain, and that there should be no controlling body (i.e. independent television authority). This does not at all line up with the NCRM policy for future broadcasting in Britain, and we must ascertain whether this is in fact official F.R.A. policy, and if so whether they intend it should remain so.

David Prewett put his agreement to the above points by telephone that evening; he remarked that his opinion was that the meeting on 23rd November should be the first of several informal discussions to discuss the matter fully. He pointed out that the NCRM decision at all times must be influenced by the thought: Will this benefit the cause of legal independent radio for Britain?

Please try to attend the meeting at 239 Eastwood Road, Rayleigh on 23rd November 1969, at 1pm.

