

NUS votes to work with group accused of supporting Islamic extremism

Posted: Thu, 23 Apr 2015

The National Union of Students has voted to work with Islamic 'civil rights' group Cage, against the Government's counter-terror and counter-radicalisation strategy.

The motion approved by the NUS 'reaffirms' their "opposition to PREVENT", the Government programme whose stated aim is to "stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism" by facing the "the ideological challenge we face from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote these views".

The NUS describes Cage as a "civil liberties group", but it was widely criticised when its links to Mohammed Emwazi became known. Cage spokesman Asim Qureshi described Mohammed Emwazi, known as 'Jihadi John', as a "beautiful young man".

Fellow CAGE leader Cerie Bullivant refused to condemn Emwazi's actions and walked off in the middle of a [Sky News interview](#) by Kay Burley when asked to condemn Emwazi. He said her question was "Islamophobic and racist".

Two charities [withdrew funding](#) from Cage after the revelations.

NSS spokesperson Stephen Evans said: "To actively work against people who are trying to counter radicalisation and extremism is ill-informed and reckless.

"It is one thing to have concerns about the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, it is quite another to work with a group that has a [troubling history](#) of supporting Islamism.

"The NUS's defence of free speech seems to extend to allowing extremist speakers on campus, but they have no objection to enforcing 'safe space' and 'no-platform' policies which curb free speech on university campuses. The National Union of Students appears to be giving Islamism a free pass."

The conference voted to not give "fascists a platform in the student movement".

The NUS also reaffirmed its opposition to 'Islamophobia'. Their Liverpool conference voted on a motion stating that the organisation would "actively campaign against racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and fascism".

The NUS say: "Islamophobia is massively on the rise across Europe, is state-sponsored and legitimised by the mainstream media."

"The Government is manipulating public perceptions and current global events to scale back civil liberties and freedoms as part of a political agenda."

Mr Evans said: "What is their definition of Islamophobia? Do they just mean anti-Muslim bigotry, or do they include criticism or satire of Islam as well? This is a vital distinction."

According to reports from those at the conference, the motion was voted through without debate.

The full list of motions can be read [here](#).

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