# Motion on the stocking and display of racist tabloids in the Union Shop Extra

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# **Union Notes:**

1. That the following tabloids are stocked and sold in the Union Shop Extra on Sherfield Walkway: The Sun, The Daily Mail, The Daily Express.

- 2. That these tabloids are the exact same list used by the campaign group 'Stop Funding Hate', which pressures advertisers to pull their funding from these publications, to distance their brand from racism, sexism, transphobia, and many forms of bigotry in general. (1)
- 3. That the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) issued a report (2) stating that The Sun and The Daily Mail have been "fuelling prejudice" with their "reckless" reporting, with ECRI Chair Christian Ahlund stating:

"It is no coincidence that racist violence is on the rise in the UK at the same time as we see worrying examples of intolerance and hate speech in the newspapers, online and even among politicians".

- 4. That in 2015, the UN Human Rights Chief, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, made a statement (3) about these newspapers, urging the UK to examine incitement to hatred in the UK media, and specifically calling out the Sun, Daily Mail and Daily Express for their sustained attack on refugees and migrants.
- 5. That The Sun published an article comparing African migrants to cockroaches 'Stop Funding Hate' quotes the following (4):

Miqdaad Versi of the Muslim Council of Britain has secured a string of corrections after challenging a "consistent stream" of false and misleading anti-Muslim stories in UK newspapers.

Press standards group Trans Media Watch has warned of an "increase in sensationalist and sometimes misleading articles published by the Daily Mail on the subject of children who question their gender... Given that research shows a high level of suicidal ideation among young trans people, this is dangerous and irresponsible behaviour".

And while the demonisation and distortion may have become normalised within the UK, internationally the behaviour of our press is a source of growing concern.

In 2015, after The Sun published an article comparing African migrants to cockroaches, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights put out a statement warning that:

"History has shown us time and again the dangers of demonizing foreigners and minorities... it is extraordinary and deeply shameful to see these types of tactics

being used... simply because racism and xenophobia are so easy to arouse in order to win votes or sell newspapers".

- 6. That the City of Liverpool is currently in a 29 year long boycott (5) of The Sun newspaper, after The Sun smeared the 96 victims of the Hillsborough disaster with their false reporting of the incident.
- 7. That The Sun is owned by News International, a company that has been embroiled in phone hacking scandals (6).
- 8. That the Board of Trustees recently reaffirmed (7) that it "does not tolerate racism of any kind".
- 9. That "inclusivity" is one of the four key values (8) of the Union.

## **Union Believes:**

- 1. That The Sun, The Daily Mail, and The Daily Express take editorial decisions and publish headlines that do not align with the Union's values (see the pages below for examples) (9).
- That these headlines contribute heavily to hate crime against Muslims and other minorities, ranging from verbal abuse on public transport to acid attacks – quoting 'Stop Funding Hate' (4):

As long ago as 2010, experts were warning that hostile media coverage was fuelling a rise in anti-Muslim hate crime. In 2016, Leicester University's Centre for Hate Studies warned that a wider surge in hate crime against migrants had been "fuelled and legitimised... by the media", while Cambridge University highlighted that "Mainstream media reporting about Muslim communities is contributing to an atmosphere of rising hostility towards Muslims in Britain".

- 3. That, as these newspapers have been condemned by the UN Human Rights Chief and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, these papers should not be stocked by the Union.
- 4. That the Union should be an actively anti-racist organisation.

# **Union Resolves:**

- 1. To immediately cease the stocking and selling of The Sun, The Daily Mail, and The Daily Express in the Union Shop Extra and all other Union shops.
- 2. To issue a statement on why the above action was taken.

## References:

- (1) <a href="https://stopfundinghate.info/">https://stopfundinghate.info/</a>
- (2) <a href="https://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/press/the-sun-and-daily-mail-fuelling-prejudice-racist-violence-hate-crime-speech-uk-ecri-report-a7351856.html">https://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/press/the-sun-and-daily-mail-fuelling-prejudice-racist-violence-hate-crime-speech-uk-ecri-report-a7351856.html</a>
- (3) <a href="https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15885">https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15885</a>
- (4) <a href="https://stopfundinghate.info/about-the-campaign/media-and-hate-crime/">https://stopfundinghate.info/about-the-campaign/media-and-hate-crime/</a>
- (5) https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-17113382
- (6) https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/jun/24/phone-hacking-scandal-timeline-trial
- (7) <a href="https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/news/statements-regarding-compromising-image">https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/news/statements-regarding-compromising-image</a>
- (8) <a href="https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/about-us/our-strategy-2017-20/values/">https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/about-us/our-strategy-2017-20/values/</a>
- (9) Please see the next few pages for many examples of The Sun, The Daily Mail, and The Daily Express headlines.



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