



FSF OPEN INVITE: Sit Down, Shut Up: Are Football Supporters Discriminated Against? [IMMEDIATE RELEASE]

Vibe Bar, London, Thursday March 4th, 7pm

Sit Down, Shut Up: Are Football Supporters Discriminated Against? is the FSF's free Question Time-style debate and gives match-going fans the opportunity to tell it how they see it to an expert panel of journalists, police, prosecutors and civil-liberty solicitors (see Notes to Editors).

- Fed up with over-zealous police?
- Tired of doormen dressed up as 'stewards'?
- Disgusted with clubs criminalising their own supporters?

Email register@fsf.org.uk to book your free place.

Visit www.fsf.org.uk for further details and panellists.

Why are football supporters treated differently from other groups in society? Go to Wembley for a pop concert and you can stand without fear of ejection. Head to a rugby league match and you can drink in your seat. Try either of those at a football game and you could end up with a criminal record.

The Crown Prosecution Service pushes for the most severe punishment in cases involving football fans - would this be legal with any other group in society? What role can fans play in improving things for the better?

Sit Down, Shut Up: Are Football Supporters Discriminated Against? will kick-off at 7pm on Thursday March 4th and lasts for 90 minutes, with a 15 minute half-time break for refreshments. The Vibe Bar is located at the Old Truman Brewery, 91-95 Brick Lane, London, E1 6QL.

The event is free but registration is required, email your name to register@fsf.org.uk or call 0330 44 000 44. All registered fans receive a free pint (or soft drink) on arrival and non-FSF members are welcome.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Journalists are welcome to attend but registration is required.

For further details: <http://www.fsf.org.uk/news/Sit-Down-Shut-Up-Are-Football-Supporters-Discriminated-Against.php>

The Football Supporters' Federation (FSF) is the national supporters' organisation for all football fans from England and Wales comprising more than 150,000 individual fans and members of local supporters' organisations from every club in the professional structure and beyond. For more info <http://www.fsf.org.uk/about-the-fsf.php>

Panellists: Tony Evans will chair the event. As well as being a Liverpool fan Tony is also Football Editor at The Times and a regular guest on his newspaper's excellent The Game podcast.

Duleep Allirajah is Sports Columnist for spiked "an independent online phenomenon dedicated to raising the horizons of humanity by waging a culture war of words against misanthropy, priggishness, prejudice, luddism, illiberalism and irrationalism in all their ancient and modern forms."

Roger Evans has 32 years police service and is currently a Superintendent in the Metropolitan Police. He was the Police Match Commander at Highbury and has worked across Europe with Arsenal and England including Germany 2006. Roger still works at the Emirates when required and performed police command functions at both the new and old Wembley stadium.

Nick Hawkins is the Chief Crown Prosecutor for Hampshire and the CPS National Lead on football. A lifelong fan he has extensive experience of prosecuting offences of football violence and disorder at home and abroad, including the World Cup in Germany. Nick has also worked throughout Europe, Brazil, and South Africa.

Henry Porter is a civil liberties campaigner, novelist, and Observer columnist.

James Welch is a solicitor and has been the Legal Director of Liberty since February 2000. Liberty is a campaigning organisation which seeks to protect civil liberties and has worked extensively with the FSF in campaigning against the use of section 27.

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