



FSF NEWS: Liberty director Shami Chakrabarti to speak at the Football Supporters' Federation's annual conference [IMMEDIATE RELEASE 21-07-10]

National supporters' organisation the Football Supporters' Federation (FSF) has announced that Shami Chakrabarti, director of Liberty, will speak at their annual conference which takes place at Wembley Stadium on Saturday, July 24th.

The civil-rights campaigner will appear before an audience of fans to discuss the manner in which supporters are policed - the FSF receives more complaints about policing and stewarding than any other issue. The panel will also feature Mark James of Salford Law School, Nicholas Long from the Independent Police Complaints Commission, and the FSF's lead on policing and stewarding Amanda Jacks.

Football supporters are subject to laws which do not apply to any other groups in society. It is, for example, illegal to drink or be in possession of alcohol within sight of the pitch while in a ground.

The FSF has also noticed a trend in the authorities applying for banning orders from the courts for offences such as "drunk attempting to enter a designated sports ground" where no violence or disorder was involved. The Football Spectators Act 1989 and the Football (Disorder) Act 2000 allows this and supporters can be required to surrender their passports without ever facing a jury or criminal court.

As well as policing and stewarding fans will also have the opportunity to attend morning workshops on safe standing and club governance. Polls show that nine out of every 10 fans back the introduction of safe standing areas and this workshop will look at ways in which supporters can campaign for its implementation. Meanwhile, the club governance workshop will feature representatives from UEFA, the FA, Football League and Premier League.

Award-winning Canadian investigative journalist and academic Dr. Declan Hill will give the afternoon's keynote speech to Fans' Parliament. Hill alleges that match-fixers have attended every senior and junior major international tournament of the past 20 years and argues poor financial mismanagement and non-payment of the players opens the door to bribery.

Over the course of four years Hill immersed himself in the murky world of the multi-billion dollar illegal Asian gambling market and organised crime. Travelling across four continents Hill interviewed more than 220 people including professional gamblers, Mafia hitmen, undercover police, players and match officials.

The result is Hill's astonishing international best-seller *The Fix: Soccer and Organized Crime*. In it Hill claims that some of the most high-profile games in world football may have been fixed - right up to the Champions League and World Cup. "It is astounding at the world's biggest sporting event that there will be players running on to the pitch who do not know how much they will get paid or even if they will be paid

at all. It is this that is the gateway for corruption," says Hill.

Hundreds of football fans are expected to attend Fans' Parliament from across the UK and beyond. The event is open to FSF members and non-members alike and is entirely free to attend. For further information, registration, and accommodation details visit: www.fsf.org.uk/fans-parliament/2010

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

- Media are welcome to attend and should contact the FSF for accreditation.
- All interested parties welcome.
- The FSF is the national supporters' organisation for all football fans from England and Wales comprising more than 180,000 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>
- Fans can join the FSF free of charge and it only takes a few minutes, simply visit: <http://www.fsf.org.uk/join.php>
- Shami Chakrabarti CBE has been the director of Liberty since September 2003 and is the chancellor of Oxford Brookes University. As director of the cross-party non-party organisation, she has campaigned against over-broad anti-terrorist measures which followed the September 11th attacks in the United States and is a prominent opponent of recent counter-terrorism legislation. She is a frequent contributor to BBC Radio 4 and to various newspapers on the topic of human rights and civil liberties. www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk.
- Declan Hill is a multi-award winning investigative journalist, documentary maker and academic. He specialises in studying organised crime and international issues. Before writing The Fix he made documentaries on the killing of the head of the Canadian mafia, blood feuds in Kosovo and ethnic cleansing in Iraq. He has also created documentaries in Kurdistan, India, Bolivia, Mexico, and Turkey. He has worked for CBC Radio and Television and PBS Frontline. His shows and articles have appeared on BBC Radio World Service and BBC Radio 4, the Guardian and the Sunday Telegraph. Recently, Declan was a Chevening Scholar at Green College, Oxford where he obtained his doctorate on match-fixing in professional football. Visit Declan's website www.howtofixasoccergame.com for more.
- Interviews requests for Shami or Declan can be sent to Michael Brunskill (see below).

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