

Some questions for the leaders of the FLA

Today people have come from around the country to join the Football Lads Alliance (FLA) demo. The march is billed as against all extremism.

We're here because we are genuinely worried that people are trying to use the FLA mobilisations to win support for far right extremists groups, whatever the motives of most of those marching.

We do not believe that football supporters are racists or that they are all linked to the far right.

The overwhelming majority of football supporters totally oppose racism.

More black and Asian supporters go to games now than ever before, every club has black and Asian players. For that matter one in four supporters at Premier League games are women.

Like you, we were horrified by the attacks at Westminster, London Bridge, Manchester, Finsbury Park Mosque and Parsons Green.



But we have to raise some important questions. We believe some people claiming to support the FLA are peddling an agenda that will lead to Muslims being scapegoated and only add to the divisions in our society.

Speakers

Why did it take protests to have the invitations withdrawn from speakers with known extreme right wing views like Toni Bugle. She was a candidate for the far right English Democrats (an organisation full of former BNP members) and heads up "Mothers Against Radical Islam and Sharia".

Mohan Singh was also invited. He recently spoke alongside the fascist Tommy Robinson at a demo. Both Bugle and Singh were given a platform on the first FLA demo in June.

And why, up until Thursday, were they set to speak again on today's demo – despite warnings about who they are and what they stand for?

Facebook

Why have people been allowed to put racist and Islamophobic posts and cartoons up on the FLA Facebook page on a regular basis, some posts even calling for 'civil war' to deal with Islam!

The posts have continued even

after John Meighan, the leading figure in the FLA, admitted the posts were so racist that the Walking With The Wounded veterans charity had pulled support from today's protest.

Membership

And why have people been allowed to openly admit on the FLA page to membership or support for fascist organisations like the English Defence League without challenge?

If the FLA genuinely wants to take on all forms of extremism it has to take on the right wing extremists in its own ranks.

THE FLA HAS GIVEN Stand Up To Racism a bit of a bad press. But don't blame the messenger. It shouldn't need us to point out that the far right shouldn't be welcome.

We don't want to go back to the bad old days when the far right saw football as its recruiting ground and supporters were used for their political agenda.

We should be making sure that we unite in the face of the terror attacks and that everybody feels welcome at our clubs, in our communities and in our workplaces.

Let's all stand up to racism and Islamophobia and make sure that football is for all.

