

## **Motion: Boycott Prevent!**

Proposer: Hani Rashid (President)

Seconder: Danny Nasr (Education Officer)

### **This Union Notes**

1. The government's Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a statutory requirement on public bodies – including universities – to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism' and to implement the 'Prevent' agenda.
2. The Prevent agenda, as part of the Government's 'anti-extremism' work has been used to create an expansive surveillance architecture to spy on the public and to police dissent, systematically targeting Black people and Muslims.
3. Under Prevent, lecturers have been known to report students as being 'at risk of radicalisation' for merely taking an interest in political affairs in class, or for observing their religion more closely, whilst politically active students have found themselves visited by counter-terrorism officers.
4. The Government's counter-terrorism/security policy is fundamentally flawed in its approach; its operant concepts of 'extremism' and 'radicalism' are ill-defined and open to abuse for political ends.
5. The Act further criminalises Muslims and Black people, and comes amidst a campaign of fear and demonisation from the government.

### **This Union Believes**

1. Islamophobia is massively on the rise across Europe, is state-sponsored and legitimised by the mainstream media.
2. The government's identified 'warning signs' of "radicalisation" problematise and renders suspect those with mental health difficulties.
3. That the Act could serve to isolate many students who already feel that the only avenue through which the Government will engage them is 'anti-radicalisation' initiatives, resulting in further alienation and disaffection.
4. The Act discourages free expression and analysis of ideas. Academics, as well as anyone in a public sector job, should not have to be part of this surveillance.
5. We fundamentally believe that universities and colleges are places for education, not surveillance
6. The implementation of the Prevent Strategy on campus will not only isolate Muslim students but undermine the civil liberties of other groups such as environmental, political and humanitarian activists.
7. That the National Union of Students (NUS) and University and Colleges Union (UCU) have both passed motions at their conferences opposing the Act and Prevent.
8. As a Charity, we as a Union are not legally bound to engage with Prevent and should seek to boycott it.

### **This Union Resolves**

1. To mandate the Officers of this Union to not engage with the Prevent strategy or implement the proposals of the Act, and to boycott it as far as legally possible.
2. To work with campus trade unions including UCU on combating the Prevent strategy and its implementation on campus.
3. To educate students on the dangers of the CTSA and the Prevent Strategy.
4. To lobby the university to be more open and transparent about how they are engaging with Prevent and other similar initiatives. This involves:
  - Demanding publications of how the policy is operating within the university and Students' Union.
  - Access to materials used to train staff and students.
  - Holding consultations with the student body regarding how this affects students.