



Fire Brigades Union

Southern Region

**Buckinghamshire - Berkshire - Oxfordshire
Hampshire - Isle of Wight - Dorset**



PRESS RELEASE

15th September

Hampshire Fire Brigades Union members protest at the Hampshire Fire Authority meeting today, 15th September 2004.

A resident from Brockenhurst and Mr Ludwig Ramsey, an Andover resident and FBU Hampshire Brigade Chair, will address the meeting on the conflict of Hampshire's stated position on equality issues and the actions they actually undertake.

This has been highlighted by an employee who stood in the recent European elections as a British National Party candidate stating that his work as a Hampshire Firefighter made him a good candidate for the people of Brockenhurst.

The FBU is exposing the duplicitous employment practices which allow employees to have a platform to express racist views whilst the same time that employee can be the first contact for those who may wish to join the service or service the public.

Peter Miller the Regional Secretary said "The FBU has a long standing tradition in the trade union movement for opposing racism and discrimination in whatever form, it must be challenged by applying an unequivocal action towards fairness, equality and respect in the workplace and in all communities.

The FBU is seeking to ensure HFRS take responsibility for their employees and set standards of conduct so that faith and confidence can be given to all potential applicants from any section of the community.

The FBU and communities of Hampshire are appalled by the continuing employment of a part-time Firefighter who expresses such extremist views. Over 200 people in Brockenhurst, a small village, signed our petition and Hampshire council tax payers should demand that their Fire and Rescue Service dismiss this employee and establish an unequivocal fairness and dignity policy."

Dean Mills the Executive Council Member said "We are not opposed to the rights of individuals to have, hold and express their views. This is their right. However using the fire service and the uniform it provides to advance ones own political views and ideology is quite another matter" Mr Mills said when asked about the fact that the BNP were a legal party: "Of course the BNP are a legal party but then again neither lying or membership of the Nazi Party in Germany under Hitler was illegal. Just because something's not illegal it doesn't in my view necessarily make it any less wrong"

ENDS

Contacts:

Peter Miller, FBU Regional Secretary, Southern Region - 07966 754519

Lud Ramsey, FBU Brigade Chair, Hampshire – 07966 754627