

Protests at Conference Centre result in one arrest

Protests on Morrison Street today have resulted in one person being arrested.

The organisation Stand Up to Racism who rallied the protesters in Edinburgh today is irate that Steve Bannon has been invited to speak here.

They said that the organisers are promoting the conference as a place to “share, learn and cross-pollinate ideas with an array of experts, scientists, artists and thought leaders” as evidence that far from intending to interrogate Bannon, organisers intend to give him the opportunity to present and legitimise his racist, far-right agenda to leading journalists from across Europe.”



Scenes outside the EICC while Steve Bannon speaks inside

Their statement continues : "Bannon has spent much of his time since leaving the White House courting far-right groups and individuals from Europe to Brazil, including former EDL leader 'Tommy Robinson' who he described as "the backbone of this country"."

Sabby Dhalu, Co-Convenor of Stand Up To Racism said:

"The BBC's claim that Bannon's appearance at this event is about interrogating and scrutinizing him is evidently false. It is an opportunity to normalize and disseminate an agenda which is accelerating the rise of hate crime and violent racist movements across the globe, and Nicola Sturgeon was right to pull out for this reason.

"The only available response of the anti-racist majority of society to the rise of these currents and the assistance handed to them by publicly funded media is to mobilise the biggest, broadest, most powerful movement against them. That is why we are protesting in Edinburgh and that is why

thousands will take to the streets in London this Saturday.”



Scenes outside the EICC while Steve Bannon speaks inside

Tara McCarthy, City of Edinburgh Unison International Officer said:

“Let it be clear, the invitation of Steve Bannon, who is widely recognised as holding fascist and anti-Semitic views, does not legitimise him or the vile vitriol he spreads.

“The vast majority of Scottish citizens oppose his rhetoric and oppose this visit to Scotland. The European Broadcasting Union and BBC Scotland are seriously misguided by suggesting that his appearance offers an opportunity to challenge his views. What they have done instead is provide a platform to a vicious individual, who’s views will regrettably resonate with a tiny minority who subscribe to his race-hate agenda. Solidarity with our brothers and sisters of all races and religions is paramount to give a clear message...race hate in all forms is not welcome here!”

Steve West, spokesperson Stand up to Racism Edinburgh said:

“Stand up to Racism Edinburgh is angered and disgusted that Steve Bannon has been invited to speak at the journalism conference being run by News Xchange, and supported by the BBC, at Edinburgh International Conference Centre on November 14th.

“First Minister Nicola Sturgeon was absolutely correct to withdraw from the conference once she had learned that Bannon had been invited to it. We agree with her that this risks legitimising or normalising extreme right-wing, racist views.

“Anti-racists in Toronto have recently led the way. 1500 of them protested last week at Bannon’s speaking tour in the city.

“Together, we are sending a message to this Alt-Right strategist that he and his racist, fascist friends are not welcome. We intend to send them back to the gutters from whence they came.”

Former Chief Strategist in the Trump administration, Steve Bannon is appearing on stage at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre this afternoon. He will be interviewed by the BBC’s Sarah Smith at a conference jointly hosted by the BBC and the European Broadcasting Union’s News XChange .