SEP European election candidate Chris Marsden interviewed on BBC 2's "Daily Politics "

Our reporter
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Chris Marsden, the National Secretary of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and one of the party's eight European Election candidates in the North West region of England, was interviewed on BBC 2's hour-long "Daily Politics" show midday on Wednesday.

Marsden was interviewed alongside Yussuf Anwar of the right-wing National Liberal Party on College Green outside the Houses of Parliament by reporter Giles Dilnot.

Dilnot asked Marsden what made the SEP different to other socialist parties to which he replied, "We stand on a history of struggle in the working class. We advance a perspective that defends the working class."

Dilnot declared, "It's Trotskyism I'm looking for really. That's what it is," as if he was revealing a great secret. Marsden said, "Yes we are the British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International. We are a Trotskyist party."

Dilnot asked Marsden why the British public should vote for the SEP and its call for the United Socialist States of Europe. Marsden replied that they "would want to vote for that if you consider the savage attack made on jobs, wages, and social conditions at the behest of the European Union and the drive to war in Ukraine against Russia.

"We're advancing a perspective in the working class where the working class takes control of its own destiny and fight for something better," Marsden continued.

Dilnot put it to Marsden that the working class had "shrunk in recent years" and that "you know and I know" they wouldn't vote for the SEP anyway. If they did, "we'd be talking about you the same way as UKIP and the Greens."

Marsden replied, "The working class hasn't shrunk. It is as big as it ever was, if not bigger. Most people are struggling to get by. They need an alternative. Our job is to convince them that socialism is that alternative."

Dilnot suggested that if the SEP and all "the smaller, socialist parties got together" wouldn't they have a better chance, "You're not that far distant, are you?"

Marsden answered, "I think we are very far distant. We are a revolutionary socialist party. They are like a ginger group on the Labour Party."

Dilnot ended the interview by slipping in, "Please tell me I am not first up against the wall when it comes" and turned away from Marsden who could only reply, "Of course not," before the cameras faded.

The full interview can be accessed here at 29.30 minutes in, until May 28. There is also an edited version on the BBC's "European elections: Party-by-party guide" with Dilnot's remarks about being "first up against the wall" removed.

Marsden has submitted an official complaint to the BBC, over Dilnot having "ended with a statement, suggesting that the SEP is a violent organisation that would kill journalists."

"Dilnot's comments are politically slanderous, entirely false—and not mitigated in the slightest by being supposedly humorous," Marsden wrote.

"His remarks have been edited from the BBC's European elections: 'Party-by-party guide,' meaning you are fully aware that he crossed accepted journalistic boundaries. I demand a retraction from the BBC and a right to reply to this despicable insinuation."

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The SEP campaign has also been reported on the BBC's regional TV show, "North West

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Today/Tonight." Speaking outside Manchester Central Library on Monday, SEP candidate Robert Skelton explained that the party opposed the European Union as it represented the interests of the ruling elite and was at the forefront of attacks on the jobs, wages and conditions of workers across the Continent, including those in Greece, Spain, Portugal and Ireland.

On its 6.30 p.m. evening bulletin the BBC showed brief clips of the SEP campaigning and a sentence from Skelton saying, "In the North West we've seen many, many job losses. We've seen libraries closed, swimming pools closed, public services reduced, wages cut, jobs lost. So this is an austerity agenda being carried out throughout Europe."

Earlier in the day, on the 1.30 p.m. show, Skelton was televised stating, "What is required, not just in the North-West but throughout the UK and internationally is a socialist society: A society whereby the rich and super-rich and billionaires don't have a stranglehold over society's wealth and resources."

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