

#notmypride

Frits Huffnagel, the chairman of the board of Pride Amsterdam, said on Tuesday in the radio programme *Spraakmakers* that refugees should no longer be allowed into the Netherlands.

Huffnagel said of refugees that “it’s always the same thing”, continuing to say: “We see a kid and think ‘oh that’s so sad’, but we don’t see the father who may have committed war crimes and the mother who enabled that.”

This remark is not appropriate for the chairman of a multi-day event that stands for inclusion and acceptance. These were personal remarks, but they cannot be separated from his position as chairman of the board. Xenophobia, racism and islamophobia are not personal opinions, but institutional forms of oppression. They do not belong in the foundation of Pride Amsterdam, which is also what their own code of conduct claims.

Last year, the organisation flew flags saying #Blacklivesmatter and #stopkillingtranspeople, and for the past several years a boat for LHBTIQ+ refugees has participated. The chairman’s remarks bring into question whether these choices reflect organisational policy, or are merely marketing stunts.

Aside from that, mr. Huffnagel used these remarks to attempt to portray refugees as a threat to our society. This kind of rhetoric is often used by the far-right. It’s important that people in positions of power are held accountable when they actively exclude groups, especially when it comes to the emancipatory struggles of marginalised groups.

In a statement on Facebook, Pride Amsterdam claims that LHBTIQ+ refugees are welcome in the Netherlands. The organisation differentiates between refugees, and insinuates that one group is welcome and another is not. The organisation also did not distance itself from mr. Huffnagel’s remarks, and does not refute them either.

Because the LHBTIQ+ community knows how oppression operates, we should resist and welcome all refugees. We therefore call upon organisations and individuals to make a statement against mr. Huffnagel’s remarks and to join us in a struggle for a more inclusive Pride.

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