"What I actually said to Le Figaro regarding the headscarf"

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Le Figaro caricatured my words regarding the candidacy of Ilham Moussaïd, who is on our list in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur regional elections.

Ilham Moussaid (pictured), a student and a party treasurer, is NPA candidate for the regional council of Vaucluse in southern France

After a serious and complex debate, the Vaucluse chapter of the New Anti-Capitalist Party (NPA) made a choice to include on its feminist, anti-capitalist, and internationalist lists an NPA member who believes in wearing a headscarf on account of her religious convictions.

Our party welcomes youth, the unemployed, the precarious, workers of all backgrounds who find their values reflected in the party. Faith is a matter of personal choice that does not create any obstacle to participation in our struggle so long as members sincerely share the secular, feminist, and anti-capitalist fundamental principles of our party.

I therefore simply said to Le Figaro: "Ilham is evidence that one can be a member of the NPA and wear a headscarf."

The NPA is a party that fights against any form of oppression and exclusion. A debate on liberation and the place of religion and all its forms of expression exists within the NPA, in view of its next congress.

3 February 2010