

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM ALAN SKED

Sir/Madam

I believe the sponsors of this Bill may have the best of motives, but they should consider the law of unintended consequences. The measures in this Bill go too far. They given insufficient guarantees to protect free speech and provide every ground for believing that unintended or merely abusive remarks will be misinterpreted as deliberately hateful ones. The end result will inevitably be an unnecessary polarisation of opinion and probably, ironically, an increase in hatred. Please stop before this happens. Our fellow Scots deserve a decent public space for free and fair discussion.

Professor Alan Sked
19 July 2020