

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

**HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL**

**SUBMISSION FROM ALEXANDER STEEN**

I would like to register my strong opposition to The Hate Crime Bill. There are so many issues with which I disagree, with the main ones being.

The Draconian approach of The Government in ensuring that free speech and the right to challenge or disagree will only be accepted if it does not threaten any default position set by our supposed experts in community living.

The potential is very high for using the Bill to " shut the mouths" of individuals or groups who happen to differ from others including groups, movements, intellectual positions, who are accepted and embraced by those in authority as right.

The blasphemy bill, for example, seems to be regarded as not relevant in modern society, because it's not been used for a long time. The abuse of Deities that people of various religions believe in, can be very hurtful to many and should have been prosecuted on many occasions. Perhaps the exclusion of blasphemy, just as one example will further open the door to Governments potential control of allowing people to say what they like in some areas of life and restricting free speech through creating fear of reprisal in other areas of life.

I have been looking at the right to disagree information and would align myself with much if not all that they say.

I am someone who believes in valuing others no matter what religion or none, whatever sexual orientation, all races and mixed races, nationality and the many other aspects of people's lives that make them unique.

I don't necessarily agree with all the above but value and respect does not always mean agreement. Without going into details of the Hate Crime Bill, I feel that ordinary persons like myself will not be able to disagree if I do not accept the default position set by our self acclaimed experts.

I would like to have said much more but I am certainly sceptical about my comments having any impact as I really feel that often consultation is a cosmetic exercise with those in power already having made up their minds.

Alexander Steen  
**20 July 2020**