

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM JACK KELLETT

To whom it may concern,

A recent proposed bill which is intended to protect against hate crimes is vague and is at risk of being exploited and breaching human rights.

The proposed bill will attack the people of Scotland's right to freedom of speech and expression. The proposed bill specifies that there can be criminal action taken against individuals who share "insulting" content. The idea of criminalising offence is a scary one, due to there being no consistent mark for what is and is not offensive. What I find to be offensive may be very different to what my mother finds offensive and what she finds offensive could be completely the opposite to what my grandparents do.

We could see comedians behind bars for telling a close to the knuckle joke, journalists getting fined for reporting on a story that someone does not like or grandparents spending their pension trying to fight the legal system because someone overheard them say a term which is not politically correct anymore.

Although the bill is intended to protect minorities and vulnerable people in the community against discrimination, people who are horrible people (due to racist or homophobic beliefs etc.) should not be punished by the law, they should be punished by the social consequences that come from people realising that they are not nice people.

Kind Regards

Jack Kellett
21 July 2020