

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM MARK RAMSAY

I want to complain about this current bill which is, without any other way of describing it, a blatant attack on Scottish citizens. What this bill will do will cause massive problems for innocent people, because it will take just one person to call it either "Sexist", "Racist" or whatever ist you want to have; turning what could be a small argument into a criminal act for who someone is arguing with or a saying something when it gets heated.

My particular problems are as followed:

1: What is characterised as hate.

What this does is make people in protective groups when everyone is supposed to be equal. Ranking people in legalise based on character stats that they have. So a white person can be less than a black person, or a Muslim person is higher than a Christian person. This will cause serious issues of trust and actual cooperation within this country and further divide who we are as a species. Make those of a lesser class, which according to popular demand is "Cis White Males", making them a VERY easy target to be arrested over something very small. Essentially a Blasphemy law making it taboo for "Cis White Males" to make even a simple joke, like the classic three men in a bar joke, a crime because of this. I for one will not want to be arrested over an opinion or a joke that can be perceived as racist because I said something about a protective group, this goes against free speech(a fundamental human right btw, an actual American Constitution) and is akin to book burning.

2: The Actual Criminalising of Hate

Hate is an emotion. Hate isn't violent in itself. Typically hate is something personal to the individual. I personally hate liver, but to those who like liver can austrisize me or not talk to me all they want, but it isn't a crime. A simplification of what can happen. Adding it as a crime will cause people to hate each other further in an never ending cycle. The lower tier group will hate the upper tier because they have all the rights. But the actual prosecution of hate will never, and his historically never been, distributed equally. Especially if its the majority talking about the minority. Everyone has an opinion, everyone has an ideal version of how things should work or be but that isn't a hate crime, and I fear that will get people arrested. To me hate crime are those that involve actual threats of violence between one another irrespective of who they are and what they are.

3: What Comes next:

In the space of 5 years we've had an increase of transgender "identities" or "sexualities" in an ever increasing minefield of a list of don't says. I fear that with this

current trend It can be simple for people to abuse this and give innocent people criminal records for absolutely nothing. Forcing people to use their correct term or else Criminal Record for the rest of the life. Compelled speech is wrong, and it equally wrong for silencing people too. Someone doesn't want to use a fancy term to identify someone then it is their business not too and should never be a criminalised. And I fear that this bill will lead to that. And worse. I want to be able to say what I want and voice my opinion on any subject matter or type of identity without fear of being arrested because of a nonsense hate crime laws. My views on certain issues are just as valid as someone who has is in a protective group and I don't want to be criminalised if I think they are simply wrong. And that is what I fear will happen. People will be arrested in the future for differing views. But what comes after this bill? Banning people from owning a certain book, arresting someone who has a profile pic with someone who has been deemed a hate criminal through association, banning even more words? All this bill will do will make it easier to be abused which gets me into my final concern.

4: The police:

Most people in this country do not trust the police. Most people do not trust how they are a protected class of their own and getting away with doing actual crimes with a slapped wrist at worse. But what is going to stop them when they abuse their power? They have shown their true colours during this lockdown as being trigger happy fine merchants or getting involved in matters that are not their business. Stopping and searching peoples "essential supplies" and giving fines for chocolate or something simple to help ease this lockdown. What is to stop them further abusing their powers when they perceive something to be a hate crime when it actually isn't? How much of their time will be taken to go after someone who sent a mean tweet or said something that isn't the current popular opinion, when their time is better served solving actual crimes? And what is to stop the public using them as a scape goat to shut down public speakers or to simply put the fear of being arrested into someone for a minor disagreement, someone calling an argument as a "Racist attack" or a "sexist attack" when it could be over something utterly meaningless? To a lot of people of the Scotland and the UK, the police aren't trusted witnesses and have gone to lengths to protect themselves when in the wrong (and no this isn't something I have made up, there is plenty of video footage and records that back that statement up). And what is to stop them from being violent when a simple situation gets aggravated due to their interference, which again has happened and there is video footage as evidence to back this up.

In summery this bill and any other hate crime laws should not exist in any circumstance. Speech should never be criminalised in any circumstance and should be allowed to heard whether people like it or not. All that should happen is how the public wants to react to the speech, they can not listen to it, debate it, walk away, lose friendships over or whatever other social aspect there is but should never be a crime. Much like the busker approach, you can either not like the music, like it and give them a little something, stay and listen or walk away but to silence them is the crime.

Although I doubt this will be recognised as an view in this day and age, I have very little trust in the Scottish Government at this stage and if this passes, I will be moving

out of this country as is my right to do so. But again, what is to say in the future I can't leave because of an addition to this bill? Who knows. This is a dangerous amendment and if the wrong kind of government gets into power, they will use this bill to wreck havoc.

Mark Ramsay
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