

## **JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

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

#### **SUBMISSION FROM TOM FICKLING**

I am writing as a citizen of the United Kingdom in opposition to this bill for the following reasons:

What is the definition of 'stirring up hate'? This could be easily manipulated to mean almost any criticism (valid or otherwise) of any individual or group can be twisted into seem as an attack and discourages critique which is the only way our society will improve.

The disenfranchising of freedom of speech will cause and is currently causing authoritarian practices in the UK (Scotland especially) which are well known throughout history and is a breach of the Magna Carta, general human rights and also the European Human Right Article 10.

Specifically, misandry has been removed from this bill but misogyny is upheld. The fact that misandry has been removed from this bill surely dictates a misandrist tactic and a hatred for men? Why either should be illegal is ridiculous as either of these terms can be relative to the individual, nevertheless, neither of these vague terms should be illegal.

Characteristics should not be protected, people should have the autonomy to protect themselves and not need government intervention unless this pertains to employment or a necessary service (e.g. medical treatment).

In short there is no way to enforce this without assuming the thoughts and intent of someones expression as it is inside someones head which is impossible to determine, unless the courts and government have telepathic abilities. This bill will only aid in frivolous and long drawn out legal processes which will slap criminal records on individuals who most likely have committed no crime but offense which should not be a crime, naughty words should not be a crime.

These laws were used by the Communists in Russia (and are in places like China) and Nazi Germany. It should be obvious that this entire bill should be scrapped.

Yours faithfully

Tom Fickling  
[08 July 2020]