

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM D SMITH

I have just read the items concerning the hate speech Bill that are being looked at to amend for law purposes, but there seems to be no clarification on what is deemed as hate speech.

The term 'Hate Speech', (if I can use an example), reminds me of anti-semitism used by the nazis to stir up hatred towards the Jews, and we know what happened through the personal accounts of those who lived and survived that horrendous time. Today, the question is, what, if by any, definition of hate speech, is hate speech? As a citizen of this wonderful country, a law abiding tax payer, and Christian (who believe in God, who has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and believes in the foundational structure of God's Word), my concern, along with many others, is this; as a Christian, if I do not agree with someone because it conflicts with the Godly foundation of what I believe, am I, as one who lives in a democratic society guilty of hate.

I know that I speak on behalf of many people in Scotland. Where does the line get drawn on debate, agree to disagree, commonsense and hate speech. As a Christian, I believe we are to love and forgive as Jesus has taught us to, and that is right before God, we are to honour and pray for those in authority (whether we agree or not with the policies or political beliefs of said authority), this is God's Word not man's. It doesn't matter the colour of our skin or cultural background of each individual in Scotland, or that of the world, we are to love one another. Jesus taught us how to love one another and showed us God's love by what He did for us on a cross nearly 2000 yrs ago.

I have a question for those who are in authority, who are in a privileged position, (and it is a privileged position): When does agreeing to disagree, commonsense, debate, free speech, etc (in a democratic society) have a clear cut boundary line which says this is hate speech.

As a Christian, I believe in the FULL GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, I believe ALL that the Word of God says and I live by it, (that is not to I am perfect). As a man who has faith in God, is my belief going to be called hate thought, hate speech, hate this or hate that, because I believe in a Saviour and God who loves me, and every whosoever, but wants me, and every whosoever to know Him, His love and forgiveness. If I am asked why I believe, as a Christian, what I believe, I will freely (no payment required) give an account of why I have a faith, of how it came about and what it means to me personally.

I could ask the same question about what you believe and why you are convinced of your stance in areas of your own life or lives.

If I didn't agree with what you believe, does it mean I am in the realm of hate speech, thought, ideology, etc?

Where does the line get drawn?

D Smith
[09 July 2020]