

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM ALEXANDER LENNOX

To Whom it may concern.

This Bill appears to be designed to neuter the preaching of the free gospel of Jesus Christ and as a Christian (in the true sense of the word) I object to governmental interference regarding hindering our constitutional rights to freely preach without hindrance from politicians or anyone else.

1. The free speech clause must be strengthened rather than hindered to protect more than mere discussion or criticism. People need to feel free to vigorously challenge Religious beliefs.
2. The free speech clause on sexual orientation must be strengthened so that beliefs about same-sex marriage are explicitly covered and and more robust debate is also protected.
3. The mere threat of prosecution for stirring up hatred is enough to cause people to be silent. This is a more subtle but equally dangerous threat to freedom of speech and would tend to undermine a society.
4. Lord Bracadale's Independent Review on hate crime report, which led to the Scottish Government's Bill, stressed the need for a clear distinction between legitimate debate and rabble rousing. The Bill comes no whwere close to reflecting this.

Sincerely

Alexander Lennox
09 July 2020