

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM EUNICE WOOD

Dear Committee Members

I wish to submit my grave concerns about the inclusion in this bill of the crime of '**stirring up hatred**' without adequate legal safeguards as found for example in the legislation in England and Wales.

A free society, which I trust is what we all value and treasure, must protect the right and freedom for **vigorous debate** on such matters as morality, public order and religion. As the proposed Bill stands it would be possible to commit an offence in the **privacy of one's own home**. How would the SNP be in government and **future independence** ever take place if debate which could be claimed to stir up hatred had never or will never take place!!!!!!!

There is a serious risk of political opinion and thus democracy becoming **distorted** as complainants **identify disagreement as hatred to silence opposition**.

This proposed part of the Bill would **stop people giving a presentation of what they believe, whatever faith or no faith they adhere to**. Silence society's worldview or philosophical position ??? What kind of democracy would that be!!!!

I strongly urge you to remove this clause and phraseology from the Bill.

Yours faithfully and with thanks for working to uphold our free democratic society.

Eunice Wood
15 July 2020