

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM JACQUELINE COOK

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my grave concerns I have regarding the proposed Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill.

The part I find the most alarming is the new “stirring up hatred” offences. These new restrictions could restrict Christians and other religions freedom of speech. The new stirring up hatred offences could unwittingly be committed by someone who did not intend to stir up hatred or be even aware that their word could be deemed abusive. Religious views and views on morality should be allowed to be debated freely and people should have the freedom to change their minds, A free society must protect this.

Church services are not excluded to this bill and a preacher could be prosecuted for preaching Christ as the only Saviour. Offences of stirring up hatred threaten freedom of religion and belief. They may stop people giving an account of what they believe. This is true for atheists as well as religious people.

I consider Scotland to be a free country, unlike other countries where some religions aren't allowed to worship freely. This should be allowed to continue.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email.

Yours faithfully,

Jacqueline Cook
09 July 2020