

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM COLIN MACDONALD

I believe the provision of a new offence of 'stirring up hatred' is unnecessary and over-reaching.

It lays itself open to being a 'catch all', where an inadvertent word even in private could be used to report a person, or a person could say they were upset or offended by a legitimate but strongly held view, say on religion or set of beliefs derived from for example the words of the New Testament (the Bible).

Freedom of speech must be upheld - as has been stated by a senior judge there is still no thought police in Britain (I take that to include Scotland).

Our liberal society must be strong enough to tolerate a difference of opinion on matters which some might want to close down, thus fostering the intolerant society they seek to eradicate.

Take great care so that you do not take away individual freedoms - you cannot legislate to make everyone clones!

Colin MacDonald
09 July 2020