

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM MRS DUDLEY

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to express grave concerns about your proposed hate crime & public order bill. There are already plenty of provisions within the law to prosecute people who threaten or stir up hatred, as is of course right to have in place as everyone deserves respect no matter their beliefs or behaviour.

The proposed new law threatens freedom of speech as it has no protection for those who aren't trying to stir up hatred but who are merely voicing deeply held beliefs that have been mainstream throughout the world, let alone the UK until recently.

The planned withdrawal of the blasphemy law is also of concern, with the huge offenses that Christians have had to endure over the last few years where their beliefs have been mocked and the person Jesus who they honour insulted in outrageous ways. Why is it that everyone else in society is to be respected except Christians? This is inequality & injustice.

Freedom of belief & freedom of speech is what many gave their lives for in the world wars, & now our freedoms are to be taken away from us with the risk of a jail sentence???. The UK seems to be becoming like the communist countries.

Protections for those who didn't mean any harm by expressing their views need to be in place, as they are in other parts of the UK. Already people are being arrested for holding views-sometimes these views have only been expressed after they've been asked about them. Does the government want to criminalize law-abiding, caring ordinary citizens just to tick the politically correct boxes and to create a two-tier class system, where Christians become second class citizens with fewer rights?

I sincerely hope that the proposed bill will either be amended appropriately or withdrawn.

Mrs Dudley
11 July 2020