

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM KEITH FERNIE

Re the committee's invitation to the public to submit views in respect of the above Bill, it is my earnest hope that the most careful heed be paid to Lord Bracadale's review of the Hate Crime report.

Lord Bracadale made crucial distinction between legitimate debate and rabble rousing, and it is starkly plain that the Bill does not give the protection to free speech that Lord Bracadale appeared to recommend.

If this Bill is passed Scotland would become the most aggressive regulator of citizens' speech in the UK and one of the most aggressive in democratic Europe. Everyone will be made to feel unsafe - unsafe to think, to speak, to discuss, to share ideas. So how incredibly dangerous is that, and may I enquire of the Scottish Government where common sense has gone to ?

Yours faithfully,

Keith Fernie
13 July 2020