

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM SYLVIA ROBERTS

To whom it may concern

I believe that we have already in place enough Bills to cover this subject and I have very strong feelings against this proposed bill for the following reasons.

1. People could easily be committing an offence, unwittingly in their on home, as a result of this bill.
2. There are no exceptions for Church's where a minister may well be arrested for preaching the Gospel. This in my opinion is outrageous and completely removes free speech. It is imperative that free speech clause must be strengthened to protect more than criticism or discussion. People have to feel free to challenge religious beliefs.
3. The threat of prosecution could easily cause people to keep quiet. This is not only subtle but a dangerous threat to freedom of speech and undermine a free society.
4. In Lord Bracadale's independent report he stressed the need for a clear distinction between legitimate debate and rabble rousing. This Bill doesn't come close to reflecting this.

Sylvia Roberts