

## **JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

### **HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL**

#### **SUBMISSION FROM CIARAN MCCOMBIE**

Good afternoon. Let me begin by stating I am a staunch SNP and Independence supporter and have been for a long time. I have lived in Scotland all my life and love this country very dearly.

That being said however, this Bill is an absolutely unapologetic and transparent attempt to sanction and restrict Free Speech and the Human Rights of everybody in Scotland. It is in breach of Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights and is an appalling step towards Fascism and Authoritarianism in a country that has fought against these very acts countless times.

It is unthinkable that a Bill like this that would be proposed by any sound minded politician, let alone someone from a Party I have supported so strongly that seeks to fight against things such as this in the form of the Conservatives and Westminster, and even further unbelievable that it would then be considered as being passed into law at any stage.

Under the guise of promoting equality this law actively seeks to promote inequality by its very nature by providing legal protection to every group save for one. It has been said that this was passed for consideration of the Public when in reality it was the whims of roughly 30 people from lobbying groups who each have their own agenda that this Bill would serve.

What possible reason could there be to have a law that protects from Misogyny and yet not Misandry alongside it. On this factor alone it is creating a state where one demographic of people are more protected by the law than another. This by its very definition is inequality. The fact that the mere act of considering something "offensive" should allow for prosecution even when there has been no direct violence or assault upon another's person is ridiculous.

I pray that this Bill is struck down quickly and resolutely because if it is allowed to be passed into law it begins an incredibly dangerous mindset to restrict the freedoms of speech and thought of all people in Scotland.

Please make the right choice on this.

Ciaran McCombie  
7 July 2020