

Justice Committee

Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communication (Scotland) Bill

Written submission from Bob McKay

<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/DA614F81-4F1B-4452-8847-F3FDE920D550/0/sectarianism03.pdf>

You will all be aware of the highlights. This comprehensive report with incredibly real qualitative evidence and expertly researched quantitative evidence cost Glasgow City Council over £1m.

The report was the subject of a fantastic Gallery of Modern Art season by Roderick Buchanan on sectarianism in Glasgow.

The conclusions included

"The majority of respondents did not support a special law against sectarian motivated violence as proposed initially by Donald Gorrie MP. While there were few concrete suggestions of action the Police might take to combat sectarianism, there was a general feeling that the Police should take a 'zero tolerance' approach to sectarian crime and that lesser crimes associated with sectarianism should not go unpunished. "

"The results challenge the common belief that serious sectarian actions are prevalent in Glasgow. Neither different forms of crime, nor different forms of discrimination experienced by respondents themselves were commonly believed to be caused by religion. Less than one percent of all respondents said that, in the last five years, their religion had been the motivation of a physical attack against them (0.7%), a threat of physical violence (0.8%), vandalism (0.6%) or another form of harassment against them (0.4%). Similarly, only a small proportion of all respondents believed that, because of their religion, they had been turned down for a job (1.1%), unfairly treated at work (1.1%) unfairly treated by the Council (0.5%), unfairly treated by the "Police (0.3%), or unfairly treated by another public service (0.2%) in the last five years. "

You the justice committee of my parliament have seen fit to prioritise this tiny problem which has disproportionate media scrutiny (why?) over and above the other ills of our society, (50,000 scots children living with addicts, not a concern? Not a priority?)

You the justice committee feel "something has to be done" unquestioning of the campaign to raise the profile of this issue at every turn.

You the justice committee are responsible for this shameful bill and its hamfisted, one sided amateur attempt to address deep seated cultural issues. Poverty is Scotland's shame. Addiction to booze and drugs are Scotland's shame, not nutters and neds using offensive language at football.

You fundamentally misunderstand the psyche of west of Scotland men if you believe there is a true dispute about religion; perhaps you imagine gers and tic fans debating transubstantiation in a horrible way?? No you know as well as everyone else its simple tribalism over an incredibly strong football rivalry.

You must stop, think, look and listen.....don't go down this road.

Funnily enough the police seem delighted by orwellian thought police laws and are talking of needing more resources.....are you all mad?

Bob McKay
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