1. **Do you agree with the proposal in the Bill to repeal the 2012 Act? What are your reasons for coming to this view?**

   No. The legislation was long overdue, enjoys widespread and popular support and IMO it would be an act of folly to repeal it.

2. **Did you support the original legislation?**

   Yes.

3. **Do you consider that other existing provisions of criminal law are sufficient to prosecute offensive behaviour related to football which leads to public disorder? If so, could you specify the criminal law provisions? Or does repeal of section 1 risk creating a gap in the criminal law?**

   I consider that there is a distinct need for such legislation as it relates to football and even, I would argue, unacceptable/anti-social behaviour at rugby.

4. **Do you have a view on the focus of section 1 of the 2012 Act, which criminalises behaviour surrounding watching, attending or travelling to or from football matches, which may not be criminalised in other settings?**

   This is a tortuous question! Stop playing semantics! In essence, I support any legislation which makes it an offence to behave in an anti-social/sectarian/bigoted way in any connection with a football match.

5. **To what extent do you consider that the 2012 Act has assisted in tackling sectarianism?**

   It has certainly had an effect in terms of reducing the repulsive singing and chanting often experienced at matches, but its overall effect will be limited as long as there exists in Scotland an officially-endorsed system of educational apartheid. Real progress will only be made when separate schools are abolished and all children can attend their local school, regardless of religion.

   **CONCLUSION:** I am totally opposed to any attempt to repeal the OBFA. It is popular amongst the general public, and effective. It targets only those who deserve to be targeted. It is clear that the attempt to drum up support for its repeal is being done for party political reasons. It would be much more to the point if those seeking to do so turned their attention to matters which did need attention and ditched the attempts at cheap political point-scoring.

   Ian Marks
   5 July 2017