

CLASS

Christian Lawyers Advocacy
& Solidarity Society

Truth | Justice | Fairness



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Department of Justice & Equality,
51 St. Stephen's Green,
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4th December 2019

Re Hate Speech: Public Consultation
Deadline for receipt of submissions: 13th December 2019.

Dear Sir/ Madam

We refer to the above and make the following points on behalf of CLASS (Christian Lawyers Advocacy & Solidarity Society).

ISLAMIC RADICALISM

1. For some time now there have been legitimate concerns about radical Islamist's and *Mr Anjem Choudary* in the UK is a case in point. *Mr Choudary* was convicted for radical hate speech. A similar offense would be helpful in Irish law. As we know there have been numerous atrocities committed by radicalised Islamists. The better known attacks are those listed hereunder: -
 - a. **September 11th attacks of 2001 (aka 911)**: The attacks resulted in 2,977 victim fatalities, over 25,000 injuries, and caused at least \$10 billion in infrastructure and property damage. Additional people have died of 9/11-related cancer and respiratory diseases in the months and years following the attacks. Four passenger airliners operated by two major U.S. passenger air carriers (United Airlines and American Airlines)—all of which departed from airports in the northeastern United States bound for San Francisco and Los Angeles—were hijacked by 19 al-Qaeda terrorists.
 - b. **City of London attacks**; 7th July 2005, bombings killed 56 people and maimed many more.
 - c. **Paris: Charlie Hebdo**; 7th January 2015; 12 people were killed and 11 others were injured.
 - d. **Tunisia**: 26 June 2015, a mass shooting occurred at the tourist resort at Port El Kantaoui, about 10 kilometres north of the city of Sousse, Tunisia. Some 38 people were killed when a gunman, *Seifeddine Rezgui*, walked down a beech shooting people with an automatic rifle. An Irish woman *Lorna Carty*, from Robinstown in Co Meath was one of the victims of that atrocity.
 - e. **Bataclan attacks, Paris, Paris**: 13th November 2015; three suicide bombers struck outside the Stade de France in Saint-Denis, during a football match. This was followed by several mass shootings and a suicide bombing, at cafés and restaurants. Gunmen carried out another mass shooting and took hostages at an Eagles of Death Metal concert in the Bataclan theatre,

leading to a stand-off with police. The attackers were shot or blew themselves up when police raided the theatre. The attackers killed 130 people, including 90 at the Bataclan theatre. One traumatized survivor committed suicide in November 2017, two years after the event, and was recognized as 131st victim in June 2019. Another 413 people were injured, almost 100 seriously. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) claimed responsibility for the attacks. In response to the attacks, a three-month state of emergency was declared across the country to help fight terrorism, which involved the banning of public demonstrations, and allowing the police to carry out searches without a warrant, put anyone under house arrest without trial and block websites that encouraged acts of terrorism.

- f. **Belgian attacks:** On the morning of 22 March 2016, three coordinated suicide bombings occurred in Belgium: two at Brussels Airport in Zaventem, and one at Maalbeek metro station in central Brussels. Thirty-two civilians and three perpetrators were killed, and more than 300 people were injured.
 - g. **Nice:** On the evening of 14 July 2016, a 19-tonne cargo truck was deliberately driven into crowds of people celebrating Bastille Day on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice, France, resulting in the deaths of 86 people and the injury of 458 others. The driver was *Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel*, a Tunisian resident of France.
 - h. **Manchester Arena bombing:** 22nd May 2017: was a suicide bombing attack; A radical Islamist detonated a shrapnel-laden homemade bomb as people were leaving the Manchester Arena following a concert by the American singer *Ariana Grande*. Twenty-three people died, including the attacker, and 139 were wounded, more than half of them children. The bomber was *Salman Ramadan Abedi*, a 22-year-old local man of Libyan ancestry.
 - i. **Barcelona;** 17th August 2017; 22-year-old *Younes Abouyaaqoub* drove a van into pedestrians on La Rambla in Barcelona, Spain, killing 13 people and injuring at least 130 others, one of whom died 10 days later on 27 August.
 - j. **London bridge attacks on 3 June 2017,** a terrorist vehicle-ramming and stabbing took place in London, England. A van was deliberately driven into pedestrians on London Bridge before crashing on the south bank of the River Thames. Its three occupants then ran to the nearby Borough Market area and began stabbing people in and around restaurants and pubs. The attackers were Islamists inspired by Islamic State (ISIS).
 - k. **London bridge attacks of November 2019:** On 29 November 2019, five people were stabbed, two fatally, in Central London. The perpetrator, *Usman Khan*, had been released from prison in 2018 on licence after serving a sentence for terrorist offences.
- l. The above are merely the better know attacks by Islamic Jihadists. There are of course many, many more. Parts of Africa are extremely dangerous places currently due to militant Islamic fundamentalism and hate speech directed at Christians.**

2. It must also be noted that the laws in the UK permit detention of persons on an ongoing basis where it is considered that such persons pose a threat to national security. The recent London Bridge attack should be noted in this regard. Two young people were brutally murdered; (Jack Merritt, 25, and Saskia Jones, 23, were Cambridge graduates, a co-ordinator and a volunteer for the Learning Together scheme). It turns out that the perpetrator, *Usman Khan*, had been incorrectly released from prison in 2018 on licence after serving a sentence for terrorist offences.
3. It is acknowledged that the **Incitement to Hatred Act** (Ireland) may be useful in this regard. An analysis of the current law should be undertaken to ensure that it is capable of dealing with radicalism where it occurs. If it is found to be deficient, then a measured legislative response may be appropriate.
4. It is further submitted that in line with the law in the UK that similar laws may need to be enacted in Ireland so as to permit the detention of radicalised Islamists where appropriate.
5. Hate speech in its true form such as the radicalisation of people for Jihad should of course be curtailed and appropriate legal remedies available to deal with such people in a timely manor so that murderous rampages such as those alluded to above can be prevented or at least curtailed.

CAUTION

6. Notwithstanding the foregoing points, we must caution that great care must be taken to protect freedom of expression together with traditional Christian values. In recent times a liberal agenda has attempted to use the notion of 'hate speech' to censor legitimate moral views on a variety of issues to the point where people are afraid to voice legitimate and well founded concerns.
7. There have been a plethora of cases where liberals have pursued upright members of society through the courts; their crime? simply adhering to their well-founded principles. Ashers Bakery in Belfast is one such. There has also been some similar litigation elsewhere in the UK and the USA. We do not want to amend the laws in this country to facilitate litigation of this type, which is typically intolerance of traditional principles.
8. A wave of extreme liberalism is currently sweeping through the western world. We have no doubt that generations to come will likely view this in a very negative light (and particularly the way it has been facilitated in some quarters).

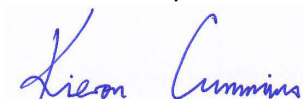
SOCIAL MEDIA

9. We have also witnessed censorship of legitimate views on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Google and Youtube, which is entirely unacceptable.
10. Regulation of Social Media operators to prevent shadow-banning and outright banning of pages, that merely try engage in sensible dissemination of true information, must also be considered.

CONCLUSIONS

11. Further to the above, it is submitted that an abundance of caution should be applied to this subject. It is currently fashionable to blame hate speech for many of societies ills. A deeper analysis of the subject demonstrates that minorities are using 'hate speech' as a tool with which to silence their opponents which is proving to be very destructive and if facilitated will cause irreparable damage to the fabric of society which our forefathers fought so hard for.
12. Therefore great care must be taken with the definition of hate speech so as not to censor traditional conservative values simply because they conflict with minority groups. The current wave of liberalism sweeping through the western world has largely been engineered by small but very vocal groups is extremely dangerous. It follows that great caution must be exercised so as to ensure that there legislative measures are specific and do not have undesirable collateral effects on other genuine citizens.

Yours sincerely,



Kieran Cummins, Solis, BSc, Dip LS, Dip Hort.
Executive Director, CLASS

Reference/s
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