Submission from Donald Reid for the Legal Profession and Legal Aid (Scotland) Bill

I was disappointed to read that the legal profession is not be given a right of appeal from a new quango set up under this Bill. Why is it justifiable to apply the rule of law to everyone but not to lawyers? Surely that is contrary to Human Rights law? Surely someone within the Executive’s legal body could have foreseen this problem and dealt with it effectively or is it policy to refuse rights of appeal to lawyers?

I am surprised that the Executive seems to think this Bill necessary. I was not aware of a huge public clamour for this legislation. I thought the Parliament worked on evidence lead legislation but was clearly wrong.

The attack on the legal profession in this Bill goes to the heart of the independence of the profession. In an attack on democracy – bans for this that and the next thing that seem to obsess the Parliament (perhaps it has nothing much to do really) – start with attacks on those capable of defending the public from the executive arm of government and in that context this Bill is a step too far.

I realise that no matter what I say will make no difference. Eventually, enough people will vote with their feet and leave such a restricting country as this Executive seems keen to make us.

Donald I S Reid