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Stirring up religious hatred

The Minister for Race Equality Fiona McTaggart (letter, March 5) says that the same arguments as those offered against the new crime of stirring up religious hatred have been offered in debates since the 1960s against provisions on incitement to racial hatred..

I disagree. The arguments are not the same. A person cannot choose his or her race, but is free to choose a religion.

The Minister says the new law 'will not prevent criticism of religious beliefs'. I disagree with this also. If I criticise a person's religious beliefs by saying they are barbaric, cruel, superstitious, intolerant and antisocial I can plausibly be accused of stirring up hatred against that person.