

Law 1053 Human Rights Study Log

03/10/11

I read an article in the Daily Telegraph, on page two about how local funding cuts mean Catholic pupils have to pay to travel to their faith school, as English councils remove subsidies. This has been deemed "a tax on religion" with parents having to pay up to £500 in travelling costs a year and some will no longer afford to send their children to a Catholic school. Some local councils already do not have a subsidy in place, and more will not by the next academic year. The Diocese of Shrewsbury believes this breaches Catholic pupil's human rights and will call for judicial review.

Councils have defended their decision stating that as children of other faiths wishing to go to their faith schools do not receive a travelling subsidy, this system is fairer. Funding cuts are necessary so this must be expected. Some previously believed that allowing Catholic pupils this travelling subsidy was an unfair privilege.

The article did not state whether those attending non-religious or state schools were allowed to keep any funding they may receive towards travelling costs, but I am already aware that funding cuts to FE means that while travel is still partly subsidised, the students must pay more than in previous years for the same service.

04/10/11

I have been previously aware of the Dale Farm case in Basildon, I believe it is currently in the High Court but I have not yet heard of a conclusion. Travellers are arguing that a forced eviction is a breach of their human rights yet the council believes that as they did not ask for planning permission to live there.

*I later read online that the appeal was quashed, and the Dale Farm travellers were asked to leave.

05/10/11

The Home Secretary Theresa May has called for a repeal of the Human Rights Act to be replaced with a British Bill of Rights, at a Conservative party conference, which may limit the rights currently enshrined in UK law, after misquoting a particular case. Kenneth Clarke, the Justice Secretary is in open dispute with this decision.

Source: The Times.

06/10/11

David Cameron has chosen to support his Home Secretary's decision so there may be a reform of human rights legislation in the future, depending on the teamwork of the Liberal Democrats in Parliament.

07/10/11

I looked at the Amnesty International UK website to check breaking news today. The main articles were:

- The need to investigate the death of a 16 year old protestor in Bahrain.
- AIUK responds to Junior Minister's comments on child abuse inquiry.
- Shappi Khorsadi starts a campaign highlighting the need for Iran to remove death by stoning as a punishment from its penal code, as part of the wider worldwide end the death penalty campaign, as this is contrary to the right to life.
- A new report has revealed that journalists and activists in Russia are being murdered for their work, contrary to freedom of expression.

I will continue to use AIUK as a news source for human rights articles.

08/10/11

I listened to the radio four programme the moral maze, with Michael Burke discussing human rights. He discusses the original USA bill of rights, and the EU convention of human rights. Human rights across the world are not always compatible with the UN convention on human rights.

The issue in the UK appears to be judicial interpretation and a reform of HR legislation may impinge on current liberties as the HRA 1998 appears to be sufficient.

There is some debate of whether human rights are truly inalienable as intended: should they be part of higher law, are they truly fundamental or do they change with political attitudes? There is a balance that must be achieved between personal freedom and protection of the State.

I found this debate very interesting and thought provoking.

09/10/11- 13/10/11

I struggled to find current stories in this time and I will search for relevant human rights stories more effectively in future.

14/10/11

15/10/11

16/10/11

17/10/11

18/10/11

19/10/11

I will be going to an Amnesty International meeting today for the letter writing campaign, to help prisoners of conscience achieve freedom.