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## Bringing you up-to-date

This newsletter will bring you up-to-date with all the latest developments in our work.

Below, we share the latest news in the B&B case involving Mr and Mrs Bull. Inside, we have good news about the police dropping an appeal involving a street preacher. We also have comments to share with you about the recent debate surrounding foster carers.

Also inside, we discuss Government plans to allow homosexual couples to hold civil partnership registrations in churches. We also tell you about

calls for a radical change to the legal definition of marriage.

There's good news on sex education, as the Government promises not to make the subject compulsory in primary schools. But we remain concerned about a review of sex education guidance. Meanwhile we uncover a troubling primary school teaching pack produced by Stonewall.

We have information about new equality laws, their potential impact on religious liberty, and the misplaced mindset of the equality agenda.

## Bid to increase penalty against B&B is dropped

The case of bed & breakfast owners, Peter and Hazelmary Bull, continues to attract national debate.

In January the Christian couple were ordered to pay £3,600 in damages to homosexuals, Steven Preddy and Martyn Hall, because only married couples could stay in the B&B's double rooms.

In March Mr Preddy and Mr Hall's lawyers at the taxpayer-funded Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) launched another legal action for the £3,600 damages to be increased.

They said the judge was wrong to take the Bulls' religious motivation into account when deciding how much they should be ordered to pay.

However, following negative publicity, the EHRC reversed the decision and withdrew the



Peter Bull has suffered complications following major heart surgery.

legal action, calling it "an error of judgment".

The move to seek more compensation came as Peter Bull was struggling to recover from major heart surgery. He has suffered some complications and remains quite ill.

The Bulls' case was debated on BBC's Question Time. TV

presenter and historian, David Starkey, who is a homosexual and an atheist, said he was deeply concerned about such cases.

He warned of a new liberal morality, and said that penalising Christians for their beliefs about homosexual behaviour is intolerant, oppressive and tyrannical.

# Freedom and justice for Christians

Bible-believing Christians are increasingly frustrated by the injustice meted out to Christians who are humbly trying to live and work in line with their faith.

However, in the area of free speech, Christians have seen some encouraging victories. In this newsletter you can read about the police abandoning a court case involving a Birmingham street preacher's right to publicly read from the Bible. That case is one of a string of legal successes for free speech, backed by our Legal Defence Fund.

You can also read a report about several MPs in the Commons backing our campaign to amend Section 5 of the Public Order Act, so that free speech is given more protection. Even the last Parliament pulled back from passing draconian laws that would have restricted our free speech.

That is good news. But in the area of employment or the provision of services, the situation for Christians may get worse before it gets better.

We are appealing a County Court's decision against B&B owners, Peter and Hazelmary Bull, who were penalised for restricting double rooms to married couples.

We are also deeply troubled by comments made by judges in relation to a Christian couple whose fostering application was put on hold by Derby City Council because of their beliefs about homosexual practice. We are thankful that not all councils operate like Derby City, and

Much of this tyranny takes place in the name of equality.

many councils welcome Christians with open arms.

In both the B&B case and the foster case, there has been a failure to reasonably accommodate the genuinely held religious beliefs of Christians.

This injustice has not gone unnoticed. Sympathy has come from some unlikely quarters. Michael Portillo, while disagreeing with the Bulls' beliefs, said they should not have been penalised. He rejected the claim that society wants such penalties. Changes to equality law are not the result of public consensus, he said. Rather, laws are changed by small lobby groups who then use the changes in a bid to shift public opinion. He also warned about a "secular theocracy" that may endanger personal liberty.

David Starkey, the TV presenter and historian, also raised profound concerns. Professor Starkey, a homosexual and an atheist, said that penalising Christians for their beliefs about homosexual behaviour is intolerant, oppressive and tyrannical.

Much of this tyranny takes place in the name of equality. In this newsletter, we report on new equality laws coming soon and the mindset behind the whole movement. Equality of opportunity is one thing, but equality of outcomes is a radical idea that undermines true fairness.

In the midst of such unease it is important for Christians to understand that, however much laws may change, reality remains the same. Whatever the law says, children will always need a mother and a father. Whatever the law says, men and women are distinct.

Whatever the law says, equality of outcomes cannot be forced on a society. Whatever the law says, marriage is between one man and one woman for life.

While reality does not alter, changing the law can nevertheless cause much damage.

Children are harmed when people believe they don't need a mum and dad. Adults are harmed when they are told they can have surgery to alter their sex. Fairness is harmed when equality of outcomes is promoted. Society is harmed when a radical redefinition of marriage is pushed on people.

We shall continue to work hard to defend our gospel freedom, to battle against the injustice suffered by Christians, and to promote Christian values for the good of all. We value your support.



Colin Hart  
Director

## Government vows not to make sex ed compulsory for primaries

The Education Secretary, Michael Gove, has said the Government will resist calls to compel primary schools to teach sex education.

Mr Gove told the House of Commons he would not accept amendments to the Education Bill to make sex education compulsory for primary schools in England, saying it would make the school curriculum more “prescriptive or intrusive.”<sup>1</sup>

At the same time the Government has said it is carrying out an ‘internal review’ of sex education and formulating new guidance for schools. It is essential the new guidance properly protects children and does not undermine the rights of parents.

The Christian Institute’s report *Too much, too young* highlights appalling sex education materials already being recommended by local councils and other bodies.

Children need protecting from sexualisation in the classroom as well as on the high street. The rights of parents over sex education urgently need to be strengthened.

<sup>1</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, 8 February 2011, col. 165

## Mike Judge meets Chilean miner



Flickr/Church Mission Society (CMS)

In January, The Christian Institute’s Mike Judge met with Chilean miner Jose Henriquez (pictured) in Durham Cathedral during his “34th Man” UK tour.

The tour’s name reflected the fact that, along with the

33 miners trapped underground for 69 days, there was a 34th man supporting them – Jesus Christ.

Several miners professed faith in Christ during that time, thanks to the Bible studies they had with Mr Henriquez, who is a

lay preacher.

He was asked about his own experience trapped underground and how many of the miners came to faith.

The interview was posted in three parts on YouTube, with a total of over 8,500 views.

## Government will consult on homosexual ‘marriage’

The Government has announced that it will consult on abolishing the traditional definition of marriage and imposing a radical new version on society so that homosexual couples can get married.

At the same time, the Government will also consult on allowing same-sex couples to register civil partnerships in churches for the first time. Civil partnership registrations are currently restricted to register offices and secular venues.

Equalities Minister Lynne Featherstone says her proposals would allow, though not compel, churches in England and Wales to perform the registrations. The Church of England has said its churches will not join the scheme.

Civil partnerships give homosexuals

all the legal rights and privileges of marriage, but it is a separate scheme and those registering do not get a marriage certificate.

Pink News, a prominent homosexual news website, claims that David Cameron and Nick Clegg would like to allow homosexual marriage and heterosexuals to register civil partnerships. But according to homosexual lobby group Stonewall the change would cost £5 billion.<sup>1</sup>

Although marriage law is devolved in Scotland and Northern Ireland, the Scottish Government has said introducing same-sex marriage would affect so many areas of law that Westminster will have to legislate.

<sup>1</sup> See <http://tinyurl.com/4wajpbf> and <http://tinyurl.com/2vpbe95> as at 21 March 2011



Dreamstime/Pixelbrat

## Frocks and pompoms for primary boys

Boys in primary schools should be encouraged to try on frocks or join the cheerleading team, a homosexual campaign group has told teachers.

Stonewall, Britain's top homosexual lobby group, has sent a pack to primary school teachers with the backing of a Government agency.

The pack includes a DVD, where a teacher says pupils should be taught to resist the values of their parents and grandparents.

The DVD case features the logo of the Training and Development Agency – a body funded by the Department for Education.

The pack also recommends using pro-homosexual story books for reading in class.

One book, *And Tango Makes Three*, is about a penguin chick raised by two male penguins.

Another is called *The Sissy Duckling* and another features two princes who fall in love and live happily ever after as *King and King*.

The Stonewall teachers' pack suggests getting primary school children to act out the books as school plays.



# Christians can foster, but case is worrying

The High Court has refused to say a council was acting unlawfully when it put a Christian couple's fostering application on hold because of their beliefs about homosexual behaviour.

The case, run by the Christian Legal Centre, does not mean Christians with similar beliefs are banned from fostering. But some of the comments of the High Court judges are very concerning.

The case centred on Pentecostal Christians Eunice and Owen Johns, who were applying to foster children aged between five and eight.

They were effectively blocked by Derby City Council because of their Christian beliefs about homosexual behaviour.

The Council had not yet come to a formal decision to reject the Johns, so the High Court would not be



Christians are not banned from fostering despite High Court judges' unhelpful comments.

drawn into saying the Council had broken the law.

Whilst the judges accepted that Mr and Mrs Johns' religious beliefs are worthy of respect, the judges concluded that "the attitudes of potential foster carers to sexuality are relevant when considering an application for approval".

The Government-funded Equality and Human Rights Commission intervened

in the case on the side of Derby City Council. Alarmingly, its lawyers said Christian moral values may be like an 'infection' that could harm children. The Commission was later forced to apologise for the remark.

The Prime Minister was asked about the Johns' case on a visit to Derby. He backed the High Court, saying Christians should be "tolerant, welcoming and broad minded".

## Police drop street preacher appeal

West Midlands Police have dropped their appeal in the case of a street preacher unlawfully arrested for reading aloud from the Bible in Birmingham city centre.

Last year a county court ruled that the police were wrong to handcuff and imprison Anthony Rollins after a member of the public objected to his public Bible reading.

Although the police accepted that an arrest was not necessary, they believed there were reasonable grounds for arrest and launched an appeal on that point.

But they dropped the appeal after reading the legal arguments submitted to the Court of Appeal by Mr Rollins' lawyers, paid for by The Christian Institute.

# Equality Duty could undermine fairness

Next month a law comes into force which will require all public bodies – such as schools, local councils and the police – to promote equality.

The law is called the Public Sector Equality Duty and was passed as part of Harriet Harman's Equality Act under the previous Labour Government.

The new coalition Government has promised to issue regulations, laying down rules for how the equality duty will work.

The regulations have been through

various drafts, but the coalition promises to have them in place by July. This means Parliament will get a chance to debate them soon.

There is great concern that the new equality duty will tie up public bodies in expensive politically-correct bureaucracy.

The law is also likely to encourage public bodies to adopt unreasonable equality targets which undermine fairness in the name of tackling discrimination.

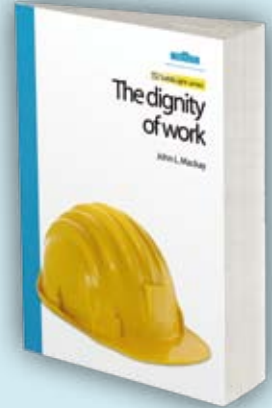
Equality laws, regulations, and policies have often led

to the religious liberty of Christians being unjustly restricted.

During debates in Parliament on the Equality Bill one book emerged as the handbook for equality law and its justification: *The Spirit Level*, written by academics Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett and published in 2009.

This book reveals the misplaced mindset behind such laws, and The Christian Institute has published a briefing on its flaws (see more below).

## The dignity of work



Many people view work merely as a source of income so that they can feed, house and clothe their families, spending what is left on material possessions and leisure pursuits.

Some Christians may seek to Christianise this attitude by adding 'funding the church and missionaries', but it is essentially the same, merely utilitarian, outlook.

Perhaps some Christians imagine that heaven will be a place of no work. But the Bible has a much higher view of the dignity of work.

In a booklet published by The Christian Institute, Professor John L. Mackay shows that men and women, made in the image of God, were created to work.

Called *The Dignity of Work*, the booklet says we should therefore view our work, whatever type of work it is, as a way of serving and glorifying God.

A Christian with this outlook will stand out against the worldly attitude that work is merely a means to an end.

## Levelling *The Spirit Level*

A book called *The Spirit Level*, written by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, has become the handbook of equality devotees.

The book claims that major social problems are caused by inequality, and a better society can be manufactured by enforcing equality.

The Christian Institute has published a briefing critiquing the book's assumptions, methods and



conclusions.

One of the major problems is the confusion between 'equality of opportunity' and 'equality of outcome'.

The former seeks a level playing field for all, the latter seeks to ensure that every match is drawn so that nobody wins.

Copies of our briefing are available from The Christian Institute website ([christian.org.uk](http://christian.org.uk)) or by telephoning 0191 281 5664.

# MPs back Institute's free speech campaign

Parliament's first debate on the new Protection of Freedoms Bill saw MPs supporting calls from The Christian Institute for amendments to protect free speech.

Gainsborough MP Edward Leigh argued that Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986 should be amended so that it no longer criminalises "insulting" words.

The Christian Institute launched a campaign last year

to amend Section 5 after cases of police misusing it to restrict Christians' free speech. Civil liberties groups have been calling for the change since 2008.

John Glen, MP for Salisbury, made clear that the law should continue to outlaw abusive words but asked fellow MPs: "Should the law really criminalise insulting words? Surely insult is in the eye of the beholder, so how can the police be expected

to regulate that?"

Mr Leigh and Mr Glen were supported by David Burrowes (Enfield Southgate), Nicola Blackwood (Oxford West and Abingdon), Priti Patel (Witham) and Tom Brake (Carshalton and Wallington).

In response, Home Office Minister James Brokenshire (Old Bexley and Sidcup), claimed that one police report said changing the law was not the solution.

But he promised that the Government would "continue to review the law... to ensure that it allows competing rights to be properly balanced."

The Protection of Freedoms Bill will be scrutinised by MPs throughout the spring before the Bill is sent to the House of Lords.

For the latest info and videos of the MPs' speeches please visit: [christian.org.uk/section5](http://christian.org.uk/section5)

## High Court says no to home abortions

A pro-abortion group has lost a High Court battle to let women complete early-term drug-induced abortions in their own homes.

BPAS, formerly the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, sought a court ruling to liberalise the law. But the judge ruled against the group, saying such abortions must be completed on medical premises.



Dreamstime/Haywiremedia

## Positive moves in Northern Ireland charity regulation



Flickr/Etruska UK

The Northern Ireland Executive wants to change charity law to offer churches and Christian groups more protection.

But the changes will not be in place before elections in the Province on May 7 and it will be up to the new Executive to make sure the changes happen.

The law needs changing because the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 put the charitable status of churches in doubt by requiring their activities to meet a public benefit test.

The Act incorporated elements of Scottish charity

law and English charity law which have contradictory approaches to assessing public benefit.

The Scottish approach is more intrusive. The current Executive says the law in Northern Ireland should follow the English model, as well as clearly stating that religious charities, including churches, are presumed to provide public benefit.

If the law changes in this way, controversial draft guidance from the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) will have to be rewritten.