

Which of these human rights, I ask, would we wish to di...

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The following is from a speech from the late Rt Hon Lord Bingham of Cornhill, former Master of the Rolls, Lord Chief Justice and Senior Law Lord [who in a speech in 2008](#) asked who would seek to remove or weaken such fundamental rights as the right not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to liberty, the right to a fair trial? [He then said:](#)

Which of these rights, I ask, would we wish to discard?

Are any of them trivial, superfluous, unnecessary?

Are any them un-British?

There may be those who would like to live in a country where these rights are not protected, but I am not of their number.

Human rights are not, however, protected for the likes of people like me — or most of you. They are protected for the benefit above all of society's outcasts, those who need legal protection because they have no other voice — the prisoners, the mentally ill, the gipsies, the homosexuals, the immigrants, the asylum-seekers, those who are at any time the subject of public obloquy.

And now we see human rights under threat. And it is not those who are proposing the end of their protection that need worry. They, like Lord Bingham, would expect no consequence from the change. But the rightly identified those who do need to fear. Which is why it is right to say that this proposal is ethically wrong.