

Funding the Future

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Nigel Farage says he wants to replace the UK Human Rights Act with a so-called “British Bill of Rights.”

But let’s be clear: this is not about protecting freedoms. It’s about removing them.

The Human Rights Act brings into UK law the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty drafted after the Second World War with strong UK backing, led by Winston Churchill, and based on the UN Declaration of Human Rights. It exists to stop governments abusing their citizens.

Farage’s plan would:

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Cut the link to international oversight in Strasbourg

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Narrow rights, especially for migrants and asylum seekers, but also for anyone who might have the right to live in another country, however long they have lived here

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Give Parliament, not independent courts, control over rights

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Undermine the UK's peace agreements, the government of Northern Ireland, and international treaties

This is not about rights. It’s about power — the power to control, divide, and expel. It risks taking Britain down a path towards authoritarianism.

Do you agree that the Human Rights Act must be defended? Join the discussion in the comments and in the poll below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E40AXGZ2Nrc?si=-runTHnoscjFsMeg>

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=7bz3n-194bb7d-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

This is the transcript:

Nigel Farage wants to create a British Bill of Rights to replace the 1998 Human Rights Act that we have at present in the UK.

So why does he want to replace our existing law that protects us from the tyranny of government, which we know can happen? The answer tells us a lot about his politics and a lot about his contempt for human rights.

Let's remind ourselves what the UK Human Rights Act is. This law, which was passed in 1998, brings into UK law the European Convention on Human Rights. That was created in 1952. It was based upon an initiative by Winston Churchill, which most modern conservatives and right-wingers forget. It has nothing to do with the European Union. And it was, in fact, based upon the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, passed in 1948, again, heavily driven by the UK, which was intended to put in place the rights that everybody should have to protect them from the tyrannies of government, which had been witnessed so recently at that time in Europe and way beyond, when far-right fascist governments had abused their populations.

The aim of the Human Rights Act is to protect everyone in the UK from abuse. There are no exceptions.

The Act provides that UK courts do enforce our rights, but there is a right of appeal if we don't like what a UK court has decided. We can go to Strasbourg, as can people throughout Europe, but again, I stress this has nothing to do with the European Union. And in Strasbourg sits the European Court of Human Rights, and that has the ultimate right to decide what is and is not an abuse.

The bill does, therefore, hold governments and public bodies to account for their actions. And that is critical. And that is why a higher court is required, because it is impossible to pretend that UK courts are completely free of UK government influence, because judges are appointed by the government, and they therefore know to some extent where their loyalties must lie.

But our right to freedom requires that we are protected even from our courts, and that's why this Act is so important. It puts us at the centre of rights.

We have a right to life, to liberty, fair trial, free speech and assembly.

We are protected from torture, discrimination, surveillance, and abuse.

We have the right to meet with other people.

And those rights are extended to every citizen. Every person living here. Every person arriving here, even if they're on holiday. To migrants, and even to prisoners, because all of us are human.

The government remains sovereign, but its powers and its power to abuse is checked by the courts.

So what does Nigel Farage propose? He wants to get rid of this Act.

He wants to replace it with a UK-only 'British Bill of Rights'.

He wants to cut the link to Strasbourg, which he associates with the European Union, quite inappropriately.

He wants to end international oversight and make the UK government supreme, therefore, meaning that if he were Prime Minister, we would be utterly dependent upon his whim.

And he wants most particularly to narrow the range of people to whom rights will apply. He most especially wants to remove, at this moment, rights from migrants and asylum seekers. He wants to treat them in effect as 'non-human' beings.

Remember, this Act that he wants to replace is based upon the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That recognises that all people are born equal, every single one of us. What Nigel Farage wants to do is to say some of us are more human than others, or that some, in fact, aren't even humans at all.

And that is what fascism does. And let's not beat around the bush here. This is a fascist proposal.

He is saying some people are not worthy of rights because they are, in effect, not human. And that is why I so profoundly object to what he is saying.

He says he's got to do this to remove the obstacles to immigration control. In practice, we are in control of migration into the UK. Over 900,000 people arrived in the UK in 2024. Of those, under 50,000 came in small boats, so the vast majority were invited, had a visa, and had a legal entitlement the moment they stepped off a plane or a boat

in the UK.

Of those who arrived in small boats, those that Nigel Farage would like to claim are illegal, every single one had a right to ask for asylum in this country. They weren't illegal. They just were of uncertain status with regard to their right to stay at the time of their arrival. And only around 30% of those people, or around 15,000 people, are likely to have had their asylum applications turned down.

In other words, the number of people who are really of concern with regard to immigration in this country are under 2% of the total, less than two in 100. And for that reason, he wants to take away all our rights.

What Farage wants is for parliament, and not courts, to decide what rights people get.

What he wants is to overturn universal rights and grant us conditional privileges, privileges that he would decide.

He wants to weaken the power of the courts to decide independently whether rights are complied with or not.

And he wants to remove all international comparisons from the UK, so that we can have a definition of rights which is quite unlike that Universal Declaration of Rights, which will exist elsewhere.

As it stands, we know that the Human Rights Act is universal and enforceable because we have the right to go to Strasbourg to have it enforced. What Farage wants is to create something which is selective, political, and defined by parliament, and therefore subject to a whim, and ultimately unenforceable.

What are the consequences if Farage succeeds? Quite fundamentally, rights would no longer be guaranteed for everyone in the UK.

Now you might think, well, so what? He's only talking about people who've arrived here illegally.

But that isn't true.

Let's be clear. Under rulings made by courts in recent years, as a consequence of legal actions brought by the UK Home Office, anybody who has an entitlement to a second passport in the UK can be expelled from this country, because there is another country to which they could be sent.

Now this arose with regard to one of the young women who went to Syria at the age of 15 and wishes to return, and she's been denied that right because she apparently has an entitlement to a Belgian passport.

But the point is that precedent would mean that anybody with a right to a second passport in the UK could, under the rules that Farage is proposing, be deemed to be a person who is not entitled to British human rights. And some people in Reform have talked about people until the third generation of migrants into the UK has been reached, not being allowed to even stand for public office in the UK because they have not shown their commitment to this country until that point in time.

This is really dangerous stuff. If you have a grandparent who was not born in the UK, this new British Bill of Rights will probably take away your right to protection. It's that serious. And what I mean as a consequence is that the government's power to consider whether you have an entitlement to live here is going to be massively expanded.

It isn't just migrants who are going to be impacted. Anybody who's considered to be part of a group that the government in the future does not like could lose their legal protection.

The UK is going to cut itself off from international norms.

This change will make the preservation of peace in Northern Ireland almost impossible, because that is based upon the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights.

This change is going to make almost all our agreements with European countries on everything from defence onwards almost impossible to maintain because the European Convention on Human Rights is implicit in all those agreements.

We are going to see the power of the state to abuse growing in this country.

The British Bill of Rights is not about rights at all. It's about a plan to remove rights. It's about a plan to abuse. It's about a plan to control. It's about a plan to remove liberty. It's about a power to actually expel. And to expel vast numbers of people if the government so wishes. The reality is that this is a pathway to the divisions that fascism always wants to create.

We have to insist on the preservation of universal, enforceable human rights in the UK for everyone who is human, or everybody's rights will be eroded, and that probably includes you.

What do you think? Should we replace the UK Human Rights Act as we now have it with the type of British Bill of Rights that Nigel Farage is proposing? There's a poll down below. Let us know your views. This is really important because for a great many people, this could end every idea of freedom and security that they have, because vast numbers of people are going to be prejudiced by what Nigel Farage is proposing.

Poll

[poll id="192"]

Taking further action

If you want to write a letter to your MP on the issues raised in this blog post, there is a ChatGPT prompt to assist you in doing so, with full instructions, [here](#).

One word of warning, though: please ensure you have the correct MP. ChatGPT can get it wrong.

Comments

When commenting, please take note of this blog's comment policy, [which is available here](#). **Contravening this policy will result in comments being deleted before or after initial publication at the editor's sole discretion and without explanation being required or offered.**