



Judge Upholds Rule that Immigrants to UK Know English

Last November, the British coalition government introduced a new requirement into immigration rules: The immigrant must be know the English language. The rule was challenged by Rashida Chapti and Vali Chapti, two Indians in their 50s. Rashida speaks English but Vali, her husband of 37 years, does not. Currently the couple lives separately because of that obstacle. In their lawsuit, the couple claimed that the language requirement violated their rights under the European Convention on Human Rights, which guarantees the right to family life and the right to marry.



[Judge Jack Beatson](#) in his opinion stated,

The new rule impacts on the Article 8 rights of the claimants [the right to a family life], but its aims, to promote integration and to protect public services, are legitimate aims. Taking into account all the material before the court, including the exceptions to the new rule, it is not a disproportionate interference with family life and is justified.

Prime Minister David Cameron had promised when he took office to reduce the immigration into Britain from hundreds of thousands to tens of thousands. His Immigration Minister, Damian Green, declared, "We believe it is entirely reasonable that someone intending to live in the UK should understand English so that they can integrate and participate fully in our society. We are very pleased that the courts agree with us."

The problem of immigration in Britain is old. Enoch Powell, a member of Parliament from 1950 to 1987, and a strong critic of unchecked immigration into Great Britain, observed in his famous 1968 "Rivers of Blood" speech,

As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see "the River Tiber foaming with much blood." That tragic and intractable phenomenon which we watch with horror on the other side of the Atlantic but which there is interwoven with the history and existence of the States itself, is coming upon us here by our own volition and our own neglect. Indeed, it has all but come. In numerical terms, it will be of American proportions long before the end of the century. Only resolute and urgent action will avert it even now.

When, in 1981, there were riots in Toxteth (inner-city Liverpool), Powell gave another speech in the House of Commons in which he said that these riots could not be understood until one grasped that 25 to 50 percent of the inhabitants of some large cities were young immigrants, 25 years old or less. Powell read a letter he had received in which the distressed Briton told him: "As they [immigrants] continue to multiply and as we can't retreat further there must be conflict." Powell warned of "inner London becoming ungovernable" and "violence which could only effectively be described as civil war." Today London is called by some simply "Londonistan," a reference to the immigrants overwhelming of



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on December 16, 2011

the capital and largest city of the United Kingdom by people who do not share the same values, enjoy the same culture or speak the same language as the British people do. Most nations have an “official language,” including nearly every Arab nation and a few, such as India (the nation from which Vali Chapti is seeking exit) have several official languages.

The reasons for having a common, historic language are serious and myriad. At a very basic level, traffic signs cannot be in a dozen languages. Today, Mexican drivers who cannot read the traffic signs on American roads are a serious public safety risk. Medical alert bracelets and conversations in emergency rooms require instant and clear communication.

Those who do not know the language of the nation in which they live are separated from the host nation’s historical documents and the public laws of the land. They may not be able to intelligently vote or, if they can vote, they are isolated from the greater part of public policy debates which are conducted in one national language. They often become mere pawns in the hands of slick and unsavory leaders. The decision in Britain is a small step toward regaining notions of national sovereignty and national cultural identity.



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