



Newsletter nr 26

March 2011

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"The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything." Albert Einstein.

It is with much regret that we have to inform you that the European Court of Human Rights decided by 15 votes to 2 that the presence of crucifixes in Italian State schools does not constitute a breach of Article 2, Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

This decision reinforces our determination to work for the separation of State and Church. Many of you responded to our earlier invitation to express your opinions on this case by emails sent to Members of the European Parliament.

We remind you that the Lautsi family refused to accept the presence of crucifixes in the State schools that their children attended. After having lost the various cases that they brought before the Italian courts, this family won its case in 2009 at the level of the Court of First Instance of the European Court of Human Rights. The decision of that Court on 18th March 2011 is the result of an appeal by the Italian State against the 2009 decision.

If you enter the following link in to a search engine (e.g. Google or Yahoo) you will find the text of the Court's decision:

http://www.echr.coe.int/echr/Homepage_en

The reversal of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights between its judgment at the Court of First Instance and the final decision is, to say the least, worrying. The EAFT is looking at the reasons for this reversal and at the risks that this represents in terms of legal precedence and we are committed to consulting expert legal advice on this matter.

Created in 2007, the European Association for Free Thought (EAFT) is now present in 13 countries.

Given the development of a Europe in which the presence of religion in the public sphere is becoming preponderant, your cooperation and your support are necessary, as well as your suggestions for future action.

The Board of EAFT