

Extract from Joint Committee On Human Rights [Written Evidence](#)

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Sir Brian Mawhinney: [quoting from a letter written to him by the Home Secretary, 15 May 1998] (1031)

"Most of the things that churches do are, in the legal context and in the context of the European Convention on Human Rights, essentially private in nature, and would not be affected by the Bill. Where the churches stand in place of the State, however, we think it is right in principle that people should be able to raise Convention points in respect of their actions on the same basis as they will be able to do in respect of the actions of other "public authorities"—however rarely the occasion may arise."

17 June 1998 House of Commons Committee: Mr Straw

(433) I wanted to avoid vexatious litigation against the Churches, which is why I was persuaded to provide them with additional protection in the Bill.