

# Disgraceful pollution of St Paul's Cathedral

by Francis Bennion

I am still reeling after reading the 49-page judgment delivered by Mr Justice Lindblom in the St Paul's Cathedral case (report, 19 January 2012). Anyone who still sympathises with those responsible for the illegal protest camp in this holy place needs to [learn the full facts by] read[ing] and absorb[ing] it. I can recall no other example of such flagrant contempt for the public good in all its aspects.

The judge recited the shocking facts in pitiless detail[; I cannot attempt a summary in a letter]. He made the order sought, terminating the nuisance. I have only one objection to the judge's decision. Discussing the possibility of a prosecution, he dismissed this on the ground that the penalty on conviction would be only a fine. In fact[, as I informed the City of London Police on November 2 last,] a prosecution for conspiracy to contravene section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 could be brought under the Criminal Law Act 1977 and here imprisonment could be awarded on conviction.

The judgment shows that it is essential that our law should not countenance the illegal occupation of other people's premises on the plea of protest. Such a development would strike at the heart of the rule of law.<sup>1</sup>

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Any footnotes are shown at the bottom of each page  
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## References:

None

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<sup>1</sup> Published in *The Times* 23 January 2012 (passages in square brackets omitted). The case cited was *The Mayor, Commonality And Citizens Of The City Of London v Samede and Ors.* [2012] EWHC 34 (QB).