

Tahir Alam Muslim Council of Britain

Recommendation VI Para 1.

On desegregation strategies: I would caution against advocating that desegregation should be “actively pursued”. This in the main may not be possible nor desirable by minority communities or by indigenous majorities communities. Segregation in schools in the main results from segregational residential housing rather schooling choices. Such advocacy would therefore be not relevant in too many cases where it is impossible to relocate and or compel tens of thousands of people to move or be bussed to different schools!!!!

Recommendation VI para 4.

Rephrase this as follows:

“In relation to the right to manifest religion in schools or educational institutions; Special instruments.....between religious minorities and educational institutions that serve them with the view to better understanding and accommodating their religious needs within schools.”

(The word “secular” should not be used as a category as this is inaccurate and incorrect for education systems in many country)

The word religious “preferences” seems to diminish the obligatory nature of many religious practices such as wearing of head headscarfs, praying the five daily prayers or Modesty -values of covering ones body (dress code), fasting during Ramadan etc.

“Religious symbols” Again wearing headscarf for example is not a symbolic act but a matter of modesty, dignity, religious obligation and duty to God. Reducing it to “religious symbol” is to negate the obligatory nature of its importance to those that decide to wear it.