ARE HUMAN RIGHTS IMPORTANT?

By Tom Bancroft

Human rights are the rights that we get simply because we are human, they protect us from slavery, unfair treatment, lack of medical attention and being harmed or killed by others. Human Rights are one of the most important things that we have. The importance of Human Rights have been demonstrated for hundreds of years, some in a positive nature such as; The Signing of the Magna Carta, the work of people such as Martin Luther King Jnr, the formation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, after the devastating human rights violations during the war by people such as Adolf Hitler.

The Magna Carta was made by the barons of England in the 13th century who were angry with King John’s abuse of royal power, the Magna Carta was made to promote the fair treatment of the nobles and later went on to improve life for the commoners. The lords hated King John because he employed unnecessary taxes on the people and the nobles. The signing of the Magna Carta helps human rights by not allowing people to abuse their powers and take away other people’s right to a decent life.

The Magna Carta was one of the early examples of extending human rights to all people and not just a single person, such as the king.

Before the Magna Carta the king could kill and maim people without a fair trial, tax them heavily and take their food, leaving them with nothing.

The Signing of the Magna Carta by the king forced him to obey the law, have new taxes approved by the council and treat people more fairly.

Another important period in history for the improvement of human rights was the work of Martin Luther King.

In the United States of America, African American people were slaves for many years and even after they were freed as slaves under the Emancipation Proclamation they were still treated like second class citizens.

Martin Luther king Jnr brought attention to the inequities of the treatment of the African American people and how important it was for them to be treated equally – to be truly free.

This came together in his very famous speech “I have a dream” (28th August 1963)

The African Americans were free but still not allowed the same things as the white people for example they were not allowed to vote, not allowed to sit next to a white person on a bus, go to the same schools or drink from the same water fountain. Additionally they did not
receive the proper respect from the police and legal system, often judged as guilty when not.

Martin Luther King Jnr. Worked tirelessly to stop black racism in America he famously said “I have a dream that one day that this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal”.

We can now see from Martin Luther King Jnr. Work how important human rights are. One of the people who severely violated the human rights of the Jewish people was Adolf Hitler. During his time as a dictator and leader of the German people, he performed many atrocities which violate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Through his grave mistreatment of people Adolf Hitler showed how important it is to value Human Rights and treat people well. During Hitler’s reign he performed many atrocities. Firstly he brutally murdered over six million of the Jewish population, including children, for no other reason other than they were Jewish. He was responsible for starting World War II when he invaded Poland, resulting in the death of millions of people unnecessarily. Many bad things happened in the concentration camps during the Holocaust, such as the separation of family members, starving and torturing people and worst of all the millions of people that were killed in the gas chambers. They performed painful and cruel medical experiments on the people in the camps, trying to make the perfect blond haired and blue eyed race of people. In some stories of the holocaust, the Nazi’s fed the starving people honey and then would not give them any water.

Through these terrible acts the United Nations was created and the Universal declaration on Human Rights was written and signed by the members of the United Nations to prevent such terrible acts again.

Conclusion

Human rights are critically important to ensure that equality is promoted for everybody it has been demonstrated that throughout history people have been fighting for the right to live freely and equally this was shown through the signing of the Magna Carta through the great works of Martin Luther King Jnr. And the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights because of the atrocities during WWII.

We see that in many countries around the world human rights conditions have improved greatly as a result of these events but there are still many countries and places that have considerable way to go in their treatment of their people.