

Public Health Emergency Law

Skype Assignment

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On Monday April 20, 2009 at 10.30 PM of the Central European time I undertook a conference call over Skype with Jose M. Campos and Josh Tolbert-Smith, students from John Marshall School Law School in Chicago, Illinois. It carried through one and a half hour of discussing partly the topics of Public Health Law and other talking points. First we prepared a brief line up to clear what we should be talking about while we were trying to follow the prescribed items. It took few days to get familiar with such a wide issue as the Avian flu, which concerns also the preparedness plans of both of our states and the information of existent effect on the current peoples' lives. But aside this preferred items we wanted to go over the topical subjects happening in the world and to compare the climate situation on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

#### The introduction of participants

To know who are we making conversation with we had to introduce ourselves. Josh and Jose were connected to the Skype through the mobile phone which made the conversation a bit more difficult. We solved this problem out by talking just like two of us at the same time, while the third was typing the notes to the computer. It's not worthless to say that it was Josh first opportunity to use Skype and that I am not to like using it for calls at all.

I am 24 year-old student attending the 3<sup>rd</sup> year at Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic. I am not decided yet whether I want to be a lawyer after I finish this school, but I think its not really important. In my opinion this education is generally useful whatever I will continue in after the graduation. At the time of this conversation I was not working because I was just looking for a job in Brno while I had just ended up one job in Prague where I am from.

Josh Tolbert-Smith is 26 year-old senior at the John Marshall Law School in Chicago, Illinois. He works in the lay office in the field of criminal defenses. He would like to be a transactional lawyer when he completes his education.

Jose M. Campos is a 27 year-old student of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year at the same University in Chicago. He works together with Josh for the same attorney. He is not quite sure about his future legal specialization, because he is interested in several legal areas at the same time.

### Avian Flu and Preparedness

We started exchanging the views about the national adaptation to the pandemic outbreaks in both countries Illinois and Czech Republic. Jose explained the specificity of the federal arrangement and the role of the state governor in the system concerning his powers in the field of public health. I have learned that it's him who declares the public health emergency. In the Czech Republic it is also the task of the executive power, the most powers has the Minister of Health. He takes the liability for the appointment of the Chief Hygienist who is in charge in the public health emergency. I had to introduce the Czech legal system to both of my colleagues to know who is our President, his role compared to the Parliament and Government.

Then we were talking about the great function of the Public Health Law which can help to reduce the impact of the pandemic outbreak so that in countries the cases are so rare. As I mentioned then I don't know anyone affected among my friends and family. I agreed with Jose that if the avian flu (or other pandemic) stroked a large, non-prepared city such as Chicago it would have caused enormous damages to the peoples lives. But I really think that in our civilized part of the world this is not such a possible threat.

I believe in the huge influence of the media, which want to scary us as well as to make us prospective as one of the aspects of the world economical policy. We agreed on how the absolute governmental power could be worrisome if it's not used in the right way. This was meant with regard to what legal, economical and other means it can apply and what information it can bring through media.

### Earthquake in Italy

We also focused on the topical problem of earthquake happening in that time in Italy, or more precisely in L'Aquila, not far away from the Capital. It became such a disaster because of the badness of the ancient buildings and geographically the location of tectonic activity. Formerly I learned, that there existed some scientist who had predicted this earthquake. He tried to warn the people in the town to better leave it, but he was charged with creating a panic and arrested. We found this really interesting and we talked also about what are we supposed to believe, who to trust. There is an amount of the information everyday and sometimes we can't know which authority is believable and which is not. It is better to be prepared to the worst and lay off after than vice versa. This was also our consensual conclusion.

## US/EU relations

During the whole conversation we encountered the American-European relationship from our point of view. I had to feel sorry about what was my idea of an ordinary American guy. Despite many nice experience with people coming from US I have to point out the attitude of much American population who blindly supported the Bush-Era policy in the name of liberty and the war against terrorism. I think this prejudiced a big part of European opinion.

An other remark related to the missile defense system planned to be installed in the Central-European territory, in the Czech Republic and Poland. I support the tendency of the state policy to cooperate rather with US than, in regard to former socialistic order in our country, with Russia. This question of emplacement of the antimissile radar corresponds with this a lot. But there is also an opposite opinion while the ordinary people are scared to be drawn attention by placing the radar here.

Lastly we discussed the climate in both of our states and the living conditions brought by it. I learned that the distinction between temperatures in winter and summer is large in Chicago and that there are also the tornados, thunderstorms and hails. This is different to what I am accustomed. I told them about our quite moderate weather. But a few times there were floods in divers parts of my country. It affected peoples' lives by destroying their houses then, but from today's viewpoint it helped developed and improve the cities and build up the flood-protection system.

## Resume

I think that one and a half hour is not giving enough time to discuss everything necessary and interesting. We looked over an amount of topics which should deserve much more time, like the Avian flu (and in the view of contemporary problem with the Swine flu – which started about few days after this conversation, it should pay some attention as well). But this would need to sit down together with the materials to compare ant to be more precise with explaining our stand mines.

But it was really pleasant experience for me to see the similarity and diversity in our opinions and also the entire lives. It made me think about it a lot and I have to say, that we are trying to stay in touch. Maybe there will be an opportunity to meet each other in the real life.