

Justice and Order: Part 6

At traffic intersections in Japan and Germany, even if a car is not coming and there is a red traffic light people will wait at the pedestrian crossing until the lights change. What is the situation in Australia? Several times, I have noticed apprehending Sydney pedestrians who have crossed roads when there is red lights. However, I can't really see that there has been any effect to come of it.

Even if a car is not coming, crossing an intersection during a red light is, of course a traffic law violation in Australia. Suppose that in 10 minutes, only one car crosses through a pedestrian crossing and the light signal indicates to the pedestrian not to cross. Even though no cars are coming the signal remains red like before. Will the individual with a strong law-abiding spirit patiently wait?

The pedestrian crossing signal lights were made for the purpose of protecting pedestrians from cars. If those cars are not currently driving through the pedestrian crossing, the possibility of pedestrians being injured in an accident disappears. Governments must undertake a review of these pedestrian crossings.

As a student in Japan, a teacher from Hong Kong who received an English education taught me that Japanese people 'live to work', whereas Westerners 'work to live'. Even more than 30 years later I remember his teachings. An Australian who is well-versed with Japan has a saying: 'For Japanese, work is honourable, but for Australians, a job is a job'. In other words, if you compare the lifestyles of Japanese and Australians, it could be said that Australians generally place little priority on their work.

If you catch a cold, you do not attend work. It is not worth working if it will damage your health. Accordingly, this is 'a job'. Because for me it is a matter of working so that I can enjoy my life, if I do not enjoy my lifestyle, I cannot bear to be forced to change my job.

Like the earlier example with pedestrian crossings signals, the difference between nationalities regarding individualism and socialism (or a communal perspective) becomes clear. However, if the law drifts too far from the social status quo, the law abiding spirit of the people can be lost in social, community minded societies.

To what extent should the law be protected and upheld in Australia? Should the law be upheld and protected in any circumstances? Or can we ignore the law unless it meets the individual's convenience? This decision is subject to the individual, but before deciding, how about considering for what reason this particular law exists?