



When I began researching ways to become involved in human rights advocacy, I ended up perusing the pages of René Cassin's website. Reading the name René Cassin gave me a vague sense of déjà vu—as if I had read it before in the pages of my primary school history books.

So I did what any sensible student of my generation would do—I decided to google him. And after spending 45 minutes reading about his amazing accomplishments and contributions to society—not the least of which was helping to draft the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—I realized I had found a role model in my eventual pursuit of human rights law.

It was only after reading webpage after webpage about his life as a lawyer, judge, member of the UN's Human Rights Commission and of the Hague Court of Arbitration, and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize that I remembered I had begun my research on the organization, not the man, an hour before. As it turned out, my research on the man himself was just the kind of research that would prepare me for my internship here at René Cassin.

I know firsthand that being an intern is often a frustrating mix of doing coffee runs and making copies, of filing papers and twiddling your thumbs. Oftentimes, interns have the unique perspective of being part of an organization but never truly having a role in what it does.

My internship experience at René Cassin has been the exact opposite. Although it has been filled with countless cups of tea, it has also been an immersive and intensive

learning experience—a crash course on British politics, human rights advocacy, and the Jewish community in the UK.

In my first month here, I have had the opportunity to attend meetings at Parliament, hear a Conservative former Attorney General speak in support of the Human Rights Act, and sit-in on meetings with various other NGOs working to address many of the same issues as our organization. I have done research on alternatives to immigration detention, overseas domestic workers visas, and the relationship between the EU and the European Convention on Human Rights. I have written briefings and read countless news articles about human rights issues. And I have had the opportunity to work with incredibly passionate and knowledgeable co-workers.

I have just begun to understand the scope and depth of the issues René Cassin is working to address. And it has made me both excited about where we go from here and the impact we are capable of having and anxious about what remains left to be done.

Never has our job felt quite as relevant as it does today, on the 40th anniversary of Monsieur René Cassin's death. In his 1968 article to mark the International Human Rights Year, he wrote, "Now that we possess an instrument capable of lifting or easing the burden of oppression and injustice in the world, we must learn to use it." We have made great progress—we have eased some of that burden—but much of the vision Monsieur René Cassin had remains to be realized.

And now more than ever, with the status of the Human Rights Act being questioned in the UK, Monsieur René Cassin's legacy of activism will play a crucial role in how we



move forward. I could not be more excited to be a part—however small—of that legacy.