



## Armed German Police Abduct Four Homeschooled Kids

Global outrage is mounting after an armed squad of 20 German police and social workers abducted four homeschooled children from their loving parents' arms, relying on a [Nazi-era prohibition](#) on home education that has been used to [ruthlessly terrorize embattled homeschooling families in Germany](#) for years. The latest move, which experts in international law have condemned as a "shocking" violation of fundamental human rights, follows controversial efforts by the Obama administration to [deport another persecuted German home-educating family](#) granted asylum in the United States by a federal judge in 2010. Hundreds of other families have [fled persecution in Germany](#) to other European nations, virtually all of which permit homeschooling.



German authorities' latest abduction of four homeschooled children, aged 7 through 14, occurred in the early hours of August 29. As the Wunderlich family was preparing to start the school day, a swarm of armed "special agents" with a battering ram arrived at the family's home to seize the kids. According to court documents obtained and translated by the [Home School Legal Defense Association](#), the sole justification for the home invasion and abduction was the parents' refusal to surrender their children for government-approved "[education](#)."

Perhaps the most shocking element in the ongoing tragedy was the authorization by Judge Koenig of the Darmstadt family court to use force "against the children" if necessary. According to the judge, the use of force against the young kids might have been necessary because they had "adopted the parents' opinions" on home education and "no cooperation could be expected" from family members amid the abduction operation.

"I looked through a window and saw many people, police, and special agents, all armed," Dirk Wunderlich, the father, told HSLDA after the terrifying ordeal. "They told me they wanted to come in to speak with me. I tried to ask questions, but within seconds, three police officers brought a battering ram and were about to break the door in, so I opened it."

That was just the start of the nightmare to come. "The police shoved me into a chair and wouldn't let me even make a phone call at first. It was chaotic as they told me they had an order to take the children. At my slightest movement the agents would grab me, as if I were a terrorist," he continued. "You would never expect anything like this to happen in our calm, peaceful village. It was like a scene out of a science fiction movie. Our neighbors and children have been traumatized by this invasion."

According to Wunderlich, as neighbors stood outside crying, his 14-year-old daughter Machsejah was forcibly removed from home by two large, rude policemen "as if she were a criminal." When Petra



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Wunderlich tried to kiss and hug Machsejah as she was being marched away to an undisclosed location, one of the “special agents” elbowed the distraught mother out of the way and said it was “too late for that.” Before leaving, officials promised the parents that they would not be seeing their children again “anytime soon.” “What kind of government acts like this?” wondered Wunderlich, echoing the question being asked by outraged activists around the world.

Both of the parents and all four of the [well-educated children](#) are devastated after the assault on their family. Petra Wunderlich, a loving mother and wife who spoke with *The New American* last year, said yesterday her heart was shattered after the ordeal. “We are empty,” she explained. “We need help. We are fighting, but we need help.” However, the tragedy was not completely unexpected.

Wunderlich had already warned *The New American* magazine last year at the [Global Home Education Conference](#) (GHEC) in Berlin that German authorities were determined to smash his family over homeschooling. Because of the parents’ steadfast refusal to stop educating their children — an unalienable right enshrined in European treaties and even the United Nations “Human Rights” Declaration — Wunderlich and his wife had lost formal custody of the kids shortly before the global summit in what experts described as a kangaroo court. While the kids were allowed to stay at home, the family knew tragedy could strike at any time.

At the historic summit bringing together home educators, policymakers, human rights experts, and more from around the world in solidarity with persecuted German families, Wunderlich told *TNA* that authorities threatened him with “kidnapping” charges if he attempted to leave Germany — another gross violation of human rights, according to experts. The children’s passports were seized, too. Finally, after about a year of anxiety, their worst fears came true on Thursday as the children were abducted by authorities for re-education. As *The New American* has [reported](#) extensively, hundreds of other German homeschoolers have already fled the country in search of educational freedom and human rights.

“The right to homeschool is a human right,” [explained](#) HSLDA Chairman and Founder Michael Farris, an attorney who cited the European Convention of Human Rights and other documents. “So is the right to freely move and to leave a country. Germany has grossly violated these rights of this family. This latest act of seizing these four beautiful, innocent children is an outrageous act of a rogue nation.”

Farris also pointed out that the U.S. Constitution is not alone in upholding the right of parents to decide how to educate their children. The German government, he continued, is a party to multiple human rights treaties that recognize the fundamental right of parents to provide non-government-school education in line with their religious and philosophical convictions.

“Germany has simply not met its obligations under these treaties or as a liberal democracy,” Farris concluded, adding that HSLDA would do everything in its power to help reunite the family and ensure its safety from government persecution. “This case demonstrates conclusively why the Romeike asylum case is so important. Families in Germany need a safe place where they can educate their children in peace.”

The Romeikes, as *The New American* has been [reporting for years](#), fled from Germany to the United States in 2008 to escape from authorities’ barbaric persecution of homeschoolers and the myriad violations of human rights perpetrated by officials under color of law. Among the abuses regularly meted out to homeschooling parents in Germany are loss of custody, massive fines, prison sentences, vicious harassment, and more. At least one homeschooled child was [forced into a psychiatric hospital by authorities](#) for supposed “school phobia,” drawing global outrage and shock.



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“We can’t expect every country to follow our Constitution. The world might be a better place if it did,” [noted](#) U.S. Immigration Judge Lawrence Burman in his widely celebrated ruling granting the Romeike family asylum. “However, the rights being violated here are basic human rights that no country has a right to violate. Homeschoolers are a particular social group that the German government is trying to suppress. This family has a well-founded fear of persecution.” In his verdict, the judge called the ruthless German persecution “repellent to everything we believe as Americans.”

The Obama administration, however, disagreed with the judge. Despite the U.S. Constitution and international agreements enshrining the right to home education, disgraced Attorney General Eric Holder and the Department of Homeland Security appealed the ruling, [outlandishly claiming](#) that a ban on homeschooling does not constitute a violation of fundamental human rights. The administration, even after a nationwide outcry, is still seeking to have the fearful Romeike family deported from Tennessee to Germany, where they would almost certainly face brutal persecution at the hands of authorities.

HSLDA Director for International Affairs Mike Donnelly, an attorney who has been working tirelessly on behalf of persecuted homeschoolers in Germany and Sweden, said he *had* hoped the situation for German families might be changing following an extended time period without atrocities on such a scale. “But I was wrong,” he concluded after the “brutality” meted out to the Wunderlichs, who join the long list of families devastated by out-of-control German bureaucrats enforcing an unlawful ban on home education.

“My question to the political leadership of Germany is: How long will you permit these kinds of brutal acts to be perpetrated against German families?” Donnelly asked. “Why is it so important to you to force people into your state schools? The echo of this act rings from a darker time in German history. When will leaders stand up and make changes so that brutality to children like the Wunderlichs no longer happens because of homeschooling? Isn’t there any German statesman willing to stand up for what is right anywhere in Germany?”

None of the officials responsible for the latest abduction returned a request for comment by press time. The parents were informed by officials involved in the raid that they would not even be able to challenge the kidnapping of their children in court until a judge returned from “vacation.” For now, the Wunderlichs and the HSLDA are asking concerned people around the world to get involved, spread the word, and offer support if possible.

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