



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on December 13, 2009

## Fathers Jailed in Germany for Opting Children out of Sex Ed

Could you imagine being jailed simply because you decided to opt your children out of sex education? Well, this is exactly what is happening to a number of fathers in Germany. And, if certain forces in the United States have their way, such a policy could one day find its way to our shores as well.

This story is unfolding in the German state of Salzkotten, where the government has decided that all children must be indoctrinated with a state-designed curriculum — including explicit sex education that most parents would agree is inappropriate for children. Bob Unruh reports on the story at [WorldNetDaily.com](#), [writing](#), “The students who are being held out of sex education classes also are not being allowed by their parents to participate in a play-acting program called ‘My Body Belongs to Me,’ which essentially teaches children how to engage in sex....”



Thus far, the fathers have been sentenced to only a week in jail; however, that is just part of their punishment. Writes Unruh:

The government [also] has imposed fines on the families, which continue to accrue.... The families are being targeted with a "Bussgeld," a fine described as "repentance money" designed to show contrition for wrong behavior.

The families so far have refused to pay because that would be admitting guilt.

Hearing such things is enough to make many want to homeschool, but, unfortunately, this renders parents “guilty” in Germany as well. Homeschooling has been illegal there *since the days of Adolf Hitler*, and today’s German government has been using increasingly heavy-handed methods to enforce compliance. As an example, Unruh published a government response to a complaint lodged after police officers came to a family’s home and forcibly brought a child to a government school. To wit:

The minister of education does not share your attitudes toward so-called homeschooling. You complain about the forced school escort of primary school children by the responsible local police officers. ... In order to avoid this in future, the education authority is in conversation with the affected family in order to look for possibilities to *bring the religious convictions of the family into line* with the unalterable school attendance requirement.

Note not only the words but the tone of the response. Is it not reminiscent of something from a very dark chapter in history?



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While no one has as yet received such a letter in the United States, the mentality it reflects is not absent from our shores. For example, earlier this month a California judge [refused to allow](#) a couple to opt their children out of lessons involving pro-homosexual indoctrination and implied that they were bigots for wanting to do so.

Yet perhaps the most eerie part of this story is the *Bussgeld*, that repentance money. When the government forces people to issue tacit admissions of guilt and expressions of contrition, we may wonder what the point is. After all, we punish people in America and appreciate remorse, but we want it to come from the heart. What is the use of coercing a hollow apology? But while this is a natural line of reasoning for sincere people, there actually is method to the Germans' madness. And for the purposes of understanding good governance and how to combat the bad variety better, it's important we become acquainted with what it is.

Martyrdom is extremely powerful. When we see that people would rather endure punishment than renounce their beliefs, it lends those beliefs great credibility. And it also sets an example of fortitude, emboldening others to take the same stand. "Wow," the thinking is, "these people must possess something very special — perhaps even the Truth — if they're willing to suffer for it. Maybe it's worth a second look." This is why it's said that the Church was built on the blood of martyrs.

This places the German government's punishment regime in perspective.

It is trying to quash martyrdom.

If you simply punish people, you force them to suffer for their beliefs and martyr them to the degree to which you punish them. The only way you avoid this is by continuing and intensifying the punishment (the fines "continue to accrue") until an admission of guilt is extracted. It is just as when medieval tyrants would torture people until they confessed — today only the methods are different. Instead of physical torture, it is fiscal torture.

In this way the state seeks to eliminate examples of courage that might inspire some of the sheep to become shepherds. It wants to deny dissenting beliefs the credibility that bold witness and blood would give them. If it appears that no one is willing to stand on principle when it counts, it sends the message that the principle doesn't count for much.

This leaves the state as the only entity upholding its principles, as the state, for good or ill, does stand up for itself. Its dictates are enforced with police and handcuffs and guns and courts and prisons, and it is often so unyielding.

Moreover, there is something implicit in this. Like it or not, laws send the message that what they enforce is a good, whether this is actually the case or not. After all, any other assumption renders lawmaking incomprehensible, for why prohibit something if it isn't wrong? Why mandate something if it isn't a moral imperative? It is as when you tell a child that something is a no-no; he assumes it is a "bad" thing to do, otherwise you wouldn't have made the rule. Unfortunately, this childlike assumption isn't always correct, as the messenger that is the law is sometimes lawless (as in contrary to the highest law).

The only way to compete with the message of law is with the message of martyrdom. Kill martyrdom, and you kill opposition. But you cannot do this by simply killing opponents, as that is how martyrs are made. Whether you ultimately kill them or just their spirit, you must first make them renounce their beliefs. Then you deny them martyr status — and their beliefs meaningful status.



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Yet the state's strategy isn't foolproof. To intensify punishment is to raise the stakes, and then, when people do resist, their martyrdom is intensified. It is much as when St. Lawrence was put to death by Roman emperor Valerian in 258 A.D. When he was being cooked in an iron cage over an intense fire, he said to his executioners, "Here now, you burn only but one side of my body; turn over the other and do my whole body."

To this day, people remember the essence of what he said, "Turn me over, I'm done on this side!"

No one remembers the man who lit the fire.



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