



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on February 6, 2016

## U.K. Targets Christians and Homeschoolers in “Extremism” Scheme

Under the guise of battling “extremism” and “radicalization,” authorities in the United Kingdom announced plans to crack down on homeschooling families and even on church-run Sunday-school programs for children. The public at large is being told that the dizzying array of proposed new government “extremism” schemes are aimed at stopping groups such as the Islamic State and other jihadists from “radicalizing” children. But with Christian Sunday schools being lumped in with Islamic madrasas, in practice, Christians and home educators are admittedly in the government’s crosshairs as well. And now, critics of the agenda are sounding the alarm.



The news about a coming government crackdown on homeschooling first emerged late last year, just as news about a massive surge in the number of home educators was making headlines across Britain following a court ruling demanding atheism in schools. Of course, officials are not-so-subtly painting the campaign as a harmless effort to prevent “radicalization” of children by Islamic extremists. Either way, though, top U.K. officials have already made alarming public statements about what they consider to be “extremism” in need of government intervention — and it includes biblical Christian doctrines. Among other proscribed “extremist” views: the biblical understanding of human sexuality, marriage, and sin.

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Last summer, for example, U.K. Education Secretary Nicky Morgan came under fierce criticism for [calling on school teachers to be conscripted](#) in the recently declared [war on “non-violent extremism.”](#) She called on educators to report children with negative views of homosexuality to the police and social services for displaying alleged signs of “extremism.” Indeed, criticism of homosexuality — considered a sin by Christians and countless others, along with any sexual relations outside of marriage — is considered a “crime” in the United Kingdom. Multiple preachers have been arrested and tossed in jail merely for stating their beliefs — beliefs that until recently were held by virtually everyone in Britain. Even [quoting former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill on Islam can be grounds for arrest](#) in today’s Orwellian United Kingdom.

But criticism of homosexuality and Islam are not the only thought crimes in British authorities’ crosshairs. Speaking at the United Nations General Assembly in 2014, U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron — a supposed “Conservative” — called for [UN assistance in waging a global jihad on what he called “non-violent extremism.”](#) Examples of the sort of “non-violent extremism” included belief in (unapproved and unofficial) “conspiracy theories” about terrorist attacks, religious prophecies about the end times, and more. “We shouldn’t stand by and just allow any form of non-violent extremism,” he told the assembled leaders of UN member governments, including more than a few violent extremists



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ranging from mass-murdering communist and socialist dictators to brutal Islamist strongmen. [The UN's own war on extremism includes a jihad on "anti-Muslim bigotry."](#)

Now, the U.K. government's guns in its war on "extremism" are being pointed directly at home-schooling families and churches, if public statements by officials are to be believed. According to multiple news reports beginning late last year, U.K. education boss Morgan — the official who wants [children reported to authorities for expressing negative views of homosexuality](#) — ordered a "review" of homeschooling. Apparently the inquiry surrounds alleged government concerns that the minds of children were being "filled with poison" by their parents.

"There has always been the freedom in this country for people to educate their children at home," said a conveniently unnamed "senior government source" [quoted by](#) the U.K. *Independent* newspaper. "But we need to know where the children are and to be certain that they are safe. For every parent doing a brilliant job, there may be someone filling their child's mind with poison. We just don't know. We don't have reliable figures." Another spokesman for the Education Department said Morgan was "determined to tackle radicalization wherever it occurs," and that authorities were enlisting extra "inspectors" to "eradicate extremism in education." At the top of the agenda is creating a national registry of homeschoolers, officials from multiple parties said.

Home education advocates, though, expressed alarm at the agenda. "I am concerned this might develop into a means of browbeating all manner of home educators whether they be Muslim or any other religion, and this being used to introduce a much tighter regime of control in the United Kingdom," Roger Slack with the Christian Home Education Service (CHES) told [LifeSiteNews](#), a pro-life news service. Slack noted that officials were pointing to British Islamic extremists who had gone to fight in Syria as justification to "interfere with all sorts of things," even though there have been no documented problems to justify the increasing intrusion.

Also under government scrutiny are Christian Sunday schools run by churches where children learn about the Bible and the faith. Leading the charge will be the U.K. "Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services, and Skills," or OFSTED. "We need to know if a Sunday school is being run," said OFSTED boss Michael Wilshaw, adding that not all of them would be "inspected" by government. "Is it registered? Is it being run properly by people that have been through proper safeguarding checks? And if that is done, then we are happy with that, and we will only go in when we feel that there is a need to do so." The prime minister later added that Sunday schools would not be raided or inspected by government if they did not meet for more than six hours per week.

Critics, though, including British lawmakers, are up in arms over the draconian proposals, which include, among other plans, a scheme to let bureaucrats seek out "undesirable teaching" in Sunday schools. Parliamentarian Stephen Timms with the Big Government-supporting Labour Party lambasted the plan. "I'm particularly uncomfortable about the idea that religious instruction should be placed under the authority of some vaguely defined British values administered by government officials," he said, adding that one commentator had pointed out that the measure would make OFSTED "the state regulator of religion." Other members of Parliament said the plan was "verging on the ridiculous." Some called it "absurd." Multiple Conservative Parliamentarians also warned that the schemes could ban the teaching of the biblical and traditional view of marriage as being between one man and one woman.

Outside of government, Christian groups also expressed major concerns. "There's a very real problem with violent extremism and radicalization that the government is trying to address, and we support



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strong safeguarding measures,” said Simon McCrossan, chief of public policy with the Evangelical Alliance United Kingdom (EAUK). “But these proposals will fail to tackle the problems and instead stifle the work that churches and faith-based organizations do with children and young people across the UK.” The group also warned that the proposals represented a “fundamental threat to religious liberty.”

Andrea Williams, chief executive of the group Christian Concern, urged Christians and supporters to work on defeating the schemes. “What [OFSTED chief] Sir Wilshaw is suggesting has serious implications on the freedom of our Christian groups to teach core gospel truths,” she said. “We have already seen that the biblical view of marriage and sexuality could be classed as ‘homophobic teaching.’ A host of other Christian values taught to our children could be considered ‘undesirable’ under the loose definitions proposed by the government.... Please pray that more people will recognize the danger of these plans and that they will be defeated.”

Scotland, which is part of the United Kingdom, has also launched Orwellian government programs aimed at children and families. As *The New American* [reported two years ago](#), Scottish authorities even approved an extremist plot assigning an individual social worker responsible for overseeing each child and their parents until adulthood. All of it was done under the guise of meeting requirements laid out in the extremely controversial [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#). The global children regime, which has not been ratified by the U.S. government due to powerful opposition, purports to mandate that decisions be made in the “best interests” of a child, as defined by government and bureaucrats rather than parents.

Americans should take note of what is happening on the other side of the Atlantic. Following in the footsteps of [extremist German authorities](#), the Swedish government even went so far as to ban home education completely in recent years, [sparking a dramatic exodus of “school refugees” from the nation](#). Across the continent, governments are becoming increasingly intrusive into family life, even as they demand increasingly radical values be propagated through taxpayer-funded schools. Similar trends are taking place in the United States. If educational and religious freedom are going to survive and thrive, concerned Americans must remain vigilant.

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