



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on January 29, 2016

The Crime of Being Christian? Atheistic State Seizes Theists' Children

Is Christianity now a crime? Is teaching of sin now a sin itself? Some would say this is the case in Norway, where a couple has had their five children seized by the government based on charges of, their lawyer reports, "Christian radicalization and indoctrination."

Marius and Ruth Bodnariu's problems began late last year when their five children, three boys and two girls aged three months to nine years, were seized by Barnevernet, Norway's child-protection agency. According to a December 3 communiqué sent by Marius' brother, Daniel Bodnariu, the principal of the school attended by the Bodnariu's daughters, Eliana and Naomi, "reported to Barnevernet that the girls had talked about being disciplined, that the family was 'very Christian.' She also reported that, in Daniel's words, 'the grandmother has a strong faith that God punishes sin, which, in her opinion, creates a disability in children' and that the parents needed 'help' in raising their children," [wrote](#) LifeSiteNews.

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This led to the children being seized November 16 and 17 — *without due process*. And despite the Bodnariu's not getting their day in court, the bureaucratic abuse continued: "The children, including a nursing infant son, have now been placed in three separate foster homes while their parents have been given extremely limited visitation rights. Although both parents can see their infant son twice a week, only Ruth can visit with her two oldest sons once per week, while neither parent can visit their daughters, [reported](#) the *Christian Post* December 31.

Not surprisingly, there has been push-back. A [petition](#) on the Bodnariu's behalf was launched in November and now has almost 60,000 signatures. Earlier this month, there were [protests](#) by Romanian Pentecostal Evangelicals in at least six nations' capitals (the couple is of that denomination; Marius hails from Romania and immigrated to Norway 10 years ago). Writing of one spirited demonstration, *Agerpres* [reports](#), "In Bucharest, people gathered in Victorei Square with signs written in Romanian and Norwegian reading: 'Norway don't separate the Bodnariu family,' 'Rather a poor mom in Romania than have your children stolen in Norway,' 'Romanians worldwide unite. Your children are being hijacked,' 'Stop Barnevernet,' 'Norway, stop child kidnapping,' or 'Reunite the Bodnariu family.'" And people in high places have gotten the message. *Agerpres* also [reported](#), just this past Saturday, that the





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Bodnarius might get their children back after a recent Romanian Parliament delegation visit to Norway. Yet while the Norwegians may bow to international pressure, the larger problem of anti-Christian persecution and overall abuse of power by Barnevernet will persist, say critics. For instance, consider another family caught in the agency's crosshairs, as cited by Pastor Cristian Ionescu, vice president of the Romanian Pentecostal Union in the United States and Canada. Writes the [Christian Post](#), the Radulescus "beat the agency in a case before the Supreme Court of Norway two years ago. Although the family won the case, Barnevernet is still going to list their children for adoption. 'Barnevernet is going ahead with the process of adoption because they say that such a long time has passed and now it is going to be traumatic for the children to be returned to their parents,' Ionescu said."

Apparently, though, the threat of "trauma" didn't prevent this bureaucracy from tearing the Radulescu and Bodnariu children from their parents — and from each other when placing them in different foster homes.

Of course, Barnevernet has its defense, claiming that child abuse was the real reason for the seizure. The Bodnarius do believe in spanking — a historical norm still accepted by most people worldwide — which is illegal in radically left-wing Norway. Yet critics say this is a smokescreen. The [Christian Post](#) again:

"Lately they [the bureaucrats] are trying to characterize it as an abuse case. It never started as such. The teacher said that we need to bridge the gap between us and this family because they have radical Christian principles and we know that right now, everything that was considered decent two decades ago is considered 'radical,'" Ionescu [said].

"You cannot indoctrinate your children in one religion and you cannot tell them about God and the attributes of God because that is offensive to so many people. Then it developed as an abuse case once Barnevernet understood that you cannot go against the family based on religious accusations of indoctrination."

And many would say the government is behaving as if it has something to hide. Ionescu also [reports](#) that the "parents were interrogated and asked not to publicly reveal the situation so they wouldn't aggravate their case." In the same vein, Barnevernet is refusing to provide its own details, citing "privacy," which, of course, can be the last refuge of a bureaucratic scoundrel.

It's not surprising that a Scandinavian country would consider Christian inculcation as creating a "disability." The region is notoriously atheistic; in fact, Sweden is one of the world's most irreligious nations, with 76 percent of the population [claiming](#) to be either "not religious" or "atheist." And Norway isn't far behind: A [study](#) found that only 14.8 percent of its citizens "have no doubt God exists," the sixth lowest figure in the world (two of the countries ranking lower are Sweden and Denmark). Anti-Christian prejudice abounds in Scandinavia.

One could also wonder about conflict of interest, as exemplified in the United States. "Child Protective Services" abuse is legion. And as former Oregon prosecutor Robert Weidner [claimed](#) in 2008, every time CPS seizes a child and puts him up for adoption, it receives "85,000 [dollars] from the federal government"; he says that to these bureaucrats, it's all about "getting the money — they talk about *keeping their numbers up*." Note also that for this reason, CPS is more likely to target "marketable" children (i.e., young, white, and healthy) who can easily be placed with families, as this writer [reported](#) in 2014.

While I don't know if the same incentive exists in the Norwegian system, Daniel Bodnariu implied that



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just such a motivation was evident, [saying](#) “There are a lot of people who need to adopt kids in Norway. They don’t give birth to [a] child and there are a lot of people in Norway who want to adopt.”

Then there is the interesting matter of “Christian radicalization.” Is this, objectively speaking, a problem? Note that a German [study](#) involving 45,000 young people found that increasing religiosity among Christian youths made them *less violent* (in contrast, increasing religiosity among Muslim youths actually made them *more violent*). So is an atheistic upbringing, which breeds less violence than a Muslim one but more than a Christian one, preferable?

Moreover, what does “radical” mean, anyway? Galileo was a “radical” when proposing heliocentrism, Pasteur was a “radical” when proposing germ theory, and Alfred Wegener was a “radical” when proposing continental-drift theory. In fact, most legendary scientists became legendary because they were radical — and right.

Unless we’re defining “radical” as extreme deviation from Truth (not so in a relativistic age), all it means is that someone thus labeled has views departing greatly from the mainstream; a man who avers that $2+2=4$ in a land where everyone insists it’s 5 is considered a radical. And Norway — in implicitly branding Christian piety a disorder in a [world of growing religiosity](#), and outlawing the worldwide and historical norm of corporal punishment — is certainly a radical among the family of man. And that’s not a radicalism that’s likely to become legendary.



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