

Association for Homeschooling

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Vereniging vir Tuisonderwys



FROM :

Association for Homeschooling

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04 February 2010

TO :

**The Cultural Affairs Officer
US Embassy**

PO Box 9536, Pretoria, 0001

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Dear mr. Tripp

The Homeschooling Association in South Africa endeavours to obtain the recognition of the right of parents to educate their children within the family.

During apartheid, home education was illegal in South Africa. The parents Andre and Bokkie Meintjies were jailed in 1994, and their children were placed in an orphanage, because they educated their children at home. However, a few years later, the Mandela government legalised home education with the publication of the South African School Act in 1996. Since it was legalised, homeschooling has grown exponentially in South Africa.

In contrast, German homeschooling parents are currently being prosecuted on the basis of a ban on homeschooling introduced by the Nazi government in 1938. In the court case against the Dudek family in Archfeldt, it was testified: "*The 'Schulpflicht' – the laws that require school attendance – are on the books in the German states and have been traced back to the Reichsschulpflicht Gesetz' [federal compulsory attendance laws] which was passed in 1938 by the Nazi government.*"

The Homeschooling Association in South Africa has expressed it's concern to the German Embassy about the persecution of home schoolers at numerous occasions since 2005, but the German government continued to intensify the persecution of home schoolers.

Uwe Romeike, a music teacher, and his family have fled from their home country to the United States. They fear that they will lose custody over their children, be jailed or have their bank accounts confiscated, if they return to Germany. This family has applied for political asylum in the USA.

On Tuesday Jan 26 this year, Tennessee Judge Lawrence Burman has granted political asylum to the family and called Germany's actions with the Romeike family a violation of their human rights and "*repellent to everything we believe as Americans*" before passing a ruling that allowed them to stay in the U.S.

The Association in South Africa would like to request that you convey the appreciation of South African parents to your government for it's protection of parental rights of citizens from other countries such as Germany.

Yours sincerely

Bouwe van der Eems
(Chairman : Association for Homeschooling)