

European panel condemns creationism effort

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European lawmakers approved a report condemning efforts to teach creationism in schools, underscoring concern about an emerging socially conservative agenda.

Meeting in Strasbourg, France, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe members approved, in a non-binding 48-25 vote, a report that criticizes creationism advocate for potentially sacrificing children's education "to impose religious dogma" and to promote "a radical return to the past," The International Herald Tribune reported Friday.

The report said creationism, a belief that a supreme being created life and the universe, was "an almost exclusively American phenomenon" but some of its tenets had migrated to Europe.

Denying pupils knowledge of various theories was "totally against children's educational interests," the report said. Creationism supporters endorse "a radical return to the past which could prove particularly harmful in the long term for all our societies," the report said.

Believers of a literal interpretation of the Bible joined people who accept the theory of evolution as "the result of a transcendent will, an 'intelligent design,' " the report said.

It also pointed to a Muslim version of creationism, highlighting a Turkish cleric's work, "The Atlas of Creation," that was distributed to schools in Belgium, France, Spain and Switzerland.

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