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# Russian Customs Seize British Children's Books as 'Extremist Literature'

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**sztu.customs.gov.ru**

Russian customs officials said they had identified "extremist literature" in a shipment of children's books imported from Britain, according to a statement released by the St. Petersburg branch of the Federal Customs Service.

Photos and video published alongside the statement suggest the titles were produced by U.K.-based publisher Usborne Publishing. The books shown included "The Dinosaurs Who Met Santa Claus," "Eggs and Chicks," "Space Puzzles," "Baby's Very First Big Play Book," "My First Story Writing Book" and "Very First Questions and Answers: What's Inside Me?"

Critics say that Russia's laws on "extremism" have been used to restrict access to foreign literature and tighten control over cultural imports since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Customs officials said the shipment, which weighed 12.7 tons and valued at 140,000 pounds ($190,000), contained 28 books in English and German deemed to have "extremist content."

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An official review had confirmed the presence of "prohibited information," the statement said, without specifying what material had triggered the designation.

The books were ordered by an unidentified Russian company specialising in educational publications and foreign-language literature, according to the customs service.

Authorities have opened an administrative case against the carrier for violating restrictions on moving goods across the Eurasian Economic Union's customs border. The legal entity could face a fine of 50,000 to 300,000 roubles ($660-$3,960) and confiscation of the goods.

Usborne was cited in a 2023 report by the Russian Book Union as a publisher that halted cooperation with Russia after the start of the war in Ukraine, the exiled news outlet Agentstvo reported.

Despite this, its books remain available on Russian online marketplaces and bookstore websites.

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