

Canada's Fascist Agenda: Illegal Security Certificates and State Psy-War Against Muslims

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Global Research, November 12, 2013

[Night's Lantern](#)

Region: [Canada](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#), [Terrorism](#)

Picture: Mohamed Harkat on Parliament Hill on tenth anniversary of his arrest and detention on a security certificate. (Cole Burstson/Canadian Press)

Canadian Security Certificate detainee [Mohamed Mahjoub](#) has spent the last 13 years teaching Canadians how to suffer injustice. He did not intend to. He has had no choice in the matter. And he is only one of five Muslim men, illegally imprisoned under application of Canadian Security Certificates, who have shown the people that innocence can survive oppression even when it attempts to destroy your family, your own life, your mind. The other men are [Mohamed Harkat](#), [Hassan Almrei](#), [Adil Charkaoui](#), [Mahmoud Jaballah](#): educators without pay.

Having gained refugee status after arrival from Egypt, married with two children in Toronto, Mahjoub was arrested without charges in 2000, held without trial, under conditions which included two and a half years of solitary confinement, threats of sexual abuse and abuse by guards. When he was ill he went on hunger strike to receive treatment. In 2007 after the Supreme Court found Security Certificates as applied, unconstitutional, he was released to house arrest under conditions so restrictive for his family that he chose to return to prison. He was again released in 2010 to house arrest without his family.

Notable in Mohamed Mahjoub's case, is not so much the suspect's distance from committing criminal acts but the government's lack of ethics. Federal prosecutors stole defence evidence from court, for which 11 of the prosecution team were barred from the case. The evidence to substantiate the reasons for Mahjoub's arrest was destroyed by the Government. Much of the alleged evidence was conceded to have been drawn from foreign intelligence services relying on torture. The Government consistently violated attorney client privilege by eavesdropping on their consultations. Mahjoub's family both in Egypt and in Canada was tormented by authorities.

Canadian Intelligence had decided, since Mohamed Mahjoub once worked as an agricultural engineer for a company involved with Osama bin Laden, that Mahjoub was a danger to Canada's national security. The public has no verifiable information that this refugee is guilty of anything. But this has proven equally true of the four other Muslim men arrested under Canadian Security Certificates, so there's an indication that the men were selected victims for intentional arbitrary arrests, in a State psy-war operation against Canada's Muslim community. In fact it threatened all refugees and immigrants. Incarceration without charges or trial, at the whim of the State which isn't held to account or to the need to provide evidence, is a mechanism to strip the vulnerable of their ability to dissent. In the long term it produces cheap labour and slaves.

The threat is also against all Canadians by denying the right of habeas corpus, betraying a fundamental tenet of English law, culture and freedom, to join American programs of the “war on terrorism” which provide the first 21st century concentration camp of Guantanamo Bay. Implicit in the Government’s attempt to assume absolute authority over a suspect’s life, without accountability to the people or the law, is the attempt to replace a victim’s understanding of God with the State itself.

Contemporary Canada felt compelled to teach this to Muslims, as previous generations taught Aboriginal peoples the Christianity of Residential Schools.

In a recent court challenge to the validity of Security Certificates, on Oct. 25th Federal Judge Edmund Blanchard found the Security Certificate process entirely valid and has allowed it to stand, while admitting Mohamed Mahjoub’s rights were violated. The decision is disturbing because human rights are made secondary to a fascist agenda. The “violation” of Mohamed Mahjoub’s rights translates into vernacular as destruction of a man’s life with his arbitrary arrest, his arbitrary imprisonment without trial, his 79 day hunger strike to receive requested medical care, the hunger strike at the new “Guantanamo North” facility partly to obtain medication and treatment for hepatitis C contracted in prison. While Mohamed Mahjoub, Hassan Almrei and Mahmoud Jaballah were on extended hunger strikes without medical treatment, a group of sixty health professionals found the men “at risk of severe hypotension or hypertension, renal failure, cardiac arrhythmia, heart failure and a variety of life-threatening disorders”. It could be argued the detainees were being forced to suicide by the conditions of their imprisonment. After over 80 days of hunger strike Mahjoub was released to house arrest when a Supreme Court decision found the application of Security Certificates illegal.

The “violation” of Mohamed Mahjoub’s rights includes a lack of government accountability for its crime. The “violation” includes a lack of any legal charges to refute, includes Mahjoub’s lack of secure right to an attorney, includes a lack of redress, and the “violation” extends to the persecution of Mahjoub’s family both in Egypt and Canada, the country he turned to for refuge. The judge finds the wrongs to Mahjoub do not violate “the conscience of the community.” The judge is mistaken. The community of Canada’s conscience is increasingly silenced to carefulness when dealing with crimes of Canada’s government. Victims of false charges know a crime is committed against them. For innocents it is psychologically more damaging, Kafka-esque, “surreal” to be made to suffer without any reason other than one’s ethnic group or religion. As Canadians realize the five Muslim Security Certificate detainees are innocent and the State has scarred them terribly, the crime against them becomes more clear but the jury is still out.

Notes

Partial sources online:

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["Political Prisoners: Canadian Security Certificates,"](#) J.B.Gerald, 2004-8, *North American Political Prisoners / Nightslantern* [access:< <http://nightslantern.ca/prison/bprisoners.htm> >].

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