MPs speak out in support of terror suspect

Recently Opposition MPs spoke out in favour of Adil Charkaoui, who was arrested in 2003 on suspicion of being an Al-Qaeda operative. Charkaoui is currently in legal "limbo"; although he was successful in challenging the constitutionality of security certificates, the Supreme Court gave Parliament one year to re-rewrite their security laws. Until the Supreme Court ruling is enacted, Charkaoui could still be deported.

[Charkaoui v. Canada (Citizenship and Immigration](), the Supreme Court held that the security certificates violated [sections 7 and 9]() of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The "secret trail" procedure infringed section 7 of the Charter because it failed to ensure a fair hearing, and the detention under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act violated section 9 because it arbitrarily prevented case review until 120 days after a certificate was confirmed [2].

Since the decision, there have been more developments to Charkaoui's case. On March 15, 2007, the Supreme Court agreed to hear an appeal from Charkaoui with regard to the validity of evidence against him compiled by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). Pursuant to policy, CSIS destroyed records of their interviews with Charkaoui and only retained summaries of the evidence. "Charkaoui contends the missing notes and tapes would have helped him mount a defence to establish his innocence and strike down the security certificate" [3]. On April 20, a key witness against Charkaoui recanted his testimony, claiming that he made the allegations under psychological stress. "Charkaoui's lawyers and supporters say the new revelation only strengthen's [Charkaoui's] case" [4].

Sources

[1] "MPs speak out in support of terror suspect" CBC News (25 April 2007).
[2] Elizabeth Liu, "Supreme Court holds that part of security certificate process is unconstitutional," Centre for Constitutional Studies.
[3] "Supreme Court will hear Adil Charkaoui's appeal" CBC News (15 March 2007).
[4] supra, note 1.