

New Buffalo Times – October 29, 2015

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In 2005, When Ibrahim Parlak was released from Calhoun County jail on a writ of *habeas corpus*, one of the terms of his release was that he had to travel to Detroit every other week to report to his removal officer. Over the years the frequency of those trips was reduced to monthly, and, several years ago, to annually. For the past few years the visits have become routine – drive 3 hours, wait a couple of hours, meet for 5 minutes, told to come back next year and drive 3 hours home.

More than a year after leaving jail he received an addendum to the terms of his release stating that he must actively attempt to get travel documents and attempt to find another country that would accept him as a resident. This Ibrahim did with several countries, not that he wanted to leave the United States, but he was required to do so. Every attempt he made was either ignored or he was told he had to get travel documents before he would be considered for entry. Being a man without a country, combined with the U.S. government's refusal to issue him a passport, even for the purpose of leaving this country, there is no way Mr. Parlak has found to obtain any travel documents. Read Catch-22.

A major factor that has kept Mr. Parlak from being deported has been the introduction of a private bill in the U.S. Senate by former Senator Levin each new session of Congress. Senator Levin retired last year. Senator Peters, elected to fill Senator Levin's Senate seat, has opted to not sponsor any private bills. This leaves Mr. Parlak with no private bill protection from deportation.

This past September Ibrahim Parlak again made the annual trip to Detroit. He was made to wait until just before the office closed for the day, and then taken to a back office to meet with his removal officer. The officer's attitude was hostile, asking Mr. Parlak what he had been doing lately to find another country in which to live. Mr. Parlak explained that lately he hadn't done much in that regard as all of his attempts had indicated that he needed documents, which he cannot obtain. The removal officer said he was making an entry in Mr. Parlak's file stating that he refused to comply with the terms of his release from jail. He then asked for any documents that Mr. Parlak had with him. He had never before been asked to bring anything like this to these meetings. He found a card in his wallet that had been issued when he was released from jail that stated that he had put up a bond

before he was released. The removal officer told Mr. Parlak that the card had expired and that he was keeping it. He then asked for more documents and Mr. Parlak said that was all he had. (Subsequent research revealed that there was no expiration date on that card).

Ibrahim Parlak was then told to return to Detroit on November 3rd, less than 2 months from the September trip, and to bring all of the documentation he had. He became concerned that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) was actively moving to deport him again, or to put him back in jail, citing the lack of a private bill and the entry made into his file that he was not complying with the terms of his release.

His concerns moved him to gather the Friends of Ibrahim group that has been with him since the day he was arrested. The group put together a campaign to bring attention to this situation and to urge Senators to sponsor a private bill before November 3rd, marshaling an impressive array of contacts and skills. The results of these efforts have been promising, although there has not yet been any documented indication that this will be resolved in Mr. Parlak's favor. The Friends of Ibrahim vow to continue the fight to free Ibrahim Parlak from this seemingly never-ending situation until he is allowed to live in the United States without persecution, like any American citizen, and until he is granted that citizenship that he yearns for.

More than a decade after he was arrested, questions remain that should have been answered long ago:

- What more does the government need as proof that Ibrahim Parlak is not a threat to this country, nor anyone in it? He has lived here for 24 years, without incident, without breaking any laws. He has a daughter who is an American citizen. He is a valued member of his community and beyond, earning the trust of his hundreds of friends and thousands of Americans who know his story and support his quest to be officially accepted.
- At a time when the U.S. is increasing the number of refugee immigrants it accepts from Syria (about whom we know virtually nothing), why is the government trying to deport someone who has met all requirements for citizenship, who employs Americans at his restaurant, who has a long

record of donating time and resources to a variety of local causes, both known, and known only to Ibrahim and the recipients.

- How much more in resources, time, and money will the government squander tracking Ibrahim's life, when they have found nothing of substance in over 10 years?
- How much of Mr. Parlak's resources must he continue to spend on attorney's fees, defending his right to live free in a land that granted him political asylum?
- Who is behind this persistent persecution? Whoever it is hides behind whatever smokescreen they can throw up. Repeated attempts to find the source have been fruitless.
- Why now, after more than 10 years of complying with every condition imposed, is the government increasing the pressure?

It is time for common sense to take over the narrative of this story, for I.C.E. to admit it made a mistake in this case, and to free Ibrahim from the cloud hanging over him.