

Parlak Still in Jail, Confusion Abounds

Battle Creek, MI - The Department of Homeland Security arrested Ibrahim Parlak in July. For the first time, both the government and Parlak spoke exclusively to NewsCenter 16, and here we have both sides of the story.

A second home and a place of freedom?

Parlak is being held in Calhoun County Jail in Battle Creek, MI, facing charges of fraud on an immigration form and being a convicted aggravated felon. He is not facing charges of being a terrorist, contrary to some misinformed rumors, although the U.S. Government does say he has past links to terrorism.

Parlak is saying, however, that he feels as if he is the one, in fact, being terrorized. He says that is due to the government that he fled to for freedom.

Parlak laments, "I can't believe it is happening here in the United States: a place that I call my second home." He has been detained by the US government for over a month now, and is in danger of deportation.

He explains the situation as "difficult," adding, "the most difficult part is still not knowing exactly why I am here."

The government responds to Parlak's charges

According to the government, he is being detained because of his past in Turkey, when he fought for Kurdish freedom.

Baker says Parlak is clearly in violation of the law

Robin Baker, of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, explains, "At the time that he applied to be a lawful permanent resident, he omitted material facts, he omitted the fact that he had been convicted of some very serious crimes."

Those crimes include the murder of two soldiers in the mid 1980's, according to documents of a conviction from Turkish courts.

However, Parlak insists those are false charges. He claims, "I was not involved in any shooting, any fighting, and I never used my gun."

Baker answers, simply, "We cannot retry that case. Based on his convictions, he is in the country in violation of the law."

All because of a mis-marked box...

On his application for lawful permanent residency, Parlak checked a box labeled “no” when asked if he had been arrested for or convicted of a crime. That is a clear violation of the International Immigration Nationality Act, according to Baker.

Parlak, however, wonders, “Why marking a box is that big of a thing,” and insists he didn’t understand the forms.

Baker says that there is no reason for confusion, saying, “I don’t think is persecution in any way, shape, or form, this is called enforcing the law, which we will do.” Parlak’s next hearing is scheduled for October 26th in Detroit’s immigration court, and while he did say this has shaken his faith in the American justice system, he does believe that justice will prevail, and that he will soon return to Berrien County.