

Abdelrazik asked to appear before committee

**Unprecedented manoeuvre seeks return of Canadian exiled in Sudan.
Government must not block will of Parliament, NDP MP says**

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An all-party Commons committee called yesterday for Abousfian Abdelrazik, the Canadian citizen labelled a national security threat by Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon, to appear before it.

"I'm convinced that this motion should allow Mr. Abdelrazik to return home, sooner rather than later," said Paul Dewar, the NDP MP who has championed the case of the only living Canadian put on the United Nations international terrorist blacklist by the former Bush administration.

The Canadian government continues to deny him travel documents, despite asking the UN to delist Mr. Abdelrazik after getting assurances from both the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and the RCMP that he posed no threat. Mr. Abdelrazik has been living in the Canadian embassy in Khartoum for more than a year.

"Passing this motion means that Mr. Abdelrazik will finally be able to come home," said Mr. Dewar. "It is critical that the government not block his return, to do so would be blocking the will of Parliament," he said.

Government MPs, including Deepak Obhrai, parliamentary secretary to Mr. Cannon, abstained on the motion but didn't oppose it.

Last month, Mr. Cannon reversed previous government promises to give Mr. Abdelrazik, who has been marooned in Sudan for six years, an emergency passport to get home. Yesterday's demand by Parliament's foreign affairs committee amounts to a challenge of that decision.

The unprecedented manoeuvre amounts to a mirror-image of an extraordinary effort by the Commons ethics committee, which managed to keep Karlheinz Schreiber, the friend of former prime minister Brian Mulroney, from leaving Canada by demanding that the lobbyist testify before it "without delay."

Yesterday's motion, which simply required "that Abousfian Abdelrazik be asked to appear before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs," further adds to the tangled political and legal morass.

In addition to belatedly dubbing him a national security risk, the government is fighting Mr. Abdelrazik in Federal Court, arguing that his Charter right as a citizen to return to Canada doesn't mean he is entitled to a travel document.