



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CANADA

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August 17, 2006

The Honourable Vic Toews  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada  
284 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H8

**COPY**

Minister Toews;

I am writing in support of Mr. Joseph Pannell, with respect to the request by the United States for his extradition to face charges in the alleged shooting of a police officer in Chicago 37 years ago.

I have several concerns regarding this extraordinary case. I am very concerned about the treatment that Mr. Pannell may receive upon his return to the United States. The facility where he will be held has been documented by Human Rights Watch to have a very poor record in the treatment of inmates. In Mr. Pannell's case, there have been no assurances that he will be protected from the possibility of retaliatory punishment due to the nature of the allegations. Furthermore, given the length of time since the alleged incident, eye-witness testimony has become increasingly difficult to verify, as well as properly cross-examine. These factors alone, should give the Government of Canada pause in its final decision to extradite Mr. Pannell to the United States.

The era in which this incident was to have taken place was a turbulent time for civil rights and race relations in the United States - systemic racism and persecution were common place. In the court disclosure from the U.S. authorities, it was claimed that Mr. Pannell belonged to the Black Panthers. Mr. Pannell has repeatedly denied this accusation. There is little supporting evidence to demonstrate that Mr. Pannell was ever a member of any militant group. These allegations require further examination.

I am very concerned that the Government of Canada is making a serious error in this extradition process. The claims by the U.S. Government are not fully supported by the evidence provided. Indeed, the police officer involved in the alleged incident has provided widely different accounts of the events.

I support Mr. Pannell in his efforts to fight extradition to the United States. His case requires further examination. Your attention to this case would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Colleen Beaumier, M.P.  
Brampton West