



House of Commons
Chambre des communes

February 10, 2009

Barack H. Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Rt. Hon. Stephen J. Harper
Prime Minister
Prime Minister's Office
Langevin Block 80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3

Subject: Omar A. Khadr, Guantanamo Bay detainee

Dear President Obama and Prime Minister Harper,

We the undersigned as Leaders of the opposition parties of Canada, comprising a majority of the seats in the Canadian Parliament collectively call on both of your governments to act immediately to release Omar Khadr from detention at Guantanamo Bay and repatriate him to Canada.

Mr. Khadr is a 22 year-old Canadian citizen, detained by the United States since the age of 15. It appears from available evidence that Mr. Khadr was taken from Canada as a child, and unlawfully recruited and used as a child soldier in the armed conflict in Afghanistan in 2002. Significant ambiguity exists as to what role he played in connection with the conflict and whether he is guilty of any criminal misconduct. It is unequivocal that the previous U.S. administration disregarded his status as a child soldier. It is also clear that Mr. Khadr has been subjected to conditions of confinement and interrogation that Canadian courts have found violate international prohibitions against torture and other forms of cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment.

We recognize that the current U.S. administration is in the process of evaluating the situation at Guantanamo Bay with a view to correcting possible past injustices. We conclude, however, that in view of Mr. Khadr's unique circumstances, it is no longer appropriate to allow Mr. Khadr to be detained by the United States. The interests of justice require acknowledgement of his status as a child soldier, his release from Guantanamo Bay, and his prompt return to Canada to be dealt with in accordance with Canadian law.

Accordingly, we the undersigned call upon President Obama and Prime Minister Harper as follows:

(1) We call upon President Obama to acknowledge Omar Khadr's status as a child soldier (protected as such by the Child Soldier Protocol), promptly release him from Guantanamo Bay, and repatriate him to Canada;

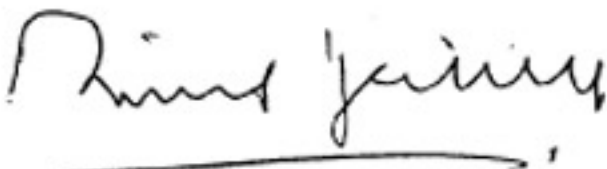
(2) We call upon Prime Minister Harper to cooperate in these efforts and ensure that appropriate arrangements are made through the provincial government of Ontario and appropriate members of civil society to provide for Mr. Khadr's supervision and reintegration into the community upon his return to Canada;

(3) We call upon President Obama to transfer available evidence of any criminal misconduct on the part of Mr. Khadr to the possession of the Canadian government for investigation and evaluation, and, if appropriate in light of the evidence and other circumstances, initiation of criminal proceedings for the commission of any offense or offenses under Canadian law by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

We note that you are both scheduled to meet in Ottawa on February 19, 2009. This will provide an opportunity to begin a constructive dialogue that will rapidly lead to coordination between the two governments necessary to implement these requests. Such action is imperative to the restoration and maintenance of both nations' commitment to the rule of law and to the implementation of the will of the majority of the Canadian people.

We send this letter in a spirit of cooperation and anticipate your prompt and constructive action on this matter.

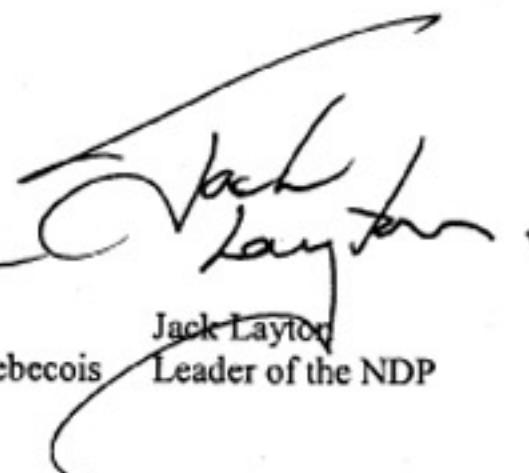
Sincerely,



Michael Ignatieff
Leader of the Official Opposition



Gilles Duceppe
Leader of the Bloc Quebecois



Jack Layton
Leader of the NDP