



Canadian Friends
Service Committee
(QUAKERS)
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Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
Ralph Goodale, Minister of Public Safety
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6

October 12, 2017

Dear Ministers,

I write on behalf of Canadian Friends Service Committee, the peace and social justice agency of Quakers in Canada. For many decades Quakers have had an active interest in the right of conscience and in civil liberties issues. We see these issues as deeply important for a healthy and peaceful society, one that expresses positive moral and spiritual values.

Chelsea Manning is a famous whistleblower and, as with other whistleblowers, her actions were highly controversial. She disclosed hundreds of thousands of diplomatic cables, videos, and documents, some of which were classified. She felt that releasing this information would expose potential human rights abuses by the US and its allies in Afghanistan and Iraq. Manning acted from a moral conviction that whistleblowing was her duty in helping the public understand what happens in modern wars, including the violations of human rights and the rule of law. Her goal was to contribute to ending current, and preventing future, atrocities.

The information Manning released made a profound difference in our collective understanding of modern wars, and has contributed to countless news articles around the world. She paid a very heavy price for her actions. She served years in harsh conditions in military prison, including long periods in solitary confinement. Her sentence was commuted by outgoing president Barak Obama earlier this year, what Amnesty International USA called the “long overdue” end to a “cruel ordeal.”¹

At the end of September when trying to visit Canada for vacation, Manning was denied entry and told she was inadmissible “on grounds of serious criminality.”² We are deeply concerned with this interpretation of Canadian law. Chelsea Manning poses no threat whatsoever to Canada or to Canadians. It is inconceivable that she should be denied entry due to previous whistleblowing for which she’s already served her sentence and had the remainder commuted. We think that it *benefits* Canada as a country to encourage celebrated human rights champions like Manning to visit if they wish. We kindly request that this decision be reversed and that in future the concept of criminal inadmissibility not be abused to prevent entry of individuals who do not pose any security threat to Canada.

in Friendship,

Derek Nice,
Clerk, Canadian Friends Service Committee

¹ Amnesty International USA. “Chelsea Manning Finally Free After Cruel Ordeal.” May 17, 2017, <https://www.amnestyusa.org/press-releases/chelsea-manning-finally-free-after-cruel-ordeal/>

² Mehler Paperny, Anna and Sharp, Alastair. Chelsea Manning says she was denied entry to Canada. Reuters, September 25, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-canada-immigration-manning/chelsea-manning-says-she-was-denied-entry-to-canada-idUSKCN1C02OW>



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