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## **Co-chair of Human Rights Commission Says Government Will Not Protect U.S. Citizens in Foreign Countries**

Washington D.C. (Feb 10, 2008) Congressman Frank Wolf (R-VA), co-chair of the newly-formed Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, said last Friday the U.S. Government will not defend U.S. Citizens who are denied the right to consular services in foreign countries, according to C. Scott Shields, a Pennsylvania civil rights attorney. Shields is representing former New Jersey resident Scott Loper, who states he was arrested on extorted charges and tortured in a Canadian jail, over a two year period, by members of a criminal police gang.

Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, signed by the United States and 163 other countries in 1967, was designed to assure fair treatment of nationals detained in a foreign country. Those governments have agreed to notify an arrested foreign national, "without delay", of the right to contact their consulate or embassy and to provide those individuals the means for that contact. Canadian officials have proven that Scott Loper was denied that right. Despite repeated requests by congressional representatives, however, the State Department has virtually done nothing.

Loper, a former New Jersey Sheriff's Officer, who had been living in Canada with his Canadian wife, says he was beaten and tortured in a small Ontario jail, by a gang of criminal police who found out he had evidence that would expose their illegal activities. "I was kept in a steel locker, laid on its' side, for months at a time", says Loper. "At least twice a week, they would pull me out and force me into a small cage where they would shower me with steam from a hot water radiator until my skin peeled. When I did get food, it was sometimes mixed with human feces."

Loper spent a total of four years incarcerated in Canada, under two consecutive convictions, for trying to contact his wife, in violation of a restraining order. The restraining order, says Loper, was extorted from his wife, who was terrorized by the same gang, after his initial, unwarranted arrest.

When, in 2004, internal investigations began to take place in the Durham Regional Police Department where Loper's alleged assailants worked, Loper was removed from jail and dropped off, chained and handcuffed, with no explanation, outside of a U.S. Border Patrol station. Now, over four years later, he still has no idea of the fate of his wife or his son, who would now be 11-years-old.

Shortly after returning to the U.S., Loper tried to get help. After Congressman Robert Andrews failed to gain an appropriate response from the State Department, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer began asking questions. According to a source within the State Department, the Canadian government first tried to say they had no record confirming Scott Loper had ever been in that country, where he had been a resident for 11 years. Confronted with evidence to the contrary, the Canadians eventually produced a document they claim proved Loper had waived his rights to consular services. The document was dated three years after his arrest, and was not signed by Loper. Both of these facts render the document invalid as any kind of waiver. Although attorney C. Scott Shields complained about these contradictions, Hoyer did not proceed any further in pressing the State Department to act, stating he had done all he can do.

When Scott Loper became a constituent of Representative Frank Wolf last year, Wolf took up the case, once more requesting a State Department investigation. Wolf apparently ran into the same dead end as Andrews and Hoyer.

Questioned by attorney C. Scott Shields on Friday as to why he wasn't pursuing the matter, Shields said Wolf, a vocal Congressional proponent of the International Declaration of Human Rights, became angry. "Don't tell me I don't want to protect my constituents", Wolf exclaimed, according to Shields. "The Government – the State Department will not pursue Vienna Convention violations against any country on behalf of Scott Loper or any American!" Shields said he responded by saying "Then, basically, Americans around the world are on their own", and Wolf responded with "That's right!"

Scott Loper's story is detailed on the Web site [ScottLoperStory.com](http://www.ScottLoperStory.com).

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Further information on this story as well as documentation of any information stated here can be obtained by visiting the web site at <http://www.ScottLoperStory.com>, or contacting Buddy Logan (see top) or attorney C. Scott Shields at 610-892-777 or [SShields@aol.com](mailto:SShields@aol.com)