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UK politicians rally behind hacker

Protests about Gary McKinnon's extradition

by Katie Scott published on 4 November 2008

The British hacker who is facing extradition to the US over allegations that he hacked American military computers has finally got a glimmer of hope.

Gary McKinnon has lost appeals in both the British and EU courts over what he fears could be a lifetime sentence in the United States.

But now some high profile British politicians have come forward to urge the government to allow the hacker to serve his time in the UK.

David Burrowes, shadow justice minister and MP for McKinnon's home constituency of Enfield Southgate in north London, has filed a petition in an early day motion urging home secretary Jacqui Smith not to extradite the hacker.

This latest measure came after Burrowes failed to get a response to a personal appeal made to Smith 2 weeks earlier.

The motion has been backed by Chris Huhne, the Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman, Chris Mullin, former foreign office minister, and Conservative MP John Bercow, as well as former home secretary, David Blunkett.

McKinnon is wanted for allegedly hacking into more than 73,000 computers belonging to the US Army, Navy and Department of Defense.

He had appealed against extradition citing his fears that the Americans were set to "make him fry" and later pointing to his Asperger's Syndrome.

Throughout - McKinnon has claimed he was simply looking for information on UFOs.

