

For some criminals, U.S. no longer a haven;

A new law makes it easier to uncover and deport those guilty of rights abuses in other nations.

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Body

Legislation signed yesterday by President Bush gives the Justice Department expanded powers to track down and deport immigrants who engaged in war crimes and human-rights abuses in their home countries.

The Anti-Atrocity Alien Deportation Act, introduced in Congress five years ago, was part of the intelligence overhaul bill that Bush signed into law.

Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D., Vt.), who along with Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin G. Hatch (R., Utah) sponsored the bill in the Senate, said it updated the charter of Justice's Office of Special Investigations, which was set up in 1979 to prosecute and remove Nazi war criminals who sought refuge in this country. The new law will allow Justice to investigate other war criminals, as well.

"Now we can pursue the new generations of war criminals and human-rights abusers," Leahy said in a statement.

Rep. Mark Foley (R., Fla.), who sponsored the bill in the House with Rep. Gary L. Ackerman (D., N.Y.), said 800 to 1,000 war criminals and human-rights abusers sought refuge in the United States every year from such countries as Haiti, Honduras, North Korea, Rwanda and Cuba.

"The United States is currently home to many immigrants who fled torture in their home countries," Foley said in a statement.

"What many people don't know is that their torturers also come here to live," he said.

The measure expands the scope of immigrants subject to deportation and denial of entry to those who have engaged in torture, genocide and religious persecution.

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