

Damage award for dad upheld

by UPI

ANNAPOLIS, Md. -- The Maryland Court of Appeals has upheld a \$3 million damages award for a father whose two sons were kidnapped to Egypt by their mother and grandmother. It is unclear whether Michael Shannon will ever be able to collect, The Baltimore Sun reported. His ex-wife, Nermeen Khalifa Shannon, her mother, Afaf N. Khalifa, and the boys, now 7 and 11, are all in Egypt. Khalifa was deported after serving a prison term. Lawyers say the ruling could be an important precedent. "In my opinion, this is groundbreaking," Bryce Neier, a North Carolina lawyer specializing in international custody disputes, told the newspaper. "Obviously, I think this particular case from Maryland is about to cause an avalanche of other parents trying to do the same thing." In 2001, Shannon had custody of his older son and his estranged wife had custody of the younger one. The older boy was abducted when his mother took him for a visit. Shannon has spoken to his sons on the telephone: "He said, 'When are you and Pop coming to get me? I'm not in America anymore.' Then six months later, he says, 'I hope bulldozers knock your house down.' They've been fully brainwashed over the past six years."

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