



Home Office

The Rt Hon Baroness Scotland of Asthal QC
MINISTER OF STATE

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Senator Bill Frist
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

17 JUL 2006

Dear Senator Frist

Thank you very much for agreeing to see me at short notice last week. It was a great pleasure to meet you, and I was very encouraged by your support for ratification of the 2003 UK/US Extradition Treaty.

As I explained on Thursday, the three year delay in ratifying the treaty has given rise to adverse comment in the UK as well as scepticism about whether the US will ever ratify the treaty, given that it has already received much of the benefit that the treaty brings. This affects our wider relationship and it will benefit both our countries if the treaty is ratified quickly. Senate approval by October, when the Police and Justice Bill returns to the House of Commons, is of paramount importance. What is at stake is not only the continued status of the US as a "trusted partner" for extradition but also the perception in the UK of how our relationship works in practice.

As you know, the purpose of the treaty is to modernise extradition arrangements between the US and the UK, putting them on the same footing as our arrangement with other trusted partners. The treaty is not aimed at speeding up extradition from the US of people suspected of involvement in terrorism connected with Ireland. I hope I was able to satisfy you that the concerns about the treaty raised by certain Irish/American groups are entirely groundless. I enclose further information on this point.

I count on your active support for the treaty ratification. In our meeting you agreed to speak to Senator Lugar and Senator Dodd. You very encouragingly told me that if floor time is needed in the Senate, this will not be a problem.

Thank you, in advance, for agreeing to help us with an issue of such importance to both our countries.

*Very best wishes ever
Yours sincerely
Baroness Scotland*
BARONESS SCOTLAND QC