

PETITION

Irish Americans Against Extradition

To: U.S. Senate, U.S. Executive Branch

**A THREAT TO IRISH-AMERICANS:
THE NEW U.S./U.K EXTRADITION TREATY
By Jerry Boyle**

On March 31, 2003, U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft and U.K. Home Secretary David Blunkett signed a new treaty providing for extradition between the two countries of persons accused of crimes. The new treaty, which has yet to be ratified by the U.S. Senate, marks an unprecedented departure from two centuries of American extradition practice. America has always been a refuge for those fleeing tyranny overseas, and a "political offense exception" to extradition has been an essential element of every one of our extradition treaties since Thomas Jefferson refused extradition of an opponent of the French Revolution.

Although the new treaty pays lip service to the political offense exception, it removes that essential protection for those seeking refuge on our shores. Worse, it subjects U.S. citizens to extradition based solely on unproven allegations by the British government. Any American active in Irish affairs faces potential detention, and transportation to the United Kingdom, without any proof of guilt, and without judicial review. Never before in its history has the United States government subjected the liberty of its citizens to the whims of a foreign government. In summary, the new treaty:

1. Eliminates the political offense exception for any offense allegedly involving violence or weapons, including any solicitation, conspiracy or attempt to commit such crimes;
2. Transfers responsibility for determining whether the extradition request is politically - motivated from the courts to the executive branch;
3. Allows for extradition even if no U.S. federal law is violated;
4. Eliminates any statute of limitations;
5. Eliminates the need for any showing by the United Kingdom of facts sufficient to show the person requested is guilty of the crime charged -- mere unsupported allegations are sufficient;
6. Allows for 'provisional arrest' and detention for 60 days upon request by the United Kingdom;
7. Allows for seizure of assets by the United Kingdom;
8. Allows for extradition for one offense, and then subsequent prosecution in the UK for an unrelated offense (thus eliminating the time-honored 'rule of specialty'); and
9. Applies retroactively, for offenses allegedly committed even before the ratification of the treaty.

No Irish-American activist is safe if this treaty passes. While the most immediate threat is aimed at those who reject the Good Friday Agreement, this treaty is a threat to political activists across the board. In fact, the treaty appears to be an effort by the U.K. government to set the stage for the breakdown of the GFA, allowing extradition for alleged behavior occurring years ago by activists and organizations.

Attorney General Ashcroft appears to be trying to slip this treaty through the Senate without fanfare, similar to the strategy used with Joseph Doherty. No more Joe Dohertys!

We the undersigned object in the strongest terms to the wholesale sellout of our United States Constitutional rights at the behest of a foreign government, and demand that the U.S. Senate exercise its authority to reject it and block its ratification.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned

<u>SIGNATURE</u>	<u>PRINT NAME</u>	<u>STREET ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY/TOWN</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIP</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
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