

21 December 2005

Andrew Tyrie Esq MP
House of Commons
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Foreign &
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From the Foreign Secretary

Dear Andrew,

Extraordinary Rendition

Thank you for your letters of 8, 9 and 15 December on Extraordinary Rendition.

The answers to the questions attached to your letter of 15 December are very largely covered in the US Secretary of State's statement of 5 December, my Parliamentary Answer of 12 December and my answers to your recent Parliamentary Questions. I enclose copies of the statement and my Answer of 12 December for your convenience. The Answers to your Question are en route to you in the normal way.

I have no reason to believe that suspected terrorists have been renditioned through UK territory or airspace during the Bush Administration. None of the information published recently has demonstrated otherwise. As the Prime Minister said to Charles Kennedy at Prime Minister's Questions last week, we see no value and have no intention of checking every flight transiting the UK which may have some connection with the US Government.

To clarify your point about "transit applications": the Home Office answer to your PQ on 13 July referred to transit of prisoners under the



Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons, the Commonwealth Scheme for the Transfer of Convicted Offenders and bilateral prisoner transfer agreements – a different category of transfer than the rendition of detainees through the UK, of which we can find no record during the Bush Administration.

The US Administration is well aware of our understanding of the UN Convention Against Torture. State Department and Foreign & Commonwealth Office legal advisers have discussed this on a number of occasions.

I answered a number of questions in oral evidence at the Foreign Affairs Committee on 13 December about rendition and I made clear to them that I was of course ready to discuss rendition with the Intelligence and Security Committee (the appropriate body of parliamentarians required by statute to hold responsible Ministers and the Agencies themselves to account).

I am happy to have a word with you about this in the House, but given what I say above, and the absence of any credible evidence to the contrary, I am not certain what a formal meeting would achieve.

Yours ever

JACK STRAW