Jacques Semmelman Featured Guest on Dateline NBC Podcast

September 3, 2026

Commercial Litigation Partner Jacques Semmelman recently appeared on the Dateline NBC podcast, *Dateline: True Crime Weekly*, where he shared his insights on international extradition with host Lester Holt. Jacques, a former Assistant US Attorney with extensive extradition experience, offered listeners an accessible overview of how the extradition process works into and out of the United States, an issue that has surfaced in several recent high-profile criminal cases.

During the conversation, Jacques addressed what must be proven to secure extradition, the types of defenses allowed and disallowed in US and foreign extradition proceedings, and countries that will not extradite without assurances that capital punishment will not be sought. Jacques explained that "Extradition is an international criminal process where a person who's in one country can be transferred to another country, either to stand trial on criminal charges or to serve a criminal sentence." He added, "The standard in the US proceeding would be probable cause. Foreign countries have their own version of that term. But basically, it means a reasonable basis to believe that the person may have committed the crime or crimes charged, and it's not close to proof beyond a reasonable doubt."

He also discussed the Lee Gilley case, involving a defendant facing capital punishment in Texas, who fled to Italy and is fighting his extradition to the United States. He notes that Italy has a principle that it will not surrender someone if capital punishment is being sought or applied, and requires "binding assurances from the requesting government that capital punishment will not be sought. They're going to hold firm and we'll see if the United States yields or not."

Regarding the extradition process in the United States, Jacques shared, "The United States will not extradite without going through a formal treaty-based proceeding. And then ultimately, if all the courts approve the extraditability of the accused, the final decision is with the Secretary of State whether or not to extradite."

Dateline: True Crime Weekly, Episode: "Verdict watch in a mother's murder trial. A firefighter's killer wife. Plus, extraditions 101," September 3, 2026

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