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University of Pennsylvania Law School

Library Dedication Ceremony

With The Keynote Address By
U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno

Thursday, October 14, 1993

Irvine Auditorium

(Transcribed from a provided tape.)

1 PRESIDENT FEIGAN: Dean Diver, Attorney General
2 Reno, Provost Lazerson, trustees, faculty, and distinguished
3 guests, it is my pleasure to greet all of you on behalf of
4 the University of Pennsylvania, in its 254th year.

5 At its 250th anniversary, we described Penn as
6 Ben's best idea. If Dr. Franklin were here today, I am sure
7 that he would agree that we are even better than we were
8 four years ago. And this poignant and glorious event
9 declares that very clearly.

10 It may seem strange to think about non-lawyer
11 Franklin on this celebratory occasion for the law school.
12 But it was Franklin's vision of a secular university, bound
13 by neither creed nor philosophy, that ultimately put the
14 non-theological professions at the heart of this great
15 institution, where they have flourished ever since.

16 It is not only the rule of law, but the secular
17 spirit of the law that gives shape and form to our society,
18 to our academic community and to our openness to the
19 advocacy of every idea or unpopular cause.

20 It is that spirit which is embodied in the new
21 Nicole E. Tanenbaum Building that we celebrate by this
22 convocation. It is that spirit which our law school
23 represents, both within and without the University. It is
24 that spirit that the new Bittel Law Library will help to
25 foster among students across the campus.

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1 This new library is essential to the continuation
2 of Franklin's vision and commitment to practical,
3 professional training, to the educational mission of the law
4 school. The facilities and support that it will provide are
5 essential to Penn's ability to attract and to hold a
6 distinguished faculty of law and to educate the remarkable
7 students who choose our school.

8 This year at Penn, we have highlighted themes of
9 continuity and change. These themes are particularly
10 fitting as we dedicate the new library. Great libraries are
11 the essential resources of great universities. That truth
12 will remain unchanged in continuity, even as we enter a
13 period in which the very meaning of the word library is
14 changing radically.

15 Libraries today are no longer bound by the
16 confines of brick walls, card catalogs and endless shelves
17 of distinguished, and sometimes not so distinguished,
18 holdings. They have burst their physical forms to enter a
19 virtual space of electronic databases, computerized indexing
20 and 24-hour access over world-spanning networks.

21 All this will be realized in Penn Law's new
22 library facility. Yet, all this is merely the logical
23 extension of Ben Franklin's vision.

24 As a printer, he understood the unlimited power
25 and range of mere words. He knew that, unconstrained by any

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1 orthodoxy, words have the magical power to effect change at
2 an unlimited distance.

3 Similarly, this library, taking advantage of the
4 wonders of new technology, will effect change not only in
5 the students of law, but in students, faculty and
6 researchers across this campus and around the world, who
7 will access its resources without moving from their desks.

8 That is what great libraries and great
9 universities do; they effect change through the power of
10 ideas. Not the ideas of a political or religious orthodoxy,
11 not the ideas of received wisdom or unexamined assumptions,
12 but through the clash of ideas, the challenge of ideas, the
13 examination of ideas, no matter how new, how radical, how
14 repugnant, or how fashionable these ideas may be.

15 The only orthodoxy in the University, or in any
16 great university, must be that it can have no orthodoxy, not
17 of the right, not of the left, and not even of the center.

18 And that is the spirit embodied in this great new
19 library. That is the spirit of Benjamin Franklin. That is
20 the spirit of our trustees and administrators who supported
21 this project. That is the spirit of the law faculty, of the
22 students, of the staff and of the generous alumni and
23 friends who made it possible.

24 And, finally, that is the spirit of the evolving
25 campus for which Nicole E. Tanenbaum Hall is one of the

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1 keystones.

2 Our extraordinary urban park that characterizes
3 Penn takes on a whole new dimension with this presence on
4 Sampson Street. It moves us further towards the creation
5 of a northern campus that will some day rival the scenic
6 beauty and intellectual vibrancy of Locust Walk and Blanche
7 Levy Park.

8 Taken together, then, the vitality of ideas and
9 the vibrancy of presence, the Bittel Law Library and Nicole
10 E. Tanenbaum Hall are reminders not only of the power of
11 words, but also of the power of words to create new spaces
12 in which the distances between people can be bridged by
13 ideas.

14 It is in that spirit, the spirit of this vital,
15 vibrant, yet quintessentially modern, institution that I
16 greet you all on behalf of the University of Pennsylvania.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 DEAN DIVER: Thank you, President Feigan.

20 As Dean of the Law School, it is my honor and
21 pleasure to welcome you all -- faculty, staff, students, and
22 alumni of this great University and its historic law school,
23 and honored guests from the worlds of government, law,
24 business, and academia.

25 In addition to those speaking on today's program,

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1 I am pleased to welcome several honored guests with us on
2 the platform: Barbara Stevens, vice president and secretary
3 of the University; Lawrence Tanenbaum, Roberta Tanenbaum;
4 the Hon. Robert Nicks, chief justice of the Pennsylvania
5 Supreme Court and distinguished alumnus and overseer of this
6 Law School; the Hon. Delores Slovitur, chief judge of the
7 United States Court of Appeal for the Third Circuit,
8 distinguished alumna and overseer of our Law School; Jerome
9 Abthal, president of the Law Alumni Society; Elizabeth
10 Kelly, professor of law and director of the Bittel Law
11 Library; Robert Gorman, the Kenneth W. Gimmel Professor of
12 Law and associate dean of the Law School; and Scott
13 Deutscheman, president of the Law School's Council of
14 Student Representatives.

15 Well, needless to say, this is a great day for a
16 great law school. And it is a great day for the University.
17 And if I may add, it is a great day for the Philadelphia
18 Phillies.

19 (Laughter.)

20 (Applause.)

21 VOICE: This is the closest I could come to
22 wearing a Phillies outfit.

23 (Laughter.)

24 VOICE: Today, we engage in one of the oldest of
25 human ceremonies, the dedication of a new building. On such

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1 occasions, from ancient times to the present, it has been
2 customary for a people to invoke their ancestors as a way
3 of seeking blessings for the new structure and for the
4 aspirations that that new structure represents.

5 And so today, we, too, invoke our ancestors, those
6 who, by their efforts as faculty, administrators, students,
7 and graduates, brought the University of Pennsylvania Law
8 School to where it is today. People like James Wilson, the
9 founder not only of this Nation, but of legal education in
10 America; or George Scharswood, who founded the first law
11 department of this University in 1850; or Carrie Burnham
12 Kilgore, who broke the gender barrier at the Law School in
13 1881; or Aaron Mossel, who broke the color barrier in 1886;
14 or Owen Roberts, who became dean in 1948 upon his retirement
15 from the Supreme Court; or Jefferson Fordham, who, as dean
16 from 1952 to 1970, built the platform upon which we
17 figuratively stand today.

18 But most especially on this occasion we invoke the
19 memory of William Draper Lewis, who became the first
20 full-time dean of the Penn Law School in 1896 at the tender
21 age of 29. Think of it, he was barely older than most of
22 you students in the audience.

23 Now, I know that most of you think that you could
24 do the job better than the present incumbent, but William
25 Draper Lewis did it better than almost all of the

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1 incumbents. During his extraordinary 18 years, he truly
2 created the modern law school. He integrated the law school
3 into the campus of the University. He built its first
4 full-time faculty. He instilled the ethic of scholarly
5 research and the case method of instruction. He made the
6 law exclusively a graduate-level pursuit. And, most
7 significantly for our purposes today, he built the majestic
8 structure on 34th Street and Chestnut Street that we know
9 today as Lewis Hall.

10 I recently discovered, to my chagrin, that Lewis
11 Hall only cost \$450,000. And, to make matters worse, most
12 of the money was raised not by the dean by his boss, the
13 provost. Ah, those were the days.

14 (Laughter.)

15 VOICE: Today, nearly a century later, we dedicate
16 a structure that can take its place proudly with Lewis Hall;
17 that, with Lewis Hall physically, brackets a magnificent law
18 quadrangle that chronologically brackets a century of legal
19 education at Penn.

20 Each building, in its own way, exemplifies the
21 understandings and the aspirations of its age. With its
22 liberal borrowings from the William & Mary architectural
23 style, its plaques engraved with the names of great English
24 jurists, Lewis Hall bespoke the intellectual debt that
25 American law owed to English law.

1 In its rigid symmetry and vaulted elegance, it
2 symbolized the then-prevailing view of law as formal,
3 positivistic, authoritarian, and the then-prevailing view
4 of legal study as an exercise in formal logic -- indeed,
5 almost a science. So, too, Nicole Tanenbaum Hall symbolizes
6 the understandings and the aspirations of this generation.
7 Its clean, bright lines and cheerful spaces convey a sense
8 of intellectual openness and eclecticism. The vast,
9 expanded home for the Law School's historic Bittel Law
10 Library symbolizes not only the enhanced importance of
11 research, but also its increasingly interdisciplinary style,
12 its international focus and its technological
13 sophistication.

14 The new classrooms reflect the increasingly
15 interactive styles of modern legal pedagogy. The lounges,
16 group study spaces, cafeteria, and courtyard are all
17 designed to facilitate the casual interchange among students
18 and faculty so indispensable to truly reflective
19 intellectual growth. And mostly, Tanenbaum Hall emphasizes
20 the centrality of students in the educational enterprise.
21 For it is, above all, a building for students, for their
22 heads, their hearts and even their stomachs.

23 For the past four years, I have had the rare
24 privilege to see Tanenbaum Hall emerge literally before my
25 eyes, from program, to design, to skeleton, to finished

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1 structure. That transformation is the product of an
2 enormous collaborative effort by literally thousands of
3 hands. And I could not possibly give credit to all who
4 deserve it on this occasion. But I must mention a few of
5 those, whose leadership, creativity and sheer persistence
6 brought us to this moment:

7 My predecessor, Dean Robert Mondheim, who dared
8 to embark on a project so ambitious; Professor Elizabeth
9 Kelly, who saw the project through seven long years;
10 Assistant Dean Gary Clinton, who never let us forget that
11 this is a building for students; architect Lou Davis and his
12 talented team of architects, whose imagination married form
13 and function so elegantly; the talented people at L.F.
14 Driscoll, our contractor, who executed those plans; the
15 talented people in the University's Facilities Planning
16 Department, who oversaw the execution of those plans.

17 And, finally, of course, I must express our
18 gratitude to all of the alumni and friends of the Law
19 School, whose generous support and patient encouragement
20 made this project possible.

21 And now, it is my pleasure to present,
22 representing the alumni of the Law School, the chairman of
23 its board of overseers, a member of the class of 1960, the
24 president and CEO-designate of the Bristol-Myer Squibb
25 Company, Charles Heimboldt.

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1 (Applause.)

2 MR. HEIMBOLDT: Thank you.

3 Thank you, Colin.

4 Madam Attorney General, trustees of the
5 University, President Feigan, Provost Lazerson, Reverend
6 Johnson, Dean Diver, distinguished guests, faculty,
7 students, and friends, good afternoon.

8 The new law library, Tanenbaum Hall, is the first
9 major addition to the University of Pennsylvania Law School
10 in over 30 years. It is the result of the tireless efforts
11 of several hundred active volunteers, the dedication of the
12 members of our board of overseers and the generous support
13 of our Law School alumni, some of whom are here today in
14 person, all of whom are here today in spirit.

15 All deserve credit and a heartfelt acknowledgement
16 for a bold undertaking, wonderfully accomplished.

17 A special acknowledgement also must go to the
18 students of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, both
19 today's and tomorrow's, for whom this library has been built
20 and who will put this library to its best use.

21 The prerequisite for making this important
22 addition to our school required leadership, a group of
23 dedicated individuals willing to take on the burdens and
24 pleasures of shepherding this project. That group, I am
25 pleased to say, included the Law School's board of

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1 overseers. I am equally proud to recognize that our board
2 of overseers has continued in this project an outstanding
3 tradition of leadership for many years.

4 It was an honor to have been chosen to lead this
5 board last April, to follow the service of one of America's
6 great jurists, Arlen Adams. His efforts pointed the way.

7 The board of overseers was delighted to support
8 the leadership of our distinguished Dean, Colin Diver, and
9 the indefatigable Professor Elizabeth Kelly, in helping make
10 their vision of the new law library become a reality.

11 Leadership, I am proud to say, abounds here at
12 Penn. Our school already has a wonderful tradition of
13 service to our community. That tradition in the Law School
14 is exemplified perhaps most notably in two programs. The
15 first is our school's public service program, which requires
16 each student to engage in a public service activity as a
17 part of their regular course of law. The second, our Center
18 for Professionalism, has pioneered in the teaching of legal
19 ethics.

20 Law schools around the country have followed our
21 lead in these programs.

22 Without instilling in our students the need to
23 serve, and to serve honorably, the many thousands of volumes
24 in the new law library would serve little purpose. But with
25 such programs and the support of alumni and others in

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1 developing new ones, the study and practice of law can move
2 forward, with both dignity and relevance.

3 In a few moments, Dean Diver will lead us in
4 honoring Justice William Brennan, a man who spent his entire
5 career in service to society. His opinions have helped
6 shape our attitudes on many of the most basic constitutional
7 questions. And while he could not be here today, I think
8 Justice Brennan would have been pleased by what we here at
9 Penn Law have done in the area of ethics education and
10 public service.

11 Throughout his career, Justice Brennan has stood
12 for doing what he believed was right. And he has been a
13 champion of what the Constitution intended to be our rights.

14 His final case on the New Jersey Supreme Court
15 before being named to the United States Supreme Court may
16 make the point. In it, Justice Brennan wrote a decision
17 that dealt with the ethics of lawyers. He said, and I
18 quote, "There is no profession, save perhaps the ministry,
19 in which the highest morality is more necessary than that
20 of the law. There is, in fact, no vocation in life where
21 moral character counts for so much or where it is subjected
22 to a more crucial test by citizen and public than is that
23 of the members of the bar."

24 In a somewhat later case he wrote, "The law is not
25 an end to itself, nor does it provide ends. It is

1 preeminently a means to serve what we think is right."

2 Our Law School and the new law library what is
3 right, as well as what is the law. All society benefits
4 when lawyers understand the two.

5 We also believe that this new law library will
6 provide great benefits to our students and, thereby, in some
7 measure, to the legal system they serve. We have come here
8 to salute all those who have helped make this project
9 possible.

10 To all of you, for a job well done, for your
11 leadership, for your dedication, and for doing something
12 really important for our Law School and University, on
13 behalf of the entire board of overseers, I thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 DEAN DIVER: At this point in the program, it was
16 to have been my singular honor to present the James Wilson
17 Award for service to the profession to Justice William
18 Brennan. Just a few days ago, Justice Brennan informed me
19 that his physicians had advised that the trip to
20 Philadelphia would be unadvisable and it would impose too
21 great a strain on his fragile health. I know that you share
22 my disappointment that we cannot honor Justice Brennan in
23 person, and that you join me in wishing him a speedy
24 restoration to health.

25 Despite Justice Brennan's absence, I would like

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1 to read the citation accompanying the award, which will be
2 presented to him in person at the next available
3 opportunity.

4 For nearly 34 years, as an Associate Justice of
5 the United States Supreme Court, you stood as an eloquent
6 voice for the rights and liberties that lie at the core of
7 our Nation's heritage. In this century, only two justices
8 served for longer terms on the court, and few in its entire
9 history have left so great a mark on its jurisprudence.

10 Throughout your long and distinguished career as
11 advocate and jurist, you strove to assure that our society
12 is free to all people, even the unpopular, that our
13 political system is open to all people, even the
14 dispossessed, and that our processes of justice are fair for
15 all people, even the guilty.

16 Although your views did not always command a
17 majority of the Court, they always commanded admiration and
18 respect. Your judicial opinions on the rights of racial
19 minorities, women, the poor, aliens, and the criminally
20 accused stand as models for the present age and beacons for
21 future generations.

22 Whether writing for the majority of the justices
23 or writing in lonely dissent, you have molded the
24 constitutional and moral discourse of the Nation, and
25 thereby helped to shape our identity as a free society. In

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1 so doing, you have honored the rule of law by maintaining
2 the highest standards of reasoned articulation, clarity of
3 expression and coherence of argument.

4 A loyal Pennsylvania alumnus and 1957 recipient
5 of its honorary degree, doctor of laws, you personify the
6 ideals of ordered liberty, articulated by this University's
7 first professor of law, James Wilson, a founding member of
8 the Court to which you gave such noble service.

9 So, as we dedicate Nicole E. Tanenbaum Hall 203
10 years after the inauguration of legal education at Penn, the
11 Law School's Alumni Society is honored to present to you the
12 James Wilson Award for service to the profession of law.

13 (Applause.)

14 DEAN DIVER: Those words were written in love and
15 respect, and they will be communicated to the Justice with
16 love and respect.

17 It is now my great pleasure to present Provost
18 Marvin Lazerson and President Clare Feigan, to present the
19 University Medal for Distinguished Achievement.

20 PRESIDENT FEIGAN: Today, we mark yet another
21 first in the long history of this Law School and our
22 University. The trustees have authorized the creation of
23 a new honor, the University of Pennsylvania Medal for
24 Distinguished Achievement, and I am honored to be presenting
25 it for the first time.

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1 According to the trustee resolution, the medal is
2 to be awarded to those individual whose performance is in
3 keeping with the highest goals of the University and who
4 have contributed to the world through innovative acts of
5 scholarship, scientific discovery, artistic creativity, or
6 societal leadership. That is a description which aptly fits
7 a woman who has indeed acted forcefully and courageously
8 when others shrank from the urgent tasks of societal
9 leadership.

10 On behalf of the trustees of the University of
11 Pennsylvania, it is my privilege to ask Provost Marvin
12 Lazerson to read the medal citation, and to call forward the
13 first recipient of the University's Medal for Distinguished
14 Achievement, the Attorney General of the United States,
15 Janet Reno.

16 (Applause.)

17 PROVOST LAZERSON: Believing that justice is
18 possible only as it resides in the heart and souls of
19 citizens, you answered a call to the bar and followed a
20 family tradition for public service in pursuit of the magic
21 of serving people in America.

22 Now, at the pinnacle of your chosen profession,
23 as the Nation's chief law enforcement officer, your
24 challenge to move our legal system closer to the ideals that
25 animated its architects gathered in this city two centuries

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1 ago. In 15 years, as State attorney for Dade County,
2 Florida, you won enough big cases to convince voters four
3 times of your effectiveness in combatting the demoralizing
4 blight of urban crime.

5 As Attorney General of the United States, you have
6 spoken out fearlessly, accepted responsibility without
7 flinching, and basked in unprecedented popularity, while
8 never deviating from your principles or your commitment to
9 respect the rights of defendants and carry out the law of
10 the land.

11 A front-line crime fighter, you have also crusaded
12 for juvenile justice reform, and promoted the cause of civil
13 rights and the environment. Unusually aware of the total
14 picture of cause and effect, and the responsibilities of the
15 system to citizens beyond the courtroom, you propound the
16 virtues of interagency partnerships, as you have worked to
17 establish ties to all segments of the community.

18 Recommending the virtues of small, old words that
19 everyone understands in place of cliches and alphabet
20 jargon, you have been described by any number of adjectives,
21 which you have, on occasion, been happy to supply to the
22 press yourself. Suggesting that outspoken, soft spoken,
23 accessible, honest, fair, the soul of integrity, are the
24 appellations that most become you as they most represent the
25 small, old values we should treasure in our leaders.

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1 Your admirers at this ancient law school rejoice
2 in your presence here today and commend the trustees for
3 offering you a token of their true respect, the University
4 of Pennsylvania Medal for distinguished achievement.

5 (Applause.)

6 PRESIDENT FEIGAN: By the authority vested in me
7 by the trustees, I confer upon you, Janet Reno, the
8 University of Pennsylvania Medal for distinguished
9 achievement.

10 (Pause.)

11 (Applause.)

12 DEAN DIVER: It is now my very great pleasure to
13 introduce Miles Tanenbaum. A Wharton graduate, class of
14 1954, a Law School graduate, class of 1957, distinguished
15 lawyer and business leader, Miles Tanenbaum literally
16 embodies the ideal of service to one's community that we
17 seek to instill in our students.

18 At the University, Miles is a member of the board
19 of trustees, and serves on seven of its most important
20 committees. He is also a member of the Law School's board
21 of overseers, and he has been the chairman of the law
22 school's superbly successful campaign.

23 Through his contributions of time, advice,
24 inspiration, financial support, and friendship, Miles
25 Tanenbaum has already left a legacy to this University that

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1 few could ever hope to equal.

2 Please join me in welcoming Miles Tanenbaum.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. TANENBAUM: Thank you, Colin.

5 It was nearly 100 years ago that our Law School
6 moved into a truly majestic structure named Lewis Hall. And
7 it was in Lewis Hall that all alumni received their
8 education, developing a respect for the rule of law and the
9 protection of our civil liberties.

10 For too many years, however, Lewis Hall was taxed
11 beyond its capacity. Clearly, the library and related study
12 facilities were outdated, and additional classrooms were
13 sorely needed. Now, with state-of-the-art layout, design
14 and electronic wiring, the library and the truly wonderful
15 study facilities and added classrooms form the centerpiece
16 of our new Law School building.

17 Our rare book and international and foreign book
18 collections will hereafter have appropriate settings, as
19 will our law reviews. The reserve reading room is a true
20 gem, as is the rare book room. And the student lounge and
21 cafeteria will be welcome amenities, along with other
22 services.

23 Lewis Hall, of course, will have to be refitted
24 to provide needed faculty offices and serviceable space to
25 house the school's clinical and other programs. All of us

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1 associated with planning and fundraising for the new
2 building are extremely proud of the outcome. And I know
3 each of you will share in that pride.

4 We are beholding for the generosity of our many,
5 many alumni and friends who made this building possible, and
6 for the dedication of Dean Robert Mondheim, who paved the
7 way, and Dean Colin Diver, who saw the project to its
8 completion. And we also owe very much to Professor
9 Elizabeth Kelly, who made certain that the building would
10 achieve all of our aspirations, and she did so with
11 incredible care and devotion.

12 In this instance, it is devotion, not the devil
13 that was in the details.

14 It was 39 years and six weeks ago that I entered
15 Lewis Hall, on the day following my discharge from the Air
16 Force. Actually, I was in the class of '52 at Wharton.

17 In truth, I had no idea what was in store.
18 Happily, it turned out to be the very best future a good
19 education could provide. And for that I owe much to the
20 dedicated lawyers who, as our faculty, tormented us into
21 learning to reason for ourselves and, thereby, they nurtured
22 within us an abiding love for this law school.

23 To them, each of us, all alumni, owe such much.

24 I believe in this audience there are three members
25 of the faculty who served during the years in which the

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1 class of '57 attended the law school. Namely, Noah Leach,
2 Leo Levin and John Honald; and also a member of the class
3 which immediately preceded mine, who subsequently became a
4 member of the faculty, Curtis Rice, who, as editor-in-chief,
5 would not permit me to persist in the mistake of refusing
6 appointment to the Law Review. We owe so much to each of
7 you.

8 On an even more personal note, I am certain you
9 understand how it is that for Roberta, for our entire family
10 and for me, this is a very special occasion. Nicole was a
11 gifted child, who left an indelible mark on her family and
12 her friends. She had an endearing gift, a quality which was
13 evident in her thoughtfulness and caring, in her wit and
14 good nature, and in her sweet smile.

15 Nicole was extremely bright. And even at age 16,
16 she possessed a special cuteness. She was a delight. And
17 she seemed destined to establish a significant place for
18 herself. Nicole wanted very much to attend this University.
19 And we are grateful that her name will be inscribed here
20 forever.

21 Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 DEAN DIVER: Thank you, Miles.

24 And now, to introduce our keynote speaker, it is
25 my great pleasure and my great honor to introduce my

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1 colleague, a great teacher, a distinguished lawyer, a
2 courageous advocate for racial reconciliation, and a scholar
3 whose writings really do deserve to be read, Professor
4 Lonnie Guanier.

5 (Applause.)

6 PROFESSOR GUANIER: I have many memories of that
7 Friday in June, the day after my nomination was withdrawn.
8 One of the most enduring and endearing occurred in the early
9 afternoon in the Attorney General's inner office. Janet
10 Reno, seated across from Bobby Kennedy's portrait
11 entertained my son Nicholas, who sat on the floor. They
12 played geography games. They hit it off right away, because
13 he happened to know that the capital of Florida was
14 Tallahassee.

15 When Nicholas returned to kindergarten that
16 Monday, he proudly told his class that he had been to
17 Washington, D.C., where he had met the Federal Government.

18 (Laughter.)

19 PROFESSOR GUANIER: Unlike my six-year-old son,
20 most of you know Janet Reno as the Attorney General. Most
21 of you came to know and respect her because of her stand-up
22 style as the first woman Attorney General. You may not know
23 that she has also practiced law.

24 After graduating from Harvard Law School in 1963,
25 she started her career in private practice, ultimately

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1 spending several years as a partner in a Miami-based law
2 firm. In 1978, the Governor appointed State attorney in
3 Miami, and she was subsequently elected to that office five
4 times.

5 Perhaps you first heard from her directly during
6 her public testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee.
7 I certainly watched and listened to that testimony
8 carefully. In fact, I saw more of those proceedings than
9 I had anticipated, when Bernie Nusbaum, the White House
10 counsel, interviewed me for a different position in the
11 Clinton administration.

12 Throughout our interview, Bernie Nusbaum had the
13 television in his office turned on to those hearings. And
14 when the Judiciary Committee voted unanimously to confirm
15 Janet Reno, Mr. Nusbaum jumped up to report the results to
16 the President, leaving me, I guess, to interview myself.

17 But I forgave, at least at the time, because, next
18 to the President, Bernie Nusbaum claimed he was the happiest
19 person in America. Of course, I had to remind him, well,
20 maybe Janet Reno might also be quite happy at the turn of
21 events. So he immediately demoted himself to the
22 third-happiest person in America.

23 I first met Janet Reno the day she was sworn in.
24 From the security guards who checked my credentials at the
25 door, to the career attorneys with whom I shared an

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1 elevator, the entire building was bursting with pride, as
2 was I.

3 Janet Reno sat down opposite that same portrait
4 of Bobby Kennedy, the one in which he is walking alone along
5 the beach. and pointing to that portrait, she told me she
6 was feeling both the best and the worst of times. I asked
7 what she meant, and she told me she felt awestruck and
8 somewhat overwhelmed. I reminded her that I had listened
9 to her testify about the house her mother built.

10 In her testimony, Attorney General Reno talked
11 about how her mother, and I quote, dug the foundation with
12 her own hands with a pick and shovel. She laid the blocks.
13 She put in the wiring. She put in the plumbing. And for
14 Janet Reno, that house became a symbol, a symbol that you
15 can do anything you really want to if it is the right thing
16 to do and you put your mind to it.

17 That house and its builder taught Attorney General
18 Janet Reno another lesson. As she testified, Hurricane
19 Andrew hit south Dade on the early morning of August the
20 24th. About 3:00 in the morning, as the winds began to
21 howl, her mother was awakened. Old and frail and dying, she
22 went and sat in her chair, folded her hands in her lap, and
23 although the trees were crashing around the house, as the
24 winds howled, she sat there totally unafraid, for she knew
25 she had built that house. She had not cut any corners. She

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1 had not compromised her standards. She had built it the
2 right way.

3 And I said to the Attorney General as we were
4 sitting there in her office on the first day after she had
5 been sworn in, if you are your mother's daughter, you, too,
6 shall face the storms calmly, knowing you had not cut any
7 corners. And so she has.

8 I spent many hours in that office while my
9 nomination was pending. At some points, when the media
10 first struck, I was overwhelmed and feeling sorry for
11 myself. And at that time, Janet Reno did not have much to
12 say. But when I started to fight back, when I vowed to
13 press forward, we connected.

14 She told me to remember two words: strength and
15 courage. And her advice is advice that I quote often. If
16 you stand on principle, she told me, you cannot lose.
17 Because even if you lose, you still have your principles.

18 As Janet Reno told a meeting of the National Press
19 Club in June of 1993, as the first woman Attorney General,
20 all she is trying to do is be herself. In that same speech,
21 she revealed that her mother accused her of mumbling, her
22 fifth grade teacher said she was bossy, her family thinks
23 she is opinionated. But, throughout it all, she has been
24 herself. And that is a self that does not do spin.

25 At the National Press Club, in the same speech,

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1 she described the scene late in the afternoon of April 19th,
2 in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy at Waco, Texas,
3 when she walked into a press conference in which television
4 cameramen, commentators and reporters looked at her, and I
5 quote, as if they were a bunch of hungry wolves, their
6 questions came fast and furious, their faces were angry, and
7 they demanded to know, what spin do you think people are
8 going to put on this? Is your job on the line?

9 And the Attorney General calmly replied, I don't
10 do spin.

11 Instead, she uses small, old words that everyone
12 understands, because, and I quote, that's what the American
13 people want more than anything else in the world. Not
14 shaded and false promises, but candid, direct answers
15 regarding what you can and cannot do.

16 Because she stands on principle, Janet Reno will
17 never lose. Because justice resides in her heart and soul,
18 Janet Reno is America's first citizen. Because she speaks
19 with those old, small words, like yes and no, many Americans
20 now know Janet Reno and, like my son, think she represents
21 the best that there is in the Federal Government.

22 It is with enormous pride that I introduce the
23 Attorney General, or as my son Nicholas would say, I am
24 proud to present the Federal Government.

25 (Applause.)

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1 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: You have done me a signal
2 honor, and I am going to try my best to live up to it.

3 And I have got a new memory, and that is of Nicole
4 Tanenbaum, a new motivation.

5 It was 30 years ago this June that I graduated
6 from law school. In these 30 years, the law has provided
7 me with the greatest adventure that one can have. But in
8 that June day, as I left Cambridge, I made some promises to
9 myself. The first was that I would try never to do anything
10 that I did not enjoy doing. And the law has made that
11 possible. At each point, it seems that I have reached the
12 end of the road. The law provides a new opportunity, a new
13 challenge, that is better than the last.

14 The second promise I made to myself was that I
15 would never let the law ground me, that I would always
16 remember there were rivers to explore and mountains to
17 climb, and books that had nothing to do with the law to
18 read, and, most of all, a family to cherish and to spend
19 time with, so that the law did not consume me.

20 This great Law School stands for three other
21 important ideas and promises that I thought about then, and
22 that I have tried to weave into my adventure and the law.
23 The first has been alluded to: to try to do the right
24 thing. One of the points that I thought of in law school,
25 and I think my experience of these 30 years, in most

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1 instance, with some exceptions, has proven me right, if your
2 cause is right and if you look hard enough and think hard
3 enough and research hard enough, the law will support what
4 is right. But you have to fight and never forget that you
5 have to fight for what is right.

6 I will never forget, in law school, reading Cruse
7 v. the United States, an old Fifth Circuit opinion, of a
8 horrible travesty that was committed during my lifetime.
9 A marshall convicted of civil rights violations for forcing
10 somebody off a bridge over the Swanee River. And I thought,
11 that is in my lifetime. That is not some other history.
12 And in these 30 years, I have seen injustice.

13 And as Cruse v. the United States reminded me
14 then, and as my experience has reminded me since, lawyers
15 all over this country and all over this world have a sacred
16 duty and a great challenge to remember that government can
17 be authoritarian, government can be cruel, and that it is
18 imperative that we stand up for justice, even in unpopular
19 causes.

20 (Applause.)

21 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: And that was brought home
22 so vividly to me about three years ago, as the Governor of
23 Florida asked me to assume appointment as a special
24 prosecutor in another jurisdiction to review the case of a
25 man by the name of James Joseph Richardson, who had been

1 prosecuted, convicted and sentenced to death for the
2 poisoning death of his seven children. The death penalty
3 had been set aside, but he had been in prison for 21 years
4 for a crime he claimed he did not commit, and many people
5 believed him.

6 We reviewed the evidence, investigated the case,
7 and I will never forget for as long as I live standing in
8 that courtroom, that old southern courtroom, and telling the
9 court that the evidence had been insufficient to charge him
10 originally; it was clearly insufficient now; that although
11 the passage of time and the death and incapacity of
12 witnesses had blurred what happened, he was probably
13 innocent and he should go free.

14 For as long as I live, I will remember as that man
15 walked out of the courthouse a free man for the first time
16 in 21 years. And I rededicated myself, and I ask all the
17 lawyers here to dedicate themselves, to making sure that we
18 do everything possible to prevent and then, if necessary,
19 to correct injustice.

20 The second lesson that this law school shares with
21 me, amongst others, is extraordinarily important: the
22 wonder, the splendor, the fun, the great challenge of public
23 service. I have tried practicing law in a small firm and
24 in a large firm, but there is nothing, just nothing, so half
25 worth doing as trying to use the law in public service for

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1 what is right. And I commend this law school with all my
2 heart and soul for valuing public service, of putting a
3 premium on it, and of showing the lawyers of tomorrow that
4 public service now can be so fulfilling.

5 The fourth point, and the third point that I share
6 with this law school, is lawyers tend to stay too much to
7 themselves. They talk to themselves. They party with
8 themselves. They argue with themselves. And they do not
9 talk to that many other people.

10 (Laughter.)

11 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: And it has been doctors
12 and social workers and police officers and poets that have
13 often taught me a new dimension of the law. And I commend
14 this great Law School for the interdisciplinary efforts that
15 you have undertaken to teach students that the problems of
16 this world will not be solved by lawyers alone, but lawyers
17 reaching out and working with others to grapple with the
18 problems that plague us all.

19 (Applause.)

20 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: And we have much to
21 grapple with, because lawyers, in addition to liking to talk
22 with themselves, like to solve problems in courtrooms. They
23 like to wait till the crisis occurs and then go do battle,
24 forgetting that there are other issues that are never
25 addressed in the courtroom, and that are in fact exacerbated

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1 and remain unresolved.

2 And all of us, as lawyers, no matter what we do,
3 have a special responsibility to look beyond the narrow
4 forum that we litigate, or the narrow transaction that we
5 deal in, to look at the ultimate issues of the law that face
6 this Nation.

7 The prosecutor, for too long, has thought that she
8 or he has won their battle and secured a victory when they
9 get a conviction, ignoring the fact that if they see a
10 prisoner sentenced to 10 years, there are totally inadequate
11 prisons to house that person for the length of time the
12 court is sentencing them. Everyone knows it, but everybody
13 announces a 10-year sentence and lets it go at that.

14 That lawyer, that prosecutor, thinks they have won
15 a victory when they send somebody to prison for a year,
16 knowing that person has a substance abuse problem, knowing
17 there is no substance abuse treatment program in that
18 prison, knowing that person is coming out of that prison in
19 20 to 30 percent of the sentence without drug treatment,
20 back to a community where the crime is going to be committed
21 again the next day.

22 Prosecutors have a duty to speak out and talk to
23 this Nation in common sense terms about what needs to be
24 done to make a criminal justice system fairer and more
25 effective.

1 (Applause.)

2 (End of side A of tape.)

3 (Begin side B of tape.)

4 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: -- won victory, that they
5 have been successful when they get their client off on a
6 motion to suppress or a motion to dismiss, ignoring the fact
7 that that client is in throes of a crack addiction that is
8 a greater prison than all the bars could ever create in a
9 real prison, and knows that that client walks out of that
10 courtroom imprisoned in that addition without treatment,
11 without resource to anyplace that can provide the treatment.

12 That defense lawyer thinks too often, incorrectly,
13 that he has won the victory when he gets the spouse who
14 batters off on some technicality or some evidentiary issue,
15 knowing that domestic violence has torn that family asunder,
16 and that he might see that person back, either as a
17 defendant or a victim, because we did not intervene in the
18 cycle.

19 Lawyers in the criminal justice system have a duty
20 to speak out.

21 But they have a duty to speak out particularly
22 today, because any lawyer or any judge who has served any
23 time in the juvenile justice or criminal justice system
24 knows that the violence that plagues America, the teen
25 pregnancy, the youth gangs, the dropouts, the homelessness,

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1 which children are constituting an ever-increasing number
2 in, are all symptoms of a deeper problem in society. And
3 that is that American has forgotten too often, neglected too
4 often its children in the last 30 years, as lawyers have
5 battled in courtrooms and have ignored the deep issues of
6 our society.

7 But then there will be other lawyers who say, but
8 that is not my problem, because I am not a prosecutor or a
9 defense attorney. There will be lawyers that battle for
10 civil rights. And we have a commitment to make sure that
11 we end any discrimination in education, in housing and in
12 employment, that we end bigotry in this country, that we
13 eliminate hate. But what if enforce all the civil rights
14 laws as vigorously as possible?

15 What difference does equal opportunity to
16 employment mean to a 15-year-old who is shot down on the
17 streets in violence?

18 What difference does equal education mean to an
19 18-year-old who never got a grounding in education, never
20 learned what it really takes, because there was no structure
21 or order around his life as he grew up?

22 We have a commitment, all of us, whether we be
23 lawyers or doctors or business men, to look beyond and start
24 investing in America.

25 And the businessman says, but that is not my

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1 responsibility. It is everybody's responsibility, because
2 unless we start investing in children and figuring out how
3 we protect children and ensure justice for all children and
4 families in America, that businessman is not going to have
5 the work force with the skills that can fill the jobs that
6 can maintain his company and this Nation as first-rate
7 employers and a first-rate nation.

8 The elderly person will say, Janet, I have done
9 my duty by children. I have sent my son and grandson and
10 great grandson to college. I have done it all. But his
11 pension will not be worth the paper it is written on unless
12 we have a work force that can maintain this economy.

13 And the prosecutor will never be able to build
14 enough prisons 18 years from now unless we focus on children
15 today.

16 And the doctor will watch health care institutions
17 fall around us because we wait till the crisis occurs,
18 rather than investing in preventative medical care for our
19 children.

20 But then the civil lawyer will say, but that is
21 not my problem, Janet. You civil rights people and you
22 criminal justice people can go do your thing, I am just
23 going to litigate. But think about it for a moment. We
24 have watched the civil justice system plagued by delay and
25 cost, so that everybody tries to figure out how to avoid it.

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1 And everybody, too often, gets caught up -- anybody that can
2 afford access to the system -- gets caught up in the delay
3 and the cost. And after they are through, very few people
4 think it was worthwhile.

5 Yes, we have got to address the issue of cost and
6 delay, and solve this problem. But even if we perfect the
7 finest system in the world, the truth is that there is a
8 deeper, greater problem. The American Bar Association
9 estimates that 80 percent of the poor and the working poor
10 in America do not have access to courts, nor to legal
11 services. And we see an ever-increasing number of Americans
12 falling into the ranks of the poor and the working poor, an
13 ever-increasing number of younger Americans.

14 The average salary of American families under 25
15 has fallen by about \$3,000 in the last 15 or 20 years,
16 because the younger families of America are too often
17 falling into that category. And what does it mean to us as
18 lawyers? It means that for a significant portion of our
19 society, who do not have access to legal services, that the
20 law is worth, too often, little more than the paper it is
21 written on.

22 And unless we, as lawyers, join together, working
23 with other disciplines, to address this problem, you are
24 going to have a large segment of the American population
25 feeling unrepresented, disenfranchised, and angry at

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1 government.

2 We have a special responsibility, made all the
3 more special by the fact that in that category of
4 unrepresented people, too often are the children of America.
5 The children of America who see no hope, who have been
6 raised without conscience, without order, without love,
7 without limits, children who grow into a world that is a
8 jungle.

9 And, too often, lawyers have said that is not my
10 problem. It is everybody's problem in America. And lawyers
11 must join forces with doctors, with social workers, with
12 teachers, with police officers, with everybody who really
13 wants to be involved to make a difference.

14 Most of all, to do that, lawyers must trust
15 people. They must devise laws that serve the people, rather
16 than limit them.

17 I think we spend more money on determining whether
18 somebody eligible for a service than we do in providing them
19 a service, because we are constantly afraid they are going
20 to cheat us.

21 (Applause.)

22 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: We have got to create laws
23 and procedures and processes that enable people to become
24 self-sufficient.

25 I spoke to a woman today in north Philadelphia.

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1 She gets a job making the minimum wage and she loses
2 benefits and is worse off than if she had not gone to work
3 in the first place. We have got to unlock the law so that
4 it serves people in ways that they can understand.

5 The middle-class person, the middle-class elderly
6 person, trying to work through a knotty Social Security
7 problem, ends up in despair. We should not have to have
8 lawyers represent us before government in matters such as
9 Social Security or welfare.

10 We ought to be able to design laws that are not
11 phrased in alphabet terms and Roman numerals and 4(d)'s and
12 5(a)'s. We should be able to devise laws that people can
13 easily understand, that serve the people, and that
14 enfranchise and cause all people to be represented in their
15 government and in the services that government provides.

16 We ought to be able to design community systems,
17 through community advocates that provide legal services in
18 reasonable terms to all American people.

19 Most lawyers that I know that went to Harvard,
20 Penn, Yale, or any law school do not know anything about
21 Social Security and welfare systems and landlord-tenant
22 actions. What if we had a system where somebody could get
23 a degree in community advocacy after four years, carefully
24 trained in the issues that face families at risk, families
25 who want to be somebody, who want to make a difference, but

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1 keep getting knocked down by the law?

2 Lawyers are going to have to devise ways that
3 children who have no family, or have a family who has fallen
4 away from them, can be represented, so that they have a
5 chance to grow into strong, constructive human beings.

6 It is a great challenge because for most of
7 history, the family has represented that child in those
8 early years. Now, there is too often not a family or a
9 family that does not know how.

10 We have got to make sure that our children have
11 health care, that they have educare, that they have good
12 schooling, that they have afternoon and evening programs.
13 We must become the advocate for all the children of America.

14 I looked at many of you as I walked in and
15 thought, I bet you had a 13-year-old son that got into a
16 little bit of trouble. And you got the rabbi or the priest,
17 and you got another friend who was a lawyer, and you all
18 went down to see the judge and you got him out and he went
19 home. And he is probably in this audience as a doctor or
20 a lawyer because people cared and people rallied round.

21 There are wonderful, great 13-year-olds who have
22 no advocates, nobody to stand up for them, nobody to go into
23 court to say, give this youngster a second chance; he needs
24 it. And I will take him home and cherish him and nurture
25 him and give him guidance and let him become a doctor or a

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1 lawyer.

2 As lawyers, we have a special duty to reach out
3 and think of what we could do if everyone made sure that
4 they were a mentor or a tutor of a child at risk. If
5 instead of litigating the great issues in the courtroom,
6 they prevented people from having to go to the courtroom by
7 representing blocks in pro bono legal services, by caring
8 about communities, and recognizing that if people are giving
9 half a fighting chance up front they can become
10 self-sufficient. If people are given half a chance to be
11 self-sufficient, unentangled by the laws that we have
12 created to try to serve them, then we can make a difference.

13 We have got so much, as lawyers, to do. We have
14 been so blessed with the opportunities that we have been
15 given in great law schools like this. But it is time, it
16 is time to recognize that we face a crisis in the law. The
17 crisis being that too many people in America do not
18 understand or have no sense of the wonder and the splendor
19 of the law. All of us, as lawyers, have a special duty to
20 go forth and do what we can to make sure there is justice
21 for all Americans.

22 (Applause.)

23 DEAN DIVER: And so we come to the conclusion of
24 this splendid convocation to dedicate an equally splendid
25 building. And I must say that, in their own ways, by their

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1 presence here, by their words and by their lives, Lonnie
2 Guanier, Janet Reno and Miles Tanenbaum teach us the oldest
3 lesson, which is, ultimately, that justice comes not from
4 the head, but from the heart.

5 Thank you all for making this an extraordinarily
6 special occasion.

7 Immediately following the recessional, we will
8 assemble at the entrance to Tanenbaum Hall on Sampson Street
9 for a brief ribbon-cutting ceremony, and then the open
10 house, so that all of you can see for yourself what the
11 shouting has been about.

12 I ask you now to please rise for the benediction,
13 and remain in place for the recessional.

14 REVEREND JOHNSON: Let us go forth from this place
15 in peace, rejoicing in the splendor of Nicole Tanenbaum
16 Library.

17 Amen.

18 (End of recording.)

19 (End of transcript.)

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