



Department of Justice

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REMARKS BY

DICK THORNBURGH
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

BEFORE THE

UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS' CONFERENCE

OMNI HOTEL
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

NOTE: Because Mr. Thornburgh often speaks from notes, the speech as delivered may vary from the text. However, he stands behind this speech as printed.

THANK YOU FOR THAT WARM WELCOME. IT'S TRULY A PLEASURE TO BE WITH ALL OF YOU AT THIS WEEKEND'S CONFERENCE, WHICH FOR ME IS AS MUCH A REUNION AS ANYTHING ELSE.

AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, I SERVED AS U.S. ATTORNEY IN MY HOME TOWN OF PITTSBURGH FOR SIX YEARS, DURING WHICH TIME I SERVED AS A CHARTER MEMBER OF THE VERY FIRST UNITED STATES ATTORNEY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED IN 1974. FOLLOWING THAT, I SERVED AS HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT'S CRIMINAL DIVISION IN THE FORD ADMINISTRATION FROM 1975 TO 1977.

SO TO BE BACK AT THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT, AND PARTICULARLY, TO BE HERE WITH YOU TODAY, TRULY REPRESENTS A HOMECOMING FOR ME -- AND IS, I MUST ACKNOWLEDGE, A PART OF WHAT SOME MIGHT VIEW AS AN ATTEMPT BY THE U.S. ATTORNEYS TO "TAKE OVER THE WORLD."

WITH FORMER U.S. ATTORNEY BILL WEBSTER AT THE C.I.A. AND FORMER U.S. ATTORNEY BILL SESSIONS AT THE F.B.I. AND FORMER U.S. ATTORNEY DICK THORNBURGH NOW SERVING AS ATTORNEY GENERAL, IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL, THE ANTI-TRUST DIVISION WILL BE FILING SUIT AGAINST US. WHAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE THOUGH, IS THAT TAKING ANY JOB AFTER HAVING SERVED AS A U.S. ATTORNEY CONSTITUTES A SLIGHT STEP DOWN THE CAREER LADDER!

BUT IT IS GOOD TO BE BACK, TO BE AMONG FRIENDS, AND TO BECOME REACQUAINTED WITH THE DEPARTMENT AND ITS WORK, WHICH IS HOW I'VE SPENT MY FIRST MONTH IN OFFICE. SINCE COMING ON BOARD, I'VE PERSONALLY VISITED WITH THE TOP LEADERSHIP OF ALL THE DIVISIONS AND LAW-ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN THE DEPARTMENT, WITH THE MEMBERS AND STAFF OF THE NATIONAL DRUG POLICY BOARD, WITH VARIOUS NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT GROUPS AND, OF COURSE, WITH THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

IN FACT, UPON TAKING OVER THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL, ONE OF MY FIRST PHONE CALLS WAS TO BOB ULRICH, TO TELL HIM PERSONALLY OF MY COMMITMENT TO EACH OF YOU AND TO THE WORK YOU SO TIRELESSLY CARRY OUT.

I SPOKE TO THE DEPARTMENT YESTERDAY, IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE MAIN JUSTICE BUILDING, AND ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS OF WHICH I REMINDED THEM AND WHICH I WANT TO RE-EMPHASIZE TO YOU, IS THE FACT THAT IN THIS NATION'S 94 U.S. ATTORNEYS WE HAVE SOME OF THE MOST VALUABLE RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN OUR UNITED BATTLE AGAINST CRIME AND IN OUR CONSTANT PURSUIT OF JUSTICE.

THAT IS NOT SIMPLY RHETORIC. IT IS A STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL CONVICTION AND PERSONAL BELIEF FROM AN OLD U.S. ATTORNEY WHO JUST HAPPENS TO BE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES.

YOU ARE LEADERS IN OUR EFFORTS ACROSS THE NATION, HELPING TO SET OUR PRIORITIES AND TO MEET THE DEMANDS IMPOSED BY THOSE PRIORITIES. I THUS HAVE NO HESITATION ABOUT CALLING UPON YOU FOR A MAJOR NEW UNDERTAKING IN OUR WAR AGAINST DRUGS, WHICH I WILL SPELL OUT IN A FEW MOMENTS.

BUT FIRST, I WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW GRATIFIED I'VE BEEN GRATIFIED TO LEARN OF THE GREAT THINGS YOU'VE ACCOMPLISHED OVER THE LAST SEVEN YEARS IN ALL OF YOUR AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITIES. ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUCH AS:

- OPERATION IRON EAGLE IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS WHERE MORE THAN 50 INDICTMENTS HAVE BEEN RETURNED AGAINST TRAFFICKERS OF MULTI-KILOGRAM AMOUNTS OF COCAINE, AND
- IN THE MONTANA DISTRICT, WHERE BOTH MURDER-FOR-INSURANCE FRAUD AND BANK FRAUD SCHEMES WERE UNCOVERED AND PROSECUTED, AND
- IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI WHERE OPERATION PRETENSE REVEALED WIDESPREAD PUBLIC CORRUPTION AND RESULTED IN 7 DEFENDANTS GOING TO TRIAL AND ANOTHER 46 PLEADING GUILTY, AND

- IN THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND, WHERE CONSTANT PRESSURE IS BEING BROUGHT TO BEAR AGAINST ORGANIZED CRIME WITH THE CONVICTION OF MAJOR PLAYERS IN THE PATRIARCA CRIME FAMILY, AND

- IN EACH AND EVERY DISTRICT ACROSS THE COUNTRY, WHERE ALL OF YOU ARE HELPING INCREASE YOUR VISIBILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT COORDINATING COMMITTEES.

THOSE EXAMPLES TOUCH ON EACH OF THE PRIORITY AREAS PRESIDENT REAGAN AND I HAVE IDENTIFIED FOR THIS DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE:

- 1) AN ALL-OUT WAR ON NARCOTICS AND DANGEROUS DRUGS;
- 2) A CONTINUED EFFORT AGAINST THE SUBVERSIVE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZED CRIME AND RACKETEERING;
- 3) A MAJOR PUSH AGAINST WHITE COLLAR CRIME -- "CRIME IN THE SUITES;"
- 4) AN UNRELENTING EFFORT AGAINST PUBLIC CORRUPTION AND THOSE WHO WOULD USE THE PUBLIC TRUST FOR PRIVATE GAIN; AND
- 5) A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN CONCERT WITH OUR PARTNERS AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL, IN AN EFFORT AGAINST VIOLENT CRIME AND THE PERNICIOUS AFFECTS OF PORNOGRAPHY.

IN THE VERNACULAR OF THE DAY, THAT IS, TO SAY THE LEAST,

QUITE A FULL PLATE. AND THERE ARE GOOD REASONS FOR EACH OF THESE PRIORITIES.

TAKE THE LAW ENFORCEMENT COORDINATING COMMITTEES, FOR EXAMPLE, WHICH, BY THE WAY, DIDN'T EXIST WHEN I WAS A U.S. ATTORNEY. IF THAT WAS YOUR ONLY AREA OF WORK, IT WOULD BE TIME AND EFFORT WELL SPENT. THE L.E.C.C.'S EFFECTIVENESS IS UNDISPUTED AND THEY ADDRESS ONE OF THE MOST BASIC NEEDS IN REALIZING EFFECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT: COOPERATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN AND AMONG FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES. THEY ARE NOT JUST A GOOD IDEA, THEY ARE A NECESSARY ENDEAVOR, DESERVING OF ALL THE SUPPORT WE CAN GIVE THEM.

YOUR EFFORTS AGAINST PUBLIC CORRUPTION AS WELL ARE A PRIORITY OF THE GREATEST CONCERN BECAUSE IT IS WORK THAT SERVES LITERALLY, TO STRENGTHEN THE VERY CORE OF DEMOCRACY IN THIS GREAT REPUBLIC.

THE VITALITY OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT, AT EVERY LEVEL, RESTS ENTIRELY ON PUBLIC CONFIDENCE AND PUBLIC TRUST. AND ANY BLOW TO THAT CONFIDENCE, OR ANY VIOLATION OF THAT TRUST, NO MATTER HOW SMALL, SERVES TO ERODE THAT SUPPORT AND WEAKEN THE FOUNDATION OF OUR NATION. HONORING THE PUBLIC'S TRUST IS A PUBLIC OFFICIAL'S HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE U.S. ATTORNEY'S EFFORT TO PROTECT THAT TRUST IS ONE OF YOURS.

THE SAME TYPE OF RESPONSIBILITY CAN BE FOUND IN YOUR WORK AGAINST WHITE COLLAR CRIME. THE CITIZENS OF THIS NATION MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO FEEL THAT THERE ARE TWO STANDARDS OF JUSTICE IN AMERICA -- ONE FOR THE MAN ON THE STREET AND ANOTHER FOR THE MAN IN THE BOARD ROOM. JUSTICE MUST BE "COLLAR BLIND" AS WELL AS "COLOR BLIND" AND AMERICAN CITIZENS MUST NOT BE MADE TO SUFFER THE HUGE ECONOMIC BURDEN WHITE COLLAR CRIME CAN PLACE ON THE AVERAGE FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY WHERE THEY LIVE.

WHAT MAKES YOUR WORK IN THIS AREA DOUBLY IMPORTANT IS THAT NOT ONLY ARE YOU BRINGING CRIMINALS -- AND I STRESS THAT WORD, BECAUSE REGARDLESS OF THE COST OF THE SUIT OR THE SIZE OF THE SUITE, THESE PEOPLE ARE CRIMINALS -- NOT ONLY ARE YOU BRINGING CRIMINALS TO JUSTICE, YOU, QUITE LITERALLY, ARE PROTECTING PEOPLE FROM HAVING THEIR POCKETS PICKED, AS SURELY AS IF YOU WERE STOPPING A MUGGING ON THE STREET.

THE REMAINING TWO PRIORITIES ARE, AS YOU KNOW, THE MOST DIFFICULT AND THE MOST CRITICAL WE FACE, AND ARE TIED TOGETHER IN SO MANY WAYS, THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO TALK ABOUT THEM SEPARATELY. THOSE PRIORITIES ARE, OF COURSE, OUR BATTLES AGAINST ORGANIZED CRIME AND AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN ILLEGAL DRUGS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS MORE INSIDIOUS OR CROSS CUTTING IN AMERICAN SOCIETY TODAY THAN DRUGS AND

ORGANIZED CRIME. AND THERE ARE NO ISSUES AMERICANS WANT RESOLVED MORE.

IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO LEAD THE WAY.

WE ARE THE POINT OF THE LANCE. AND WHILE THIS IS A BATTLE THAT WILL NOT BE WON THIS MONTH, OR THIS YEAR, OR EVEN IN THE NEXT; IT IS A BATTLE THAT WE WILL CONTINUE WAGE...AND A WAR THAT WE WILL WIN.

I KNOW IT IS SOMETIMES FRUSTRATING. I HAVE BEEN THERE. I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE. AND NOBODY KNOWS BETTER THAN ME THAT YOU DON'T WIN THEM ALL -- YOU'RE FREQUENTLY UP AGAINST SOME OF THE BEST LEGAL TALENT MONEY CAN BUY -- BUT THAT SHOULD NOT DISSUADE YOU. BECAUSE WHILE YOU MAY LOSE SOME, YOU ALSO WIN MORE THAN YOUR SHARE, BECAUSE THROUGHOUT IT ALL YOU HAVE AVAILABLE NOT ONLY THE BEST IN LAW ENFORCEMENT TALENT THIS GOVERNMENT CAN PROVIDE BUT THE UTMOST SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS NATION.

THAT IS AN IMPORTANT POINT TO REMEMBER BECAUSE I ALSO KNOW IT BECOMES DISHEARTENING TO HEAR THE CRITICISM AND NAY-SAYING THAT SOMETIMES EMERGES IN THE DEBATE OVER POLICY AND DIRECTION. IT'S DIFFICULT TO HEAR POLITICIANS SAY WE'RE WAGING A 'PHONY WAR' ON DRUGS AND TO HEAR OTHERS ADVOCATE UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER IN THE GUISE OF DRUG LEGALIZATION.

IT'S HARD TO REMAIN PATIENT WHEN CONGRESS SEEMS TO BE WAGING ONLY A RHETORICAL WAR ON DRUGS DENYING YEAR AFTER YEAR THIS ADMINISTRATION'S REQUESTS FOR FULL FUNDING FOR THE NECESSARY RESOURCES TO CARRY OUR ANTI-DRUG EFFORTS.

IN FACT, IF THERE IS ONE GREAT IRONY IN THE BEHAVIOR OF CONGRESS OVER THE LAST SEVEN YEARS, IT CAN BE FOUND IN THE FACT THAT OUR ANTI-DRUG EFFORTS HAVE PROVEN TO BE ONE AREA -- ONE OF THE VERY, VERY, FEW AREAS -- IN WHICH CONGRESS HAS EXERCISED BUDGETARY RESTRAINT...IN SPITE OF A NATIONAL CONSENSUS TO DO OTHERWISE.

YOU KNOW THE FACTS BETTER THAN I DO:

- U.S. ATTORNEYS, ALL OF YOU WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROSECUTING FEDERAL DRUG CASES, HAVE BEEN FUNDED BELOW THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST LEVEL EVERY YEAR FOR THE LAST SEVEN YEARS.

- LAST YEAR, CONGRESS CUT THE PRESIDENT'S FISCAL '88 BUDGET REQUEST FOR U.S. ATTORNEYS BY 673 POSITIONS, THE F.B.I. BY 518 POSITIONS AND EVEN THE D.E.A. BY 20 POSITIONS.

-- THIS YEAR, CONGRESS HAS EFFECTIVELY CUT THE PRESIDENT'S FISCAL '89 BUDGET REQUEST FOR THE U.S. ATTORNEYS BY 566 POSITIONS AND FOR THE F.B.I. BY 453 POSITIONS, AND FOR THE D.E.A. BY 105 POSITIONS. GIVEN THAT YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ABSORB \$11 MILLION FOR THE FISCAL '89 PAY RAISE, YOUR STAFFING MUST BE LIMITED TO 90 PERCENT OF PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED LEVELS -- IN EFFECT, CUTTING U.S. ATTORNEY POSITIONS BY 10 PERCENT.

-- AND BEYOND THOSE STAFFING FIGURES, CONGRESS HAS ALSO CUT \$321 MILLION OUT OF THE PRESIDENT'S '89 REQUEST FOR NEW PRISONS, PROVIDING FUNDS FOR ONLY 2 OF 7 PROPOSED FACILITIES; AND THEY CUT \$25 MILLION NEEDED FOR THE SUPPORT OF U.S. PRISONERS IN STATE AND LOCAL JAILS.

BUT ALL IS FAR FROM LOST. THERE HAS BEEN SOME GOOD NEWS FROM THE HILL RECENTLY FOR THE WAR ON DRUGS. THERE ARE PROVISIONS IN THE DRUG BILL PASSED BY THE HOUSE LAST WEEK -- A DEATH PENALTY FOR DRUG RELATED KILLINGS, A "GOOD FAITH" EXCEPTION TO THE EXCLUSIONARY RULE, USER ACCOUNTABILITY PROVISIONS, TO NAME A FEW -- THAT, CERTAINLY ARE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. AND WE'RE ANXIOUSLY WAITING FOR THE SENATE TO FOLLOW SUIT.

BUT I WILL NOT BE SATISFIED UNTIL WE OBTAIN FULL FUNDING FOR OUR EFFORTS, UNTIL WE PUT AN END TO THE SITUATION OF A FEDERAL

LAW-ENFORCEMENT OFFICER HAVING TO SET ASIDE A CITIZEN'S COMPLAINT, SAYING, "SORRY, WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH AGENTS TO CHECK THAT OUT." OR OF A U.S. ATTORNEY TELLING AN AGENT, "SORRY, WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH PROSECUTORS TO BRING THAT CASE TO TRIAL," OR OF A JUDGE TELLING A PROSECUTOR THAT THERE IS NO ROOM IN A FEDERAL PRISON FOR A CONVICTED DRUG TRAFFICKER.

FRANKLY, WE HAVE CHALLENGED CONGRESS TO SHOW AMERICA WHO'S REALLY TOUGH ON DRUGS. AS I SAID, THE CURRENT DRUG BILLS ARE ALL VERY WELL AND GOOD, BUT ALL THE EXCELLENT PROVISIONS IN THEM WILL BE OF LITTLE PRACTICAL VALUE WITHOUT CONGRESS PROVIDING ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR BASIC FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES.

AT MY REQUEST, YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME A MOST IMPRESSIVE COMPILATION OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING THIS ADMINISTRATION. I APPLAUD YOUR EFFORTS AND OFFER YOU CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS FOR JOBS WELL DONE.

AS I INDICATED EARLIER, I AM NOW ASKING YOU TO PERFORM ONE MORE TASK IN OUR IMPORTANT FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS.

I AM ASKING EACH OF YOU TO PREPARE A REPORT, TO BE DELIVERED TO ME, THAT DETAILS THE "CORPORATE STRUCTURE," IF YOU WILL, OF THE NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING BUSINESS IN YOUR DISTRICTS. I WANT TO KNOW THE HOWS AND WHYS OF DRUG TRAFFICKING. I WANT TO KNOW THE

INS AND OUTS OF THE DRUG ENTERPRISE. I WANT A "WHO'S WHO" OF THE DRUG WORLD.

OUT OF THIS WE CAN COMPILE A "DUN AND BRADSTREET" ANALYSIS OF THE BUSINESS STRUCTURE OF DRUG TRAFFICKING IN THIS COUNTRY AS A BASIS FOR ANALYZING HOW BETTER TO EFFECTIVELY COMBAT DRUG IMPORTATION AND DISTRIBUTION. I ASK THAT YOU ANALYZE SALES, ACCOUNTING, BANKING, FINANCES, COMMUNICATIONS -- EVERYTHING YOU CAN IDENTIFY OUT OF PAST PROSECUTIONS AND PRESENT INVESTIGATIONS THAT MAKES UP THE COMPLEX AND ALL TOO OFTEN INVISIBLE WEB OF DRUG DEALING IN AMERICA.

WORK AT IT. DIG FOR IT. EMPANEL THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE GRAND JURIES PROVIDED FOR UNDER LAW IF YOU HAVE TO. BUT FIND OUT ONCE AND FOR ALL HOW THIS DEADLY GAME IS BEING PLAYED. DEMYSTIFY IT. DRAG IT OUT FROM UNDER THE ROCK WHERE IT LIVES AND BREEDS. SO THAT WE CAN FULLY EDUCATE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC AS TO SIZE AND BREADTH OF THESE ILLEGAL AND INSIDIOUS BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND THAT THEY, IN TURN, WILL BETTER UNDERSTAND AND MORE ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORT THE DIFFICULT STRUGGLE IN WHICH WE ARE ENGAGED.

DO THAT, FURNISH THE INFORMATION TO ME, AND I PROMISE YOU, THAT NO ONE WILL EVER AGAIN ACCUSE US OF WAGING A "PHONY WAR" ON DRUGS.

OUR GOALS ARE GREAT, WHICH MAKES OUR CHALLENGES EVEN GREATER. THAT IS PART OF THE SATISFACTION THAT COMES WITH SERVING AS A UNITED STATES ATTORNEY AND PART OF THE PRIDE THAT I FEEL IN WORKING WITH EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.

IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK. THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU.