



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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REMARKS OF THE HONORABLE JANET RENO

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

ON

REENTRY COURT INITIATIVE

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John Jay College of Criminal Justice

899 Tenth Avenue

New York, New York

P R O C E E D I N G S

(1:00 p.m.)

Thursday, February 10, 2000

GENERAL RENO: Thank you, President Lynch, for that kind introduction and for your very warm welcome, and let me tell you how happy I am to be at an institution that has done so much to contribute to the improvement of the criminal justice system and the national crime policy in America.

I see the results of your efforts across this country, and certainly in the Department of Justice. It is wonderful to be here because so many interesting things are happening. People are looking at problems

and solving them instead of saying who is guilty, who is innocent, and not addressing the problems.

Your great chief judge, Judge Judith Kay, has taken the lead in making sure courts are focused on the problem and what can be done to keep it from happening again.

Everywhere I go, when I come to New York, I feel like I've learned something new that we can use, and I just appreciate it very much.

What is the problem that I want to talk about today? I want to talk about one of the most present problems we face as a nation, the reentry of offenders from prison back to the communities where the problem started in the first place.

What is the dimension of the problem? We have made remarkable strides in our fight against crime in this country. Crime is down seven years in a row in almost all categories. Crime is down in communities, communities are safer, more cops are on the street. Under the Brady Bill we even prevented more than 40,000 felons and other prohibited persons from buying guns.

We have prevention programs that are working. We are fighting crime more intelligently and more strategically. We are applying the problem solving approach to better understand crime, the problems, and to collaborate in new ways to reduce those problems, but we have an exciting opportunity that few generations have had, we've learned how to fight crime sensibly to solve problems together, we've learned to do it in a bipartisan way, when I see sheriffs from the republican party standing with U.S. attorneys from the democratic party, and they don't think about parties, they think about how to solve the problem that prevents crime from occurring in the future.

We have an economy that is strong, that can provide jobs. Let us take this opportunity now and not become complacent, but instead let's end the culture of violence in this country once and for all on a permanent basis.

We have one problem that is significant and that has received too little attention for too long. We are not going to end the culture of violence until we address this problem, the problem of prisoner reentry.

What happens to the prisoner who serves his time and comes back to the community, does he face the apartment where he got into trouble in the first place, does he face people slamming the door in his face, does he face put down from people who say that's an ex-offender, he must be doing something wrong, or does he face a new world of hope and opportunity and support and collaboration?

Let's understand the dimension of the problem. There are now approximately 1.2 million people in federal and state prisons in America today, compared to 320,000 in 1980. It is an explosion, an explosion that has occurred as more people are being sent to prison for longer sentences.

Who is coming back? In 1998, 545,000 offenders came back from state and federal prisons; in 1999, 565,000; in the year 2000, 585,000 are anticipated to return to communities, and a slight increase is projected for each year beyond.

They come to prison with such significant problems: Drugs, 70 percent have a history of drug abuse, only 10 percent statistics show were receiving drug treatment in state prisons.

Mental illness, 179,000 in state prison have self reported mental illness.

They come into prison with rage, with a sense that they had been treated unfairly. They come into prison as dropouts or illiterate. They come into prison without life skills, without a job or an anticipated job. They come with so little chance of getting off on the right foot, unless we do it the right way.

While in the prison they get new problems hoisted on them, hate, they come to look at life as simply a matter of survival, and then with all these problems, they come out in too many instances without too much supervision and they come back to the very fragile communities from once they came.

Is it any surprise that nationwide two-thirds are rearrested within three years of release, 330,000 people committing more crime or charged with committing more crime?

What can we do about this problem?

Regardless of our political affiliation, we must stand together and use common sense. Common sense tells us that we should use our time while these offenders are in prison to address the problem and solve the problem, and we have shown that we are capable of doing it.

Common sense suggests that as these people return to the community, they come back with supervision, with the support network, with an opportunity for a job, particularly in a time when the economy is flourishing.

We need to rethink how we remanage the reentry, the reintegration of prisoners into society to minimize public safety risk and maximize the product, the productive activity that we want all Americans to participate in. More prison is certainly not the answer, and 330,000 recidivisms in a three-year period is certainly not the answer, just as increased borrowing does not reduce the national debt, it only delays the day of reckoning.

Longer prison sentences cannot eliminate the lack of reentry efforts and the problems they cause. Eventually most of the offenders are going to come back to the community, and it's a great waste of tax paying dollars if you're not interested in any of the other elements involved, just to see this revolving door occur again and again and again.

We must take some bold new steps to assure that the offenders don't re-offend, don't return to prison, and do have jobs and life skills and the capacity to cope on the outside. Together and in partnership we must develop the seamless system of offender accountability, supervision and support. A system that begins in many instances before incarceration and continues as the offender leaves prison and re-enters the community, beginning with drug testing upon arrest and a follow through from trial to pre-sentence investigation to incarceration to preparation for what it's going to be on the outside.

There is plenty of evidence that this is the right thing to do. The cycle of crime is well documented, and we know that ex-offenders tend not to have the tools to do it. By using intensive supervision and transitional community services, we can, I think, produce lower rates of recidivism. Because 70 percent of prisoners have a history of drug

abuse, this element of reentry is particularly critical.

Unfortunately, as I have indicated, a national survey of inmates shows that only 10 percent participated in prison based drug treatment in 1997. This is a shame because research shows that drug treatment in prison, when combined with drug testing in the system of graduated sanction after release, can cut recidivism by as much as 80 percent.

I would like to describe to you the initiatives that the Department is undertaking with regards to reentry. Over the past year the Department of Justice has been working to develop several different approaches to help communities address the problem. The first is a concept of a reentry court, we're also discussing reentry partnerships, and finally I will talk to you about the President's plans to support and expand new approaches to reentry.

Jeremy Travis, who is with me today, and is a wonderful colleague, developed the idea of reentry court, which would oversee an offender's return to the community after release of prison or jail. The court will use its authority for positive reinforcement as drug courts do.

Let me tell you about something that can really happen because we've seen it happen before. In 1987 in Miami we had a large number of offenders charged with possession of small amounts of cocaine, primarily crack. Nothing was happening to them because the calendars were so crowded that the court could not get to the case other than to give credit to time served, so there was no punishment, there was no treatment, there was nothing.

Five people, with the court leading the way, developed the drug court. We had it evaluated after it had been in operation. The evaluators told us it made sense and it had a benefit. I came back to the 10th anniversary of drug courts in 1997; there were over 300 in operation in the country and 200 on the drawing boards.

This reentry court modeled on the same theory of a carrot and stick approach, in using the strength of the court and the wisdom of the court to really push the issue. We can really make this a reality, it doesn't have to be a concept. We don't have to just talk about it, we can make a difference if we proceed.

The message works with us, stay clean, stay out of trouble, we'll help you get a job, we'll help you prepare in terms of a skill, but if you come back testing positive for drugs, if you commit a further crime, if you violate the conditions of your release, you're going to pay some more serious punishment every step of the way.

The reentry court would promote positive behavior by the returning offender. It would marshal resources to support the offender's successful reintegration into society. The court would also use its powers of punishment, using the graduated range of swift, predictable sanctions, to make sure that the individual stays on the right track.

Judges working closely with others would approach or could approach a plan for reintegrating the offender into the community. The court would then monitor and enforce the plan. The partners of court would include institutional and community correctional officers, law enforcement, local businesses, family, clergy, support services, victim advocates and neighborhood organizations.

One of the issues that I think we have to face as we address the collaboration involved either in the partnership or in the court concept is what we do to build bridges between those coming back from prison and law enforcement authorities. Too often those coming back think they are under a microscope, they are being stopped for no reason at all, and they have this presupposition and ill will.

One of the marvelous things we could do is what I saw some young people do before they got to prison in Seattle as part of our Safely Futures Program. They went to the police to start talking to the police about how they could communicate with each other, how they could talk with each other, how they could work together. It could be so exciting, and we look forward, Mr. President, to how we might work to see what can be done in this effort.

Judges working closely with others have an opportunity to create a contract between the offender and the court. In the drug court I used to see that judge looking down, shaking his head. He had built a rapport with that offender, and that offender knew that somebody cared about what was happening to him. He wasn't a name, he wasn't just a number, he was a real person before that court. That court anticipated and expected the best of him, and that offender was trying to deliver.

We also imagine the new role for a community safety officer, who would manage the offender's transition. The community safety officer would hold the offender accountable, and for special conditions geared for the neighborhood, that the offender would have to meet, and connect the offender to key treatment and job opportunities.

If we make sure the peace courts have that manageable case load and they have the resources for supervising and sanctioning these offenders, we could make a real difference in the offending rate in this community and make our community safer.

It has been difficult for me to watch the courts of America overwhelmed in these last 20 years by cases coming to them. It is wonderful to see domestic violence courts, to see the community courts here in the State of New York, to see the work that is being done with drug courts, and to see what a powerful force courts can be if they are given the resources and if they have a case load limited so it is truly manageable.

We can do so much, not just in the area of drug courts or reentry courts, but in the area of domestic violence courts, juvenile justice courts, we can do so much if we just give the courts the tools to do the job.

Last fall the Office of Justice Programs sent out invitations to state and local jurisdictions around the country to submit their proposals for pilot reentry courts. To help promote this concept, we will work with a small number of jurisdictions to explore the model, to provide technical assistance and support information sharing across the sides.

I'm proud to announce that we've selected San Francisco, California, two sites in Delaware, Broward County, Florida, El Paso County, Colorado, three counties in West Virginia, two sites in Kentucky, two sites in Iowa, and the Harlem Reentry Court right here in New York.

In so many of these sites, people and organizations that care from across the political spectrum have recognized the need to work together as a community on the critical issue of reentry.

In fact I had the opportunity today to hear about the Harlem Reentry

Court, and in its first year the court will monitor the behavior of up to 100 released offenders by locating a reentry court in the neighborhood in which the parolees live.

There is so much potential to engage family members and community institutions in supporting reintegration efforts, and when the community has the opportunity to see a court in action, the court gains credibility, but the court also gains information from the community that is so vital.

I'm excited, as I have told the representatives of the court system, about this time next year I will have my red truck starting across the country to explore the country, and I expect to see the Harlem court in action.

The second programming approach to the reentry issue is what we call the reentry partnership. This partnership initiative seeks to create new accountability and support for released offenders by enhancing the monitoring and follow-up of individual and candidate support systems and repairing the harm done to victims.

Patterned after successful police/corrections partnerships, reentry partnerships will establish key new resources through institutional corrections, community corrections, community policing, local businesses and faith-based institutions. Community organizations all will work together to prepare for more successful returns of inmates to their home neighborhoods.

The partnership will comprehensibly concern issues of offenders reentering the community, where reentry partnership will enhance supervision and increase accountability, and technology can help. Technology, like computerized crime matching, electronic monitoring, enabling critical information to be gathered and processed quickly. Technology together with strategies can reinforce positive behavior and help swift responses for offenders who may stray, but some of this must be done in the old fashion way, again, by that police officer.

What do you want: I told you not to come around here anymore. Get out of here, and I don't want to see you here again.

Good afternoon young man. What are you up to now? How have you been

doing, and have you found a job yet? Why don't you go see this person and see what he can do to help you.

Which is the better?

It doesn't cost much to learn how to talk to people with respect, and every time I talk to young people who have been in court and asked them what could have been done to prevent the problem, they said somebody to talk to, somebody who knows how hard it is to grow up in America today, somebody who could treat me with respect, but also tell me when I've done wrong in no uncertain terms.

We can do so much through communication, through problem resolving, by working together to make a difference.

One promising effort in this area is Santa Ana Police Department's SOS Programs, short for Stay Out of the System. The Santa Ana Police Department is funding mental help and job counselors to work with offenders before they're release, and community police officers are reaching out to offenders upon their return to ensure they are receiving the supervision, guidance and support they need to succeed.

We need to make a concerted effort to better train our police officers, particularly when it comes to interacting with young people and offenders returning to society, just as they're doing in Santa Ana.

I think another critical part of the reentry process is letting offenders know how they can regain their voice, their vote, consistent with state law, without having to hire a lawyer.

This last Martin Luther King Day I worked on a building that was being rehabilitated in St. Louis. Approximately 15 young men were working there. The big question in they're mind was how can I get my civil rights restored. They wanted to participate, they wanted to make a difference, they didn't know where to go, they didn't know how to do it, and they were getting confused signals.

We've got to make sure that they get the process clearly explained, so that they can take steps immediately to have they're civil rights restored.

Right here in New York City, former Mayor Koch, Reverend Al Sharpton, and Professor Charles O'Connell are collaborating on a project to provide ex-offenders with an opportunity to earn a second chance. The second chance perhaps is designed to help offenders earn back their privileges as citizens, in addition to assure they are prepared.

The reentry partnership will focus on preparing communities in returning offenders. Many communities are not equipped or mobilized to deal with their drug or mental health problems, nor do they have allowances in place to deal with other problems: Supervision, job placement, family services, and community services, that are so critical to preventing recidivism.

Community sponsors for communities can help. I think it would be great if people on the outside can establish relationships with offenders to help them ensure that their time on the inside is as productive as possible and to provide support and guidance when they get out. Sponsors could help offenders find jobs, housing, treatment, and can provide another level of accountability.

Think about what would happen if a court sentenced somebody to five years and they said young man, I'm putting you in the reentry program and this church, whom you know, has agreed to be your advocate on the outside, identifying job opportunities and making sure that everything possible is done while you're in prison to secure job training that will fit your aptitude and the opportunities that will be available when you come back to the community, and they're looking for alternative housing for you, and they're going to make sure that you have an opportunity to visit with your children while you're in prison and establish the relationship that you had been seeking and try to help you be a better parent.

It doesn't cost that much to care, and there are an awful lot of caring people in terms of private non-for-profit groups, faith-based institutions. So many care, and if we harness them, we can make a difference.

The reentry partnership model is already in action. Over the last several months the Department of Justice began working with eight pilot sites in Vermont, South Carolina, Nevada, Missouri, Massachusetts Florida, and the State of Washington.

They are coming together to work with offenders before and after they're release. The partners are public and private, state and local, they cross the traditional boundaries, and they use a number of tools to do business in a brand new way. They are engaging in problem solving, they are engaging in caring about human beings, they are engaging in trying to recognize that in every human being there is worth, if we can find it and if we try hard enough. They are engaged in the greatest service that we can undertake, which is to care about others.

So where do we go from here? The reentry partnership and reentry court models are promising, and they can do a lot by bringing together existing resources, but they need to be nourished. That's the reason I'm so pleased that the President supported the reentry initiative in its proposed budget for next year.

The President's budget requesting includes \$145 million for reentry programs. Under the plan the Department of Justice, Labor and Health, and Human Sources will work together in a brand new collaboration to address every element of the reentry challenge in a group of high risk communities with a common group of offenders, including juvenile offenders.

The President recognizes it's a criminal justice problem, a public problem, and economic problem. As a result, the problem needs to be tackled in a coordinated way. Under the President's budget, the Justice Department will dedicate \$60 million in offender reentry initiatives, the Department of Labor will dedicate \$75 million in job-related programs and the Department of Health and Human Sources will dedicate \$10 million in substance abuse and mental health treatment.

I'm looking forward to working with Secretary Herman, Secretary Shalala and members of the Congress from both sides of the aisle to make this great idea a reality. But, ladies and gentlemen, while we talk about the reentry and while it's absolutely vital, we cannot and must not cease our efforts. We must only enhance our efforts to make sure they never get into the system in the first place by developing prevention programs throughout the country modeled on programs that are working now.

Seven years ago I came to Washington and talked about the need for starting a zero to three and providing the building blocks of a

child's life that will give them a strong and positive future. Some people said I sounded more like a social worker. Well, I'm still here, and now police chiefs and others are recognizing and leading the way and developing after school programs, monitoring programs, early childhood development programs that can truly make a difference.

In short, whether we're talking about reentry or prevention, fair and firm enforcement, progressive, caring, dedicated policing, there are so many pieces to this remarkable puzzle, but at the heart of the solution to the problem of crime in this country are the people of this country, and there are so many, both as individuals and as individuals associated with institutions, such as the one we meet in today, that are doing so much to prove that working together we can end the culture of violence in this country if we are comprehensive in our efforts, if we rely on solid information, and if we use good old fashion common sense. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MALE SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Attorney General will take questions. I would like to explain to the Attorney General that some of our students may have class, so if you see some of them getting up, it's because they go to next class.

GENERAL RENO: Don't cut class on my account.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

ANSWER: We are trying to do everything we can -- the issue was that he was a counselor in a halfway house, and there are programs still available, community supervision in different forms, but we were just discussing today how effective a halfway house would be in providing that chance, giving a person an opportunity, without being involved with family that would sometimes weigh them down, until they've gotten themselves a bit better organized, and so one of the notes that I made after the discussion on the Harlem reentry program was to go back and see what we were doing about halfway houses, and if you will make sure I get your card or someplace to call you, I'll give you a call.

QUESTION: How can we use electronic media to deal with these

problems? That's what I specialized in. And, firstly, I would like to change the focus from criminal justice to citizen justice in this country.

Secondly, I used media to make the behavior of the police and the public understandable to each other and I've used it to make the community aware of the problems drug people, people on drugs have, and up in Massachusetts we've had tremendous success with this, and I'm an old friend of Hugh Danes, which I think you know.

ANSWER: Great Solicitor General.

QUESTION: Tenant of mine in my house.

ANSWER: I hope he was a good tenant.

QUESTION: He was a fantastic tenant, we are very close friends.

ANSWER: The electronic media can be a marvelous tool. I think when the American people have an opportunity to see a fair reporting of an issue or fair analysis done through the electronic media, it can be a marvelous tool. I didn't mention it because I didn't want to talk too long, I wanted to leave some time for questions.

QUESTION: It's not a question how the media deals with it, it's how we -- it's not what the networks do or anything like that, it's what we as citizens and as people in John Jay and so forth can use media to make the police and the public understand how to relate to each other probably and to make them aware of the problems that criminals have coming back into the system and to deal with the drug problems in schools before they get to the criminal system and so forth. So if you ever want to talk about this, I'll be glad to go into it. I know Bill Clinton very well.

ANSWER: Sir, the point that you make is a very solid point, and let me go back and explore what we might do to be more effective in that regard.

QUESTION: Attorney General, as the gentleman was talking about the media covers the news objectively, outside there is a group of people that are trying to determine whether or not Elian should be returned to Cuba?

MALE SPEAKER: No press questions.

QUESTION: Is there a difference between the reentry programs for juvenile offenders and adult offenders, or is it just mainly focusing on the adult offender?

ANSWER: This program could address the issue for both. I think, for example, the Harlem court looks forward to expanding, but I have a thought about the juvenile court. If you wait until you start focusing on reentry, that does not give you the opportunity to provide the same continuum of coherent sanctions, coherent treatment programs, and the juvenile court judge that knows that young person, knows what he's capable of, has a case load small enough that he can really focus on the child and resources sufficient to make a difference in that child's life, can be a powerful force, and it really should start up front at the intake level, at the adjudication level, at the correctional level, and later, because most young offenders are not going to be attained for an indubitably amount of time, not for five years, there would be a more up front approach that can be addressed in the community effectively with courts, again, modeled courts that have a sufficient quantity and quality of services that can truly make a difference.

QUESTION: Can you comment on the hackers, the computer hacking that may be going on?

ANSWER: I'm not going to comment on any pending investigation in terms of what's going on, but let me just put a note on that. I think it is going to be important for everyone involved in law enforcement to work together to develop the expertise and the equipment and the technology on a continuing basis necessary to investigate, to properly search computers because we're coming to the day instead of getting a search warrant for somebody for some drug dealers black book, we're going to have to get search warrants for his computer, which takes the place of the black book, and to do that we're going to have to be able to share, because the equipment and expertise are going to be very costly.

QUESTION: Why don't you discuss the benefits of education during incarceration, because certainly a person released with a high school or college degree would be a different individual that the reentry program will work with. Right now they come out with very few skills

and generally without a high school or junior high school education.

ANSWER: That's the reason I introduced in my discussion how effective it can be if we analyze the aptitude of the offender, had some idea what jobs were available in the community in which he will return and see what can be done during the prison setting to train the skills necessary to fill such jobs, and I think community advocates, looking at that as community advocates for the offender, can make a difference on the outside, and I think prison systems focused on what can be a real skill that can enable them to earn a living wage can be very important forces on the inside.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

ANSWER: It's going to depend on each jurisdiction on how to use probation or parole. Again, there is a tendency to say well, the probation officer will handle it, but you've got to have case loads that a probation officer can manage. I know persons that have 200 cases at any one time, and they do incredible work, but we've got to have case loads that they can manage, and we also have to have salary scales that will keep them in the same job rather than rotating through to find a better paying job. We can't do this on the cheek, but my argument is if we do it right the first time, we're going to save ourselves vast amounts of dollars down the road.

QUESTION: Good afternoon, Attorney General. I have a question, it's kind of elongated, so be patient on this. Your reentry program I think is excellent. I think most of us would applaud it, however, when we look at your figures in terms of the thousands and thousands of youths that are now in prisons, such as in New York State, there is a study that came out not too many years ago, it indicated the youth of the State of New York came from specific areas of New York City, those areas have been criminalized, known as drug areas per se. One of the questions I raise is that drugs aren't raised -- cocaine is not raised in the Harlem area, it's not raised in the Brooklyn area, it's not raised anyplace in the city, is it possible that the reentry program could extend to the entry of drugs into these communities? It would seem to me that many of the youth have been criminalized by drugs coming into the community that now have to deal with the court systems, that that program itself could be stopped if we deal more with the drugs coming into those communities, otherwise we have a situation where individuals are basically criminalized by outside influences, what's your response to that?

ANSWER: I don't quite understand your question in terms of using the reentry program in that way, but I do think that we need to do as comprehensive an effort as we can to focus on the drugs, and what we're trying to do is to develop amongst the federal agencies and in partnership with state and local agencies the most complete and comprehensive set of data and information as to what the drug problem is in a community, is it cocaine, is it -- where is it coming from, who are the major organizations, and work together to take them out. At the same time, if you take out a drug organization and you don't move in with some other program to fill the vacuum, some other route is going to come in and fill the vacuum with the drug dealer, and so I think it requires a comprehensive effort that includes treatment as well.

QUESTION: Rudolph Guilliani and the police commissioner both have been really pushing to end parole, what do you think about that?

ANSWER: I'm not familiar with the issue in New York, and I learned long ago not to comment on something that I don't know about.

QUESTION: Attorney General, if you will, why not ask the Department of Justice to elect a special prosecutor to investigate the safe campaign practices with Vice-President Gore? Is it justice not only prosecuting those that are spying, but those that are allowing Red China to --

A. Because I did not think the Independent Council Act would provide for the appointment of an independent counsel.

QUESTION: And China --

ANSWER: You asked why I didn't seek the appointment of an independent council, and I didn't think the terms of the statute provide for it.

QUESTION: Up to a third of the people in prisons and jails are reported to have very serious mental illness, and in state prison systems that I've worked with, frequently the prison system will develop good mental healthcare and stabilize the condition of some of the people with very serious illness, but when the reentry time comes, the challenge of making the connection between good mental healthcare in a prison and good mental healthcare on the street is

extremely difficult in qualifying a person for HMO care, getting a person on a case load, getting a person a prescription, for example, do you have insights or suggestions of how we can keep prisoners stabilized when they are getting good mental healthcare for their serious mental health needs.

ANSWER: I think you left out one of the key factors, and it's called transportation and in terms of getting them to the place that they can get the mental healthcare that is so vitally needed. I think this is one of the major issues, whether it be healthcare for a child, mental healthcare or any other category of service, we have got to do more in terms of community efforts to link people to the service provided, and we have got to understand the person suffering from mental illness who is told you got to take this bus across town and this bus across town and if you get to the clinic and it's closed five minutes before you got there, that's gonna set you back a long way. Part of it is developing the capacity to manage, and that's the reason I think that community advocates can be such a powerful force in terms of helping a person cope with the difficulties of life.

MALE SPEAKER: We have time for one more question.

QUESTION: I just wanted to ask besides the reentry program, is there any focus being put on alternatives through incarceration? At the Bronx court they have a Bronx treatment court which I worked at for a year, it's going through great strides, people graduating in different phases, they've become productive with services you would provide in the reentry program, is there any alternatives through incarceration?

ANSWER: There is wonderful things going on, but, again, to make it work, we've got to make sure we don't send 200 people to a program that has services that can effectively deal with 100. We have got to make sure we don't use these alternative programs just to get a case handled, we've got to make sure they are handled right.

QUESTION: Some years ago when you were thinking about removing the college programs out of the New York State prisons, a study was done, and the study showed most people returning back with community college degrees was successful in their transition. Since then the college programs have been moved out of the prisons, and what happens is people return back to the communities, they're not making it. So

they don't have vital skills when they return back to the community based on the needs of the community.

I have two questions for you: One, with this model, would the model in fact restore education back to the prison? And the second question is, the skills that people can be afforded, are those skills they can take back to the community so it could be a positive impact for them?

ANSWER: Let me tell you about an experience I had this morning. I was at the Delancy Street facility up in Brewster, New York, and I asked one young man who had been arrested in the Delancy Street what he was doing now. He indicated that he had -- was headed for a career in business, and then he thought no, I want to do something else, and he's now one of the chief counselors at a juvenile justice facility in the area, and he's so committed to it and so determined and is making a tremendous difference.

With respect to appellant grants, if I can waive a magic wand or if I could do anything to get the appellant grants back, I would do that, and I will continue to fight to get them back. Thank you all.

MALE SPEAKER: I want to thank on behalf of each of you the Attorney General for coming here and announcing this most important program. Thank you so much.