



# Department of Justice

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REMARKS

OF

THE HONORABLE GRIFFIN B. BELL  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

AT

THE DEDICATION CEREMONY

OF

THE CHARLES J. BONAPARTE AUDITORIUM

12:00

THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 1977  
CHARLES J. BONAPARTE AUDITORIUM  
J. EDGAR HOOVER BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

I appreciate the opportunity to take part in the dedication of the FBI Auditorium in honor of Charles J. Bonaparte.

History records that he was an exceptionally able Attorney General. He left an enduring impression on the country by creating the investigative agency that grew into the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

When law enforcement officials feel overwhelmed by problems, they might consider the difficulties that faced Charles Bonaparte when he became Attorney General in 1906.

The Department of Justice was trying to cope with a series of complex cases involving allegations of fraud by government officials and obstruction of justice.

The Department had prosecutors, but it had no investigative staff of its own. Under a long-standing practice, it was forced to borrow investigators from the Secret Service.

Charles Bonaparte saw that the situation was intolerable. He later told Congress: "A Department of Justice with no force of permanent police in any form under its control is assuredly not fully equipped for its work."

By July of 1908, he was able to issue the order establishing the Department's investigative office. Various accounts generally agree that he hired nine new detectives and used other persons already in the Department for his 23-member investigative staff. This was subsequently named the Bureau of Investigation, and in 1935 became the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Charles Bonaparte had a distinguished career both before and after he was appointed the Nation's 46th Attorney General by President Theodore Roosevelt.

Born in Baltimore in 1851, Mr. Bonaparte was graduated from Harvard College and Harvard Law School. He served as an overseer of that University for some 12 years. Before becoming Attorney General, he served under President Roosevelt on the Federal Board of Indian Commissioners and as Secretary of the Navy. As Attorney General he implemented President Roosevelt's "trust-busting" policies.

Mr. Bonaparte, beyond his service in the Roosevelt Administration, was a vigorous campaigner against corruption and for human and civil rights. He died near Baltimore in 1921.

Mr. Bonaparte epitomized the many contributions that Italian-American have made and are making to justice in the United States. He also epitomized the high ethical standards and professionalism that the Department of Justice must meet in the many important tasks that confront it.

It is an honor to be here today to take part in the dedication of this auditorium to his name and his ideals.