



ADDRESS TO THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHIEFS OF POLICE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

U. S. ATTORNEY GENERAL

JANET RENO

October 20, 1998

Salt Lake City, Utah

Tuesday, October, 20, 1998; 10:55 a.m.

MS. RENO: Thank you, Chief Moody, Chief Neubauer and Rosenblatt, everybody. Thank you so much. This is my sixth visit with you in the five and a half years that I've been attorney general.

I worked with a large number of chiefs of police in Dade County over the 15 years I served as state attorney, but I've met a lot more across this country. And I have seen your work. I have been in your communities. I have seen some of the best work product that I come across in my role as attorney general in the reports that you do following your summits. The Murder Summit, the Summit on Youth Violence, all are examples of a professional, excellent piece of work.

As the director pointed out, you are an incredible force in this nation. I have heard congressmen say that, Well, where are the chiefs? We'll probably go along with them on that.

You kept C.A.L.E.A. from being delayed further. Your voice is heard, and we thank you. And I salute each and every one of you because you do one wonderful job for your city, for your state and this entire

nation.

And you've got one of the most difficult jobs of anybody I know. You've got to be an expert on technology, whether it be DNA or cybertechnics. You've got to be an expert on labor relations. You've got to be an expert on budgets. You've got to navigate politics in city hall and elsewhere. You've got to be the glue that brings the community together. You're a teacher. You're the ethics officer for your community. You're the possis for the hopes and fears and intentions of the people you serve.

You are one of the finest organizations I have dealt with in the time I've been attorney general, and you are some of the finest people I have dealt with. And I thank you so much for all that you do for us.

And look at the results of your efforts. Crime is down six years in a row. Juvenile crime is down for the third year in a row. And the reason? Your leadership and your officers' courage, common sense and compassion.

You have done so much, and yet we all know that it is a fragile reduction. We've got to fight harder. President Clinton and Vice President Gore are committed to making sure that we have a hundred thousand police officers on the streets, that the Brady Law remains forceful and effective in this nation. The Violence Against Women Act provides funds to communities across this nation that give you the resources necessary to develop effective programs.

Mayors have made such a difference, schools, community activists, business people, but oftentimes I find that it is the chief who is the glue that brings them together. And I saw this this morning in Salt Lake City.

Ruben, it was a great pleasure to watch you in action, even though you weren't there.

But I have a challenge for us. I've been there before. I've watched my crime rates go down, and I've cheered. And then I've suddenly seen them start up again, and I've suddenly started hearing from police about some insidious substance that we didn't know. It was like cocaine, but it wasn't cocaine. But it was crack. But it took us a long time to understand the devastation of crack.

I know that as fast as it goes down, it can come right back up. And part of that occurs because our citizens, and sometimes we, become complacent. We cannot rest. We cannot become complacent. We have got to continue to drive that crime rate down so that we eliminate the culture of violence in this nation. We cannot eliminate violence altogether, but if we use the leadership in this room, the common sense and the commitment in this room, we can eliminate it as a culture in this nation.

What is required? Vigilance. We've got to forecast what's coming around the corner and be prepared. There's going to be something after meth, and we've got to understand what it will be and be prepared to deal with it.

We've got tools, new tools. The D.E.A. is doing a wonderful job, and Tom Constantine is doing great work in trying to develop forecasting methods. We've seen that in the development of meth strategies. The Adams Program, which includes providing for drug forecasting, can be a vitally important tool.

Let us collect the information that is in our files in the federal government, in databases across the country, in your police reports. Let's extract it and understand it and forecast what's coming and identify patterns and trends and use our limited resources in the wisest way we can.

To do that I think we're going to have to develop a cadre of analysts. If I go to an S.A.C. meeting or a SAC meeting, what they tell me they need almost more than they need agents are analysts. When I talk to Mr. Constantine, he and I are trying to figure out how to get analysts hired. When I talk to chiefs, they say, I need analysts. Let's develop a cadre across this country that can help us identify what the facts are so that we can make informed policy and operational decisions. Let's bring them together, and let's share in a global information network that can provide the appropriate security, but provide the proper exchange that will permit us to come together and plan through accurate information, through current information that can inform the directions we must take to keep that crime rate going down.

If vigilant, if dedicated, if we do not rest, we can make a difference for this nation. Now, some of you are probably sitting

there saying, Well, she's a nice lady, and I've liked working with her. But she's gone too far now, and these are just pipe dreams.

I stood in Toronto, Canada, this summer and explained that I had checked and double-checked these figures, but that over the last five years Toronto had had a hundred gun-related homicides, and Chicago, of roughly equal population, had had 3,000 gun-related homicides. This does not have to be in this country, and if we are vigilant, if we persist, if we punish firmly, fairly and with a sanction that fits the crime, if we provide alternatives that prevent crime, if we get crime out of politics and into tough, new common sense, if we work together without regard to turf and credit, we can keep it going down so that Toronto is a reality in this nation.

I'd like to talk about five examples with you. Some are old problems that raise their ugly head, others are new problems that sneak up on us if we're not careful. Domestic violence, and what can we do, guns, drugs, hate crimes and weapons of mass destruction.

Domestic violence is something that when I started as a prosecutor in 1978, people laughed at me when I developed a L.E.A.A. grant to do something about it, but now I see such results across this nation. But we've got to do more. If we're to have a permanent impact on violence in this country, we have got to make sure that domestic violence is no longer handed down from one generation to another.

We've got to make sure that the dollars distributed under the Violence Against Women Act passed with President Clinton's leadership and Congress's vision, that we can make a difference. Over one million dollars has been distributed to all the states of this country, one million dollars on formula grants that is available to police. Let us make sure we use those funds.

Many of you have used these grants to build special units and develop other innovative programs. And you've had the summit on domestic violence, and you can see the difference it's making. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the number of female victims of nonlethal, intimate violence has declined from 1.1 million in 1993 to 840,000 in 1996. The number of murders by intimates dropped from 3,000 in 1976 to 1800 in 1996. These are significant decreases.

But we cannot become complacent, we cannot rest, for at the same time

we are faced with a far more mobile nation. More and more of our population move from state to state for business or employment reasons or to avoid domestic violence. Our federal system of 50 states and 50 court systems, plus many tribal courts, make it difficult for police to deal with the mobility of domestic violence.

The Violence Against Women Act addresses this problem by requiring the courts of one state to give full faith and credit to the acts of the courts of other jurisdictions. Put simply, a domestic violence protective order issued by a court in one state can now be enforced elsewhere in the country.

But this presents problems. Most court orders are interpreted by lawyers and judges. They have the luxury of time and the clarity of the day. Protective orders are often enforced in the middle of the night by a lone officer who has many considerations, not the least of which is his safety, the safety of the victim and of others who may be in the area. An abuser who stalks his victim to another jurisdiction is a person whose conduct demands caution.

How can we expect officers to interpret court orders from other states in the middle of the night while they have to worry about safety concerns? I asked that question, and in the true tradition of the I.A.C.P., you answered it by developing this pamphlet, *Protecting Victims of Domestic Violence*, which is an excellent example of the great work that you do. It will serve law enforcement and the victims of domestic violence alike, and it is going to save lives.

Chief Moody, where did you go? Thank you too.

Everyone involved in this effort deserves praise for the work that was done to bring this pamphlet to press.

But we must do more. We must interrupt the cycle of domestic violence and stop handing it down from one generation to another. Police at the scene more than anyone else see the terrible look on a child's face who's standing there as their mother is being carried out to an ambulance and their father is being taken off in handcuffs. We need to intervene at that point to make a difference.

Just before I came over here, just by coincidence, I went to look at what Ruben Ortega has been all about. And I challenge you all to take

a look at what he's done. I went to a victim resources center. There were five detectives who wanted to be there, or at least seemed like they wanted to be there, and they talked a good line. And just looking at their faces, I think they really did want to be there, because they were working with prosecutors, the judge was there who was vitally concerned with the effort. But most of all, they were focused on how they were protecting what they have come to call audience children, a terrible name but a fitting name, children who are the audience for such terrible violence.

We've got to make sure that everyone in this hall goes back and looks at whether you're accessing Violence Against Women Act money or V.A.C. A. money, to make sure that you have advocacy available to children at the scene and in follow-up sessions that can let these children know that there is support and that this violence is not the way of life that should be handed down from one generation to another.

The second issue: Guns. We don't have to have the Chicago statistics. We really can have the Toronto statistics. But it's a challenge for both the federal government and for all of you. It requires that we plan together and take effective action against those who illegally possess a gun. Nobody tolerates that.

But people approach it from a different point of view. In Boston the U.S. Attorney has worked with the local prosecutor in an effective partnership in which sometimes the local takes it, sometimes the feds take it, depending on what is in the best interest of the case and the community. In Richmond, federal prosecutors are into an initiative called Project Exile. It is working.

We have got to ensure appropriate sanctions for anyone who possesses a gun. Now, you're probably saying, There she goes again. Yes, I've been there before. I've had huge case loads that the courts couldn't begin to manage with the resources that they had. I've had someone charged with carrying a concealed arm get off with little, if any, punishment. Let us join together, whether it be through gun courts or other mechanisms, to development sanctions that can mean what we say, because guns are the most deadly tool of all.

The Brady Act is taking its toll on violence. Almost a quarter million fugitives, felons and others prohibited by law from possessing firearms have been stopped in their tracks and denied a

firearm. It's a commonsense tool. Let's work together to make the national check system work as effectively as possible.

But let us provide alternatives for our children on the streets as we get the guns out of their hands. As we impose the sanction, let us also impose an aftercare component and a follow-up that gives these kids something to say yes to.

I visited with children in an alternative school this morning, and I was reminded they sure can talk to you and they can talk back to you. But if you listen to them very closely, they have so much wisdom and so much understanding, and there is so much gold there if only we'd reach out to find it.

The next issue is drugs. We throw up our hands. We don't have enough resources. But if we use these tools of forecasting correctly, we can make a difference. But we've got to provide treatment and follow-up, and when we take out the drug organization, we've got to have something, whether it be weed and seed or other initiatives, that take its place.

The fourth issue that I think we've got to focus on, and I'm equally convinced that hate crime is an evil that we can do something about. Last year I directed the Justice Department to undertake a comprehensive initiative against hate crimes. You had the same idea, and I'm delighted that you are devoting your 1998 summit to the subject. The department's initiative has many facets, but a key element is the recognition that we at the federal level need to work closely with state and particularly local law enforcement because the primary responsibility for responding to hate crimes begins with you, and we want to support you.

About a year ago I asked the Department of Justice's Community Relations Service and the FBI's Hate Crimes Unit to work with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to development a model hate crimes training curriculum. Today I'm pleased to announce the availability of four training curricula on hate crimes, for patrol officers, investigators, managers and a mixed audience of all three. Over the past months we have held three regional trainer sessions to instruct qualified trainers on the ins and outs of these new curricula. I can now say that in each state there is at least one team of three trainers available to teach these curricula to your

forces.

If you want more information about either the trainers available in your state or the curricula, I urge you to contact the Office of Justice Programs Response Center.

Over the next year we're going to continue to work on this effort, but to make our endeavor a real success, we must work together so that we can reduce the devastating impact of hate crimes on our citizens.

Dan, I want you to let me know, if they won't call me, what we can do better to support you who are in the field on the frontlines.

But it is vital that we respond, for one thing we learned, haters are cowards, and when they're confronted, when they are held accountable, they back down. And those that would follow them back down.

But there are new issues, in ways not new, but with technology and science we present new issues that we must face together, united and indivisible, so that terrorists don't tear us apart. We have seen the forces of terrorism at work in the bombings at the World Trade Center and at the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City. These bombings demonstrated the absolute worst in humanity but also the very best in local law enforcement, the local police, the firefighters, the rescue squads who first responded. They were the heroes.

We must do everything in our power to prevent these awful acts. We must form stronger, more effective partnerships that will enable us to exchange threat warnings with you in a timely, helpful manner that will enable you to be alert to information signaling attacks, that if it were combined with FBI information or information from around the world would help us prevent this act in the first place. And together we must do everything in our power to prevent these terrible acts.

But we will not be able to prevent every one, and we must be prepared to respond. The response by you and your colleagues in the first few minutes after a terrorist attack is critical. The situation is dangerous and chaotic. The way we respond can make all the difference. And that is why the training and equipment of first responders is one of the most important undertakings we face. Such efforts are especially important as we face the threat of weapons of

mass destruction, including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

During this past year, various federal agencies addressed this problem. Now, pursuant to agreement among the federal agencies, the Department of Justice through the FBI will take the lead in this federal effort. Pursuant to this agreement, Director Freeh is establishing the National Domestic Preparedness Office which will be housed within the FBI and will draw on the expertise of agencies such as the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the Public Health Service and the relationships, the planning efforts and experience and insight of FEMA to prepare America's communities for terrorist incidents.

To ensure that first responders have the proper plans, the training and the equipment to do the job right, the state and local governments need to be a full partner in the plan and in the carrying out of this effort. You are on the frontline. Your colleagues in fire and rescue are there with you. We want to develop a two-way street, an exchange of information. We want to involve you in the development of this effort. It will not be successful without you. We want to identify and utilize state and local emergency plans and networks that have proven effective. We will work with governors, state emergency preparedness officials and public safety officials to ensure that together we plan for all of the nation and leave no gaps in training and provision for equipment.

This new office for national domestic preparedness will be a center for assistance, not a new bureaucracy. It will be a focal point for helping communities prepare for attacks. Through the Office of Justice Programs, it will offer a streamlined process for obtaining federal assistance.

This is one of my most important priorities. But to accomplish this goal I need the help and the input of fire departments, emergency medical services, hospitals, public health organizations, state and local emergency officials, and each one of you as leaders of the police departments of this nation. If we do it the right way, we can make a difference.

Chief Neubauer, you take over one of the great organizations in the world, and I look forward to working with you in the coming year.

Sometimes, as Adlai Stevenson once said, the burdens of office stagger the imagination, and they convert vanity to prayer. We need prayer as we approach our roles, but we need confidence, confidence that if we persist, if we work together, if we use technology instead of letting technology use us, if we are methodical and careful and act based on sound information, we will not eliminate violence completely, but we can eliminate the culture of violence in this nation and make that downward trend in crime a permanent reality for this time and for generations to come.

Thank you for all you do for your communities and for this country.

(Concluded at 11:18 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E STATE OF UTAH) COUNTY OF SALT LAKE)

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the speech given by the HONORABLE JANET RENO, Attorney General of the United States of American, before the 105th Annual Convention of the International Association of Chiefs of Police on the 20th day of October 1998, was taken before me, SUSETTE M. SNIDER, a Certified Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Utah, residing at Salt Lake City, Utah; that the speech of the HONORABLE JANET RENO was reported by me in Stenotype and thereafter caused by me to be transcribed into typewriting, and that a full, true and correct transcription of said speech so taken and transcribed, is set forth in the foregoing pages numbered from 1 to 18, inclusive.

WITNESS MY HAND and official seal at Salt Lake City, Utah, this 21st day of October, 1998.

Susette M. Snider, CSR, RPR

My Commission Expires June 17, 2000