



Department of Justice

STATEMENT OF ATTORNEY GENERAL JANET RENO

LOUISIANA-PACIFIC CASE
JOINT EPA-DOJ PRESS CONFERENCE

May 24, 1993

THANK YOU, CAROL, FOR INVITING ME HERE TODAY. AND THANK YOU BILL FLANAGAN, FOR BEING HERE. BILL IS THE ACTING U.S. ATTORNEY IN SHREVEPORT WHOSE OFFICE WILL HELP MONITOR AND ENFORCE THE IMPORTANT SETTLEMENT WE ARE ANNOUNCING TODAY.

AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, I AM A PRODUCT OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA. WHILE I ASSURE YOU MY REPUTATION FOR ALLIGATOR WRESTLING IS SOMEWHAT EXAGGERATED, MY CONCERN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT CANNOT BE OVER-STATED. THOSE OF US WHO LIVE IN SOUTH FLORIDA, WITH ITS FRAGILE ECO-SYSTEM, ARE CONSTANTLY AWARE OF THE NEED TO DO SOMETHING -- I SAY AGAIN, DO SOMETHING -- TO INSURE MEANINGFUL PROTECTION OF THE AIR AND WATER AROUND US.

OUR ADMINISTRATION BELIEVES THAT POLLUTERS SHOULD PAY FOR THE HARM THEY CAUSE. THE PURPOSE IS NOT JUST TO DETER VIOLATIONS. THE PRESIDENT WANTS COMPANIES THAT 'PLAY BY THE RULES' TO KNOW THEY WON'T BE AT A COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE. PENALTIES SHOULD ALWAYS RECAPTURE THE ECONOMIC BENEFIT A VIOLATOR GAINED BY BREAKING THE LAW.

IN THIS CASE, E.P.A. CONDUCTED A UNIQUE INVESTIGATION IN SEVERAL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. IT DISCOVERED THAT THE COMPANY HAD FOR YEARS AVOIDED PERMIT AND POLLUTION-CONTROL REQUIREMENTS BY FAILING TO ACCURATELY REPORT THE AMOUNT OF POLLUTION THAT WOULD RESULT FROM THE CONSTRUCTION OF 14 NEW PLANTS. E.P.A. REPORTED THE MATTER TO THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT. A TASK FORCE OF ATTORNEYS IN THE DEPARTMENT'S ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION WAS IMMEDIATELY ASSIGNED TO WORK WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS AT E.P.A. TO INVESTIGATE AND RESOLVE THE MATTER.

NOW, IT HAS BEEN RESOVED -- WITH THE LARGEST CIVIL PENALTY EVER COLLECTED FOR A VIOLATION OF THE CLEAN AIR ACT. MORE THAN THAT, THE SETTLEMENT INCORPORATES CORRECTIVE MEASURES AND INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY. ABOUT 70-MILLION-DOLLARS WORTH OF THE LATEST POLLUTION CONTROL EQUIPMENT WILL BE INSTALLED AT FACILITIES IN 9 STATES. THE AIR WILL BE CLEANER IN MAINE AND GEORGIA. TEXAS AND MINNESOTA. WISCONSIN AND CALIFORNIA. AND THE SETTLEMENT WAS ACHIEVED AT MINIMUM LEGAL COST TO THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER.

NO STATE, ACTING ALONE, COULD HAVE ACHIEVED SO MUCH. YET, WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE AS WELL WITHOUT THE INVALUABLE COOPERATION

OF THE STATES INVOLVED. WE PLEDGE OUR CONTINUED BEST EFFORTS TO
WORK TOGETHER IN A PARTNERSHIP-AGAINST-POLLUTION.

AGAIN, I AM DELIGHTED TO BE HERE. I SOMETIMES RECOIL AT
DESCRIPTIONS OF ME AS A 'TOUGH OLD GIRL.' HOWEVER, ON THIS
MATTER, KEEPING OUR AIR AND WATER SAFE AND CLEAN, YOU CAN SPREAD
THE WORD -- I INTEND TO BE TOUGH.

THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME.