

**THE
NEW ENGLAND
COUNCIL**

**LEADERSHIP AWARD
TO
WOMEN IN BUSINESS**

**Keynote Address by
U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno**

**Boston, Massachusetts
Wednesday, June 9, 1993**

1 (Introduction by Natalie Jacobson.)

2 MS. RENO: Thank you very, very
3 much.

4 A little over three months ago, I
5 thought I would be beginning a new term as
6 the prosecutor in Dade County, and these last
7 three months have been some of the most
8 incredible that I could ever imagine. People
9 have been so wonderful and so warm during
10 times of crisis.

11 And to come back to a place that I
12 loved for three years, a place that doesn't
13 know how to handle ice in wintertime, but,
14 otherwise, the greatest city to go to school
15 in the world, and to come back with dispatch
16 to such a warm welcome is a very wonderful
17 experience for me.

18 I love this city.

19 I used to get on the MTA and ride
20 all over the place. On Saturday afternoons,
21 not having much money at all, I would get on
22 the MTA, before you redid the market area,
23 and go to the market area and just wander up
24 and down and do my shopping for the week, and

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 stop at used book stores and find bargains
2 that, today, are very valuable, and then,
3 wander through the cemeteries that have such
4 a sense of history.

5 You continue to build such an
6 incredible city and I think it's a testimony
7 to the leaders throughout this community.

8 It's a great honor to me to be here
9 today with such distinguished people.

10 I think in the last 15 years, there
11 has been a tendency from Washington to push
12 problems to the state and, then, the state
13 pushes problems to the community, and the
14 community, with its back up against the wall,
15 has been the place for innovation and
16 creativity and boldness and new ideas.

17 In just speaking with these ladies
18 this morning for such a brief period of time,
19 I'm already going back to Washington with new
20 ideas to share with others. And I want to
21 continue to get out into the communities of
22 America, for I think that's where our
23 solutions will come, and that's what I
24 present to you today from my limited

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

experience in Washington, but from the perspective of 15 years in Dade County.

I think the time has come to approach the problems of crime and so many of the problems that we face in America in a thoughtful, nonpartisan way that looks at what works and what doesn't work, that gets the best return on our dollars, the figures what we can afford and can't afford, and that we work together and implement that approach. I have these suggestions that I think we can all begin to implement as we work together to discuss what works and what doesn't work.

I think at the end of the line, it's imperative, as we focus on crime, that we have to focus on the dangers of the offender, the career criminal, the person who commits two and three robberies, and those people should be prosecuted, convicted, and put away and kept away. We should make sure we have enough prison cells to house them for the length of time the judges are sentencing them. We should make sure that all states have sufficient prison cells to house such

1 offenders and that we share our resources in
2 terms of lease arrangements or whatever is
3 necessary to make sure that those people are
4 not a plague upon our streets, and the same
5 for major traffickers and major distributors,
6 but states around this nation are facing
7 gridlock in their prison count because, in
8 too many instances, there are not enough
9 cells. In other instances, people are
10 returning to the community sooner rather than
11 later.

12 It makes no sense to have somebody
13 who has two priors for a burglary, who has a
14 significant drug problem, to send him to
15 prison for three years, then, pick him up and
16 put him back in the community without doing
17 anything about it. Guess what? In a week,
18 he's going to be right back on our doorsteps
19 wasting yours and my dollars in prosecuting
20 him and incarcerating him. We've got to do
21 more to interrupt the cycle.

22 In Dade County, we developed a drug
23 program focused on first offenders, but the
24 principle applies, in the good old-fashioned

1 sense as the carrot and stick approach, to
2 the more serious offender. For that person
3 who has a criminal past, because he has a
4 drug problem, let's tell him he can get
5 punished or he can work his way out of
6 prison. He can go into detox, he can get
7 stabilized, he can come back to the community
8 in residential non-secure facilities, he can
9 agree to random drug testing, we can work
10 with him in job training and placement, we
11 can get him into after-care programs, all
12 under judicial supervision, so that if he
13 messes up along the way, we can get him back
14 into the jail and let him know that we mean
15 business, but we've got the carrot and stick
16 both working, and we're going to have a far
17 better chance that that person will get off
18 on the right foot, that we can make a
19 difference for him in this fashion, but there
20 are other things that we have to do.

21 I don't know about Boston, but I
22 suspect it's true because people from around
23 this nation have told me that their figures
24 compare, when I first took office 15 years

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 ago, I went to a medical examiner, looked at
 2 30 years worth of people being killed in Dade
 3 County to find out why they had been killed.
 4 Forty percent were related to husband and
 5 wife, boyfriend/girlfriend, significant other
 6 ex-spouse disputes and violence.

7 We developed a domestic intervention
 8 program and we have now come a long way in
 9 terms of developing a domestic violence
 10 court, but for too long domestic violence has
 11 been accepted as something that's
 12 semi-proper. That's where violence in
 13 America gets started.

14 When a child sees his father hit his
 15 mother, violence becomes a way of life, an
 16 accepted way of life for him, and we have got
 17 to interrupt it and make a difference right
 18 when it starts.

19 Physicians throughout this country
 20 have got to understand when a patient comes
 21 into their waiting room with a black eye,
 22 they don't treat just the black eye, they
 23 find out what caused it, and refer that
 24 patient, particularly patients of

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
 65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 longstanding, for counseling, and the same
2 would be true in emergency rooms throughout
3 this country. No longer can we turn our back
4 on the birthplace of violence.

5 We have got to look at our
6 youngsters in our juvenile justice programs
7 and understand that violence, again, is
8 probably, amongst youth, the greatest single
9 crime problem we face in America.

10 The startling statistics that have
11 been revealed lately of children who have
12 been hurt or killed through use of guns
13 throughout America is just appalling,
14 something that this nation cannot tolerate.

15 We have got to emphasize the
16 juvenile justice system, put enough resources
17 in it to make a difference. An investment
18 there will save us human lives, it will save
19 us dollars, but there is a tendency
20 throughout America to be penny wise and pound
21 foolish and spend our dollars after the
22 crisis, after the deaths, after the tragedy,
23 and when it's a lot more costly to correct
24 it.

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 So, I started looking at the people
2 that we were prosecuting in Dade County as
3 juveniles, and I realized that we could
4 change some lives, but there would never be
5 enough dollars to change lives at 16 and 17
6 after they had two or three prior
7 adjudications for delinquency. We had to
8 start earlier.

9 And we started looking at dropout
10 prevention programs, which were, oftentimes,
11 a signal that there was going to be further
12 trouble down the line, but dropout prevention
13 programs at middle schools were too late. By
14 that time, the child was already two or three
15 years behind in reading levels, he had not
16 developed his self-respect, his sense of
17 dignity, his sense of purpose. He was being
18 laughed at, so, he was acting out to gain
19 attention in other forms.

20 And I started developing
21 intervention programs, neighborhood
22 intervention programs for early school
23 children, but that was too late.

24 And, in 1985, the crack epidemic hit

1 Miami, probably earlier than most other
2 jurisdictions in the country, and I went to
3 our public hospital to talk to people about
4 what should be done about crack moms and
5 their babies.

6 They gave me an education. And
7 probably the doctors in this community,
8 probably the greatest medical community in
9 the world, can give each of us an education.
10 They pointed out to me that the most
11 formative time in a person's life is zero to
12 three; that 50 percent of all learned human
13 response is learned in the first year of
14 life; that from zero to three, the child
15 develops a concept of reward and punishment
16 and develops a conscience.

17 Think about it. If he hasn't
18 developed a conscience then, what difference
19 is punishment going to make at 13 or at 20,
20 or what difference is the threat of
21 punishment going to mean to that child.

22 And, yet, as I walked through that
23 public hospital, I saw children from whom the
24 very fabric of society had fallen away,

1 children who, in those early days before we
2 knew what to do with them, had been in their
3 bassinets for six weeks without being held or
4 talked to except when changed or fed, and
5 they were beginning to show nonhuman
6 responses; whereas, the child across the
7 neonatal unit who had been born with terrible
8 birth defects and was severely crippled was
9 beginning to respond in human terms because
10 his parents were with him around the clock or
11 as much as they possibly could be.

12 And I began to understand that we
13 all focused too narrowly. The businessman
14 looks at his profits, the prosecutor looks at
15 the convictions, the teacher looks at the
16 dropout rate or the graduation rate, the
17 pediatrician looks at who he got cured or she
18 got cured, and each of us focuses on a narrow
19 point in human life without coming together
20 as a continuum to make a true investment.

21 And, then, I looked further and I
22 thought a little bit about history. Up until
23 the industrial revolution, both parents were
24 most often with the child. The tailor, the

1 miller, the wheelwright, the child was in and
2 around the mill, in and around the shop, at
3 home with mother.

4 With the industrial revolution, one
5 principal teacher began to go to the factory
6 and, in subsequent centuries, to the
7 corporation and to the office.

8 And, after World War II, we saw the
9 second parent begin to go to work ever more
10 often and we began to see the disintegration
11 of the American family. But, then, we also
12 saw the burden placed on our public schools.

13 The schools became the institution,
14 both public and private, most responsible for
15 ending 200 years of slavery. The schools
16 became the institution, public and private,
17 most responsible for stepping in when a child
18 came to school wracked by domestic dissension
19 in the home. And, yet, look at the burdens
20 we have placed on the schools in terms of
21 educational challenges.

22 My grandmother would be almost 105
23 now, she lived to be 93, and I used to talk
24 with her about what she saw in her almost

1 century of life: Flight, electric light, the
2 automobile, man to the moon, atomic energy,
3 sulfur, penicillin, computers, lasers,
4 television, just an incredible diverse of
5 human knowledge, probably the greatest in all
6 human history, and the schools haven't even
7 begun to be able to keep up with it. And,
8 still, the family has disintegrated around
9 that child in the formative years.

10 It's time we all looked to a much
11 longer perspective, that we look in whatever
12 capacity we function at an investment in
13 humans from the beginning. If you don't care
14 about it from the common humanity sake, care
15 about it from profits, because if we don't
16 focus on the children of America today, you
17 are not going to have a work force with the
18 the skills that can fill the jobs that can
19 maintain America as a first-rate nation.

20 If you're a senior citizen who used
21 to tell me, 15 years ago, that you've done
22 your duty by education by sending your son,
23 your grandson and your great grandson to
24 college, unless you care about children

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 today, your pension you have will not be
2 worth the paper it's written on if we don't
3 have the work force that can maintain the
4 economy and that can maintain that pension.

5 The physician who says that's not my
6 problem, that's some problem across town,
7 will have health care institutions that are
8 being brought to their knees by the lack of
9 preventative medicine throughout this country
10 that is preventing epidemics that are
11 overburdening our health care system, and the
12 prosecutor will never be able to build enough
13 jails if we don't start focusing on that
14 child when he learns or should be learning
15 the concept of reward and punishment.

16 How do we do it and where do we
17 begin? First of all, I think we have to look
18 at how we've come to structure America.

19 I used to resent being in Dade
20 County when federal officials would come to
21 town and say, "This is the way we're going to
22 do it," or come to town and say, "We're going
23 to solve all your problems." And, then,
24 they'd tell me they had a grant. Well, the

1 grant was a round peg, and we had a very
2 square hole, and the round peg would never
3 get shaped squarely, it always had to go into
4 the square hole as a round beg.

5 I want to try my best to change
6 attitudes in Washington and throughout this
7 country.

8 Communities know their needs, they
9 know their resources, they can plan better as
10 to what's needed. In one community, there
11 may be a private not-for-profit enterprise
12 that is filling a need; whereas, in another
13 community, that might not exist. One
14 community's need will be different, there
15 will be different circumstances. I'd like to
16 see the federal government working with
17 communities as true partners, fitting
18 together pieces, but to do that, the federal
19 government is going to have to work through
20 its bureaucracy.

21 I used to sit in Miami and listen to
22 title this and ABC that and XYZ this and an
23 HHS this and a weed and seed that, and I
24 didn't know how they related. I'm still

1 learning how they're related. And we've got
2 to develop a program in Washington where the
3 pieces weave together so that we can provide
4 comprehensive services to people who can
5 benefit.

6 Most people that I've come into
7 contact with in the streets of Miami, and the
8 communities and the neighborhoods in Miami,
9 are wonderful people. They want so to be
10 self-sufficient, they want so to raise their
11 children without drugs and crime, they want
12 to be safe, they want to be free, they want
13 to be independent, but they have been so beat
14 down by the bureaucracy that tells them, "I'm
15 sorry, you've just gotten this job that earns
16 minimum wage, so, you're going to lose
17 benefits and you're going to be worse off
18 than if you hadn't gone to work in the first
19 place"; another lady that calls me and says,
20 "Ms. Reno, you've got to help me, my daughter
21 has a crippling disease, it's getting worse,
22 my company has lost its health care benefits,
23 I can't get Medicaid for her because I make
24 too much money, but I can't afford this very

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 expensive treatment, and that hospital has
2 told me I should quit my job so I can be
3 eligible for Medicaid." This is the
4 ridiculous absurdity we see of waiting for
5 the crisis to occur rather than making a
6 sensible and much smaller investment upfront
7 in people.

8 Let us form these partnerships to
9 develop a comprehensive approach to the
10 various points in life where we can lend a
11 helping hand to make people self-sufficient,
12 operating on the theory of trust the people.
13 If we can give them half a fighting chance,
14 they will succeed.

15 Let's, first of all, join together
16 to make sure that parents are old enough,
17 wise enough and financially able enough to
18 take care of their children.

19 Let us focus on teen pregnancy. For
20 every teen pregnancy prevented, we can save
21 so much in terms of misery and dollars that
22 have to be invested down the road.

23 Let us look to our young men, ages
24 18 to 30, who are parents, who can't get work

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 because they have two prior records, but
2 they're through with that, they're
3 desperately trying to get off on the right
4 foot, but they can't find a job because
5 they've got a prior record. Let's find ways
6 to provide parenting skills, but, also, to
7 give them that chance to get back into
8 society.

9 We can do so much if we focus on
10 parents.

11 Raising children is the single most
12 difficult thing I know to do. About eight
13 years ago, a friend died, leaving me as the
14 legal guardian of her 15 year old twins, a
15 boy and a girl. The girl was in love, and
16 I've learned an awful lot about raising
17 children in the last few years, but it is one
18 of the most rewarding things. And we can
19 give them skills and teach them things in
20 high schools and in other programs that can
21 enable them to be better parents and stronger
22 parents, and they want to be, they so
23 desperately want to be.

24 I talked to two schools shortly

1 before I came up here, in the year before I
2 came up here, a high school in the inner city
3 and, a week later, a middle school in the
4 inner city. I collected child support for
5 Miami and they wrote a rap song about me, so,
6 all the kids knew the rap song, and they
7 started asking me questions about child
8 support; what do you do if he doesn't pay,
9 what do you do if she wastes the money. And
10 I answered those questions, but it was so
11 eerie, a week apart, totally independent of
12 each other. I, then, said, but that's not
13 the point, the point is that you should be
14 old enough, wise enough and financially able
15 enough to raise your children, and both
16 auditoriums, independently and spontaneously,
17 broke into loud cheering, storming applause,
18 that lasted for several minutes. Kids want
19 that structure.

20 We've got to make sure that every
21 child in America's parent has prenatal care.

22 You say what's the Attorney General
23 of the United States talking to me about
24 prenatal care for? We've got to reach out

1 and talk about things that don't concern us
2 because everybody's told me that for every
3 dollar spent in prenatal care, you will save
4 \$3.00 down the line for health care
5 associated with low birth weights and other
6 problems.

7 If you don't care about the child,
8 care about your tax paying dollars. If you
9 don't care about dollars, care about our
10 future in terms of having strong and healthy
11 human beings.

12 We've got to focus on the ages of
13 zero to three and make sure that those
14 children have safe constructive edu-care.

15 It is so frustrating to walk through
16 a public housing project, see a three year
17 old wandering around, and ask why he isn't in
18 child care. In Florida, it was his mother is
19 not working, she's not looking for work, and
20 she has abused and neglected him bad enough
21 for him to be declared dependent and,
22 therefore, eligible for child care. So, he
23 wanders unsupervised.

24 We've got to make sure that children

1 have preventative medical care. Something is
2 terribly wrong with a nation that says to a
3 person 70 years old you can have an operation
4 and extend your life expectancy by three
5 years, but turns to a person, a child of the
6 working poor, who do not have health benefits
7 and who make too much money to be eligible
8 for Medicaid, and say, sorry, you can't get
9 the medical care that will save us all
10 dollars in 10 years if we treat it now rather
11 than later and save you a life of misery.

12 We have got to make sure that we
13 focus on our schools and give our schools the
14 support they need to teach our children,
15 freeing our teachers time to teach, and let
16 other people deal with the social problems
17 that have become the responsibility for the
18 schools.

19 Let's have conflict resolution
20 programs in the schools. They can work.
21 Violence is tearing our kid's lives apart,
22 they are dying on our streets. We can do so
23 much in terms of programs in the schools that
24 teach children that they can resolve their

1 conflicts peacefully.

2 Let's tell the advertisers that we
3 don't want them to advertise violence, and
4 send the message by buying based on that
5 message.

6 Let us look at what happens. I pick
7 up the file, and maybe you all do it better
8 in Boston, but I'm told, as I travel around
9 the country in my limited time, it's pretty
10 often the case you pick up the file of a 13
11 year old charged with armed robbery, truant
12 15 days in the first 45 of school and when he
13 was eight years old. Nobody did anything.
14 The police took him to the school. The
15 school called home. Home didn't come. The
16 school put him on the bus and sent him home.
17 Nobody went home to find out that the mother
18 was on the verge of falling into a terrible
19 crack addiction and that we could have done
20 something about it if we could have just
21 intervened early enough.

22 Let us start looking at job
23 development in a real sense, not just a
24 summer job that says to a kid you can scrape

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 paint on this public building, but a summer
2 job that blends school experience, school
3 work experience, aptitude and interest.

4 Wouldn't it be wonderful if we all
5 joined together in a common effort and used
6 the resources of education in the private
7 sector, resources that we had, and said to
8 7th graders we're going to do a careful
9 evaluation with the existing information we
10 have on your aptitude and interest, then,
11 we're going to develop a program which, if
12 you follow, step by step, through work
13 experience in the summer and school
14 experience and after school experience, will
15 lead you to a skill, when you graduate, that
16 will enable you to earn a living wage, and
17 that that will be your requirement of high
18 school.

19 Right now, we go in different
20 directions. The summer job program, too
21 often, doesn't complement the school. The
22 school's work experience program is sometimes
23 at odds with what the school is doing. We
24 could do so much in terms of blending it

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 together with the public and private sector
2 working together.

3 Let us offer our youngsters
4 opportunity for service.

5 I used to look around this nation
6 and it's wonderful to see in other
7 communities the same monuments to the young
8 men who served in the Civilian Conservation
9 Corps during the depression, they served with
10 such a spirit, and it's wonderful to talk to
11 them to this day, even.

12 And, then, I can remember World War
13 II when my aunts went off, one as a women's
14 Army service pilot and the other as an Army
15 nurse behind Patton's Army in North Africa,
16 and when those ladies went to war and when
17 they came home, they were my heroines because
18 they were standing up against one of the
19 great dictators in the history of the world,
20 and John F. Kennedy sent our young people
21 half way around the world to help others less
22 fortunate.

23 Our crisis is on our streets and in
24 our communities and in our neighborhoods

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 throughout America. And we can develop such
2 wonderfully creative programs that would
3 challenge our youngsters, give them a sense
4 of purpose, give them a sense of fulfillment
5 and let them be involved, but it's not just
6 dollars and programs. It's something that
7 each one of us, whether it be the attorney
8 general who has authority over the Department
9 of Justice, or the CEO of a large company,
10 all of us can make the most important
11 contribution, and that is to put family first
12 in every thing we do.

13 I remember my afternoons after
14 school and during the summertime. My mother
15 worked in the home, my father worked
16 downtown. My mother taught me to bake a
17 cake, to appreciate Beethoven's symphonies,
18 she taught me how to play baseball, she
19 taught my brothers and sister and I how to
20 play fair, and she spanked the living
21 daylights out of us, and she loved us with
22 all of her heart, and there is no child care
23 in the world that will ever be a substitute
24 for what that lady was in our life.

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110

1 And, yet, I looked at the women in
2 my office in Miami struggling to get to work,
3 to get breakfast, the children off to school,
4 try a case, call witnesses at 6:30 at night,
5 leave at seven, get home, put dinner on the
6 table, the children bathed, the homework
7 done, and everybody collapses in bed.
8 Saturdays, it's Temple or running errands.
9 Sunday mornings, it's church or sleep in
10 late. And, Sunday night, they start
11 preparing for trial again. There is no
12 quality time, too often, with children.

13 If you had told me in 1960 that I
14 couldn't go to Harvard law school because I
15 was a woman, I would have been outraged, and
16 I would be even more outraged now.

17 But for a nation that can send a man
18 to the moon, surely, we can put family first
19 in everything we do. We can spend time with
20 our children while both parents, mother and
21 father, are spending time in their
22 professional development. That will be our
23 challenge for this next century.

24 And the warnings from the last two

1 verses from the old testament from the Book
2 of Malachi are the clearest warnings that I
3 know of, "And, behold, I shall send you the
4 prophet Elijah before the coming of the great
5 and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall
6 turn the heart of the father to the children
7 and the children's hearts to their father,
8 lest I come down and smite the land with a
9 curse."

10 Thank you.

11 (End of speech: 12:20 p.m.)
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

IRENE M. ARABIAN, CSR, RPR (617) 367-8888
65 E. INDIA ROW, 20-E, BOSTON, MA 02110