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ADDRESS BY  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY GENERAL JANET RENO

AT THE  
DINNER OF THE NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Tuesday, September 14, 1993

Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.

(Transcribed from a provided tape.)

1 MS. BLACK: Has everyone found their seat by now?

2 I think for this group we need a cattle prod to  
3 get everyone down.

4 Good evening.

5 The Newspaper Association's board of governors and  
6 I are absolutely delighted to welcome fellow newspaper  
7 publishers and newspaper executives, Senators,  
8 Representatives, members of the Clinton administration,  
9 postal rate commissioners, and other distinguished guests.

10 How fitting it is for this group, who cares so  
11 much about the printed word and newspapers and books and  
12 magazines to be here in the Library of Congress.

13 For those of you whom I have not had a chance to  
14 say hello to yet, I am Cathy Black, and I am the president  
15 and CEO of the Newspaper Association.

16 This is the second day of our annual fall board  
17 meeting here in the Nation's capital. It is also obviously  
18 a very historic moment in Washington. Little did we know,  
19 planning this meeting a year ago, and choosing the Mayflower  
20 Hotel that we would end up in Washington on a very historic  
21 occasion, a very joyful occasion, and also headquartered  
22 with the Israeli delegation. It was quite a time in the  
23 Mayflower Hotel for the last 48 hours.

24 But whether it be in the Mayflower Hotel, in the  
25 halls of Congress or on the 10th floor of the Postal

1 Service, many of our elected and appointed officials and  
2 staff, and many of you in this room, will be very much aware  
3 that the newspaper industry is in town.

4 Speaking with a united voice on Capitol Hill,  
5 within our own industry, and in the international arena, was  
6 one of the primary reasons that about a little more than a  
7 year ago seven organizations merged to become the Newspaper  
8 Association of America. Today, we represent about 85  
9 percent of the circulation in this country. The future of  
10 newspapers is important to the more 1,500 dailies and 7,000  
11 weeklies that reach your mailboxes, your newsstands, and  
12 almost everyday, your doorstep.

13 Newspapers are important to the survival of this  
14 Nation. The role of newspapers to provide penetrating  
15 coverage is so central to our concept of democracy. The  
16 freedom of the press, along with the freedom of speech and  
17 the right of people to peaceably assemble, are among the  
18 cornerstones of this great country.

19 The Newspaper Association of America, or NAA, is  
20 an organization guided by an outstanding board of governors  
21 that are here with us this evening, and experienced staff,  
22 who provide the information, the skills, the services and  
23 resources that our members need to have newspapers continue  
24 as the world's leading information provider.

25 The Association is fully dedicated to the mission

1 and purpose of advancing the cause of a free press and  
2 ensuring that newspapers have the economic strength to serve  
3 the American people. And in a media world that is changing  
4 so fast and furiously that even futurists are out of breath  
5 when they try to keep up, NAA is strategically focused to  
6 help the newspaper industry reposition itself for a  
7 different era and a more complex media environment.

8 As we maximize our strengths in local markets and  
9 communities all over this country, we also have to engage  
10 and embrace new technologies in news and information. It  
11 is and will be a very exciting time ahead.

12 We essentially focused on key areas in government  
13 and public policy, marketing, readership, literacy,  
14 technology and technical issues, and diversity, because  
15 diversity is important in terms of news coverage and also  
16 in terms of work force issues. All of this is important to  
17 ensure that newspapers have a long-term issue and prominence  
18 in this country.

19 We know that everyone in this room, whether you  
20 are part of the newspaper industry or you are one of our  
21 distinguished and honored guests this evening, we know that  
22 you care about the role that newspapers play.

23 After dinner, it is my great pleasure that Donald  
24 Newhouse, who is the chairman of our association for this  
25 year, will take the podium to give his official welcome, and

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1 also to formally introduce our wonderful and our honor to  
2 have as our guest speaker this evening the Attorney General  
3 of the United States, Janet Reno.

4 So, now, please, enjoy your dinner, and after we  
5 are done here, Don Newhouse will come up.

6 Again, thank you for being with us this evening.

7 It is a pleasure.

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 (Pause.)

11 (Tape is edited.)

12 MR. NEWHOUSE: Good evening.

13 The Newspaper Association of America, its board  
14 of governors and I are delighted to welcome you, who read  
15 more newspapers with greater passion, more critically, than  
16 any group of 200 that could be found anywhere in these  
17 United States.

18 Love us or hate us, or love us and hate us, we  
19 love our readers.

20 I am Donald Newhouse. For the past 41 years I  
21 have worked for newspapers. This year, my year of  
22 servitude, I work for newspapers as president of Vance  
23 Publications, and I am chairman of the Newspaper Association  
24 of America.

25 NAA is an infant, born 16 months ago, because

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1 newspapers found themselves, as a character in Pogo says,  
2 confronted by insurmountable opportunities, challenges that  
3 required the unified response of all newspapers, large and  
4 small, group and individually owned, public and private,  
5 challenges that also required the unified response of all  
6 newspaper disciplines, challenges which are, first, our  
7 publishing areas are rapidly becoming demographically more  
8 diverse.

9           Newspapers, if they are to maintain, as they must  
10 maintain, their universality, must broaden the appeal of the  
11 information they offer. Men and women readers of different  
12 ethnic, racial, religious, and lifestyle groups want  
13 information specific to their interests. To meet these  
14 needs, newspapers must diversify their staff.

15           Second, advertising decisions affecting large  
16 markets and small markets are being made nationally. A  
17 local newspapers, large or small, a local any media cannot  
18 be heard. Networking, in the sense that individual TV  
19 stations network, is a must. A single source for placing  
20 an advertisement and billing an advertisement is a must.

21           Third, the needs of our communities and of our  
22 employees are becoming increasingly complex. Environmental  
23 and recycling needs and ergonomic concerns must be met by  
24 all newspapers, working together, working with those who set  
25 the policy and those who write and carry out the

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1 regulations.

2           Newspapers must be good corporate citizens or we  
3 face the grim fate of reading about ourselves in ourselves.

4           And, finally, there has been a barrage -- I might  
5 say a daily barrage -- of new technologies, which have the  
6 potential impact the way news and advertising will be  
7 delivered.

8           In today's world, technologists have outrun  
9 marketers. News on paper, newspapers, continue to be the  
10 most efficient and effective information providers.  
11 However, newspapers can and must adapt new technologies to  
12 add value to the services we provide our readers and  
13 advertisers.

14           The heart, body and soul of a newspaper is its  
15 localness, but today's challenges are regional and national.

16           NAA was created to be the unified response of  
17 newspapers to these challenges. NAA was created to  
18 strengthen each of its members. The people who join me in  
19 hosting this evening, join me in having two careers. They  
20 are CEO's, publishers or marketers of newspapers, and they  
21 are guiding the NAA to fulfill its mission. They deserve  
22 newspapers' thanks.

23           I am grateful to you for listening to my  
24 commercial. And as a reward, I will tell you a story. The  
25 renowned conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, Sir

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1 Thomas Beecham, was one of us mortals who could never  
2 remember a name. Once, after a concert, he was attending  
3 a reception and met a woman whose face was familiar but  
4 whose name, as usual, had escaped him.

5 From somewhere deep in his subconscious he dredged  
6 up the fact that this woman had a sister. To cover his  
7 embarrassment he asked her: What is your sister doing these  
8 days? After a brief pause, the woman responded: Oh, she's  
9 still the queen.

10 (Laughter.)

11 MR. NEWHOUSE: For those Thomas Beechams in this  
12 audience, I will introduce our guest speaker.

13 (Laughter.)

14 MR. NEWHOUSE: Janet Reno is the daughter of two  
15 reporters, Henry, who worked as a police reporter for the  
16 Miami Herald, and of whom she says, "he always seemed to see  
17 the beauty in the human spirit with a gentleness and humor  
18 that was rare," and Jane, a reporter for the competition,  
19 the Miami News -- she wrote beautifully. At age 52, for a  
20 feature story, she slept on the beaches of Miami for six  
21 days and wrote, "My bag was my pillow and I wiggled out  
22 curves in the sand to fit. Never did I have a sounder,  
23 sweeter sleep. The nights were most magical after the moon  
24 had set, for the stars were higher and so lavish in their  
25 brightness that I could see the white crests of all the

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1 curling waves."

2 Janet Reno grew up in a house literally built by  
3 her mother. On the doorpost of this home is a painted tile  
4 with these words: "hic vivet reporter." Translation: Here  
5 lives a reporter.

6 This house stood in the path of Hurricane Andrew  
7 and withstood its attack, while devastation rained around  
8 it.

9 Reno went to Cornell, where she once introduced  
10 former President Harry Truman, from whom she absorbed the  
11 philosophical concept, "The buck stops here."

12 Reno received an A.B. in chemistry. Then on to  
13 Harvard Law School, where she was one of 16 women in a class  
14 of 500.

15 From 1963 to 1978, her legal career included both  
16 private practice and public service. In 1978, she was  
17 appointed State attorney for Dade County. Thereafter, she  
18 was elected a record breaking five times, receiving in 1988  
19 a plurality of 68 percent.

20 Here is Janet Reno in her words at Barry  
21 University in Miami after she became Attorney General, she  
22 told the graduating class: "So let us take community and  
23 let us take family and rebuild around the children of  
24 America an environment, a fabric, where they can grow as  
25 strong and constructive human beings."

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1           Before the Women's Bar Association of Washington  
2 she said: "Let us put this world back in human terms, not  
3 in terms of machines, not in terms of billable hours, not  
4 in terms of goals and outcomes, but in terms of real human  
5 beings. We have got to reach out to families and children  
6 for whom the very thread of society have fallen away and  
7 become unravelled, so that the children stand there too  
8 often alone."

9           And, finally, in a group of attorneys she said:  
10 "We must explain our actions not in obscure legalese but in  
11 small, old words we all understand."

12           I believe the concept of small, old words we all  
13 understand must come from her upbringing by two reporters.

14           From her writings and from her actions, we know  
15 Attorney General Reno to be a person of compassion and  
16 strength of purpose, a person who is making a great effort  
17 to share with us all her conception of the proper role of  
18 justice in our society.

19           It is my pleasure to introduce Attorney General  
20 Janet Reno.

21           (Applause.)

22           ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO:     That is the nicest  
23 introduction I have had since February the 7th at 11:45 at  
24 night, when the senior Senator from Florida called me and  
25 said, "Janet, I think you might get a call from the White

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1 House the next day."

2 (Laughter.)

3 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: It also makes me feel very  
4 much at home. Last Saturday night, I was with the National  
5 Conference of Editorial Writers, and I explained to them  
6 that I feel more comfortable around newspaper people than  
7 anybody -- anybody, including politicians -- forgive me,  
8 Mr. Chairman, but I am sure you have a newspaper background  
9 in your life.

10 (Laughter.)

11 (Applause.)

12 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Anybody, including  
13 lawyers, and I will forgive myself.

14 (Laughter.)

15 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: But newspaper people, not  
16 television people, but newspaper people are my life. What  
17 Mr. Newhouse neglected to say was that my grandfather was  
18 the chief photographer for the Herald, my aunt was the music  
19 critic of the Herald, my sister started her career in public  
20 service as a copy editor for the Herald, my brother started  
21 as a copy boy for the Herald and ended up as a writer for  
22 Newsday. And I am waiting for him to editorialize against  
23 me.

24 (Laughter.)

25 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: And I wish you all would.

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1 I cannot count on Safire to keep me honest.

2 (Laughter.)

3 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: You all have got to weigh  
4 in on this issue. As I told somebody today, I am going to  
5 be portrayed as a wimp. If I can have Senator Metzenbaum  
6 and Senator Thurmond fighting over me at the end of the  
7 confirmation hearing, then I know I must have spoken out of  
8 both sides of mouth. I have got to be careful.

9 (Laughter.)

10 (Applause.)

11 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: This has been an  
12 extraordinary adventure. No matter what happens, the  
13 kindness of so many people in the media, the kindness of  
14 people like Senator Simpson, who, when I walked in -- they  
15 had me scared about you --

16 (Laughter.)

17 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I will not tell them that  
18 you are one of the most interesting, intelligent people that  
19 I have met along the whole course of this way, and that you  
20 have provocative thoughts about so many good issues. And  
21 I am going to become your press agent.

22 (Laughter.)

23 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: The first person I met was  
24 Mr. Chairman. And I told him about Texas Wild, and that  
25 began my adventure in America. And I thought, what a small

1 world, that I can tell a man from Texas about the most  
2 beautiful book I have ever read about his State. And I have  
3 started talking to people around this Nation about their  
4 vistas, their people, their community programs, their  
5 rivers, their mountains, and this is an incredible Nation.

6 But I would like to talk to you tonight about our  
7 government and our media and our future.

8 For 15 years, and for more, I served the people  
9 of my community a thousand miles away. I love that  
10 community with all my heart and soul, and I think about it  
11 so often in these last two or three days. I love this  
12 Nation and this government. But it is fragmented. It is  
13 disjointed. Too many people think it is unaccountable, and  
14 many think it is confused.

15 And where does it come from?

16 I had thought it might be well for us to think  
17 tonight a little bit about the course of history and how we  
18 got to where we are. Because what gets me is that that  
19 should not be. The Republicans I have met care passionately  
20 about this country, and they want to make it better, and  
21 they want to work with me and with everybody else to make  
22 it better.

23 The President of the United States is one of the  
24 smartest, brightest, caringest, warmest people that I have  
25 ever met. I have never seen anybody that has such a sense

1 of history and sense of government.

2 Most everybody I have met in Washington cares  
3 deeply, including the media. I started having Thursday  
4 morning press meetings, and I am almost beginning to look  
5 forward to them. I decided I had gotten slightly nuts.

6 (Laughter.)

7 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: But it was because we were  
8 beginning to have a spirit of, okay, how do we solve this?  
9 Well, you are not doing very good this about this Reno. You  
10 are taking too long. What about this?

11 But there is a spirit in this Nation that is so  
12 extraordinary. Why? Why are we where we are at?

13 If I look at history, if you consider the time of  
14 the Depression and World War II, it seems to me that those  
15 two causes gave people confidence in their government --  
16 confidence in the government's ability to deal with  
17 critical, hard crises and come out okay.

18 After World War II, we came into the civil rights  
19 era. And, again, government gave hope to people who had  
20 been oppressed, who had no sense of justice, and there was  
21 the indication that we might be able to provide justice for  
22 all.

23 I can remember those days afterwards. I worked  
24 in Tallahassee. I worked for people that I looked forward  
25 to seeing on Friday when I would go back to help dedicate

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1 a memorial for Governor Leroy Collins, one of the great men  
2 of all time, a man who cared passionately, who never gave  
3 up, who was unafraid, who loved people and loved his  
4 community.

5 I remember sitting around lunchrooms, bars and  
6 other places with reporters and editors in Tallahassee in  
7 those days when I worked for Sandy D'Alemberte, the  
8 then-chairman of the House Judiciary Committee and now the  
9 past president of the American Bar Association. And there  
10 was such a spirit of warmth. They would kick me one day in  
11 the editorial. They would zing me one day with the lead in.  
12 But we would sit around and talk about how we could make  
13 that State and this Nation greater. There was such a sense  
14 of hope and a sense of purpose that was shared by the public  
15 servants and the media and people who cared.

16 And then came Watergate. And no matter who you  
17 are or what party, we understood there was an impact of  
18 Watergate. But I have never understood until I came to  
19 Washington the long, long shadow that Watergate has cast.  
20 As I start trying to figure out why Congress and the Justice  
21 Department did not get along or why somebody else did not  
22 get along, or why the media is so suspicious, I keep having  
23 my reporters who were here come back to Watergate. And you  
24 saw Congress and the President and other people begin to be  
25 suspicious. You saw young people disillusioned.

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1           At the same time, you were watching the  
2 disintegration of the family or strong families with both  
3 parents going to work to try to make ends meet. And we saw  
4 the public schools begin to absorb the most extraordinary  
5 burden in human history. If you think about these last 30  
6 to 40 years in American history, think of what the public  
7 schools have had to absorb.

8           They have been the institution, public and  
9 private, most responsible for ending 200 years of slavery.  
10 They have been the institution, public and private, that  
11 most often stepped in to soothe the child's tears caused by  
12 domestic violence and inattention at home. They have been  
13 the agency, public and private, that has met the  
14 unprecedented challenge for the modern world.

15           Think of what has happened in these last 100 years  
16 -- the flight to the Moon, flight, lasers, atomic energy,  
17 penicillin, telephones, television, automobiles. The most  
18 incredible burst of knowledge in all of human history. And  
19 the schools, already beset and burdened with the social  
20 burdens of our time, have not even begun to be able to keep  
21 up with it as we have placed additional burdens on them.

22           And with this technology, government has become  
23 far more complicated. I look at the memoirs of people who  
24 lived a hundred years ago, who even lived at the beginning  
25 of the Depression, and government today is a much more

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1 complex arena, as is all of the world. But what did we  
2 introduce?

3 For those visitors here tonight, we introduced TV.  
4 And TV is wonderful and could be a far greater and better  
5 tool than it is today. But to explain the modern world and  
6 modern technology in 30-second sound bites just does not do  
7 government justice. But we got accustomed to 30-second  
8 sound bites. And we tried to educate the people, and it did  
9 not work.

10 And then we decided too often in these last 10 or  
11 15 years that we would throw money at the problem. You do  
12 not throw money at the problem. You do not tell a community  
13 here is a CETA grant, spend a million dollars in six months  
14 or you lose it. And then we developed another attitude --  
15 it is not my problem. That is somebody else's problem. I  
16 am a prominent lawyer. That is a kid at risk in another  
17 community in another neighborhood. That is not my problem.

18 And it produced a nation that was fragmented, a  
19 Federal Government that said to the State, you do it,  
20 without giving the State the money. The State said to the  
21 community, you do it, without giving the community the  
22 money.

23 We told prisons to work without doing anything in  
24 prevention and without reintegrating people into the  
25 community. We told juvenile judges to do something without

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1 providing proper housing and proper education, in many  
2 instances. We told Head Start to do it. And then as soon  
3 as Head Start was finished, we did not provide afternoon  
4 programs and in-the-evening programs. We just did it,  
5 throwing money, saying it is not my problem.

6 And where was the media?

7 I am not sure. I come from a State with very open  
8 government. And the media was looking, but the media had  
9 become so specialized that it never saw the picture as a  
10 whole. It was making progress.

11 Where was the media in this capital?

12 I come to this capital and I find a government  
13 far less open than the government I left in Miami. I find  
14 a government that says no, we cannot do this because of this  
15 act. Or, well, I am not sure that I can give you this  
16 information.

17 I think it is imperative that we have an open  
18 government, responsive to the people. The President of the  
19 United States is dedicated to that, and he has said, Janet,  
20 go to it, and let's get this open. Let's make us  
21 accountable. Let us make us ourselves responsible to the  
22 people.

23 But in the process of doing that, I have run into  
24 problems. Well, that is the Privacy Act. You cannot do  
25 anything about that.

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1           What I have wanted to try to do is work with each  
2 of you to establish a dialogue with your Association's  
3 executive committee to address these issues so that we  
4 perform a balance between the public's right to know, which  
5 I think comes close to being infinite sometimes, and  
6 government's right to do its job without getting sued by the  
7 Miami Herald because you tried to comply with an open  
8 records law, and did it in good conscious and have to spend  
9 more time fussing about the Miami Herald suing you than  
10 trying to be accountable to the people.

11           Someplace there is a balance, and we have got to  
12 effect it.

13           In the process, as I watch this government, I have  
14 seen the media start to compete with each other. They work  
15 on their sources. The sources leak. I think you have open  
16 government in Washington because everybody leaks everything.

17           (Laughter.)

18           ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: And you leak everything  
19 based on who you know and not in open candor. And somehow  
20 or another, we can work together to establish an appropriate  
21 basis between an open government, a government that is  
22 accountable, a government that lets people know what we are  
23 doing without getting caught up in the process.

24           We can have a government that is reported by  
25 people who understand life, not a person who is a specialist

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1 on K through 3 and is the So-and-So Post's reporter on K  
2 through 3, not on that reporter that calls you and says,  
3 well, I will have to have somebody else call you, because  
4 I do not understand that process.

5 Before Watergate, while I worked in Tallahassee,  
6 there were many reporters, now some editors, now bureau  
7 chiefs. One was Bill Mansfield, an editor whom I saw the  
8 other night, a person with whom I had shared sorrows and  
9 joys, a person who is absolutely important to my life, a  
10 person can be my critic and my supporter. And we sat there  
11 at the end of the evening and remembered so many good times.

12 Rich Oppel, the Knight-Ridder bureau chief had  
13 come to Washington, wondered if I had remembered him from  
14 those days in Tallahassee in 1972. And I said, of course,  
15 I remember you and how much we enjoyed each other. Somehow  
16 or another, we ought to be able to look out across the world  
17 to all the media, our detractors, our critics -- and there  
18 were curmudgeons in Tallahassee that gave me such fits.

19 We ought to be able to look out on a Democratic  
20 Attorney General to a Republican Senator and know that you  
21 are going to criticize me every now and then, but that we  
22 are going to be collegial and reach more agreement than we  
23 ever reached disagreement in trying to make this Nation go  
24 in the right direction. And then we have got to figure out  
25 how to do it.

1           Mr. Newhouse talked about the localness of news  
2 coverage. I suggest to you as I read too many papers in  
3 this Nation, coming back and forth across it, that we have  
4 lost the sense of blending the national and the localness,  
5 and we have lost it in government. If we are to succeed,  
6 we are must develop a partnership between Federal and local  
7 government. Not a Federal Government that comes to town and  
8 says we know how to do it better, and you can have this  
9 grant if you fulfill all the strings that we have got  
10 attached to it, but a Federal Government that comes to town  
11 saying that communities know better than anybody else what  
12 their needs and resources are, communities know better than  
13 anybody else how to solve their problems if they are given  
14 half a fighting chance.

15           I have gone to this Nation to make sure that what  
16 I learned in Miami was not unique -- and it is not -- and  
17 that is that we have got to let go and let communities be  
18 creative and innovative and bold. What people tell me is  
19 well, we cannot trust communities.

20           Unless this Nation trusts its people, unless  
21 Republicans trust Democrats and vice versa, unless the media  
22 basically trusts public servants and public servants trust  
23 the media to all work together to come to a common outcome  
24 of a better future for this Nation, we are not going to  
25 succeed.

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1           But I think most Americans do trust each other.  
2 I think we trust each other in this room tonight. I think  
3 we can be skeptical and still trust, and build a  
4 partnership, where the Federal Government says, okay,  
5 Trenton, New Jersey, here is your plan and here is what we  
6 can do to fill in the pieces to provide for a continuum.  
7 But then we have got to reweave the fabric of society around  
8 the society that we have let fragment.

9           We have got to understand that we are not going  
10 to solve the problems of the world by building prisons 18  
11 years from now unless we focus on children born today. We  
12 have got to understand if we do not care about crime, if we  
13 live in a fortress castle and are a prominent businessman,  
14 that unless we focus on children in America today, we are  
15 not going to have a work force in 15 and 20 years with the  
16 skills necessary to fill the jobs to maintain America as a  
17 first-rate nation.

18           Unless the elderly understand that their pension  
19 is not going to be worth the paper it is written on unless  
20 we focus on children and develop that work force, we are not  
21 going to even begin to get ahead.

22           We have got to truly develop a national agenda for  
23 children, people and families, putting people first.

24           We have got to and we can, because there are  
25 community programs that can be backed up by the Federal

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1 Government at every step of the way.

2 We can reduce teen pregnancy and make sure that  
3 families are old enough, wise enough and financially able  
4 enough to take care of their children.

5 We can provide preventative medical care.  
6 Something as terribly wrong with a nation that says to a  
7 70-year-old person, you can have an operation that extends  
8 your life expectancy by three years, when we turn to the  
9 child of a working poor person who has no medical insurance  
10 and makes too much to be eligible for Medicaid that that  
11 child cannot have preventative medical care that gives them  
12 a chance for the future.

13 We can invest in afternoon programs and evening  
14 programs that occupy the time of our children who are left  
15 undersupervised because both parents are working. We can  
16 develop school-to-work programs that give our children an  
17 opportunity to graduate with a skill that can enable them  
18 to earn a living wage.

19 We can look at that child when they are truant at  
20 eight, part of a family that is disintegrating around that  
21 child and understand that unless we intervene then, we are  
22 going to have that child putting a gun up beside somebody's  
23 head at 14 years old, and we are going to have to worry  
24 about punishment.

25 And we can understand that we have got to punish.

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1 And we have got to provide job retraining. And we have got  
2 to provide respite care. But, most of all, America has got  
3 to stop waiting for the crisis to happen and start investing  
4 in people.

5 We invested in smokestacks. We invested in roads.  
6 We invested in infrastructure. But we have not invested in  
7 people, either in dollars, time, care, love, and  
8 supervision. And that is what we have got most of all to  
9 do. If you have got reporters in your city room, if you  
10 have got reporters throughout America that are struggling  
11 to beat deadlines and they have got an old curmudgeon of a  
12 city editor who does not give a damn about children, make  
13 sure he does. Because unless we put children first in  
14 America in our work place, in our newsroom, in our city  
15 room, it is not going to make a difference.

16 I can remember going to work, being welcomed by  
17 the city desk at the Miami Herald in the old Miami Herald  
18 Building on South Miami Avenue. Reporters raised me.  
19 Reporters took me to work at the police station. Reporters  
20 took me over to the courthouse. Reporters took care of me  
21 when my father was covering something that he did not want  
22 me to see. Reporters can do the same today.

23 (Applause.)

24 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Do you have a question for  
25 me? Somebody said there might be a question.

1 MR. NEWHOUSE: The Attorney General has kindly  
2 agreed to answer questions.

3 Are there any questions?

4 Right here.

5 QUESTION: Attorney General Reno, in your  
6 questioning before the Senate Judiciary Committee you said  
7 that politics does not enter into what I do, but, yet, we  
8 are missing somewhere around 35 U.S. attorneys who got  
9 discharged from their jobs before their terms were ended.

10 Could you answer that, please?

11 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: What is the question?

12 QUESTION: What happened to the 35 who got  
13 discharged before their terms were ended? I am thinking  
14 particularly in Maryland, where I am from, where the U.S.  
15 attorney was asked to resign before his term was up.

16 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: What is your criticism of  
17 the present U.S. attorney?

18 QUESTION: I am asking you the question, not you  
19 asking me.

20 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Well, your question  
21 assumes that the present U.S. attorney is not capable,  
22 qualified and excellent and dedicated and has the ability  
23 to do the job.

24 QUESTION: I'm sorry, I do not follow.

25 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I think you have a very

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1 excellent U.S. attorney.

2 QUESTION: The U.S. attorney in Maryland was asked  
3 to retire -- was asked to resign before his term was up.

4 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Do you know who your  
5 present U.S. attorney is?

6 QUESTION: I know that Mr. Bennett was the one who  
7 used to be.

8 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Well, your present U.S.  
9 attorney is a person who I have personally interviewed, a  
10 person who comes highly recommended by a large number of  
11 people, a person who I have the greatest confidence in. And  
12 I think if you check out your U.S. attorney you will find  
13 the answer to my question. And the answer to my question,  
14 if you want it in more general terms, like too many  
15 newspaper reporters do, rather than looking at the specifics  
16 of the issue, is that we are trying to find the very best  
17 people for the job, who will not bring politics to the  
18 issue, but will provide the best and most experienced  
19 abilities to do the job possible.

20 In some instances, there have been interim U.S.  
21 attorneys, who I think can do the job better than others.  
22 In other instances, as in Maryland, there has been an  
23 appointment. And I think that you should check into it.  
24 And if you have any concerns, do not hesitate to call me at  
25 area code (202) 514-2001. And I would even suggest that the

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1 present U.S. attorney and I would meet with you to consider  
2 your criticisms as long as they were not political.

3 (Applause.)

4 QUESTION: I am very glad you do not let politics  
5 enter into it.

6 MR. NEWHOUSE: Any other questions?

7 Other questions?

8 (No response.)

9 MR. NEWHOUSE: Thank you, Attorney General Reno.

10 (Applause.)

11 (End of audio.)

12 (End of transcript.)

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