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CALIFORNIA WOMEN LAWYERS
19TH ANNUAL DINNER

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Convention Center
San Diego, California
Thursday, October 7, 1993

P R O C E E D I N G S

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2 MS. RENO: If you had asked me 33 years ago this
3 fall, as I entered Harvard Law School, that I would ever
4 stand here and look out over California Women Lawyers in
5 this number with their colleagues; if you had told me what
6 I saw last Friday would happen; if you had told me about the
7 contributions that women have made in the law over these 33
8 years, I think I would get a big smile on my face, but I
9 would be a little bit doubtful.

10 It is so impressive to see what California Women
11 Lawyers have done in these last years to make a difference
12 in America; to make a difference in Congress; to make a
13 difference in the courts; to make a difference on the
14 streets of California. And all I can say is that you set
15 an example for us all, and I thank you.

16 Nancy Davis is what a lawyer should be, never
17 giving up. Angela Bradstreet and Lisa Brandon are people
18 who care and want to be involved, and want to make a
19 difference. And they are all examples.

20 These last seven months have been a great
21 adventure for me. They have made me terribly proud to be
22 a lawyer in America.

23 I have watched lawyers, I have watched them care.
24 I have watched them spend hours and hours of pro bono time
25 caring about people who could not help themselves. I have

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1 watched them work on legislative affairs and make a
2 difference. I am so proud to be a lawyer, and I love
3 lawyers.

4 But, there's one thing I just don't care for, and
5 that's an indifferent lawyer.

6 We must galvanize the lawyers of America together,
7 to make the law real in the lives of all Americans, to make
8 it an instrument that can protect all Americans, not just
9 a few.

10 We must galvanize the lawyers of America together
11 to make sense out of the law, to make it mean something to
12 people. To make it understandable to people in small old
13 words that people can appreciate and use.

14 And where do we begin in that effort? As
15 prosecutors and as defense attorneys, those of us who
16 practice in the arena of the criminal justice system must
17 look at what we are doing. Too often the prosecutor think
18 she or he has won their victory when they get someone
19 sentenced to five years, ignoring the fact that they will
20 be out in 20 to 30-percent of the sentence; or ignoring the
21 fact that they will be out without having adequate treatment
22 for the drug problem that got them there in the first place;
23 or ignoring the fact that even if they have the drug
24 treatment, if they return to the community from whence the
25 problem started, with no support, no housing, no back up,

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1 they're going to be right back in the system again.

2 We as lawyers are focused on our own small arenas.
3 We think we win a fight in the courtroom, we win victory in
4 the courtroom, but we are just beginning.

5 The public defender who thinks they win the
6 victory when they get their client off on a motion to
7 dismiss or a motion to suppress, knowing full well that that
8 client walks out of the courtroom gripped in a prison that
9 far surpasses the prison that we put behind cells, and put
10 within cells, the prison of addiction, isn't doing his job
11 any more than the prosecutor is doing her job when she fails
12 to follow up.

13 Too often that person will walk out of prison or
14 walk out of the courtroom not free, not represented, not
15 enfranchised in this nation. They will walk out into a
16 world where they do not have access to legal services, to
17 advocacy, into a world where the law is worth little more
18 than the paper it's written on. We must change that for all
19 Americans.

20 We must be concerned for all Americans, because
21 as we get that client off, after charged with some violent
22 act, after we send that violent criminal to prison, we as
23 lawyers have too often ignored our role in doing something
24 about violence in America. If lawyers could help build this
25 nation, build a legal system that we could be proud of in

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1 Yes, we've got to make sure that that violent
2 recidivous, that dangerous person is put away and kept away,
3 and that we have truth in sentencing, and that person is not
4 going to get out to prey on somebody else.

5 But, at the same time we have to turn and look at
6 that 13 year old that we have before us. Look at his pre-
7 sentence investigation, see what has happened to his life,
8 look at the fact that he's already dropped out of school;
9 that his mother was a crack addict; that he's helped to
10 raise his sibilings; that he's never known his father; that
11 he's bounced from pillar to post, and that it is a miracle
12 that he is alive. And we have got to join together to
13 reweave the fabric of society around that child, and other
14 countless thousands throughout America.

15 And we have go to say that you don't reweave
16 fabric by developing programs like that over night, it takes
17 a long slow pace to put together a child's life; from
18 developing strong and healthy parents, to providing strong
19 constructive care through the early childhood, providing
20 afternoon and evening programs, but making sense of a
21 child's life. We have much more to do.

22 We have much more to do in telling America that
23 we have got to get rid of this love affair with guns, and
24 we have got to get guns off our streets.

25 And we have got to tell America that even though

1 my mother said that television contributed to -- it still
2 is a marvelous tool for education, and we've got to stop the
3 senseless violence that's spread across it day in and day
4 out in front of our children, and do something useful with
5 it.

6 Yes, we can do something about violence if we take
7 the energies in this room and across the nation, and let
8 people know that violence won't be solved by 30-second sound
9 bites and promises of more sentences, it will be solved by
10 common sense, firmness and compassion.

11 But, it will be solved by people who have
12 advocates. Every one of you in this room probably has known
13 a 13 year old who got in trouble. And their mother calls
14 you, and you came and helped, and you got another friend,
15 and you got the minister, and you got the doctor, and you
16 developed wonderful programs, and the kid never went to
17 court because the judge was so impressed with all the
18 wonderful people rallying around for poor Joey who got
19 himself in trouble.

20 There are thousands of Joeys across this country
21 who get in trouble every day, who are not bad kids, who
22 deserve that alternative, who deserve the option not to get
23 caught up in the system that need our advocacy, in our
24 blocks on our streets and our schools and around the nation.

25 But, 80-percent of the poor and the working poor

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1 in America do not have access to legal services now; do not
2 have access to advocates; do not have somebody that can
3 care, that can campaign their cause.

4 We must continue our pro bono efforts, but they
5 will not be totally successful if we confine ourselves to
6 the small arenas of court, they've got to be one on the
7 streets, by people who go to our streets, to our classrooms,
8 to communities to help reweave the fabric of society in the
9 community, and help make people self-sufficient in a nation
10 where the laws have become so complicated, so wound up in
11 red tape, so confusing that the average American needs a
12 lawyer to represent them before government and Social
13 Security and welfare, and everything else, it is time we
14 make the law simple so that people can understand them.
15 Make the law simple so that they serve the people. Make the
16 law simple so they protect the people.

17 We have fought so hard for due process. We have
18 tried so valiantly to make the Constitution real. But, if
19 80-percent of the poor and the working poor in America do
20 not have access to a lawyer, think about what we have done
21 to this nation.

22 All of us have a special responsibility as lawyers
23 to develop new systems, new procedures and new approaches,
24 so that no American will be without legal services that will
25 help them protect their rights and make the Constitution

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1 real.

2 We have become so involved in our own language,
3 in our own process, in our own narrow search for due process
4 in our courts, that we have left too many people out in the
5 cold, alone, unsheltered and feeling as if the law is not
6 their friend, that they are disenfranchised from a nation,
7 that a nation doesn't care.

8 It comes back to the community. Our problems will
9 not be solved in Washington, not at the state capital, not
10 in the city and county commissions; they will be solved by
11 building neighborhood and community throughout America
12 again. Building community and neighborhood around family,
13 building community and neighborhood around children, with
14 systems that are accessible to people.

15 We spend more time in determining whether
16 somebody's eligible for a service than we do in providing
17 them services.

18 We spend far more waiting for the crisis to occur,
19 than preventing the crisis with a relatively small
20 expenditure of dollars.

21 But, our greatest challenge is going to be to
22 recognize that the greatest single care giver is the family.
23 If you had told me that fall day that I could not be
24 admitted to Harvard Law School because I was a woman, I
25 would be outraged. I would be even more furious now.

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1 But, a nation that has sent man to the moon, a
2 nation that has done the incredible things of technology
3 that we have seen in these past 100 years, can certainly
4 develop a society and a community where both parents can
5 spend quality time with their children, and work in their
6 childrens schools, be with their children, read to their
7 children, support their children, care for their children
8 and at the same time be the best lawyers in the world.

9 I remember my afternoons after school and in the
10 evenings, my mother worked in the home and built that house,
11 my father worked downtown. My mother taught us to play
12 baseball, to appreciate Beethoven symphonies. She loved us
13 with all her heart, and she spanked the living day lights
14 out of us.

15 There is no child care in the world that will ever
16 be a substitute for what that lady was in our life during
17 that time. And yet, I watch us now struggling to get to
18 work, get the childrens breakfast, get home at night through
19 the rush hour, the children bathed, the homework done; too
20 often we do not have quality time with the most precious
21 possession in our life.

22 Lawyers working together are going to find a way
23 to be productive, great, magnificent lawyers, and still put
24 children and family first in our lives.

25 MS. BRANDON: Attorney General Janet Reno. Thank

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1 you.

2 Attorney General Reno would like you to understand
3 that she's leaving us tonight to fly back to Washington for
4 a briefing, and she's leaving the country first thing in the
5 morning. So, she apologized for having to leave us so soon.

6 Before we end our program tonight I would like to
7 make a few personal acknowledgements. Not too many, I won't
8 keep you too long.

9 First, I'd like to recognize Anne McGowan, who is
10 a past president of California Women Lawyers. Anne, where
11 are you? Thank you for your example and your support.
12 Without your prompting I most assuredly would not be
13 standing here tonight.

14 To Anita Miller, the Executive Director of
15 California Women Lawyers. Your wisdom, your experience and
16 your lessons are invaluable. Thank you for those that you
17 have given me so far, and please don't quit any time this
18 year.

19 To Dan Jaffee (phonetic) and Bruce Clemmons
20 (phonetic), and all the gang at table number one, thank you
21 for believing in me, and supporting me in this effort. I
22 am forever grateful. I only hope you won't mind a year from
23 now.

24 And to those personal friends and family members
25 in the audience tonight, to merely say thank you for your

1 love and support seems tremendously inadequate. I want you
2 to know how important you all are to me, and thank you very
3 much for coming tonight.

4 And thank you for making the 18th Annual
5 California Women Lawyers Annual Dinner a tremendous success.
6 We appreciate your support. Please drive carefully or walk
7 carefully, whichever you're doing tonight.

8 Thank you very much.

9 (Proceedings in the above-entitled matter
10 were concluded.)

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