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SPEECH BY
ATTORNEY GENERAL JANET RENO
BEFORE
THE CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK
CARNEGIE COUNCIL ON ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

Friday, April 22, 1994

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THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

P R O C E E D I N G S

(1:12 p.m.)

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3 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: It is a pleasure to be
4 here, but I think you should be speaking to me, all of you
5 collected here, and telling me what needs to be done,
6 rather than I standing here. But let me share with you
7 some sense of where I am coming from.

8 I think the first point that has to be made, and
9 it has to be made with vigorous clarity, with absolute,
10 positive conviction, and that is that we cannot lose a
11 generation or generations. I have been to too many
12 meetings where people have said we've just lost a
13 generation and we can't bring them back. And I don't buy
14 that, and I think that we must all join together, all of
15 those who care about children, and speak out loudly on
16 that issue.

17 Secondly, I think we must become more vigorous
18 advocates. Dr. Hamburg knows the story I tell of how I
19 first found A Matter of Time. I read a little bitty
20 article about it in the newspaper, and then I had my
21 secretary in Miami start looking for it. And it took me a
22 long time to get it. But you will be happy to know that
23 shortly after we saw each other last, I happened to
24 mention it, the Starting Points, at the American Society
25 of Newspaper Editors. Unbeknownst to me, my brother, who

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1 introduced me that day, had just done a column in Newsday
2 on Starting Points. So we're trying, Dr. Hamburg.

3 (Laughter.)

4 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: But to become advocates,
5 we can't talk in terms of common humanity, we've got to
6 talk in terms of why the American people, some of them
7 cynical, some of them selfish, some of them indifferent,
8 have got to be able to buy into this with us. We've got
9 to talk as if we were hard-nosed business men and women
10 making an investment in our future and expecting a return
11 on our investment. And I think we can do that, and do it
12 effectively.

13 I think it's imperative that we point out that
14 unless we make an investment in children and their
15 development, we are not going to have a work force, we're
16 not going to be able to have enough prisons, we're not
17 going to be able to have a work force that can sustain the
18 pension of the elderly. And as I point -- and if you
19 don't care about any of that, the next time you get held
20 up in your driveway as you come home from the supermarket,
21 think about that. But put it in terms that people can
22 understand.

23 My mother was an amateur social worker during
24 the Depression with the FERA, and she always imbued me
25 with the social worker's passion. But she too often

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1 talked in passionate terms and in humane terms, and she
2 didn't talk in terms that sold the businessman, the sold
3 the doctor who had middle class patients who thought it
4 wasn't his problem.

5 I think more and more, America is beginning to
6 understand that it is everybody's problem; that we can't
7 let up. Because one of the things they're starting to do
8 is to say, well, let's start with the babies and do right
9 by them, but let's -- well, there may be a lost
10 generation. We can't allow that to happen.

11 As I have traveled around the nation, I have
12 become convinced that we have got to provide a continuum.
13 Clearly for those newborns, we have to follow the points
14 made in Starting Points, and develop a continuum and an
15 agenda for their life that can count. But then we have to
16 take those that are older and look at what we can do now
17 in our most effective interventions to make a difference.

18 I ask as I travel around the country, young men
19 and women, particularly young men in detention facilities;
20 young men who are ex-gang members in South Central Los
21 Angeles meeting with me at the Urban League; young men in
22 programs that have been developed, after-care programs,
23 job-training programs; what could have been done to
24 prevent the problem in the first place?

25 I think it is very important to ask that

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1 question of young people. You know better than I that
2 young people have some remarkable ideas. They've got an
3 awful lot of common sense. They have some great wisdom
4 and some considerable insight into the situation that they
5 find themselves in.

6 And there are two poignant statements that keep
7 running through all that these young men tell me. The
8 first is something to do in the afternoons and evenings,
9 beginning in elementary school. You shouldn't have waited
10 until I was starting to get into trouble. Get me in
11 elementary school. And not just sports. I'm big, but I'm
12 not particularly coordinated, and I liked other things
13 better. I would love to have had got my hands on that
14 school computer databank, computer bank. Something to do
15 that is positive.

16 And then the second thing they talk about -- and
17 it breaks your heart -- is somebody to talk to, somebody
18 who knows how hard it is to grow up, somebody who will
19 criticize me properly when the criticism is due, but
20 somebody who doesn't hassle me, who doesn't put me down,
21 who doesn't demean me, who treats me with respect.
22 Somebody that can give me a hug when I need it; somebody
23 that knows how hard it is to grow up.

24 Those ought to be two simple things to provide,
25 and I think we have got to talk about how we provide them.

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1 And I think we have to talk first with the people we're
2 trying to serve, and talk with young people and find out
3 how we design programs that meet their needs. I am amazed
4 at the number of young people who say nobody ever talks to
5 us.

6 Now, you know what it's like. Sometimes that 8
7 year old is 80, sometimes he's 8 months old, sometimes he
8 doesn't know what he is, and if he's a little bit older
9 and he's an adolescent, he can be five different things at
10 the same moment.

11 (Laughter.)

12 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: But if we learn how to
13 talk to them, we can understand so much and we can work
14 with them.

15 Secondly, I think it is imperative that we
16 involve families. We have too often decided that we're
17 going to let that mother go, that mother that may be an
18 incipient crack addict, that mother who may have lost all
19 sense of hope in the world, who can't see the light at the
20 end of the tunnel.

21 If we're going to provide programs afternoons
22 and in the evenings and during the summertime for that
23 young man or that young woman, we're going to do a far
24 better job if we believe that we can save the mother, the
25 parent as well, and design programs in the schools, in the

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1 community centers, that bring in the parent and involve
2 the parent and give the parent an ownership and let the
3 parent know that there's something going on, and that we
4 can make a difference and that she can make a difference.

5 I think that's one of the greatest challenges,
6 is how we bring the family back. And one of my favorite
7 stories -- we had a housing development at home. The
8 median age in the housing development was 17 years of age.
9 I think 89 percent of the heads of household were single
10 women. It had had a lot of problems with crime and drugs.
11 It was a very dilapidated housing development, public
12 housing.

13 We started an early neighborhood intervention
14 program that tried to provide programs after school and in
15 the evening. When we first went into that housing
16 project, people would just look at me. They wouldn't
17 glare at me, they wouldn't look mean, but there was no
18 trace of emotion on their face at all. They almost looked
19 at me as if I were an alien from another planet, and I
20 certainly felt so.

21 We set up the programs. I went into some of the
22 homes because I was in the process of preparing to sue the
23 housing authority because they wouldn't maintain the
24 housing. I watched toilets falling from the ceiling above
25 into the kitchen below. And we started to make some

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1 changes. We got a pediatrician in this large development.
2 We started making repairs. The lawns got mowed, the
3 buildings got painted, programs were developed, a little
4 league was developed.

5 About a year and a half after that, I was
6 driving with my mother and we were up near Larchmont, and
7 I said come on in and I'll take you into Larchmont
8 Gardens. I wasn't more than two blocks into the housing
9 development before people were running out and waving,
10 hey, Janet, hi, Janet, come over, let me show you what
11 they've done here, what they've done there.

12 People were given a sense of hope. Now, what we
13 tend to do is give them that sense of hope, move on, and
14 it falls back. We've got to organize ourselves around the
15 afternoon and evening programs which, by themselves, won't
16 be sufficient unless we organize a family structure and a
17 community structure around it that can provide for the
18 maintenance and the long-range continuation of the
19 program. Otherwise, if I went back to Larchmont Gardens
20 today without having provided follow through, I'd find
21 some silent faces looking at me even more distantly than
22 they did before, because hopes had been dashed again.

23 As we talk about afternoon, evening, and summer
24 programs, we've got to talk about how we give people the
25 sense that they can do it themselves. How we give parents

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1 who are not working or who are on welfare or who can't get
2 a job, or it's not worth it getting a job until we get
3 some sensible welfare reform that gives them some
4 motivation for working, how can we give them a sense that
5 they can contribute positively to the young people in the
6 neighborhood.

7 The third thing, I think it's important for us
8 to develop is a sense of neighborhood. Not of community,
9 but of neighborhood. How many wonderful programs, since
10 1964, have been developed that talked about community but
11 were too far away to really have a relevance to the people
12 there. Marvelous community center, but maybe a mile away,
13 not something that could draw that child, properly
14 supervised, to this center like a magnet, and let that
15 mother let that child go knowing that he or she would be
16 safe.

17 Nothing upsets me more than to drive past a
18 school in the afternoon and see it locked and barred as
19 people are looking for sites for centers. Nothing upsets
20 me more than to see marvelous facilities at the school go
21 wasted in the evenings when children are drifting around.
22 Nothing upsets me more than to have people struggle to get
23 a midnight basketball team going, but they can't find the
24 courts to get it going while the school gymnasium stands
25 shut.

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1 So the schools become an important part, but
2 there may be other places for afternoon and in the
3 evening, and it's got to be based on a neighborhood
4 approach. How we give something that is relevant in that
5 neighborhood; how we provide it; what difference do we
6 make?

7 How do we do it? I think the first thing is for
8 us to all understand that the time has come for lawyers to
9 stop thinking just like lawyers, doctors like doctors, and
10 social workers like social workers. We are all in this
11 together.

12 One of the things that I'd love to see Carnegie
13 do is inspire some graduate schools to start really
14 developing interdisciplinary programs, lawyers, doctors,
15 social workers. It is so frustrating to me to continue to
16 go back to the University of Miami Medical School. They
17 have a marvelous program on public issues. Most of it's
18 malpractice when it comes to the law.

19 (Laughter.)

20 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: But I was once a year
21 asked to talk about children and poverty. The law school
22 was never as progressive as the medical school, because
23 they wouldn't talk about the medical issues except from
24 how we -- what do we do about suing doctors. We can do so
25 much if we start talking together.

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1 Within the community, if the disciplines come
2 together, we can make such an incredible difference. In
3 Miami we developed a program with a community friendly,
4 highly respected police officer, a social worker, a public
5 health nurse, and a community organizer, that started in
6 another housing project.

7 They formed together a team, worked full time,
8 based themselves in the public housing development; and
9 started looking at programs afternoons and in the evenings
10 for the kids in the development; started looking at the
11 bigger pictures of medicine, of immunization; of what
12 about the elderly person in the development; of bringing
13 it all together and looking at it as a whole. That
14 community initiative, that neighborhood initiative was so
15 integral to the success of a crime reduction effort in
16 that community, it caused the police to want to replicate
17 it.

18 I don't know all the answers, but I am convinced
19 that somehow or another we have got to bring the community
20 into the area. It doesn't have to be same race, though
21 that sometimes helps. Sometimes a part, far more, that's
22 needed is somebody who understands young people, who knows
23 how to work with them, how to treat them with that quality
24 that says you are somebody.

25 It is incredible what difference that can make.

1 But the major problem to it right now, there are a lot of
2 people that would like to volunteer, but they don't want
3 to go into the neighborhood where the volunteering is
4 necessary. And we've got to break that down, we've got to
5 provide transportation for people that want to go into the
6 neighborhood.

7 And community policing is, to me, the key to how
8 we get that done. A community police officer is
9 oftentimes the person who is providing the afternoon
10 program. I have now been to community policing
11 initiatives around the country, and so much of the effort
12 of the police officer is centered on developing programs
13 for the kids.

14 But we have got to make a community safe enough
15 for people to come out of their houses, come from behind
16 the apartment door, come from across town, where they want
17 to volunteer but they feel unsafe, and make the community
18 safer through the community policing initiatives that can
19 make a difference.

20 And then we've got to figure out what kids are
21 interested in, and we can do so much of that. We've got
22 to figure out how we can train them. As the child grows
23 up, it is so frustrating to me when we talk about jobs
24 programs, to see people do make-work jobs programs that
25 have no relevance to the child's aptitude or interest.

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1 As part of the afternoon programs, as part of
2 the evening programs and summer programs, the key to it,
3 it seems to me, is for us to develop an assessment of the
4 child's aptitude and interest. Most schools do that. Let
5 the educators talk with the sociologists and find out what
6 the optimum time for doing it is, and then let us design a
7 program with the schools whereby afternoon and evening
8 experiences, both work experiences and work training
9 experiences, are dovetailed with school coursework so that
10 that child will graduate from high school with a skill
11 that can enable them to earn a living wage.

12 Let us dovetail school academic courses and
13 requirements with parenting skills courses afternoons and
14 in the evenings, and responsibilities, so that as part of
15 these constructive efforts after school and in the
16 evenings, children are learning skills that are going to
17 be precious to them as they grow older.

18 These are some of the ideas I have on how we
19 design it. But as I indicated earlier, I think that I'm
20 preaching to the choir, and you probably could be telling
21 me much more. And I think it's people like you who have
22 educated me so much over the years in terms of trying to
23 find what we're all looking for, which are the threads and
24 the yarn that just knit a child's world back together
25 again.

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1 I think we've got to have people who are skilled
2 in understanding peer pressure. When I first heard about
3 peer pressure a long time ago I thought it was kind of
4 ridiculous, but you can see easily how it happens. They
5 have no one to talk to, they have no standard to measure
6 against. We've got to help them develop that. The
7 conflict resolution programs that are working in so many
8 of our schools, could be translated into programs during
9 the afternoon and in the evening.

10 We can do so much. But mostly we've got to get
11 America to volunteer. Yesterday I was at the Great Hall
12 of the Department of Justice for volunteer week. The hall
13 was full, United States Marshals, Deputy Marshals, FBI
14 agents, people from various programs in the office,
15 various components. It made me very proud, but what upset
16 me was that 1,100 people have volunteered their time.
17 There are 95,000 people in the Department of Justice.

18 Just think of what could happen if I could urge
19 all 95,000 people to volunteer their time in some way to
20 help a child at risk. Think of what we could if everybody
21 in Government did that, including the Department of
22 Defense, and then multiply it to the great employers of
23 this world.

24 We could make such a difference, but so many of
25 those people don't know where or how to volunteer. The

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1 marshal knows that he can go to Anacostia with the gun on
2 his hip and feel safe and be a role model. The FBI agent
3 can feel comfortable. How do we take that elderly person
4 who's retired at 62 who wants so to make a difference in
5 an inner city, who doesn't have transportation? How do we
6 get them into programs afternoons and in the evenings
7 where it counts?

8 These are some of our challenges, but I've never
9 been so convinced, after a year in this office, that we
10 can meet those challenges and give our children a future.
11 And I would like to say, for all my teasing about your
12 marketing.

13 (Laughter.)

14 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: That the Carnegie
15 Foundation has just been absolutely splendid in this whole
16 effort. You have led the way for me. It's not me
17 otherwise. Thank you very much.

18 (Applause.)

19 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I said I would try to
20 answer questions, but as I say, you all may know more than
21 I do.

22 QUESTION: I would just like to thank you,
23 because this is the first time we have had anybody from
24 Justice really talk about the prevention issues. And I
25 can't express how difficult that is, because here we are

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1 in New Jersey talking once again about juvenile justice,
2 and even though they give sort of lip service a little bit
3 to prevention, it's mostly a remedial discussion about
4 where are we going to put these kids once they're in our
5 systems.

6 And I think the use of the bully pulpit, even
7 more so, with the other Secretaries --

8 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: No, not more so for me,
9 because everybody says I'm talking too much.

10 (Laughter.)

11 QUESTION: And the other Secretaries, who simply
12 haven't been as vocal on this issue, coming together with
13 the effort that you have been making, to really hammer
14 home out in the States, because it does filter down. How
15 you set the tone at the national level -- and if we can
16 get some of the Governors to also pick up on that tone --
17 really does make a difference.

18 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Let me give you some
19 insight into that. I was at a remarkable meeting this
20 morning -- and I don't think I violate confidences. It
21 was the Senate and House leadership with the President,
22 talking about how we now move on to conference with the
23 crime bill. And there are parts in the crime bill that
24 are personally distasteful to me, but the bill that has
25 come out of the House is a very solid bill in terms of

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1 balance and I think it's going to have a real impact.
2 There are significant dollars in there for prevention, for
3 sound work programs, for ounce of prevention, for
4 afternoon and evening programs.

5 And somebody said -- they started talking about
6 the prevention programs. I didn't hear this a year ago,
7 but the President of the United States looked up and he
8 said there is a wellspring out amongst the American
9 people. They understand far better than many others the
10 need for prevention. And he says, interestingly enough,
11 the people leading the way are the police.

12 Suddenly, the chairman of the Senate Judiciary
13 Committee was saying the prevention part's going to be
14 fine in the Senate. No difficulty.

15 (Laughter.)

16 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: And Chairman Brooks of
17 the House Judiciary Committee saying, oh, it'll be fine in
18 the House. You just got to resist.

19 Some people give me some of the credit for
20 turning it around. I don't think so. Let me give you
21 just -- Donna Shalala and Dick Riley speak very eloquently
22 about prevention and intervention. But as Donna says,
23 having a prosecutor -- and this -- as some may know, I'm
24 personally opposed to the death penalty -- but having a
25 prosecutor who has sent -- gotten the death penalty in

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1 over 80 cases standing up here and telling you this, it
2 has a certain different ring. I think Donna would also
3 say looking at you.

4 (Laughter.)

5 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: What has happened is
6 that police and prosecutors are on the front line now. I
7 go to the International Association of Chiefs of Police
8 and I start talking about children and they start
9 cheering, the National Sheriff's Association. They're
10 putting it in terms that people can understand, and the
11 American people understand it far better. We have just
12 got to keep a relentless pressure on to make sure that
13 everybody understands we're all in this together.

14 Let me tell you where the social services and
15 the child development experts come in. They sometimes get
16 too parochial, and it used to upset me no end to hear the
17 juvenile -- I didn't understand it for a while, and then I
18 kept hearing the phrase "juvenile justice experts" and
19 then I would hear "child welfare experts." And they
20 destroy themselves because the great juvenile court judge
21 isn't going to succeed unless somebody's made an
22 investment up front.

23 All of us have got to look at the longer
24 picture. And it's fascinating; when I do use the bully
25 pulpit and start talking to 300 of the most significant

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1 business people in America, the President of American
2 Airlines, David Rockefeller, et cetera, and I start
3 talking and then I get to 0 to 3, and suddenly a smile
4 comes across their face and they start shaking their head
5 yes.

6 They understand. And the reason people
7 understand is they go back to their child or their
8 grandchild, me to my great niece who's now almost 2 years
9 old, and they remember all the changes in those first 2 or
10 3 years. And that's something that they can connect with.
11 That's visceral. They don't need a child development
12 expert telling them that.

13 So the whole -- it was a very interesting thing
14 for me, because I came into this office so suddenly and so
15 unexpectedly and the President and the Cabinet had already
16 been to a retreat in Maryland before I was appointed, so I
17 came in and didn't -- hadn't known the President, and I
18 thought, well, what am I going to say?

19 And I started talking about the things that I
20 had talked about in Dade County. Shea can tell you I
21 didn't say too much different. And then I started hearing
22 mid-level people at the White House say Reno is supposed
23 to be an Attorney General, not a social worker.

24 (Laughter.)

25 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: And then Beverly Lumpkin

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1 would ask me at my Thursday morning press conference:

2 "Ms. Reno, do you think that you've overemphasized this
3 interest in children and early childhood and not paid
4 enough attention to your real responsibilities as Attorney
5 General." And I saw this long-winded question coming and
6 I thought I'll fix her, and I said, "no."

7 (Laughter.)

8 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: And then she gave me the
9 bully pulpit. She said: "Well, could you expand on your
10 answer."

11 (Laughter.)

12 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: And I said, "thank you
13 so much," and went at it.

14 (Laughter.)

15 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: And it was fascinating,
16 because people -- there was speculation that I would be
17 gone, and so forth and so on. And I just kept on --
18 because it's just based on absolute common sense. And
19 then I talked to the Press Club -- and this is kind of
20 long winded, but it's just trying to tell you to keep on
21 and to put it in terms that people can understand.

22 I told the Press Club, I said you've got to stop
23 looking at whether I wrestled alligators or how close I
24 lived to edge of the Everglades, and why don't you start
25 looking at some of the statements that I'm making about 0

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1 to 3, about afternoons and in the evenings, and if you
2 find anybody that disagrees with those statements, those
3 are the issues that should really be discussed in the
4 analysis of Janet Reno. And as I reminded them when I
5 spoke to the Press Club about 3 weeks ago, it's been
6 almost a year now and nobody has refuted anything I've
7 said about 0 to 3.

8 So I think there are an awful lot of people
9 speaking out, but I think it's very important that you
10 speak out beyond your discipline, put your discipline in
11 context, and that you speak out in ways that can sell even
12 the meanest, most disagreeable old curmudgeon.

13 QUESTION: I wanted to thank you, as well, for
14 the work that you've been doing with community policing.
15 And part of what we discussed this morning is the
16 importance of redeveloping the sense of community. And
17 for a lot of people the sense of community is the police
18 officer who's working in the community and is the old beat
19 cop who's walking in the neighborhood. So I think that
20 the community policing efforts have, by and large, done
21 that. As well, the PACT Program, which we have the good
22 fortune of having in Denver, has been real effective.

23 Now, one of the concerns that we've got in
24 smaller communities where we are doing the planning ground
25 for community policing, where we're involved with PACT,

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1 the concerns that we've got is when we're looking for the
2 next step, and that is to be able to get Federal funds to
3 help us fund additional police officers to do that.

4 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Get the crime bill
5 passed.

6 QUESTION: Well, one of the things that we're
7 told now, because of the things that we've done in the
8 past, we don't have enough crime to justify it.

9 (Laughter.)

10 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: If we can get 100,000
11 police officers, we ought to be able to get police
12 officers to any community that wants them.

13 QUESTION: And that's what would truly be the
14 supportive role of the things that we're looking for, is
15 as the criterion comes out, help us in some of those
16 communities.

17 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: What we're trying to
18 do -- because I think that's one of the most difficult
19 issues that I face. First of all, how do I know a
20 community, how do I get dollars to communities. If I just
21 divvy it out in a formula, we could go to revenue sharing.
22 How do I get it out? Has somebody pulled the wool over my
23 eyes? I just heard about a grant, and I said we didn't do
24 that, because I knew the community.

25 But it's getting it out in ways that are

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1 flexible enough for that community to use it right, but at
2 the same time have outcome measurements so that we be sure
3 it be used correctly and not as CETA monies were used and
4 waste was incurred. That is going to be an extraordinary
5 challenge, but I think it is so critically important.

6 Because it is police officers who are -- the
7 other exciting thing that's happening about police
8 officers, community police officers, is that they're
9 giving people a whole new attitude towards police,
10 particularly the kids. I walked into an elementary school
11 in South Central Los Angeles about 2 weeks ago, 40 percent
12 Hispanic, 40 percent African American, and 20 percent
13 Cambodian, and I asked some of the kids what they wanted
14 to be when they grew up. They looked over at the police,
15 I want to be a cop, and smile.

16 We had down for the crime bill kick off -- after
17 I got back, the President brought down three young men
18 from Dorchester and their two community police officers
19 who have really become their mentors and the mentors of
20 others in the community. A young lady in South Dallas
21 said I grew up to think that police officers were my
22 enemies; now they're becoming my friends.

23 And so what it's doing, since the police officer
24 has so long been the symbol of authority that kids have
25 gotten disillusioned and angry, it's now becoming the

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1 focal point. And it is a fascinating transition that I
2 don't think the advocates for community policing fully
3 appreciate.

4 QUESTION: I know that -- around your point of
5 volunteers and how to get people more motivated and get
6 them around to places, the Program that the Justice
7 Department has had for a while with FBI agents being
8 volunteers in Boys' and Girls' Clubs, I have heard just
9 wonderful things about and how it's changed ideas and
10 attitudes and so on.

11 But if something like that can be given more
12 attention, more marketing, and others can become involved,
13 it may begin to set a tone for law enforcement people all
14 over the place to become more connected and social
15 agencies, I think, might be less reluctant or fearful of
16 involving them in their programs, for the obvious reasons.

17 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: It's happening too. You
18 can just see it begin to filter. One of the big problems
19 I had -- there are new U.S. Attorneys that came into
20 offices in the 94 U.S. Attorneys Offices, but the rest of
21 the staff remained very much the same. And they're
22 wonderful people and they're very able lawyers, and most
23 are so excited by our encouraging them into community
24 service and volunteering.

25 And I say it's totally up to you, but we want to

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1 encourage you, we want to support your efforts, we want
2 you to feel free to engage in pro bono legal services.
3 And there are two or three offices that, hum, hum, that's
4 not my job, hum, hum, hum. And it's so fascinating. You
5 turn around and they start looking and you start talking
6 about what other U.S. Attorneys are doing, what other very
7 experienced trial lawyers are doing, what FBI agents are
8 doing, and they shut up. I don't know whether they start
9 volunteering.

10 QUESTION: But at least they shut up.

11 QUESTION: I'd just like to make a comment. And
12 speaking not as a representative of the Department of
13 Education, but as a former educator, that it is so nice to
14 have another agency willing to take on some of the
15 responsibility that's been placed on educators and sharing
16 that responsibility with the future of our children. It
17 is so necessary.

18 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Well, I think we have an
19 obligation to go beyond that. I mentioned the other day
20 that you have -- when I saw in school, I had wonderful
21 teachers. There are wonderful teachers now, but all the
22 teachers that I had in school would probably have become
23 doctors, lawyers, and engineers had they been 30 years old
24 today rather than 30 years old in 1945.

25 Something is wrong with a nation that's paying

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1 it's lawyers coming out of law school to Wall Street --
2 what's the latest, \$70,000 for first year -- I mean that's
3 obscene. The only think that ranks it in obscenity is the
4 six digit figures for football players and things like
5 this. It's just -- it's wrong.

6 And one of the things that we've got to do is to
7 place teachers back in the extraordinary role that they
8 play, that they are playing, that they're playing under
9 much more difficult circumstances today. And I think
10 teachers get so beat down, and I think all of us have a
11 responsibility for speaking out and encouraging and
12 supporting and telling our young sons and daughters and
13 nieces and nephews, hey, being a schoolteacher is one of
14 the great jobs that anybody can have. You feel like you
15 want to teach? Go teach.

16 I have a young friend who will be graduating
17 from Suwannee this year. His father is a lawyer, and a
18 lawyer of some repute, and had been in politics, and
19 everybody assumed that Josh would go to law school and go
20 into politics. Josh may yet go into politics, but Josh
21 wants to be a teacher, and I think he's going back to
22 Miami to be a teacher, and he will be a great teacher.
23 But nothing has made me angrier than to hear people,
24 knowing that Josh wants to be a teacher, say: "Oh, but
25 aren't you going to be a lawyer like your Dad?"

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1 QUESTION: We have a program for early childhood
2 development and after school programs. We've had that
3 program since '88. Our problem is that it's a
4 demonstration, and what we've experienced is, you know,
5 giving people high hopes, they get into the program, the
6 kids get a good start, only to have the demonstration end
7 in 12 months, 17 months, and then we're back to square one
8 again. And that's the biggest dilemma for a lot of the
9 things that we do, is that we're never given enough money
10 to meet the actual need. And then when we are given
11 money, it's not money that's going to continue. You know,
12 it's demonstration. So I don't know if we'll ever be able
13 to overcome that obstacle.

14 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: If I suggest something
15 and if it sounds at all critical of HUD, understand it's
16 not meant to be. It's more just based on my experience.

17 You have the same problem that I do coming from
18 the Department of Justice now; how you translate something
19 from Washington to communities and give the residents in
20 that housing development the opportunity to build it, it
21 create it, to buy into it, and then to perpetuate it.

22 I come from a different experience. I came up
23 from the bottom and I worked in the community and fought
24 HUD and fought Jackson Hole HUD, and fussed and fumed and
25 sued the local housing authority and then would work with

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1 HUD officials and then would get so angry, I'd say look,
2 you've got this marvelous center here. I mean, you can
3 knock out some walls here, you can have a child-care
4 center here, you can put this here, you've got it. Oh, we
5 don't have vacancies. My eye, you've got 20 percent
6 vacancies. Don't talk to me about not having enough
7 space.

8 Well, our resident's don't -- don't talk to me
9 about residents not maintaining things. Get them
10 organized. Teach them preventative maintenance. Move in.
11 Don't -- now, this is not --

12 QUESTION: Go on.

13 (Laughter.)

14 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Don't talk to me about
15 having enough money. Get in some money, get a community
16 to say, look, that's a high crime area. Robert Taylor
17 Homes is a high crime area. We can talk about going in an
18 searching, but we can't do anything until we create a
19 sense of community.

20 Those towers may be too tall to create that
21 sense of community, but most housing developments have
22 that capacity. Challenge a community and their housing
23 authority. Don't look at that housing authority as an
24 island; look at it as part of an overall community. When
25 you talk about community policing, say to a community

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1 you're going to get a grant for community policing, for
2 housing, but you've got to buy in so that they can also
3 include the area around the public housing.

4 And part of it is going to be the community is
5 going to have to figure out how it's going to maintain,
6 with the seed money you provide, afternoon and evening
7 programs for the youngsters in the public housing
8 development. And you're going to get a further incentive
9 if you work with the public schools in that area to
10 provide educational opportunities afternoons and in the
11 evenings.

12 And HUD will give a grant to the public housing
13 project, but HUD in Washington will go to DOE in
14 Washington and they will come together and they will link
15 with that, and they will go to the Office of Justice
16 Programs, and instead of all coming in and putting one
17 piece here and one piece over in this housing development
18 and one piece in this neighborhood, they will have a
19 comprehensive program that can have a chance of success,
20 with the community having bought in to perpetuate it.

21 QUESTION: I'm so glad you said that because
22 that was going to be the next thing.

23 (Laughter.)

24 QUESTION: I did not know you were going to say
25 that, but that is exactly what we are doing through what

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1 is called family investment centers, to do that very
2 thing.

3 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: But you've got to make
4 the community buy in. And what has happened is that
5 HUD -- too many HUD developments have become islands,
6 islands of misery, crime, and drugs, and they don't have
7 to be. And communities should be challenged.

8 It shouldn't be the responsibility of the
9 Secretary of HUD to solve the problems in Robert Taylor
10 Homes. It should be the responsibility of Chicago working
11 with HUD, Justice, Education, HHS, and everybody else
12 concerned, to develop a comprehensive community around the
13 public housing development. If we can't create a
14 community in those miles of high rises, there's talk about
15 tearing them down.

16 DR. HAMBURG: I've got a big decision to make.
17 Either we liberate the Attorney General now or we stay
18 until 8:00 tonight. I'd prefer the latter, but I choose
19 the former, knowing she has a few other things to do.

20 I think you can tell, though, that you're among
21 friends, but that what you're doing is profoundly
22 encouraging and you're inspiring to us. And on behalf of
23 everybody here, I express our heartfelt good wishes for
24 the great work that you are doing.

25 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Thank you.

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1 (Applause.)
2 (Whereupon, at 1:52 p.m., the remarks
3 concluded.)
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