

Transcription of the Attorney General's
Remarks at the Warden's Meeting

August 1994

Thank you Dr. Hawk for that introduction, but it is I that should be thanking you for the job that you do. I had heard about the Bureau of Prisons as a prosecutor in Miami -- heard that it was one of the best run agencies in Government, certainly a model for corrections officials, but I have seen it first hand in these eighteen months that I have now been in Washington. In those first days that I took office, I must admit that it was quite daunting; here I had been a prosecutor often wanting to have some voice in the correction policy of the state, often wanting to have some voice in the law enforcement policy of the state, and suddenly I had the FBI, DEA, the Bureau of Prisons, the U.S. Attorneys, and the Criminal Division, and I thought, "Now that I've gotten it, what am I going to do with it?"

But, clearly one of the strong opportunities I had in those first days was to watch the Bureau of Prisons in action. I asked each component to come in and give me a briefing. I can tell you unequivocally that the best briefing given was by the Bureau of Prisons. It was living up to its reputation. It had data, it knew what was happening within its institutions, it knew who was in its institutions, it had long-range forecasts, short-range forecasts, and in these 18 months I have now had an opportunity to judge their accuracy and I can tell you that your information is absolutely accurate and very critical. You understood what so many agencies either don't understand or haven't been able to equip themselves with -- that information is key to agency success.

It was also clear to me that you understood the need for planning, that you understood the need for alternatives and options and possibilities, and most of all it was so refreshing to see that you understood the mission of corrections and what corrections was all about. I have now had the opportunity to be on the scene to see Loretto, to see San Diego, and I look forward this year -- now that we have the Crime Bill behind us -- to visiting more of your institutions and see first-hand the wonderful job that you do.

I had an opportunity to watch Dr. Hawk in the session with the OMB, a fierce advocate for this agency, an articulate exponent of what we are trying to do, and the extraordinary burden that you face, but then I heard separately -- and it wasn't as if she was

impressing me -- and she went to brief Alice Rivlin, and Alice came back to me -- the new Acting Director of OMB -- and said, "That was just an extraordinary presentation, they do a remarkable job." And I said "Yeah, they really do." So wherever the Bureau of Prisons goes, you impress people, both with an understanding of your mission and the recognition of the tremendous burdens that we have to provide you with the support you need to do the job.

One of the things that has impressed me most too (and I don't think OMB sees this): you not only understand the need for information, you understand how important people are to the equation of agency success, and I can tell you in my two visits to date and in my contact with the people from the Bureau of Prisons, you understand how important the people you work with are -- from the doctor to the superintendent, to the warden, to everybody -- it was just amazing to see how everybody came together in a cohesive pattern.

Now I used to think -- when I went to institutions in Miami -- that they could con me, and I tried to figure out how to detect the con. I finally realized that it was in the face of people -- and in the two institutions that I have been to -- both in the face of inmates and the face of the staff -- you are successful, you are putting people first, you are prizing people, you're holding them accountable, you're giving them an opportunity -- and it's an extraordinary example for all other Federal agencies, and for every agency of government, State or local.

You also have the capacity to react to emergencies, to fill in the gap when suddenly something -- you are confronted with something which you hadn't planned for (which is again unusual), because as I watch so many of the situations we deal with -- whether they be violent crime or immigration -- we are trying to improve agencies, we are trying to make ourselves better, but we are sometimes putting our fingers in the dike, because the situations sometimes seem overwhelming. You never seem to let it overwhelm you.

You have helped me articulate even better what I understand the mission of corrections to be. First of all, make sure that everyone is safe -- the staff is safe, that the public is safe, and that the inmates are safe. Secondly, and this is what is so extraordinary about what you do, you create an atmosphere and an environment that punishes -- that provides sanctions -- but never demeans or degrades the inmates with whom you work -- and I think that is an extraordinary testimony to what we do.

You have an extraordinary ability to deal with what is becoming an ever increasing problem for you: long-term inmates, aging inmates. And in those few situations where I saw that, again, you

do an extraordinary job in giving those people -- even in a prison setting -- a sense of human dignity. I just commend you and have often cited you as a example for other agencies: "If the Bureau of Prisons can do this for criminals, look at what you can do serving the people of the United States." Thank you for your example.

I wondered what it would be like to see whether you shared my feeling about what prisons should be about. I frankly had the image of Federal prisons being either prisons for white collar criminals who had to do their time (and when they got back to the community, they would know what to do with themselves) or these long-term, maximum-security institutions that housed people that were never getting out. But you also have a capacity to understand far better than most the need for the transition to the community. In your work with community corrections; and understanding that most people in the institutions are going back sooner rather than later; and that if we can bring them back with a transition that addresses their drug problems, and addresses their job training problems, and expresses their educational deficiencies, you are going to bring them back to the community with a chance of success.

It is extraordinary what you are doing. But you are also recognizing something I think is very important and I think we are going to have to do more of it: you're recognizing that not only do we have to work with people to address their drug problems, not only do we have to work with them to give them educational skills that can help them cope when they come out of the institution, not only do we have to work with them in job training, but we have to work with them in a new problem the Government is faced with: parenting skills, parenting responsibility, and family responsibility. And it is so exciting to see what is being done, both in State and Federal institutions around the country, in terms of teaching parenting skills.

I have not seen some of the Bureau of Prisons work yet, but one of the institutions that struck me as so successful was an institution in New York that had young mothers with young infants, and what can be done by prison officials is extraordinary. In terms of family responsibility, the payment of child support, again we can do so much, and I look forward to working with you in these efforts.

The approach that you have adopted, I think is central to securing justice in this country -- a form of justice that ties into a vision of mine that I try to explain wherever I go:

It is a vision that every child in America has an opportunity to grow up safe, with a positive, strong, healthy, hope for the future. Properly educated, properly developed.

It is a vision that includes modern, efficient, fair law enforcement that deters as well as detects crime and does so in a way that is least intrusive in the lives of the citizens of the public it serves.

It is a vision that includes a wide variety of truly effective pretrial and other community-based interventions for low-risk offenders so that we can stop the development pattern of crimes as early as possible.

It is a vision that includes the effective range of institutions that you in the Bureau run, so that we always have the capacity to lock up the truly dangerous offenders.

It is a vision that includes all these elements in a coordinated effort for that as well, to suppress crime in our country so that people will be safe.

But with that vision you are helping achieve in this country, you probably -- far more than anybody else -- face extraordinary challenges. You have managed to cope with overcrowding because you are such a magnificent agency, far better than State agencies have. You are seeing an increase in violent criminals that you probably never dreamed would occur 10 years ago -- but America is seeing that increase in violence that we cannot simply understand. Youth violence that is random, youth violence that is organized and it is beginning to spill over into our institutions.

I want to work with you to address this issue because I think it presents extraordinary challenges -- and clear dangers -- and we need to work together to make sure that you have the staff, the facilities and the resources to protect the staff at the institutions and to protect other inmates.

We have an opportunity now. I wondered, as I thought about coming here this morning, whether I would come here telling you "Well, we are still working on a Crime Bill." Well now it's passed. We have had an extraordinary opportunity because -- think of what that crime bill structure is: monies for 100,000 community police officers. Not just cops riding by and picking people up in reverse stings in a random way, but community police officers dedicated to preventing as well detecting and punishing. Monies for State and local prisons and jails. Recognizing that you are getting some of these dangerous offenders (and I have sent you some of these dangerous offenders because I didn't have enough jails in Florida to house them for the length of time that the judges were sentencing them). So I would take a trigger-lock case and march over to Federal court because I knew I could get 85 percent of 15 years or something close to it.

We now have an opportunity to say to the States and to local prosecutors, "Look: we have always said that violence is a State and local problem. We are not trying to dump on you, we are not trying to pass the buck, we want to work with you in every way possible. But we want to give you that money to open that prison, so that you can house the guy that we don't need to prosecute in triggerlock because you are perfectly capable of prosecuting if you've got the prisons." So we need to work together to make sure that monies get out to States and local prison systems in the best way possible to help State and local officials assume responsibility that they want to assume, but they hadn't had the resources to help them and equip them.

We also initiated last March an anti-violence initiative. I think Dr. Hawk, when she first heard about it, said, "You're doing what?!" But I wanted to explain it because it is so important. It isn't saying, "Give us all the cases of violence." It is saying, "Let us form a partnership with State and local governments." Instead of the FBI just going off on its own, let's let the FBI come in with a local gang task force and ATF and DEA, because guns and drugs and organized efforts are all involved. In some instances it will be the FBI giving information to local law enforcement that it didn't use to give (because it used to be a one-way street) so that local law enforcement can apprehend that dangerous offender, local law enforcement can put together a complex RICO case, and State correctional officials can house the people that local law enforcement prosecute and convict. If we do it the right way, we can make such a difference -- and I will be asking Dr. Hawk and her staff to work with us in trying to design a proper balance between what should come into the Federal system -- both from a prosecutorial prospective and a prison perspective -- and what should be handled at the State and local level. And we would quite frankly appreciate your input.

The wardens who see these inmates can often tell me, "Look, this guy should never been brought to Federal prison -- he has a chance to come back into the community; he is a first-time offender. Yes, it was a violent crime, but he is going to be out in about 5 years, and it's better that he come out in a graduated way into the community rather than being warehoused some place remote from his community and then brought back in a transition. You can help and I ask for your input, and Dr. Hawk and I look forward to working with you in that effort. We can do so very, very much, but it will be clear to me that there are going to be situations -- and I see them developing now -- where you will have very dangerous offenders, young offenders, very boisterous offenders and hard-to-manage offenders in your institutions.

I just recently visited with the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York. She explained to me that, with the concurrence of the local prosecutor for Manhattan, the Feds were taking cases not made by Federal law enforcement agencies but

made by the New York City Police department because of some evidentiary rules in the State of New York that would have prevented those cases from being prosecuted in State courts. These cases involved 80 New York murderers. That gives some idea of the dimension of the violence you face as these cases will come to the Federal prison system.

I come from a jurisdiction where the State of Florida that has some of the most liberal discovery rules imaginable. The defense can take the deposition of every single witness pre-trial; it is extraordinarily burdensome. Far better that I take a very complex case and transfer it to Federal court where my prosecutors were cross designated and have it prosecuted in Federal court for the interest of the community and everyone concerned.

You will be getting some of those offenders. There will be major traffickers, and what we are trying to do is to say that it is a local problem, the local user, the local street dealers should be handled at the local level, but if it is a major trafficker and a major trafficking organization that should probably go to Federal court since it will involve issues that cross State lines and district lines. We need to work together, with State and local law enforcement, with the Federal agencies, and we want the Bureau of Prisons involved.

We have done something in this last year that I think is very encouraging. When I came to Washington, too often the DEA, and the FBI, and ATF, and Customs didn't talk together. Now people who have been with the Department of Justice for twenty years tell me that they have never seen the cooperation that now exists. Customs and DEA have just developed an MOU that is historic. DEA and FBI are getting together and exchanging top level officials -- so that it will be exciting to see what can be done. ATF is working together with the FBI in better ways than ever before. That's what I want us to be about -- and I want the Bureau of Prisons involved in all these equations because you see what's happens at the end of the line.

One of the major issues that we will confront is what we do about three strikes, you're out. I want to try to develop guidelines that will make sure that that provision of the Crime Bill is used as wisely as possible -- to really focus on the truly dangerous offenders, the career criminals, the true three strike dangerous offenders, not just somebody who was in a bar-room brawl at eighteen and another bar-room brawl at thirty-seven, another bar-room brawl at forty-five. I want this person who has been an armed robber, been to prison, been an armed-robber again, been to prison, and now we have him for a third time on an armed robbery or other serious violent crime. Again, we will be working with Dr. Hawk and try to make sure that we do not abuse this marvelous tool for law enforcement.

Another concern, and Dr. Hawk and I have talked about for a long time, is the problems with juveniles in the Federal System. You are not equipped to handle it, and I don't think you should be asked to handle something that is basically a local responsibility. If we are ever going to make the concepts of community and community corrections work, it has to work in the juvenile justice setting. Most of the juvenile offenders are coming back into the community sooner, rather than later, and every chance of success they have is going to be based on how well the community works with corrections and juvenile justice officials to bring them back to the community with a chance of success.

It is so touching to me to talk to young offenders, to talk to ex-gang members who have been in trouble and ask them what could be done to prevent the trouble in the first place or what could be done now. They want so to get off on the right foot, they want a chance for a job, they want be treated with respect, they want to come back to their community with some chance of making it -- and that can be done at the local level. We are going to try and make sure Crime Bill monies go to local government so that it is handled the right way.

But there is no doubt that there are 17-year-olds, 18-year-olds who are members of violent gangs, key ingredients to the violence that is crossing this country (and you will end up with some of them), but again I would like to work with the Bureau of Prisons to make sure, as we develop guidelines, as we work with U.S. Attorneys, that we have guidelines that make sure that you are not burdened by juveniles; that should far better be handled in local systems.

One of the major problems that we face -- again I think we will have a far better opportunity -- it is interesting to me, and we need to get more data on who is coming into the Federal system, in terms of drug abusers, drug traffickers, drug dealers, and what level of dealing -- are they dealers as well as users? Could they better be handled at the local level? One of the reasons again, they too often were not handled at the local level is because most governments, State governments did not have adequate treatment programs that could address the problems of drug abuse. This Crime Bill will provide additional dollars to States and local government for drug treatment in prisons.

And when we see a situation that involved an offender who is basically drug motivated, or motivated by a drug problem and the offense isn't serious, I think that person should be treated and imprisoned in a State setting with the opportunity of again of trying to bring them back to the community in a graduated and organized way based on these new treatment dollars.

This Crime Bill is being funded by a reduction in 252,000 Federal positions, and how do you do that in the Department of Justice? She understands the problem. We don't have a solution yet, but we have explained that you cannot -- and I will promise you that I will work with you wherever possible, I will be there, I will be advocating for you, I have said that we cannot continue to permit the overcrowding, we are going to have to continue to reduce it in a orderly way. But I will try my level best to make sure that you are not asked to do the impossible and take an increased number of violent offenders without the staff, without the facilities, without the resources necessary to properly manage it.

[Applause]

I don't have all the answers yet, and I think this will be one of the great issues that we will struggle with in this year. The other thing that I wanted to try and avoid -- nothing offended me more than for legislators to talk about sentencing guidelines, to talk about certainty in sentencing, to talk about tough sentences, to talk about minimum mandatory sentences in the Florida legislature, and never provide the dollars (well, they did both, overcrowding) -- but then they provided the base gain time incurred before you ever got into prison, and then they provided incentive gain time, then they provided administrative gain time, then they provided special gain time, until they were serving 20-30 percent of their sentence -- and that makes a mockery of everybody's efforts.

It is going to require that we all speak out, and that we try to do our best, to prove by success, that we have got to match Congress' talk with actual ability to continue to do the extraordinary job that you have done in the face of tremendous challenges.

Dr. Hawk knows that she can call me at the drop of a hat -- she has often done that just to say look, watch out for this, this is what's happening -- but we will continue to work with the Bureau of Prisons in every way we can to meet this challenge.

It is an exciting time in American history, it is a time of so many challenges, it is time of some mean spirit, I have now been across this country, I have been to town meetings, I have been on radio talk shows, I have gotten the calls from people around this nation, some concerned about guns, others have been concerned about ... Lord knows what, but what have I also gotten and what I think we saw in the vote of Congress last night was Republicans and Democrats coming together in a new spirit about bipartisanship, in a new spirit which says, look, there has got to be a reasonable control of guns that have nothing but war purposes; look, you are not going to solve the problem just punishing people; you are not going to solve the problem just by

talking tough, unless you provide dollars to go with it; you are not going to solve the problem just by prisons without more police officers; and you not going to solve the problem without more prevention programs to go with more police officers.

Last night's vote was very historic when you consider the effort that was mounted against that bill, the extraordinary effort (I haven't seen a Charleton Heston movie in a long time). But I think the American people spoke last night -- and they spoke with I think a sense that they share your vision and my vision for what law enforcement, corrections and America should be about. Thank you.

Q&A's

Q: You mentioned a reduction of 256,000 positions. We are aware of the efforts to consolidate services at the Department of Justice, such as the DEA and the FBI. What are other efforts and innovations to consolidate services? Also, are we looking across departmental lines, such as the Treasury or other law enforcement agencies?

A: Everybody in Government is subject to this reduction. Justice has the biggest problem because here is the President of the United States asking to add 100,000 community police officers -- and the question I have gotten for the last year is how can you be adding community police officers while you are reducing FBI and DEA? -- so there are some contradictions, and we have tried to deal with those. But with respect to the DEA and the FBI, let me first make it perfectly clear that I am not trying to merge them. But what we have done -- and this is an example: as Director Freeh and Tom Constantine came on board together I have an extraordinary opportunity because I think I am probably the first Attorney General in history that had a hand in naming both the FBI director (with whom I had served) and the DEA administrator (with whom I had served) and to make sure that they got along well. They get along beautifully and the agencies are starting to come together through the Office of Investigative Agency Policy. I named Freeh as the director of that. They are meeting to address coordinated training, reduction in duplication in training, automation, budgeting processes, aircraft, intelligence mechanisms -- just a whole range -- and I think we can become far more efficient and produce a lot more results in that way.

Freeh has looked at the FBI and has moved 300 agents from behind the desk out to the field. Constantine is looking at the same thing. The Marshals Service is looking as to how it can do things better, but the simple truth is that as we -- and this is the major challenge that the Department of Justice faces or presents to the Office of Management and Budget -- if you are making such a concentrated effort against crime in America, you cannot reduce the prison capacity, you cannot reduce the law enforcement capacity, but I think we can make it smarter and better.

I don't really frankly think there too many things I can do in the Bureau of Prisons, because I really meant what I said, I think you may be a model agency. But one of the other areas that I have is I've got a Criminal Division with some 400 people in it, I've got 94 U.S. Attorneys out there with an awful lot of lawyers, how do I balance the Criminal Division with the U.S. Attorneys? If the U.S. Attorneys need more, should I decentralize as Freeh has decentralized? We are engaged in a large number of efforts in that regard, but with the fact that the Federal Government has made such a commitment to law enforcement it is

very difficult to downsize significantly to meet what would otherwise be the Department of Justice's share -- and that is our challenge and that is my challenge with respect to the Bureau of Prisons as well.

I will tell you: I ran an office of 930 people and everybody said, "How can you possibly manage a department of 95,000?" Part of it goes back to simple, old processes of answering your mail, answering your phone, being responsive, treating customers -- treating people who come in contact with the Government -- as you would want a member of your family, if they were in the same situation, to be treated. Again I think the Bureau of Prisons is light years ahead of many of the agencies, and I am using you as a model in a number of ways.

Q: Ms. Attorney General, we have all been aware and watching you as the immigration of hundreds of Cubans fleeing their country...

AG: Try thousands.

Q: O.K. Do you envision either in the short term or in the long term any involvement of the Bureau of Prisons in addressing these concerns?

A: We have already the current, the plan (and it was historic). For a long time Cubans were paroled into this country automatically, and they were looked at differently than any other category of people. Our message now is: we want to do everything through legal immigration, through the asylum process, to grant those who have a right to come to this country that right in an orderly way. We want to do everything we can to deter illegal immigration. Those that take to the sea, we urge them not to -- particularly in this particular weekend, where the seas were so high in the Florida straits. But it is an unsafe journey under any circumstance. They will be taken to Guantanamo and other safe havens. What I foresee for the moment is that there may be some (we are preparing and planning -- trying to do it in an orderly way)...If there are significant crimes committed in a safe haven, what is the responsibility, how is it handled? -- and I suspect some of those offenders will come to the Bureau of Prisons. We are on the lookout to see whether Castro is doing what he did in Mariel. There are some signs and we are watching it very carefully. I have asked that the Bureau of Prisons be involved as we see just what is developing with respect to this issue, but what we are trying to do is keep that problem in Cuba by saying to people, "You cannot export your failed regime -- you've got to deal with it there through political and broad-ranging social reform." I know the impact on the Bureau of Prisons from Mariel and it's something we have to plan very carefully, and we will have to see how this new policy addresses the issue. It is a very difficult situation.

Q: One of the issues during the Crime Bill deliberation that we wardens watched very closely was the proposed ban on weightlifting.

AG: Did it get back in?

Q: Not yet, not yet. We were very pleased that it was taken out, but I think we were wondering: do you see this as a passing thing in Congress or do you envision that they might become more involved with what are really the internal practices of the Bureau of Prisons?

A: I think Congress will continue -- both in the Bureau of Prisons and in other areas -- to exercise what it considers to be an oversight function. And I will continue to work with you to respond to Congress and to be accountable and to show what the good policies of the Bureau of Prisons have been able to do in successful reintegrations of people into the community.

Q: Many of us realize that your emphasis on prevention is one that would make some difference over the long term and perhaps that is its problem: that the dividends would be in the long term rather than the short term. But are other Government departments in any way interested in partnering with Justice to develop some prevention programs with children, and babies prenatally, to help sow the seeds in the right way so that these people don't grow up to be our clients in the long term?

A: Yes, there is great excitement. Somebody said that it's time we detach ourselves from Congress and just take what we have and work with it, and we started that very early on because I look at the massive dollars in the Crime Bill and it's going to be an extraordinary challenge to make sure that those dollars are spent wisely without waste and we hold people accountable. I think the new model -- and we now have it on the underway as just pilot projects in Denver, in the State of Nebraska, in Washington, D.C., and in Atlanta -- the Department of HHS, Education, Labor, HUD, and Justice have come together as a group. We have gone to the community or been requested by the community to come there. The governor of Nebraska said, "I won't ask you for any more money. Just come down as a comprehensive group from Washington. Untie some of your strings; share with us some expertise and let's form a partnership."

It's based on the recognition that communities understand their needs and resources far better than people from Washington, so throughout Nebraska, throughout Omaha, people plan and identify needs (prenatal care or early childhood development, the whole range of things -- afternoon and evening programs, truancy prevention programs, tutoring programs -- the whole range) and the Federal Government and all those agencies worked with them. It's not perfect yet. The Cabinet Secretaries are all in total

agreement: we have got a great alliance but to filter down through some of the bureaucracy and try to get them working together is a little bit more difficult. I was on a phone hook-up with the Omaha, Nebraska (and the whole Nebraska group). It was so exciting to see what they had done in the last year, and how excited they are about it -- what is happening. I have a friend who I hadn't seen in a while and she has a close friend in Atlanta. The close friend in Atlanta was involved in -- we call it PACT, Pulling America's Communities Together -- was involved in the PACT program in Atlanta and he started to talking about it and he had become the great advocate. It was really working and he wasn't conning me; he was telling somebody that he didn't think had any connection with it.

It is very difficult to do that because I'm convinced that the problems won't be solved in Washington, they are going to be solved at the community level and I can take a hundred cities and do that. But how do you do it for every little town, because a little 25,000-person town is feeling some of the impact and that is the great new challenge of Federalism: how we make the Federal Government a true partner, a comprehensive partner with State and local government, rather than providing grants with a lot of strings attached, how we give them the dollars but yet at the same time hold them accountable not for process but for outcome. It's an exciting undertaking.

I think the reason it is going to work is because the cities have their back up against the wall. Beginning in the 80's, the Federal Government transferred programs to the States without dollars, the States transferred programs to the communities without dollars, and now mayors with their back up against the wall -- after this recession the last four years or so. They are doing really creative things. It's happening and it is fascinating, for all this talk about pork. When you hear Republican mayors and the representative of the Republican Mayors Conference come to the Department of Justice and stand in a conference room with me at a press conference and say, "We've got to support this Crime Bill, but unless we start with prevention it's never going to work." It took Congress a long time to hear it but it heard it. But the mayors, the police chiefs, the cops on the beat know prevention is absolutely critical and it's happening. Last night was a great victory but there is about \$7 billion worth of prevention in that bill. It was a great victory, but now we face the extraordinary challenge of making sure it's spent right.

Q: I just want to follow up on Margaret's question, and that is: if you look at the sentencing guidelines -- and they're somewhat generic in that they apply equally to men and women -- and we look at the difference between -- the major differences for men and women in terms of sentencing guidelines, links, etc. -- and that is that a 20-year drug sentence applies to a male as opposed

to a female...looking at the difference in recidivism and success rates...and trying to break up the guidelines a little bit and see if there are differences in that we may do more with parenting and women offenders in trying to get them out quicker, etc. Are we doing different things?

A: Well, what I'd like to do is not give up on the young men of the world either, and try to do more with them. One of the single most frustrating tasks I have had in this past year was developing a slate to recommend to the President for appointment to the Sentencing Commission. There is one Democratic slot and three Republican slots and I wanted to make a recommendation of a group that would be collegial, that would be thoughtful, that would have a range of views, but would be collegial and thoughtful in their discussions so that they could really move ahead on some of the good things that the Commission staff has done. I wanted a slate to recommend to the President that he could nominate that would have the voice of Congress so that it wasn't just a recommendation by the Sentencing Commission that would be in isolation: that when the Sentencing Commission recommended, Congress would listen. I think we are about to do it and it is my hope that the Bureau of Prisons will be very, very much involved with this Sentencing Commission. I intend to be, in my ex officio capacity, and I would be very interested in your recommendations.

I think this is the greatest challenge we face. Young men have as much capacity to get themselves straightened out as young women. We've got to unlock that door. It's fascinating...I've been to a couple of situations now where I talked to ex-gang members or young men in detention for some serious offenses and they look at me just stony, don't talk much, and I talk to them and ask them a couple of questions and then they see that I'm treating them with respect, that I'm anxious to hear what they have to say, that I have some idea of what they've been through, I understand, and we end up with the best session possible, and they keep telling me...I just...I think we can do far more in terms of learning how to deal with them. The problem with the Bureau of Prisons is that you get them after juvenile justice officials have put them down -- after some few -- not all -- police officers have put them down. That's the reason I'm so encouraged by community policing. In every initiative that I've seen this year as I've traveled around the country, kids are looking to the community police officer as their mentor. They are really becoming not just a law enforcement force but a great prevention force and I think we have got to do a lot more in this country about how we talk to young men, how we treat young men, how we don't give up on young men and don't give up on a generation in America.