

1 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
2 ELEVENTH ANNUAL NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

3
4 KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
5 ATTORNEY GENERAL JANET RENO

6
7 The Great Hall
8 U.S. Department of Justice
9 9th & Constitution, N.W.
10 Washington, D.C.

11
12 Tuesday, August 2, 1994
13 (11:26 a.m.)

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1 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Thank you very much.

2 It is a real privilege to be here with you
3 today, and I want to thank the Menominee Tribe. I first
4 heard about the tribe from Ada Deere, and she has made me
5 so familiar with your history and your proud tradition.
6 You have done me an extraordinary honor today, and I am
7 deeply grateful. But I also understand that I've got a
8 lot to do.

9 I would also like to recognize Congressman
10 Stupak. Thank you for your leadership in Congress and the
11 Law Enforcement Caucus and all that you have done in
12 working with the Department of Justice.

13 But most of all, I want to recognize today the
14 American people. I want to tell you about so many
15 wonderful American people that I have met in this past
16 year, people who are concerned about crime and who want to
17 do something about it and want to make a difference.

18 Thirty young Indians from Pueblo Jimez in
19 Arizona ran in a relay all the way to Washington over 15
20 days to tell Secretary Babbitt and myself what was needed
21 at the pueblo to address the problem of young people so
22 they did not get into trouble. They brought with them
23 leather cases made by their medicine men. They had
24 started from near Albuquerque and each had run a part of
25 the relay all the way to Washington. Young people care so

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1 much.

2 The young people I met in Dorchester,
3 Massachusetts, stood up to tell me how extraordinary their
4 community police officers had been, serving as mentors,
5 making a difference in their community, bringing the
6 community together. A businessman in South Dallas
7 appreciated so much what public officials had done to come
8 together.

9 One of my favorite memories was to visit an
10 elementary school which I've adopted here in Washington,
11 D. C. A law firm, a prominent law firm here in
12 Washington, had decided to volunteer to help paint, clean,
13 and plant new plantings at the school on a Saturday. I
14 went there, and there was a senior partner on a ladder.
15 There were school children from the school, participating.
16 Here were elementary school students who were painting.
17 They weren't making a mess of it. They were really
18 contributing to their school. The pride that everybody
19 had in coming together as partners was just absolutely
20 tangible.

21 Wherever I have gone in the United States,
22 whether it be in New York City or the smallest town, I
23 have a sense of the American people coming together and
24 saying yes, if we work together, if we stand up for what's
25 right, if we stand together, we can make a difference in

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1 terms of crime and in terms of giving our children a
2 strong and positive future.

3 The Night Out Program, the National Night Out,
4 is a symbol of the feelings of all these people and of 27
5 million Americans around the world who want to make a
6 difference, and who not only want to make a difference but
7 are proving, day in and day out, that the citizens of this
8 country, working together, can make a difference.

9 Our programs will not work if they come from
10 Washington without involving the people. Our programs
11 won't work if we go to a community and say this is what
12 you've got to do. We've got to reach out to all Americans
13 and let them know that this is a government of the people.
14 Whether it be a young man in Brooklyn or an elder at the
15 Menominee tribe, we have to involve everybody in
16 participating in this effort and in making a difference.

17 How do we start in this process?

18 First, it is important that the Federal
19 Government organize itself in a way so that the Federal
20 law enforcement agencies work together. I went to a
21 listening conference in Albuquerque and heard from Indian
22 tribes from around this nation that too often the Bureau
23 of Indian Affairs is not talking to the FBI and the FBI is
24 not talking to the State Police. We need to coordinate
25 our activities together so that we serve the people.

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1 We need to go to communities around this nation
2 and develop partnerships with state and local law
3 enforcement so that we exchange information with them, we
4 provide support for them, we give them the expertise that
5 we may have that they need to solve a crime. And then all
6 of us, both Federal and local law enforcement, have got to
7 form a partnership with people, principally through the
8 community policing initiative.

9 It has been so exciting to me, ladies and
10 gentlemen, to see the new attitude towards policing. When
11 I go to an elementary school in south-central Los Angeles,
12 where 40 percent of the school is Hispanic, 40 percent is
13 African-American, and 20 percent is Cambodian, and I ask
14 the young people what they'd like to be when they grow up,
15 they look past me, they look past the mayor, and they look
16 over my shoulder and see a community police officer. And
17 they say I want to be a policeman.

18 There is trust that has been developed. Police
19 are on the cutting edge of bringing communities together.
20 When a youngster, a young lady of 18, in South Dallas says
21 I didn't trust cops, but now I've been watching community
22 police officers, and they're making such a difference, and
23 when three young men came from Boston to this very hall
24 and stood here to tell the President of the United States
25 what a difference community police officers had made in

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1 their lives, you understand what it is all about.

2 Community policing is involving the citizens.

3 But police can't do it. It's up to the people, and

4 National Night Out is a symbol of the people of America

5 taking control of their community again. It is a symbol

6 of the people of America forming a partnership in their

7 community not just with police, but with teachers.

8 Principal after principal will tell me that it is so

9 difficult to get parents to come to school and be involved

10 in school. And yet, so many are beginning to reach out.

11 And others are beginning to volunteer in the school to

12 make a difference.

13 It is the people of neighborhoods reaching out,

14 to work with park and recreational people, to work with

15 the business community both at a national level and at a

16 local level. I'll bet representatives of these

17 corporations are actively involved in neighborhoods where

18 they are a partner with the school, a partner with police

19 officers, where they do ride-alongs, where they make a

20 difference, where they have come together.

21 It is so many different people reaching out and

22 caring. It is doctors working with lawyers. It is all of

23 us coming together to focus on neighborhoods and to

24 understand that the strength of America lies in the

25 neighborhood, whether the neighborhood be a tribe, or a

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1 borough of Brooklyn, or my southwest section in Miami. We
2 all are part of a neighborhood that can make such an
3 incredible difference.

4 It is important that we build on what the
5 National Night Out has done as a symbol. But we cannot
6 just take tonight and let it be a symbol. We have all got
7 to go back to our neighborhoods, to the communities that
8 we love, and renew our pledge to make a difference, to
9 reach out to help others, to build on what we have
10 started.

11 We will, hopefully, have a wonderful opportunity
12 to provide resources that can expand on this effort. The
13 Crime Bill is now pending. It will probably be considered
14 by the House of Representatives tomorrow. It provides
15 monies for 100,000 community police officers on the
16 streets of America in the next six years. It provides
17 monies for extraordinary prevention programs to enhance
18 what you do in your neighborhoods, to enhance the efforts
19 of prevention programs that give young people something to
20 say yes to, so that they can say no to gangs, drugs, and
21 violence.

22 We must work together to get that bill past but,
23 more importantly, to make its implementation real, and to
24 give to the people of America the tools necessary to do
25 the job.

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1 We have an extraordinary opportunity made
2 possible by 27 million Americans and more, who care
3 passionately about their country. The people of America
4 believe we can make a difference. I know we can make a
5 difference if we just take it back, child by child, family
6 by family, neighborhood by neighborhood, tribe by tribe,
7 community by community, until we make this nation safe
8 again.

9 Thank you.

10 [Applause]

11 [Whereupon, at 11:37 a.m., the Attorney
12 General's remarks were concluded.]

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