

1
2
3 FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE CONVENTION
4
5
6
7

8 REMARKS OF ATTORNEY GENERAL JANET RENO
9
10
11
12
13

14 DATE: August 2, 1995

15 TIME: 9:00 a.m.

16 PLACE: Virginia Beach Pavilion
17 Virginia Beach, Virginia
18

19
20 CHAIRMAN: Dewey Stokes

21 President, Fraternal Order Of Police
22
23
24
25

1 MR. STOKES: Brothers and sisters, it is with great
2 pleasure this morning that I introduce to you the
3 Attorney General of the United States. In 1993, the
4 Fraternal Order of Police came out and supported and
5 endorsed the nomination for the position of Attorney
6 General of the United States of one Janet Reno. Her
7 performance since March the 12th of that year has
8 demonstrated that our endorsement and their appointment,
9 the President's appointment, was a correct decision.

10 Attorney General Janet Reno has time and again
11 shown her support and commitment to the law enforcement
12 community, as recently as yesterday before the House,
13 and I agreed in taking a hard line on criminals, and we
14 did not have to convince this attorney general that a
15 hard line on criminals was necessary, from her
16 experience in Florida.

17 She has stood with us, seeing that legislation was
18 passed that would assist the working law enforcement
19 officers of this country. She has come to the forefront
20 to the defense of our federal law enforcement brothers
21 and sisters while other elected officials and
22 bureaucrats have either remained silent or criticized
23 our federal brothers and sisters for taking the
24 appropriate action.

25 As Attorney General and the chief law enforcement

1 officer of this country, she has been and has always
2 been open and available to listen to the concerns of the
3 Fraternal Order of Police at the national level. She
4 has stood there to make those tough decisions, and,
5 brothers and sisters, it is with great and humble
6 privilege I introduce to you this morning the Attorney
7 General of the United States, Janet Reno.

8 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Dewey, I am so honored to
9 be here this morning, because I well remember that
10 February day two years ago when I came to Washington to
11 be considered for attorney general. They brought you
12 in, and you looked at me like, H'm, and then you asked
13 me some questions, and I think it took us about ten
14 minutes to understand that we talked the same language,
15 we agreed, and I have enjoyed the opportunity to work
16 with you ever since. It has been a real privilege, and
17 it is a real privilege for me -- as you know, the
18 President yesterday signed a Presidential Certificate of
19 Commendation to honor your service on behalf of law
20 enforcement throughout the country. I'd like to present
21 it to you, and the certificate reads: The President of
22 the United States of America awards the Certificate of
23 Commendation to Dewey Stokes in recognition of his
24 exceptional efforts as the President of the Fraternal
25 Order of Police to improve the lives of law enforcement

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO
1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 officers throughout the nation and to make America's
2 communities stronger and safer, whether working to
3 increase benefits for the survivors of officers killed
4 in the line of duty or battling to pass the crime bill,
5 the Brady bill, and the ban on plastic guns, assault
6 weapons and copper-covered bullets. He has shown
7 himself to be a tenacious advocate for the police
8 officers and the citizens of this nation. In a proud
9 career, Dewey Stokes has lived up to the finest
10 tradition of American service and leadership."

11 Dewey, thank you.

12 I have had the opportunity to meet some of you in
13 different places across this nation; some in Washington,
14 in the National Law Enforcement Officers Vigil, some in
15 the Police Officers Memorial Service on the Mall. It is
16 so touching to me to come here this morning and already
17 begin to see people and talk to people that I have met
18 along the way. I have met others of you in the towns
19 and cities that you serve, in the towns and cities that
20 you protect. I have walked the streets of your city, of
21 your community, with you, and I have seen what the
22 police officers are doing across this country to bring
23 America together again. There is nothing so rewarding
24 as to walk down the street of a neighborhood and see
25 people come out and talk to their officers, exchange

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO

1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 information with them. You do such an incredible job in
2 the service of this nation.

3 Yesterday we saw another example of police
4 officers, of law enforcement agents, responding,
5 responding to public scrutiny because they had had to
6 deal with a terribly difficult situation. They faced a
7 situation where ATF agents had gone to serve a valid
8 warrant, and in the process of trying to implement the
9 law of this nation in a right and orderly way, four of
10 them were shot down and 15 more were wounded.

11 We cannot stand by and let that happen without
12 holding people accountable, and that is what the federal
13 law enforcement tried to do, with support and assistance
14 from local law enforcement. They tried to bring that
15 situation at Waco to an end peacefully, and after 51
16 days they took the best action they could based on all
17 the information that was available. They knew they were
18 going to face scrutiny and they weren't afraid to face
19 ten days of scrutiny.

20 I am so proud of those officers, so proud of those
21 agents. If we are to have a rule of law, we must back
22 up officers across this land, whether they be an ATF
23 agent or a police officer in a small town. Each of us
24 shares the same problem: how do we protect our citizens
25 and at the same time adhere to the rule of law. Police

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO
1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 officers throughout the land are our heroes and heroines
2 as they execute this solemn challenge.

3 I have always said I look at it from the vantage
4 point of a prosecutor in Miami. I used to tell my
5 prosecutors that police officers had the single toughest
6 job of anybody I know. You've got to make hard legal
7 decisions, and most of you don't go to law school. You
8 can't sit with your feet propped up in your office
9 looking at law books. You've got to make a judgment
10 right there on the streets, where it counts, but not
11 only do you have to do that, you then have to go to
12 court and prepare to testify and have a criminal defense
13 lawyer try to second guess you day in and day out for
14 two days on the witness stand, and you still come
15 through with the convictions.

16 You've got to make decisions that reflect human
17 interest, the health and safety of the citizens you
18 serve, and you do it day in and day out. I am so proud
19 of American law enforcement as I have had the
20 opportunity now to see it in action, not just in the
21 community that I served at home in Miami but around this
22 nation.

23 If we are going to achieve our goals, protecting
24 our communities, protecting our nation, while at the
25 same time adhering to the rule of law, it is imperative

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO

1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 that we work together, that federal law enforcement work
2 together with local law enforcement, that we come
3 together, that we exchange information as a two-way
4 street, that we support each other, and when a case is
5 more properly handled in state court, then let it go to
6 state court and let the federal government assist local
7 law enforcement in the prosecution of the case in state
8 court, if that is what is in the best interest of the
9 case.

10 But I think that the greatest example I have seen
11 of cooperation, and the proudest moment I've ever had
12 being involved in law enforcement, were in those days
13 following the terrible blast in Oklahoma City. Four
14 days after the blast I went to the command center in
15 Oklahoma City. I saw Oklahoma City police officers,
16 state troopers, FBI agents, ATF agents, shoulder to
17 shoulder, working together.

18 As I traveled around the country, I would go to an
19 FBI office and they would be working with local law
20 enforcement, following up on a particular lead that was
21 going to be absolutely critical to the solution of the
22 case in Oklahoma City.

23 I have never seen law enforcement work together as
24 it did in those days following that terrible, terrible
25 tragedy, and look at who was responsible for solving

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO

1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 that crime. Not just the FBI. It was an Oklahoma City
2 police officer who spotted the rear axle that had the
3 number on it that led to the identification of the Ryder
4 truck. He had the skill, he had the alertness, to spot
5 this critical piece of evidence. It was an Oklahoma
6 state trooper who arrested the person who has been
7 charged with the crime.

8 Nobody can do it by himself. We are all in this
9 together, and Oklahoma City was another example of how
10 vital local law enforcement is in our efforts across
11 this country. And in Washington we have been working
12 together. Dewey has been such a strong support in
13 making sure that your voice is heard on so many
14 important issues, to utilize asset forfeiture laws, to
15 ban armor piercing ammunition, and to enact an exemption
16 to the Age Discrimination Act for public safety
17 officers.

18 The dialogue between the Department of Justice and
19 the Fraternal Order of Police supports the fundamental
20 goal of the Clinton administration, a partnership with
21 state and local law enforcement. Our partnership starts
22 with an understanding of what role local police officers
23 play in our community and how the federal government can
24 assist. We don't serve you well if we rush to
25 federalize all crimes, recognizing that naturally,

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO

1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 historically, and rightly and properly, most crimes are
2 prosecuted and should be prosecuted on the local level,
3 and we should support you in that effort.

4 To that end, a little over two years ago we
5 developed an anti-violence mission, and my message to
6 the FBI, to the federal agencies, to the federal
7 prosecutors, was, Go to your local law enforcement, go
8 to the police officers, go to the prosecutor, and let us
9 develop an initiative where we share information, where
10 we work together to get the bad guys put away and kept
11 away.

12 If the state doesn't have adequate prison cells,
13 let's cross designate the prosecutor and let's bring the
14 police officers into federal court and let's make sure
15 we get the time in federal court that puts the bad guy
16 away. If it is better done with local government, let's
17 do it there, but let's get the job done without concern
18 about who gets the credit.

19 Local law enforcement has for too long been on the
20 front line in terms of the fight against violence and in
21 many instances has been overwhelmed. Our commitment has
22 been to direct resources to states and localities, and
23 to do it at an unprecedented level. We have dedicated
24 our resources at the local level where over 95 per cent
25 of the criminals are arrested, prosecuted and serve

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO

1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 their time.

2 Nothing was more frustrating to me than to get
3 somebody prosecuted, get him convicted, get him
4 sentenced to the right sentence, and then turn around in
5 the 15 years that I was a prosecutor and have about 20
6 to 30 percent of the sentence because we didn't have
7 enough prison cells. We have got to work together to
8 continue to make sure every state in this nation has the
9 money to have the cells to house those prisoners for the
10 length of time of their sentence so we can have truth in
11 sentencing in this nation for once and for all.

12 Nothing is so frustrating as to see police
13 officers working as hard as they can to solve crimes,
14 needing the additional resources, and not having the
15 response. We want to make sure that we get you support
16 in the form of police officers that can give you the
17 alliance, the support that you need, to get the job
18 done.

19 If you've got the toughest job in America, America
20 should realize it and give you the tools to do the job.
21 That involves not just major urban areas, because an
22 awful lot of people think that crime and violence is a
23 problem in the big cities. It's a problem in small
24 towns. It's a problem in the suburban areas. Wherever
25 crime is, we need to get you the resources, and one of

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO
1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 the things that I have tried to do is to make sure that
2 rural America, the small towns of America, are not
3 forgotten as we form this partnership with state and
4 local law enforcement across the land.

5 Our partnership continues with an understanding
6 that you want and need less bureaucracy as you apply for
7 the grants and aid that Washington supplies. I used to
8 wonder how much of my taxpayer's dollars came out of my
9 pocket to get a government aid grant. In a study I was
10 told I was not too far wrong, that for every \$6.00 of
11 tax dollars that I sent to Washington, about a dollar
12 would come off the top in Washington before it got to
13 the regional office in Atlanta, another dollar might
14 come off there, another dollar might come off in
15 Tallahassee, and another dollar might come off in the
16 city commission at home.

17 We have got to make sure that the dollars get to
18 where they are going to be in as effective a manner as
19 possible with the money going for tools to do the job on
20 the streets and not to administrative overhead, and that
21 is what we have tried to do. That's why we cut red tape
22 dramatically for the Cops program. The administrative
23 costs for that program are less than two per cent of the
24 funds. I am told this is a truly astounding figure in
25 federal history.

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO

1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 Much of our ability to direct resources to where
2 they were so desperately needed stems from the passage
3 of the 1994 Violent Crime Control Act, signed into law
4 in September 1994 by the President. It offers a tough,
5 targeted approach. It provides the monies for prisons
6 to house the dangerous offenders in states across this
7 land. It provides money for 100,000 community police
8 officers. It provides monies for prevention programs
9 that can work. Together we want tough enforcement, more
10 prisons, and a crime bill that can really make a
11 difference. It provided funds to continue to implement
12 the Brady bill, which prevented 41,000 guns from
13 reaching the hands of felons in the first year alone.

14 We cannot afford to turn back on any of this
15 progress. At every step along the way, from drafting to
16 passage to talking in the halls of Congress to
17 implementing, the FOP has been there, and this bill is
18 in no small part due to your hard work in helping to get
19 it passed and now implementing it.

20 The crime bill was not a creation of Washington.
21 When I came to Washington, I said to people, Listen to
22 the communities. Listen to the mayors. Listen to the
23 police officer who has to be on the street. Let's find
24 out what he needs. We listened, and you told us what
25 help you could provide to make cities and towns across

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO

1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 this land safer.

2 Now, as the programs we created together come under
3 attack, we need the FOP to continue to be leaders in the
4 fight to preserve the crime bill. We will accomplish
5 President Clinton's historic pledge to put 100,000 new
6 police officers on the streets of America, and we will
7 do it in record time. People scoffed at that last year.
8 They said, You just get 20,000, total. But just last
9 week we announced another round of Cops awards, grants
10 that will put a total of 23,907 officers on the streets,
11 and we've only just begun. Cops Ahead of Cops asked for
12 two programs designed to expedite the request of local
13 law enforcement to put more cops on the streets. Cops
14 Ahead directed almost 4,400 police officers to cities
15 with 50,000 or more. Cops Fast funded more than 7,000
16 officers to cities and towns with less than 50,000
17 people, because we weren't going to forget the small
18 towns of America. Less time was spent on completing
19 paperwork so that the resources were directed to you
20 quickly and efficiently.

21 We are going to continue in that effort, and we
22 need your help. It is important to remember that some
23 in Congress said we couldn't do it. They said we would
24 hire social workers instead. I have seen those police
25 officers. I have seen what they are already doing, now

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO

1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 that they have come out of the academy. They are on the
2 streets. They are not social workers. They are people
3 that are solving crimes and making their communities
4 safer as we see the record reduction of violence as we
5 add additional police officers to the streets. But the
6 attack continues on the Cops program, one of the most
7 successful nonbureaucratic programs in the federal
8 government's history. Just last week the House of
9 Representatives passed an appropriations bill which
10 would eliminate the Cops program and would replace it
11 with a block grant program. The Senate will also soon
12 consider attempts to gut the Cops program.

13 When I was a state attorney in Dade County, I'd see
14 headlines: bill passed assuring South Florida of a
15 certain number of resources. Six months later I'd ask
16 my senator when that support would get down to the local
17 level where it was needed. Sometimes he would answer
18 that the money had been authorized but not appropriated.
19 Other times I knew that the money was filtering down
20 from Washington, through Tallahassee, and that I didn't
21 know when I would see it. Every time the money changed
22 hands along the way there was less of it to reach the
23 local level.

24 But the Clinton administration's approach is new
25 and different. It focuses resources at the local level,

1 with no middleman, no huge administrative cost diluting
2 the strength of the program. We made a promise, and we
3 are keeping it. We are steering appropriated funds that
4 are satisfied through a trust fund directly to you at
5 the local level. We need the help of the Fraternal
6 Order of Police to assure that Congress does not turn
7 its back on the commitment made to law enforcement
8 officers and the American people with the passage of the
9 Violent Crime Control Act last fall.

10 Various legislative proposals now before Congress
11 retreat from the progress we've made in one of two ways.
12 These proposals either dangle the carrot of larger
13 authorizations that may not be funded or they create
14 block grants, diverting money from law enforcement as it
15 changes hands along the line.

16 We must continue to work together to create
17 programs to ensure the safety of all citizens. We must
18 not be deterred by the taxing of the law enforcement
19 profession.

20 You are doing incredible jobs in small departments,
21 in large city departments. Wherever I go, I am so proud
22 of American law enforcement. You are what policing is
23 all about. You are on the streets, giving citizens hope
24 that their community can be saved. You are on the
25 streets, giving children hope that they can grow in a

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

(202)289-2260 (800) FOR DEPO
1111 14th ST., N.W., 4th FLOOR / WASHINGTON, D.C., 20005

1 safe, constructive way. You are on the streets, putting
2 your life on the line. You are on the streets, being
3 fair and firm. You are on the streets, rebuilding and
4 making your communities stronger and safer.

5 I've watched the eyes of survivors as I go to the
6 funeral of an officer. I watch the eyes of officers on
7 the streets as they expose their life to danger. We
8 have an unprecedented opportunity in American history to
9 bring America back to where I once knew it, where our
10 communities are safer, and, working together, we will do
11 that, because of your efforts, your courage, your
12 bravery, and your commitment to America and to this
13 nation. On behalf of every American, I say from the
14 bottom of my heart, thank you for all you do for all of
15 us.

C E R T I F I C A T E

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH, to wit:

I, Karen H. Martino, B.S., do hereby certify
that the foregoing pages are a true and correct
transcript of my Stenotype notes of the proceedings had
at the time and place in the caption mentioned.

This 5th day of August,

1995.

Karen H. Martino
Karen H. Martino, Court Reporter

My commission expires: Oct. 31, 1997.