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REMARKS OF HON. JANET RENO,
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 1995

8:30 A.M.

CINCINNATI CONVENTION CENTER
525 ELM STREET
CINCINNATI, OHIO

(Speech beginning at 8:30 a.m.)

1 Thank you, Jim. I remember that
2 conference because I remember a particular panel, I
3 was so impressed with the dedication of the people
4 there, their sense of innovation, their sense of
5 purpose, but it didn't surprise me because you all
6 have one of the toughest jobs of any group in the
7 criminal justice system and too often because you
8 are the end of the line where it's not visible, you
9 don't get the credit for the tremendous job you do
10 for your community, your county, your state and for
11 this nation.

12 In the best of times, you have a
13 difficult job. You see the meanest, most vicious
14 offenders and you protect us from them. At the
15 same time, as you confront these people, you've got
16 to retain your belief in people, your belief that
17 people can put their past wrongs behind them and
18 move ahead. And then as you are believing that,
19 you've got to keep from becoming cynical when one
20 of them messes up and comes into the system having
21 proven you wrong, yet you never give up on people,
22 trying to hold them accountable, at the same time
23 giving them the opportunity with the chance of
24 coming back with a possible constructive future.

25 In this day and time, we have an even

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1 more difficult job. Our offenders are more
2 violent, they are tragically younger.. You have
3 case loads of probationers and parolees that
4 stagger the imagination. Your facilities are
5 overcrowded and you face court orders that set the
6 population limits so you don't know which way to
7 turn.

8 The fiscal pressures are extraordinary.
9 Some will be happy to build prisons, but they won't
10 be happy to give you the operating expenses this
11 year, the next year and the next year. They will
12 be happy to build restraints, but they will forget
13 that most of the people are coming back to the
14 community sooner rather than later and they are
15 limited in terms of the dollars they give you for
16 aftercare. And then when something goes wrong, you
17 end up in the headlines.

18 Well, I'm here to tell you today how much
19 this nation owes you, owes you for a job so well
20 done, day in and day out protecting us and at the
21 same time having that wonderful positive regard for
22 the strength and the ultimate greatness of the
23 human spirit.

24 I want to work with you. I've already
25 enjoyed that opportunity and I want to work with

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1 the President and the entire association in forming
2 a real partnership because you know better than
3 anybody else what works, what doesn't work.

4 I remember that morning in Miami Beach
5 your giving me good advice on what was working and
6 what was not working. How do we hold people
7 accountable? How do we return them to the
8 community with a chance of success? We want to be
9 a partner with you in this effort across America.

10 The 1994 Violent Crime Act I think set a
11 tone that is so important for America. It was
12 premised on punishment, punishment that was fair,
13 that fit the crime, that was carried out, that held
14 people accountable. It was focused on rebuilding
15 communities through 100,000 community police
16 officers that we will receive across this land in
17 the next six years, community police officers that
18 work with the neighbors in the community to
19 identify problems of priorities and re-weave the
20 fabric of society around children and families and
21 it focused on prevention.

22 In so many respects, you are the most
23 eloquent advocates for prevention because you see
24 what happens at the end of the line after the other
25 institutions have failed or after society has

1 failed to give our young people a chance to grow in
2 a strong and positive way.

3 But as we approach this effort, I think
4 it's also important as we look at policing,
5 punishment and prevention that we understand what
6 goes into the sanctions. It is so important,
7 particularly as we look at the violent youth coming
8 into our communities, coming into our systems that
9 we develop gradually plans of sanctions, sanctions
10 that are fair, that fit the crime, but that are
11 developed gradually so that people will understand
12 they will be held accountable for what they do.

13 At the same time, that won't work unless
14 we develop a coherent plan of treatment, of job
15 training placement, of aftercare and follow up to
16 give them a chance to come back. We are trying to
17 work with you, listen to you, understand from you
18 what needs to be done.

19 One of the areas where there has been
20 great focus is on the issue of boot camps and our
21 Office of Justice Programs that work with you to
22 figure out what works and doesn't work; and,
23 indeed, I am pleased to announce today the first
24 awards under the Crime Act for the correctional
25 boot camp programs for nonviolent offenders, over

1 \$20 million of boot camp funding in 20 states.
2 Seven are awards for renovation and expansion of
3 existing facilities and ten are for new boot camp
4 construction. The expansion grants are for
5 renovation of a variety of existing facilities
6 including several military bases.

7 These boot camps are for adult males,
8 females and juveniles at the local, state and
9 federal level. Several will go to Indian tribes in
10 a joint effort and more than half of the awards are
11 for boot camps for juvenile offenders.

12 Boot camps can be a successful part of
13 our strategy. These programs can reduce
14 institutional overcrowding and costs while
15 increasing educational levels, employment prospects
16 and access to community programs. But we must
17 learn from the ideas that have been successful at
18 existing boot camps. And we can't re-invent the
19 wheel, but we know the best rates involve
20 integrated boot camps with a strong aftercare
21 program. That's why we have included a requirement
22 in the Crime Law Act that grants intensive
23 aftercare. We don't want to take away the
24 successful transition back to the community.

25 So many people have told me that we have

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1 a whole generation of 18 to 35-year-olds that
2 didn't have the aftercare, didn't have the
3 follow-up, went back to the apartment over the open
4 air drug market where they got in trouble in the
5 first place, despite their best efforts, got in
6 trouble again and recycled back again and again.

7 Let us speak out for what works and how
8 we can improve the system we have. I'm looking
9 forward to seeing additional progress on innovative
10 forms of incarceration and these grants of the day
11 help sustain the hard work that you do day in and
12 day out, but I ask of you to continue to let us
13 know how we can improve, how we can work with you,
14 how we can develop a better partnership, how we can
15 develop grants that are useful and serve a purpose
16 for you who work so hard in the field.

17 The Crime Law Act also dedicates
18 resources to building correctional facilities to
19 house violent offenders. \$8 million will, over
20 five years, build prisons, jails and juvenile
21 facilities. We need security levels to house
22 violent criminals and we must ensure there's
23 sufficient bed space for the true offenders to
24 serve their sentence so we can protect our nation
25 from these offenders. And when offenders do serve

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1 their terms, they are coming back and we need
2 aftercare programs for them, too. Unfortunately,
3 some in Congress want to change the 1994 Crime Act
4 dealing with the prison proposal.

5 Because of the greater flexibility
6 provided under the 1994 Crime Law, I have no doubt
7 that the states and localities will be able to
8 build correctional facilities more quickly,
9 equitably and with greater fiscal responsibility
10 than under the House or Senate proposals.

11 We must stand firm on the Crime Act as it
12 was passed and we must not let the clock be turned
13 back to more bureaucratic red tape.

14 What else does the Crime Act provide
15 for? It outlaws dangerous assault weapons and
16 provides funding for the Brady Bill. The Brady
17 Bill provides resources to update criminal history
18 records that can give you a far better
19 understanding of whom you have in your business so
20 that appropriate action can be taken. We cannot
21 afford to turn back the clock on this progress. We
22 will make the President's historic pledge to put
23 100,000 police on the streets of America come true
24 and we will do it in record time.

25 I used to, in Miami, look at the federal

1 grant applications that came down and I often
2 thought that I probably had to go to college to get
3 a degree in federal grantsmanship. What we have
4 tried to do, what we have tried to do with all the
5 grant processes is simplify them and make them
6 easily understandable, easy to fill out, hold
7 people accountable, but at the same time give them
8 the support necessary to cut through the red tape
9 of the grant process.

10 We developed 800 numbers and tried to do
11 it in a reasonable way. Awards for nearly 24,000
12 police officers have been granted under the House
13 program for the nation's largest and smallest
14 cities and towns and we have strategically placed
15 the community police.

16 And today I would like to challenge you
17 because I think we have a wonderful opportunity to
18 combine corrections and policing as the offender
19 comes back to the community. If we can put
20 community based police officers and involve them in
21 the aftercare program for that ex-offender, we can
22 make a difference; yet, you may say, there are some
23 police that don't look at it that way.

24 You should travel with me as I have had
25 the opportunity to see community based police in

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1 action, seeing them pulling young people back from
2 crime, helping young people get out of trouble.
3 It's a remarkable experience to stand in the great
4 hall of the Department of Justice and see two young
5 men from Dorchester, Massachusetts tell the
6 President of the United States what a difference
7 the community based police officers have made in
8 their lives and their decision to stay out of
9 trouble.

10 But the most important effort that we've
11 got to convey to all America is that we will never
12 be able to police our way out of this problem. We
13 will never be able to build our way out of this
14 problem. We have to make an investment into our
15 children and into their future; and through
16 prevention, perhaps, give them the chance to grow
17 in a strong, constructive way, give them a strong
18 and positive future.

19 The Crime Act as it was passed in 1994
20 provides significant monies in a balanced way for
21 prevention programs that can make a difference for
22 programs in the afternoon and in the evenings for
23 kids to keep them out of trouble.

24 I bet you have done what I've done,
25 particularly if you are in juvenile corrections,

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1 try to talk to people who have been in trouble.
2 I've asked them, what could have been done to keep
3 you out of trouble, what could have been done to
4 make a difference? And again and again, they tell
5 me two things; some program in the afternoon and
6 evening to keep me out of trouble and somebody to
7 talk to, somebody who understands how hard it is to
8 grow up in America today, somebody to give me a pat
9 on the back when I deserved it and tell me where I
10 was wrong and hold me accountable. The Crime Act
11 can provide monies for that through afternoon
12 programs, through community programs.

13 Let us not let the clock be turned back.
14 Clearly, as we read the papers today, as we look at
15 all the figures coming out of the National
16 Institute of Justice, out of all the record keeping
17 that occurs in America, we see the correlation
18 between drugs and crime. It makes no sense to send
19 somebody to prison if they have a substance abuse
20 problem and turn them back to the community.

21 We have to speak out and let America
22 understand how critical it is that we have these
23 substance abuse programs. Through the Crime Act,
24 we're addressing this. There is no question we can
25 deal swiftly with the hard core drug dealers and

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1 other dealers, but we have to continue to provide
2 treatment programs and enhance our treatment effort
3 so they make a difference.

4 You all have got to help America
5 understand that just as you treat somebody for
6 cancer, sometimes it reoccurs and you have to keep
7 treating it again and sometimes treatment doesn't
8 work. But in many instances, treatment does work
9 and we can't give up. We have got to continue to
10 do everything we can to understand how to best
11 deliver substance abuse treatment in correctional
12 facilities, in correctional programs and in the
13 community hereafter. We look forward to working
14 with you in every way possible.

15 The Crime Act also provides monies for
16 drug courts. I've had experiences with drug courts
17 in Miami. I've had the experience with seeing what
18 works, what doesn't work and continually trying to
19 improve it. For these grants to remain under the
20 Crime Act, we need your support. We need your
21 analysis of how we can work together and how we can
22 share information in an expeditious way about what
23 is working in drug courts across this country so
24 that we share the ideas with other communities that
25 want to develop these efforts.

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1 You are on the front line. You've got to
2 be our eyes and ears for what is working and what
3 is not and let us then convey to the rest of this
4 nation what makes a difference.

5 Consistent with our efforts to balance
6 money for constructive incarceration, I'm pleased
7 to tell you about a very recent grant award which I
8 announced not too long ago, not under the Crime
9 Act, but it is under way, this is the BAHA Act from
10 the National Sheriff's Association in collaboration
11 with the ACA for TV networking. The network will
12 offer programming of the house committee. The
13 network will -- if you'll be real quiet, I'll
14 continue -- the network will offer programming in
15 areas of critical importance such as drug and
16 alcohol dependency and treatment, educational
17 improvement and vocational and employment readiness
18 training.

19 The network will also offer programs on
20 parenting skills, anger management and domestic
21 abuse. Television can be a force for the good.
22 This innovative grant will help us consider how to
23 better use it for the future.

24 We welcome the leadership of the ACA and
25 their work and think what we can do. Have you

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1 watched what can be done through interactive video
2 through video conferencing? If we can develop the
3 best programs possible and use the technology of
4 the next century, we're going to be able to reach
5 offenders across this country in a far more
6 effective way. The Department of Justice looks
7 forward to working with you in every way possible.

8 Another issue of concern is the House of
9 Representatives' recent action to zero out funding
10 for the National Institute of Corrections. You
11 know how important NIC is. It provides training
12 and technical assistance to state and local
13 correctional facilities. NIC facilitates the use
14 of best practices by state and local agencies. We
15 should ensure that the important functions of the
16 NIC are continued and we need your voice in
17 Washington to be heard.

18 This is an exciting time in this nation's
19 history. So many people are coming together in
20 communities, working together in positive ways.
21 They may not know how important prevention is in
22 Washington, but they know how important prevention
23 is in that small county and that urban
24 neighborhood. They understand how important what
25 you are doing is to their community and to the

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1 ultimate safety of us all.

2 We look forward to working with you and
3 together, taking America back for our children,
4 child by child, block by block, family by family,
5 all of us working together, the police and
6 correctional officials, the business community,
7 teachers, parks and recreation specialists, we're
8 all in this together and together, working to
9 re-weave the fabric of society around those that
10 have been lost, we can make a difference for this
11 nation.

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