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PRESS CONFERENCE
"A SUMMIT ON CRIME - COMING TOGETHER FOR
UTAH'S FUTURE"

Room 150A
Salt Palace
Salt Lake City, Utah
June 30, 1997
12:30 p.m.

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June 30, 1997 12:30 p.m.

ORRIN HATCH: Utah was not ready for the crime increase which came with our state's phenomenal growth. The purpose of this summit is not to assign blame but to come together to initiate the development and implementation of a Utah blueprint to solve our crime problems. I believe we are beginning to turn the corner on crime. Our coming together like this is a clear step in turning that corner. Our blueprint against

12 crime must be Utah's plan, not Washington's.

13 Following the summit we will draft this
14 blueprint -- blueprint. Paul Cassell of the
15 University of Utah, one of our brightest and best
16 professors of law in the country, is serving as our
17 secretary, and he is going to help to craft this
18 blueprint. Key participants will be involved in
19 drafting this document.

20 The federal government, however, must be a
21 player, especially in light of the illegal alien
22 problem. And I am pleased that these federal
23 officials have come here to listen and to work with
24 us today. We are very gratified to have them and
25 we're very honored to have these great federal

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1 officials. These are the top people in federal law
2 enforcement in our country.

3 On this first day we've already seen some
4 positive developments. Federal law enforcement
5 officials have agreed to assist in the
6 implementation of a long-term strategy to reduce
7 crime in Utah. Attorney General Reno has announced
8 the establishment of the first ever project where
9 state and local law enforcement will be given the
10 power to enforce federal immigration laws. We will
11 double the number of repatriation flights out of
12 Utah to Mexico. We will increase federal jail
13 space from 75 beds to between 250 and 300. In
14 addition, the department will explore avenues to
15 assist with the costs associated with construction
16 and/or renovation of county facilities. Efforts
17 will also be made to ensure adequate jail space is
18 guaranteed in southern Utah.

19 We are also going to study placing
20 federal -- a federal prison in Utah. Should Utahns
21 decide to support the idea of locating such a
22 facility in Utah, the department has agreed to work
23 with appropriate officials to study the possible
24 locations in Utah and, of course, the possibility
25 of bringing it here. The Department of Justice

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1 will initiate a multijurisdictional, quote, "Clean
2 Sweep," unquote, initiative to target criminal

3 aliens engaged in drug trafficking and violent
4 crime.

5 As part of this initiative we'll get three
6 new prosecutors and five new FBI agents and an
7 enhanced Drug Enforcement Administration presence.
8 Already Commissioner Meissner of the -- of the INS,
9 the Immigration and Naturalization Service, is
10 saying that we'll get more and more help from the
11 INS as well.

12 Federal law endorsement presence will
13 gradually increase in the coming years as Utah
14 prepares for the Olympic games, and Director Freeh
15 of the FBI has made that clear that they're already
16 working on that, so we believe that will all be in
17 place by the time we have our Olympics in 2002.

18 Governor Leavitt today has announced a
19 major voluntary initiative which is a truly
20 positive development. The governor has also called
21 for a 1000 person increase in law enforcement and
22 correction officers. These are all first steps but
23 they are very positive developments, and we are
24 very, very happy to have these federal government
25 people here today, the top people in law

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1 enforcement in our country, and I'm sure they're
2 prepared to take any questions that you have.

3 So we'll turn the time over to you, and
4 you've got the Attorney General of the United
5 States, you've got the head of our Marshal Service,
6 you've got the director of the FBI Louis Freeh,
7 you've got the -- the administrator of the Drug
8 Enforcement Administration Thomas Constantine,
9 you've got the head -- the commissioner of the
10 Immigration and Naturalization Services Doris
11 Meissner, of course, our own wonderful Lieutenant
12 Governor, and my own partner in crime back there in
13 Washington. And don't take that seriously but
14 (laughter) some people do. Senator Robert Bennett
15 is a great, great asset to Utah and is helping us
16 greatly in these areas, especially on the Senate
17 Appropriations Committee. So we'll be happy to
18 take any questions you have.

19 Yes.

20 VOICE: My question and for you, and --

21 ORRIN HATCH: For me?
22 VOICE: Yes. My first one, anyway.
23 ORRIN HATCH: Okay.
24 VOICE: And that's on the locating of the
25 federal prison -- or the possibility of locating a

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1 federal prison here in Utah. If we could send our
2 prisoners who commit federal crimes and are
3 prosecuted as such to any federal prison, why would
4 we want to have a federal prison here?

5 ORRIN HATCH: Well, because there needs to
6 be developed federal prisons. Having one here
7 would be not only a -- a matter of prestige and a
8 follow onto Utah's desire to support law
9 enforcement in the country, but would also provide
10 350 to 400 jobs in Utah as well as provide us with
11 a means of having enough bed space and other
12 detention space to be able to take care of the
13 increased crimes that are occurring here as our
14 population is increasing.

15 One of the problems is that the federal
16 government, in looking at these places, probably
17 looks less at rural Utah than it would to being at
18 or near major airports so we can transport those
19 prisoners, but they may look at that as well. And
20 it will be up to the people here in Utah as to
21 whether or not we -- we would entertain the idea of
22 having a federal penitentiary here. On the other
23 hand, it would be a great -- a great privilege for
24 Utah to do so.

25 But that doesn't mean we'll get it, even at

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1 that, it's just if -- if the people in Utah do
2 think that's a good idea, then we're certainly
3 going to make an effort to see if we can have one
4 here.

5 VOICE: As Attorney General, this
6 establishment of a first-ever multijurisdictional
7 immigration working project, are we -- what is the
8 thrust of this here? Are we talking about a
9 workplace freeze?

10 JANET RENO: What we're talking about is
11 the frustration sometimes of a sheriff who picks up

12 someone who he knows to be an illegal alien. There
13 is no one that can respond, or someone says "Well,
14 we can't really do anything." What we need to do
15 is to work together first by drafting regulations
16 to implement the act in the right way to make sure
17 that there's proper understanding and training of
18 the responsibilities involved, that there's close
19 coordination, and then try to use the resources
20 that we all have to enforce the laws of this
21 country the right way.

22 And if I may take just a moment, I'd like,
23 also, Senator, to recognize Scott Matheson our U.S.
24 attorney, who has done such a fine job.

25 ORRIN HATCH: You should be up here with

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1 us. We might have some tough questions for you.

2 VOICE: Ms. Reno, you've announced
3 different ways in which the Justice Department will
4 be giving more resources to Utah. Would you be
5 doing this if Senator Hatch weren't from Utah?

6 JANET RENO: Well, when I came out here I
7 wanted to make sure, and I asked my staff to sit
8 down. It's clear to me -- and what I've tried to
9 do is focus on communities. As the crime rate has
10 gone down across America I've tried to focus where
11 there may be problems, to see what we can do
12 working with state and local officials and citizens
13 to turn it around. And here, obviously, with the
14 increase in population, the circumstances here with
15 the increasing number of young people and with the
16 fact that youth violence is a problem around
17 America, and if you have an increasing number of
18 young people that is going to exacerbate the
19 problem in that community, I wanted to see what we
20 could do and do it the right way. And I
21 specifically said, "Now, I don't want to do
22 anything just because he's the chairman of the
23 Judiciary Committee, I want to do it because it is
24 right and because we have a wonderful opportunity
25 to work with the people of the state of Utah." And

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1 all you have to do and look out there this morning
2 and see the great cross-section of people and

3 realize that this is a really splendid opportunity.

4 And, Senator, thank you for calling it.

5 ORRIN HATCH: And we're happy to have you
6 here.

7 Yes.

8 VOICE: This I suppose would be for either
9 Janet Reno or Doris Meissner. Could you elaborate
10 a bit more on the immigration project, what some of
11 the local people might be doing in various types of
12 tasks and how many local people would be involved.
13 Would their -- would their authorization would be
14 for a temporary period or an extensive period,
15 would it have a deadline at the end of it? Tell us
16 a little bit more about how the whole thing will
17 operate.

18 JANET RENO: First of all, the act passed
19 last year authorized programs such as this and
20 authorized the cross-designation. A lot was put on
21 the Immigration and Naturalization Service in terms
22 of developing regulations that went into effect and
23 have a dramatic and immediate impact on people, and
24 so the first efforts have been -- of the INS have
25 been to focus on those regulations.

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1 They're in the process of developing the
2 regulations. I can't give you the contours, but
3 Doris correct me if I'm wrong, but here are the
4 frustrations I see. As a local prosecutor I would
5 have somebody identified as probably a drug dealer,
6 but there was insufficient evidence to charge them
7 when the case was finally reviewed by prosecutors.
8 I would love for that illegal alien, after they
9 have been appropriately identified and everything
10 has been handled according to constitutional due
11 process, to be immediately identified and removed
12 from the country. I think we can work with
13 everybody concerned to develop a partnership so
14 that we use state and local law enforcement
15 properly trained under these regulations to do it.
16 But as I said earlier, sometimes things don't move
17 as fast in Washington as they do in Salt Lake City,
18 but we're going to try to get these regs done as
19 soon as possible.

20 VOICE: Will this pilot be the only pilot

21 project or will there be other states involved?

22 JANET RENO: We are going to start with
23 Utah and just -- and I'm even more convinced that
24 this is the place to start after talking with
25 people this morning. I mean, there's such a good,

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1 close working relationship. And what impressed me
2 so much about law enforcement is that they
3 understand how important it is that we don't
4 profile people, that we don't pick on one group of
5 people, that we just take it based on the facts and
6 do it according to due process, do it with respect
7 to -- to the tradition of this nation as a nation
8 of immigrants and do it with regard to legal
9 immigration as well. I think this can be a perfect
10 place to do it and show that it can be done
11 effectively and in the right way.

12 VOICE: Ms. Meissner, Commissioner
13 Meissner, here in Utah, if I understand correctly,
14 the INS has essentially got an unlisted phone
15 number recently. They changed their numbers and
16 they aren't telling the public what it is, and
17 they're closing down their office to the public one
18 day a week, and they say they're just overloaded
19 and can't do anymore. Would you tell us if that's
20 true and why and what -- what's happening to make
21 them so overworked.

22 DORIS MEISSNER: You're talking now about
23 an entirely different part of the operation than
24 what we've been discussing this morning. You're
25 talking about our adjudicating applications. We

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1 have been overwhelmed here, as in other parts of
2 the country, particularly with Naturalization
3 applications, and that -- and we're talking now
4 about double and triple caseloads in -- in
5 Naturalization. Our local office here went into
6 basically a stand-down position for a couple of
7 weeks in order to regroup and try to get on top of
8 the application load. We are -- we definitely are
9 an organization that is open to the public, and we
10 need to be answering all those questions. We
11 certainly want to be able to answer our telephones,

12 and as soon as this very short period of cataloging
13 the applications and being sure of what our
14 workload is and how to tackle it is complete, we'll
15 be publishing our phone numbers and we will be
16 available for questions. So we will be back in
17 touch on that very quickly.

18 VOICE: Did I understand you that this
19 stand-down with respect to applications doesn't
20 affect the enforcement of -- of the law against
21 illegal aliens?

22 DORIS MEISSNER: That's correct. It has to
23 do only with the Naturalization caseload. We're
24 temporarily unable to get on top of it.

25 VOICE: In protecting the constitutional

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1 rights of the Hispanic U.S. citizens who do not
2 speak English, what is the Department of Justice
3 doing to ensure that they're not deported when U.S.
4 citizens are Hispanic and do not speak English?

5 JANET RENO: In all of these situations we
6 want to make sure there is appropriate
7 communication, that if somebody is a permanent --
8 legal permanent resident of this country or they're
9 a citizen of this country they're not focussed on
10 inappropriately, and if there is some circumstance
11 that causes their deportation to be considered that
12 there is a full and fair review process so it
13 doesn't happen.

14 VOICE: Could you define "appropriate."

15 JANET RENO: I'd have to define it in the
16 absence of any specific occasion or circumstance.

17 VOICE: Several months ago Senator Hatch
18 had you (inaudible) Trentadue's brother lives here
19 in Salt Lake at the federal prison. What is the
20 progress on that, Janet?

21 JANET RENO: I had followed that case
22 closely from the time it was first called to my
23 attention to make sure that the civil rights
24 division in the FBI followed up appropriately.
25 Senator Hatch asked me to check into it again

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1 earlier this spring, and we checked. It is under
2 investigation. And other than that I can't

3 comment.

4 VOICE: Is that a separate investigation
5 from this?

6 JANET RENO: No. The grand jury
7 investigation is part -- is part of the criminal
8 investigation.

9 VOICE: (Inaudible).

10 ORRIN HATCH: Not completely, because the
11 grand jury meets so seldom that --

12 VOICE: (Inaudible).

13 JANET RENO: Yes. The Senator asked me to
14 check into that. He asked to make sure there was
15 sufficient grand jury time, and I was told there
16 was sufficient grand jury time.

17 VOICE: (Inaudible)

18 DORIS MEISSNER: It's always a tough
19 question as to where you prioritize. We will try
20 and meet the needs as best we can. I think that in
21 government we often try to get by in the most
22 efficient way possible, and -- and which causes
23 some prioritization. And, of course, we --
24 everyone would like additional staff, everyone
25 would like additional attention. Any staff that we

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1 can get from the federal government will be greatly
2 appreciated. We always work closely with the
3 legislature to try and meet the needs. I don't
4 think that anyone is ever, ever fully satisfied
5 with the degree of staffing that we have, but I
6 think overall our employees work harder and
7 probably are the most dedicated in the country, and
8 so we get a lot of good effort out of employees we
9 have. And is it ever enough? No. Could we always
10 use more? Yes. But I think overall we are
11 probably more productive than any other state.

12 I don't know whether that totally answers
13 your question.

14 VOICE: I guess my question is more
15 directly: Is this going to do anything but add to
16 their workload? I mean --

17 DORIS MEISSNER: Let's let -- he has some
18 more perspective.

19 THOMAS CONSTANTINE: Maybe. The
20 cross-deputization that was referred to before, the

21 highway patrol troopers were given what's called
22 Title 21 authority. In essence it gives them the
23 same authority in those circumstances as a DEA
24 agent. They go through a training program, they
25 actually agree to certain limitations and liability

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1 protection, which I think is very important both to
2 the troopers and to the state to protect the
3 troopers and for their own protection. Their
4 workload would not change. What happens is with
5 the uniform troopers in Utah and other places in a
6 course of conducting traffic investigations, very
7 often they find individuals that are wanted
8 sometimes for murders, sometimes for robberies,
9 oftentimes lately for drug violations, and as a
10 result of that we're making the arrests for the
11 drug violation. Now with the new authority they
12 not only can make an arrest for the state-level
13 violation of that crime, which is I think, as you
14 heard, because of prison capacity is a very
15 difficult situation presently for the state of
16 Utah, they can make that a federal violation of the
17 law, and then there may be a better alternative for
18 the resolution of the matter once convicted.

19 It also gives not only the highway patrol
20 but the state of Utah an opportunity to share
21 adequately in the assets that are seized at that
22 point. As I think as the person in charge of the
23 highway patrol has already mentioned, already there
24 have been \$10 million that has been seized by that
25 particular agency. By having Title 21 authority

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1 that allows them then to take part in the asset
2 seizure. That money goes directly to the State of
3 Utah, it's directly to the Utah Highway Patrol, the
4 criminal justice system. So cross-deputization
5 really enhances the assets of the state, it doesn't
6 limit them.

7 DORIS MEISSNER: That's where I think we'll
8 have a few extra staff, and we'll --

9 VOICE: (inaudible) -- for those law
10 enforcement officers who are out in the street,
11 what will they be able to do (inaudible) a green

12 card?

13 DORIS MEISSNER: Well, I think we're
14 talking about two different things here. What Tom
15 Constantine is talking about is what you've
16 described. What the Attorney General is speaking
17 about is the Memorandum of Understanding that will
18 follow the regulations on state and local law
19 enforcement are still in the -- in the process
20 of -- those regulations are still in the process of
21 being written.

22 And exactly those questions are the ones we
23 need to answer: What would be the extent of the
24 authority of local law enforcement, what would be
25 the type of training that we would provide? It's

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1 an extremely sensitive area. And first and
2 foremost in our thinking is that we would be
3 certain to attach and properly be preserving the
4 rights and liberties of the people who are here.
5 We do know that in implementing any kind of sharing
6 of authority with state and local law enforcement
7 that we will need to be training local officials
8 very, very carefully, and the scope of what they
9 would be doing will have to be carefully defined.
10 That's why we are suggesting the pilot, and we
11 think Utah would be a good pilot for the reasons
12 that the Attorney General explained, so that we
13 test and be sure we have those straight.

14 VOICE: Some of the members of the Hispanic
15 or minority communities say that they're not --
16 they're not part of this plan and they feel like
17 they should be. Do you plan on in inviting them in
18 this plan?

19 DORIS MEISSNER: Yes. We are still in
20 the -- we are still in the conceptual stage. We're
21 still at the point of developing regulations and
22 what the -- what the concept is. As soon as we
23 have that firmly established internally, we'll be
24 reaching out and inviting them in.

25 VOICE: In that regard (inaudible).

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1 DORIS MEISSNER: Those recommendations have
2 to be published so the people can comment on them

3 so that everyone will have an opportunity to fully
4 participate and be heard.

5 VOICE: When would that be?

6 DORIS MEISSNER: We hope to be able to have
7 a draft of the regulation, as the attorney general
8 said, sometime this fall.

9 ORRIN HATCH: We have got to get back into
10 our conference.

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