

1  
2 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
3 Press Conference  
4 THE HONORABLE JANET RENO, ATTORNEY GENERAL  
5 Thursday, October 9, 1997  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Last Friday, I sent a  
3 letter to Chairman Hyde, responding to his and his  
4 colleagues' request that I apply for the appointment of an  
5 independent counsel. Almost immediately, some people  
6 claimed that I had made a final decision with respect to  
7 certain fund-raising activities and use of government  
8 facilities by determining that at this time I did not have  
9 information that triggered the independent counsel statute  
10 with respect to covered persons. These claims are simply  
11 not true.

12 This is an ongoing investigation. It is being  
13 conducted in a professional, sensible way, by building our  
14 case from the ground up, by investigating and confronting

15 low-level targets and moving up the chain of those  
16 involved to whomever is responsible. And by building  
17 cases that provide proof that meets the test of the law  
18 and that will stand up in court.

19 I do not seek to create headlines or deal in  
20 innuendo or mere speculation. I want to make decisions  
21 and build cases that stand the test of time and court  
22 review. And no pressure or harsh words or editorials will  
23 change my focus.

24 There have been claims that we have somehow tied  
25 investigators' hands or chosen not to pursue all available

3

1 leads or spare high-level figures by not triggering the  
2 provisions of the independent counsel statute. These  
3 claims are not true. I will continue to review the  
4 evidence. And if the information triggers the statute, I  
5 will do so as I have already done in this case.

6 At the same time, it is our duty to carefully  
7 review all the information, and separate information from  
8 innuendo, and fact from speculation based on unreasonable  
9 deductions when determining whether to commence an inquiry  
10 against a covered person.

11 More than 120 agents, attorneys and staff are  
12 working full-time to do this investigation in the right  
13 way. No criminal case in this Department has more  
14 resources. More than a million pages of documents have  
15 been obtained. Hundreds of interviews have been  
16 conducted. We have an active Grand Jury investigation.  
17 And agents have been dispatched across the country to  
18 track down leads.

19 When I say that I am determined to follow every  
20 lead, I mean it. But I do not mean to follow innuendo or  
21 rank speculation.

22 Some have claimed that I have not vigorously  
23 pursued evidence, by failing to secure production of White  
24 House tapes. These claims are not true. As I have said  
25 before, we have an active Grand Jury investigation

4

1 underway. In general, the law relating to grand juries  
2 does not allow me to discuss Grand Jury subpoenas and  
3 their enforcement. Thus, all I can say is that we sought

4 the production of these tapes in an appropriate manner and  
5 are as disturbed as anyone about their delayed production.

6 I cannot tell you everything that has gone on in  
7 the course of our investigation to date or everything we  
8 have done. Because as I have told you on a number of  
9 occasions, prosecutors should not comment about pending  
10 investigations. But if I could, it would dispel so many  
11 of the misunderstandings and so much of the misinformation  
12 that has swirled around this investigation. People have  
13 alleged that we are reacting only to the press and to the  
14 work of others. But that is only because they cannot see  
15 everything we are doing.

16 I am going to press on and investigate until we  
17 find the truth. I will close by saying this. In my 4 and  
18 a half years in Washington, I have asked for independent  
19 counsels on several occasions, and referred additional  
20 matters to them at least twice more. On other occasions,  
21 I have declined to do so. Each time, I acted  
22 deliberately, after thorough analysis. Each time, I  
23 worked with career prosecutors to separate the fact from  
24 the hype. And each time, my decision was based on the  
25 facts and the law, and nothing else.

5

1 No one can shout loud enough or write a headline  
2 big enough or use words shrill enough to keep me from  
3 doing what I think is the right thing on this  
4 investigation.

5 Now, I will be happy to try to answer your  
6 questions.

7 QUESTION: General Reno, can you tell us, on  
8 Saturday, when you learned of the tapes, of the existence  
9 of the tapes, what was your reaction?

10 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I was mad.

11 QUESTION: Mrs. Reno, based on what we know and  
12 your investigators know now about those tapes, would they  
13 have made any difference at all in the letter that you  
14 sent to Chairman Hyde?

15 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Based on everything that  
16 we know of those tapes at this point, it would not.

17 QUESTION: Would it have changed the assessment  
18 that none of the coffees were outside of the residence?

19 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Would you say that

20 again?

21 QUESTION: Would it have -- my recollection from  
22 your letter was that one of the reasons that the coffees  
23 didn't trigger an independent counsel was that it was --  
24 the investigators' understanding was that they were all at  
25 the residence. The tapes appear to show that at least one

6

1 was at the Oval Office.

2 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I think it would clearly  
3 indicate that there was one in the Oval Office. But I do  
4 not -- I am told by the investigators that it would not  
5 change the determination in the letter.

6 QUESTION: With whom were you angry?

7 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: What?

8 QUESTION: With whom were you mad?

9 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I was very disturbed  
10 that the tapes had not been produced in a current fashion  
11 and that it had taken so long, after the production of the  
12 tapes, to let us know.

13 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, can you make an assessment  
14 just watching the tapes, or do you need to go back and  
15 interview the people who attended those coffees? When you  
16 look at the tapes, you can see a lot of people fully aware  
17 that a camera was present.

18 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Again, what we are doing  
19 in the process, and I think it is important to realize,  
20 that we are continuing to investigate the use of  
21 facilities. That does not mean that that triggers the  
22 independent counsel statute. And we are going to continue  
23 to review all aspects of it.

24 If the evidence develops information that a  
25 covered person may have committed a crime, we will trigger

7

1 the statute.

2 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, in addition to being mad,  
3 what are the options available to the government with  
4 regard to the nonproduction -- non-timely production of  
5 those materials?

6 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Again, as I indicated  
7 previously, I really cannot comment on our -- the steps  
8 that we can take with respect to enforcement.

9 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, in terms of mad, are you  
10 mad at --

11 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Wait just a second.

12 QUESTION: Are you considering any steps at this  
13 time?

14 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Again, I would not  
15 comment on the steps that we are taking.

16 QUESTION: You said that you were mad about the  
17 delay. Are you also mad that the White House counsel,  
18 Mr. Ruff, failed to inform you about the existence of the  
19 tapes when you met with him last Thursday?

20 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I think it is important  
21 in this whole process that there be early communication.  
22 Processes have been set up in the White House, and I think  
23 Mr. Ruff had relied on those and not realized that the  
24 information had not been provided.

25 QUESTION: Do you believe the explanation about

8

1 their not being able to find the tapes or not being able  
2 to produce them? Do you believe that it is further  
3 necessary to investigate what may have been deleted or  
4 what may still be withheld?

5 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I would not comment.

6 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, your statement this morning  
7 was extremely strong. Now, it is no secret to the  
8 American people that you are taking on this daily  
9 criticism -- or almost hourly criticism -- from Republican  
10 leaders in Congress. Is your statement to us not only to  
11 editorial writers, but to Republican leaders in Congress?

12 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: My statement really is  
13 addressed to the American people, because I think they are  
14 the people that count in this whole equation. I think  
15 they have got to understand what is being done. I think  
16 they share -- and there is an innate sense of justice in  
17 the American people -- that share a feeling: Don't just  
18 make allegations without having foundation. Don't take  
19 action without foundation when you conduct criminal  
20 investigations, when you institute criminal processes.  
21 Make sure you know what you are doing.

22 And I think it is important for us all -- people  
23 have reminded me -- my sister reminded me last night that  
24 what we are seeing is not anything really new. She had

25        apparently read some recent history of Thomas Jefferson,

9

1        and it suggested that he had some of the same comments  
2        directed at him. And I think it is important that we  
3        understand this in the context of history and that we do  
4        everything we can to let the American people know what the  
5        process is and what we are trying to do.

6                One of the frustrations, however, that a  
7        prosecutor has and that an investigator has is that while  
8        the investigation is underway, while a Grand Jury  
9        investigation is underway, you cannot discuss the details  
10       of the investigation. There may be some that think we  
11       should. But I think the American people would rather have  
12       their investigations conducted in a solid, professional  
13       way -- not in the headlines, but in a thorough, methodical  
14       way, that builds the evidence that stands up in court.

15               Because one of the things I know the American  
16       people do not like is investigations that lead to  
17       prosecutions, that lead to convictions, that get reversed  
18       on appeal. And we do not want that to happen.

19               QUESTION: Ms. Reno, is it a problem, though  
20       that -- (off microphone) -- and that it really does not  
21       matter what you say -- (off microphone) --

22               ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: One of the things that I  
23       do not pay much attention to as well as editorial writers  
24       is polls. Because one of the things that I have learned  
25       is that the questions posed in polls sometimes confuse the

10

1        situation. And what I have got to do is do the best that  
2        I can; let the review of the investigation, when it is  
3        concluded -- let people be the judge of what we did. And  
4        I am willing to subject myself to that scrutiny.

5               Judging by the comments that I am receiving --  
6        and they are anecdotal and they certainly do not represent  
7        all the American people -- people want it done right.  
8        They do not want it done based on polls. They do not want  
9        it done based on speculation. They do not want it done in  
10       dribs and drabs and dripples here. They want it done  
11       right. And we are going to try to do it right.

12               QUESTION: Are you getting a lot of mail from  
13       the public on this?

14 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I have not checked to  
15 see.

16 (Laughter.)

17 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, what was the sense that  
18 Chairman Hyde -- (off microphone) -- thinking about  
19 talking? You made the point that they -- (off  
20 microphone). You made the point -- (off microphone) -- it  
21 certainly had been shown that they had calls to raise hard  
22 money and that hard money was in fact raised there. So is  
23 one reason now why the coffees appear still to be legal in  
24 your mind -- (off microphone) -- is the fact that -- (off  
25 microphone)?

11

1 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Either solicited or  
2 received is the language of the statute. And it is very  
3 specific.

4 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, could you tell us about --  
5 (off microphone) -- from the FBI -- (off microphone) --  
6 essentially end your investigation?

7 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: What I had indicated  
8 when we announced the addition of people to the task force  
9 is that in any investigation there is a tension oftentimes  
10 between investigators and prosecutors -- one wanting to do  
11 one thing, one wanting to do another. And I think that  
12 tension can be healthy. We just had a meeting  
13 yesterday -- our regular meeting with the FBI and the  
14 prosecutorial -- with Chuck Lavella. And I am convinced  
15 that, judging from their reaction, their comment, there is  
16 a real spirit of teamwork now. And I feel very gratified  
17 by that.

18 QUESTION: Have you talked to Judge Green about  
19 these problems?

20 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Judge Green and I are in  
21 regular communication on this effort.

22 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, in your opening comment,  
23 you mentioned the Grand Jury process in regards to the  
24 production of the tapes, and subsequently, in response to  
25 a question, you said there will be steps you are taking.

12

1 You are leaving the clear impression that production of  
2 the tapes -- (off microphone) -- criminal investigation.

3 Is that the inference we should draw from your statement?

4 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I would not comment.

5 QUESTION: It is just that we have some  
6 clarity -- (off microphone) -- you had taken certain steps  
7 -- (off microphone) -- Grand Jury process --

8 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I mention Grand Jury  
9 process as a general statement, pointing out that I could  
10 not comment on subpoenas or enforcement.

11 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, you say that you want the  
12 American people to know -- (off microphone) -- but, in  
13 fact, the American people, and reporters, are in the dark  
14 on -- (off microphone). One of the -- (off microphone) --  
15 the Justice Department released, 2 weeks ago, an FBI  
16 report showing that the Justice Department had  
17 information -- (off microphone) -- technology and about  
18 unlawful disposal of genetic materials. And yet, there  
19 were -- (off microphone) -- very narrow questions -- (off  
20 microphone). This indicates to me the Justice Department  
21 did know about it.

22 And so my question is, specifically on this  
23 case, is there any kind of investigation into this? Or is  
24 the investigation -- (off microphone)?

25 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I will be happy to have

13

1 Bert give you any information that he can, consistent with  
2 the matter as it is pending.

3 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, there have also been  
4 renewed suggestions -- I guess is the best way to put  
5 it -- that one way for this to be resolved would be,  
6 rather than to appoint an independent counsel, just  
7 simply -- (off microphone) -- this all to a special  
8 prosecutor. Is that anything you are still thinking  
9 about?

10 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I always try to listen  
11 to suggestions as to what we might do. As I have pointed  
12 out previously, when I used that provision previously and,  
13 myself, appointed the special counsel, as opposed to  
14 applying to the special division of the court to appoint  
15 the independent counsel, the special counsel was  
16 criticized for not being independent because I had  
17 appointed him. But as I pointed out to you last week,  
18 since I am the only one that can remove an independent

19 counsel appointed by the court, that question still arises  
20 as well.

21 Again, what I am trying to do is look at the  
22 evidence in the law and do it the right way.

23 QUESTION: Would it be fair to say that the  
24 possibility of a special prosecutor, as opposed to an  
25 independent counsel, is not a live option?

14

1 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I do not foreclose  
2 anything in the course of the investigation, because what  
3 I want to try to do is make sure people understand I am  
4 not shutting doors, I am not saying this investigation is  
5 concluded or this aspect of the investigation is  
6 concluded. I am going to continue to try to conduct this  
7 investigation in an orderly way and see where it takes us.

8 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, you say that you always  
9 listen to suggestions. There have been some substantial  
10 suggestions that you resign.

11 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I listen to those.  
12 (Laughter.)

13 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I listen to those.

14 QUESTION: When you talk to your sister down in  
15 Florida, and she says, Janet, come on back, you know,  
16 bring your boat and let's just, you know, kind of tool  
17 around the Everglades here. Do you think about that?

18 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Well, one of the things  
19 that I think about is -- what she pointed out to me was,  
20 when I said, when I come home, I will not have the Potomac  
21 to try my hand on the rapids. And she said, I have got a  
22 new deal for you. She said, I took my boat out into the  
23 ocean and surfed it in; and it was a thrilling experience,  
24 and you will like that a lot, too.

25 QUESTION: There you are.

15

1 QUESTION: Amen.

2 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Wait for Thanksgiving.  
3 (Laughter.)

4 QUESTION: How much of your statement this  
5 morning was inspired by the Republican criticism -- (off  
6 microphone)? Are you trying to send them a message by  
7 making this statement this morning?

8 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: No, I am trying to talk  
9 to the American people. And I will welcome the  
10 opportunity next week to talk to the members of the House  
11 judiciary committee.

12 QUESTION: Are you as mad at the congressional  
13 committees as you are at the White House?

14 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I do not get mad at  
15 people for saying mean things. I just try to mosey on and  
16 do it right.

17 QUESTION: Can you tell us a little more  
18 about --

19 QUESTION: How significant is it that one of the  
20 Republicans did appear -- (off microphone) --

21 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: The issue is whether  
22 there was a solicitation or receipt of a contribution.  
23 And that is the key to it. And that is what we will  
24 continue to review.

25 QUESTION: You seem to be really narrowing down

16

1 your view of that; that it is the law that prohibits  
2 solicitation and receiving of contributions. Have you  
3 determined now that, number one, the act has got to take  
4 place on the premises, so that it is a fundraiser and  
5 not -- (off microphone) -- number one; and, number two,  
6 have you determined whether soliciting or receiving on the  
7 phone is illegal?

8 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Again, the second issue  
9 is under review at this -- and the first issue, my  
10 recollection is that there is -- there was a case pending  
11 and the question arose with respect to President Carter,  
12 as to whether there was a solicitation. It did not, I  
13 think, ultimately address the place in the White House,  
14 and that that might still be a consideration. But I would  
15 ask Bert to confirm that for you.

16 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, why wasn't there more of a  
17 push or a demand from the Department, from the White  
18 House, to produce the Locket tapes? Locket has been  
19 around for 40 or 50 years, or whatever, and everyone knows  
20 that these types of tapes are available. Why wasn't there  
21 more of a push in the Department to get those tapes  
22 earlier?

23 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Again, I would not

24 comment about the enforcement process.

25 QUESTION: Did you feel like you were being --

17

1 QUESTION: (Off microphone) -- are you talking  
2 now about the application of 607, as far as solicitation  
3 and receiving? I just want to be sure I understood your  
4 language.

5 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: You have to have -- let  
6 me have Bert, so that I do not misquote the statute --  
7 give you the actual language.

8 QUESTION: (Off microphone) -- would like at the  
9 specific question -- (off microphone) --

10 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Again, let me have Bert  
11 give you the specifics so that I do not misstate it.

12 QUESTION: Where do you stand on a decision for  
13 next week on whether you need to open a preliminary  
14 investigation of the President's phone calls?

15 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: That is pending.

16 QUESTION: Have you received any  
17 recommendations, either verbally or in writing, from your  
18 staff on which ways to go?

19 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: No, I have not.

20 QUESTION: Could you tell us a little more about  
21 why you were -- what made you mad. Did you feel you were  
22 being deceived or manipulated or -- in your own words?

23 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: When you have something  
24 like this, when you have a situation where the White House  
25 has recognized the responsibility to produce the

18

1 documents, it is very, very frustrating to have them  
2 produced in such a delayed fashion. And I also thought  
3 that we should have been told immediately, as soon as they  
4 were found.

5 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, given the belated  
6 production of the tapes, is your letter to Chairman  
7 Hyde -- (off microphone) -- is your letter to Chairman  
8 Hyde now -- (off microphone)?

9 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: No. But as we have told  
10 Chairman Hyde in the letter, we will continue to review  
11 all the information, to see if there is any information in  
12 the course of this investigation that triggers the

13 statute, and we will trigger it.

14 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, were you informed about the  
15 case before -- (off microphone)?

16 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I do not know what the  
17 timing of the release to the media was. I learned about  
18 it Saturday.

19 QUESTION: Did you realize you were kind of left  
20 out of the loop -- (off microphone)?

21 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I believe that we were  
22 not told in a timely fashion.

23 QUESTION: Ms. Reno -- (off microphone) --

24 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: It has not triggered a  
25 new 30-day. Again, we will continue to review all aspects

19

1 of the matter. And if it does, if there is information  
2 that is developed, we will trigger it.

3 QUESTION: (Off microphone)?

4 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: No, I have not.

5 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, one of the criticisms from  
6 the Hill yesterday was -- that was directed at you -- (off  
7 microphone) -- said that you had been up to testify and  
8 you had said that no stone was left unturned, and now,  
9 here it comes that there were these tapes. Is it a fair  
10 criticism of the task force that the task force did not  
11 know about the tapes?

12 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I do not think that that  
13 is a fair criticism at all. And as I have indicated to  
14 you, I cannot discuss the processes. And that again is  
15 one of the frustrations, if we are to conduct this  
16 investigation according to law and in an appropriate way,  
17 there is going to be a lot that we cannot talk about in  
18 terms of what we have done in the investigation, in all  
19 aspects of it.

20 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, Chairman Burton has -- (off  
21 microphone). What is your reaction to that? What is the  
22 Justice Department's reaction to that?

23 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: We are working with the  
24 chairman to see just how we can accommodate the oversight  
25 interests of Congress while, at the same time, considering

20

1 the interests of the Department of Justice.

2 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, if we can get back to the  
3 independent counsel statute for a moment. Presumably your  
4 critics on the Hill read the statute, and voted for it or  
5 against it back in 1994. In your opinion, is there any  
6 way, given what you know now and given the elements of the  
7 statute, is there any way that you could seek the  
8 appointment of an independent counsel?

9 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: My understanding is  
10 that -- if you are asking about -- are you distinguishing  
11 between the special counsel and the independent counsel?

12 QUESTION: Yes.

13 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: My understanding is that  
14 I still have available the opportunity to appoint, myself,  
15 a special counsel.

16 QUESTION: But do you have a legal right now,  
17 under the independent counsel law, to go the special  
18 division and ask for an independent counsel?

19 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: There are several issues  
20 involved. One, is there a covered person? And do I have  
21 information on a covered person that would trigger the  
22 statute?

23 And my conclusion to date is that we do not, but  
24 that we will continue to review it and, if information is  
25 developed, we will appropriately trigger the statute.

21

1 With respect to non-covered persons, if there is  
2 information with respect to a non-covered person that  
3 would create an actual conflict of interest, that would  
4 also trigger the statute. And I have concluded that that  
5 does not exist at this point.

6 QUESTION: So your answer, under the -- given  
7 the facts of your investigation so far and the facts of  
8 the law itself, you cannot go to the special division and  
9 ask for an independent counsel?

10 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: That is what I have  
11 concluded to date. Now, just to be the devil's advocate,  
12 others would say, well, you really do have an actual  
13 conflict of interest. I have carefully reviewed it,  
14 because what the statute, in effect, does is create the  
15 categories where the conflict exists, with the President,  
16 for example, the Vice President, and they are the covered  
17 people. And if the evidence is triggered, it is assumed I

18 have a conflict and the statute is triggered.

19 I do not feel, to date, that I have a  
20 conflict -- an actual conflict of interest with respect to  
21 any other person for whom there may be specific or  
22 credible evidence.

23 QUESTION: Then are you being urged to break the  
24 law to immediately seek an independent counsel from the  
25 special division?

22

1 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I think Chairman Hyde  
2 and his colleagues have a different understanding of the  
3 law. I would never suggest that they are urging me to  
4 break the law.

5 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, how do you -- (off  
6 microphone) -- about the cooperation that you have gotten  
7 from the White House -- (off microphone) -- in response to  
8 subpoenas and so forth, in addition to this -- (off  
9 microphone) -- issue?

10 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I have had no  
11 information that would indicate that there has not been  
12 good cooperation prior to this.

13 QUESTION: But this goes back to Bernie  
14 Nussbaum's time in the White House Counsel's Office. I  
15 mean, there seem to be repeated episodes where you have a  
16 problem with someone in the White House Counsel's Office  
17 not providing you with full information. Why is it that  
18 you cannot settle these problems with this White House?

19 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Again, what we are doing  
20 is taking steps to see what we can do to make sure it  
21 never happens again. Otherwise, I cannot discuss with you  
22 the process.

23 QUESTION: Are you satisfied with the Ruff  
24 explanation? You seem to be saying that -- (off  
25 microphone)?

23

1 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Again, I would not  
2 comment with respect to -- because there are a number of  
3 issues, in addition to Mr. Ruff's explanation, and I would  
4 not comment.

5 QUESTION: (Off microphone) -- the FBI about  
6 the -- (off microphone) --

7 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I have understood that  
8 the FBI has met with the families and that Director Freeh  
9 has initiated a review to make sure that something like  
10 that does not happen again.

11 QUESTION: Do you know what the status of the  
12 investigation is?

13 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: No, I do not. I would  
14 suggest you check with the FBI on that.

15 QUESTION: Does it concern you -- (off  
16 microphone) --

17 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I think it is important  
18 in any situation like that, that there be an immediate  
19 response, that there be a follow-up, and that we review it  
20 to see why it happened, and take steps to see that it does  
21 not happen again.

22 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, there is a book out -- just  
23 out -- that reports that Lyndon Johnson had -- (off  
24 microphone). Have your guys checked the White House to  
25 see if President Clinton has a similar system?

24

1 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I would not comment  
2 concerning the efforts in the investigation.

3 QUESTION: Have you inquired personally with  
4 members of the task force and asked if any of them thought  
5 about tapes and asked the White House, and who in the  
6 White House they may have asked about it?

7 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Again, I would not  
8 comment.

9 QUESTION: (Off microphone) -- soft money --  
10 (off microphone) -- that 441(e) does not apply to soft  
11 money. I am wondering about the application of 441 --  
12 (off microphone) -- to soft money. Is it the position of  
13 the Department that the restrictions on -- (off  
14 microphone) -- contributions are or are not applicable?

15 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Again, I would have Bert  
16 give you whatever we can appropriately comment on.

17 QUESTION: (Off microphone) -- White House --

18 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Has it what?

19 QUESTION: (Off microphone) -- between the  
20 Justice Department and the White House --

21 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I do not know quite how  
22 you mean the term "strained." I think any time somebody

23 gets upset and mad at what happened, there perhaps is a  
24 strain.

25 QUESTION: Have you talked with the President

25

1 about that?

2 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: No.

3 QUESTION: Has he apologized to you?

4 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: No.

5 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, some of the audio on the  
6 videotapes is a little hard to hear. Is the FBI -- and  
7 maybe they have already or are they planning to enhance  
8 the audio?

9 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I would not comment.

10 QUESTION: Ms. Reno, why have you decided not to  
11 talk to the President on this?

12 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I talked to Mr. Ruff,  
13 who was response.

14 QUESTION: But given the fact that he does  
15 not -- (off microphone) -- chief law enforcement officer,  
16 what about talking directly to the President?

17 ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I talk to Mr. Ruff.

18 Thank you.

19 VOICE: Thank you very much, Mrs. Reno.

20 (Whereupon, the press conference concluded.)

21

22

23

24

25