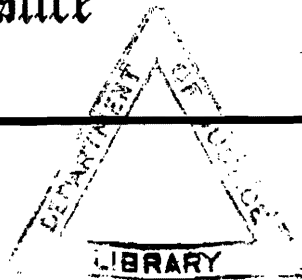




Department of Justice

P5
668
.K36

For Release at Noon, C.S.T.
November 15, 1961



ADDRESS
BY ATTORNEY GENERAL ROBERT F. KENNEDY
ASSOCIATED PRESS MANAGING EDITORS MEETING
DALLAS, TEXAS

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I am delighted to be here.

It is particularly appropriate, I believe, that you are meeting here at this time in one of the principal cities of the South and Southwest, which only recently gave the world a convincing demonstration of the American people's respect for the law.

The President, in addressing the United Nations in September, said that the key to survival of the human race in dignity and honor is that the rule of law be maintained and upheld. The President charted our long-term hope and objective of creating an international system of law and order so that a peaceful and productive society will exist throughout the world.

Obviously, this is not going to be accomplished for many years to come. Though we can clearly trace our respect for the law back several thousand years to the time Moses received the Ten Commandments, the rule of law in an open society still is a revolutionary ideal throughout much of the world.

However, we must seek constantly to transpose this ideal into reality throughout the world and our strength to do so depends upon our will and determination to live by the rule of law here at home. This is what the people of Dallas, Atlanta, Memphis, New Orleans, and many other cities demonstrated by desegregating their schools this fall without disorder or disrespect for the law. In each of these cities, and particularly in Dallas and Atlanta, this was accomplished by citizens from all walks of life, accepting their responsibilities and acting with skill, vigor and dedication.

So, I am not only delighted to attend this meeting of the Associated Press Managing Editors, but I am delighted to be in Dallas. Progress has been made here and elsewhere in the United States toward our goal of all men being free and equal before the law. We still have a long way to go in the North, East and West, as well as in the South, but we are making progress. That is what counts. That is what is important.

Last April I spoke at a meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors and I am sure many of you were there. At that time, I outlined

eight anti-racketeering bills which we had introduced, and I asked you to support them actively. Many newspapers did. The widespread editorial backing of these bills was a major reason why five were passed. To those of you who did support us, I wish to express my thanks and appreciation.

I can report to you today that these new laws are having some effect in reducing the huge illegal gambling profits which finance organized crime. Gamblers in every section of the country have curtailed or ceased some of their activities so that they will be less vulnerable to federal prosecution. The operator of the nation's major sports betting information wire service shut down, commenting that he was "too old" to go to jail. Operators in New Orleans, Hot Springs, Ark., Newport, Ky., and many other centers have shown awareness of the new laws.

These bills were passed with the help of both Republicans and Democrats in Congress --- the most legislation in the anti-crime field since 1934. Their purpose is to deny organized crime the use of interstate travel and communications; and ultimately help bring the big time racketeers and hoodlums down to size so that they can be controlled effectively by local law enforcement agencies. The situation now is that the major figures of organized crime have become so rich and so powerful that they and their operations are in a large part beyond the reach of local officials.

We have a very long and difficult road to travel in reaching our objectives in the crime field. And, as I said last April, we will let the record speak for us three or four years from now. We would rather work two or three years to bring a major underworld figure to justice than to bring a number of cases against less important hoodlums just to make the record look good.

At this time I will say that I am encouraged -- not only by the passage of this legislation -- but by the vigor and dedication of the men of more than 20 federal investigative agencies and many state and local law enforcement units who are tackling the job.

I hope you will continue to support the efforts of these men. Remembering that newspapers supplied about 30 percent of the leads which the McClellan Committee received, I ask for your active help as well as your support.

Gentlemen, in my opinion, the insidious, corrupting and weakening influence of organized crime is only one of several problems which the American people must face up to without delay. This is essential if we are to maintain our position as the leader of the free world and encourage other nations around the globe to strive for freedom.

Just a little over a year ago, President Kennedy was telling the American people that he did not feel we were taking full advantage of our strength, vitality and resources.

And at his inauguration, he said:

"Now the trumpet summons us again....to bear the burden of a long

twilight struggle....a struggle against the common enemies of man; tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself."

Since that day, most of our attention has been fixed on Berlin, Latin America, Southeast Asia and the far reaches of outer space. And while coping with these problems which are immense and not solved easily, the signs are clear that we are becoming increasingly strong at home. This is not only in arms and economy, but in meeting the great challenges which unemployment, slums, crowded classrooms, crowded highways, polluted streams and juvenile delinquency pose for all of us. We are only beginning to get up steam and I do not assert that our domestic problems and difficulties are any less than a year ago. But, as in combatting racial discrimination and organized crime, we have started to move forward again.

Just in the matter of maintaining the vigor and flexibility of our free, competitive economic system, there has been noticeable improvement in the past nine months. Industrial production has increased by more than nine percent. Corporate profits are up 14 percent. Personal income is up 4 percent. Labor income is up almost five percent; farm income is higher than at any time in 10 years -- and this has occurred with only a very small degree of inflation.

From 1958 to 1960, total gold losses amounted to 5 billion dollars. Last October, the gold outflow was more than \$300,000,000 for that month alone. This October it was cut to \$70,000,000. Very definitely the trend has been reversed.

The increase in our gross national product, which on the average over the past decade has not compared too favorably with that of the Soviet Union and many other nations, has shown a healthy spurt in the past nine months.

I might say, that as I go over these figures, I am amused by reports in newspapers and magazines that this administration is quote anti-business unquote. If, as the President has said, we are to bear this label because we are enforcing the anti-trust laws, then we shall do so happily. We look upon the anti-trust laws as being "pro-business", protecting and promoting the competitive interests of business, small and large, while at the same time protecting the public.

We are very aware that in the next decade, if this nation is to remain strong, businessmen must provide technical and scientific research; expand their productivity; make their domestic and international distribution systems more efficient; accommodate the civilian market and at the same time supply the increasingly complex needs of the armed forces. And while they're at it, they must pay taxes.

It is this administration's responsibility to provide a climate in which all this can be done. That is our aim and the record demonstrates clearly that we in the Department of Justice, in enforcing the anti-trust laws, are doing just that.

Mark W. Cresap, president of Westinghouse, a firm, incidentally, which was a defendant in the electrical equipment case, said:

"Government is not the enemy of business; business is not the enemy of government. There is only one enemy and we know who it is."

I agree. In my work as Attorney General, my experiences over the last nine months have strengthened my faith and belief that the future for all of us here in this room and for our children can be bright and promising. I see America as a nation gathering its strength; its people facing the future with courage and ingenuity, turning to meet their common problems and moving forward.

I have no sympathy with those who are defeatists and who would rather be "red than dead." Nor do I have sympathy with those, who in the name of fighting Communism, sow seeds of suspicion and distrust by making false or irresponsible charges, not only against their neighbors, but against courageous teachers and public officials and against the foundations of our government -- Congress, the Supreme Court and even the Presidency itself. As a vigilant, experienced American, who has real credentials as a Communist fighter --- J. Edgar Hoover -- has said, such actions play into Communist hands and hinder, rather than aid, the fight against Communism.

As newspaper editors you have a special responsibility not to be hoodwinked or stampeded by the fearful Americans of our time. I challenge you to send your reporters out to dig into the activities of the Communist Party in your areas and learn the facts.

On Monday, the 30-day period in which the Communist Party of the United States must register with the Department of Justice as a Communist-action organization, will expire. The Supreme Court has ruled that the Communist Party is an arm of the Soviet Union and must register in accordance with Section 13 of the Subversive Activities Control Act of 1950. This case was before the courts for ten years.

Party leaders have stated repeatedly that they will not register the Party. The Act provides a \$10,000 penalty for each day the Party does not do so. We are prepared to proceed should the Party not register, but we may wait a few days.

If the Party does not register, the law imposes a personal obligation upon each individual officer and member of the National Board to register within 10 days -- in this case, by November 30. The law provides a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. Within 30 days after November 20, if the party is not registered, every member also will be required to register.

One reason why the Party may balk at registering, is that among other things, the law requires it to identify its officers; give an accounting of where its money comes from and how it is spent; and label its mailings and radio and television programs as "Communist."

We foresee further court proceedings, perhaps of a protracted nature. However, we are prepared to enforce the law with vigor. Meanwhile, let me assure you that the F.B.I. is on the job, expertly and quietly investigating the activities of the American Communists and what is far more dangerous to our security, espionage by representatives of Communist bloc nations.

In just eight days, we all will pause for Thanksgiving. Governor Bradford of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, observed that out of small beginnings greater things were produced by His hand, and said:

"...and as one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled hath shone unto many...."

As editors, you more than most people, are keepers of the light. With your dedication to the truth and your courage to print it, we will continue to go forward here at home, sending America's light -- ever brighter -- to dark continents and distant lands.