UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

AN ADDRESS BY

THE HONORABLE GRIFFIN B. BELL
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

BEFORE

THE ATLANTA METROPOLITAN CRIME COMMISSION

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1978
ATLANTA HILTON HOTEL
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
CONGRESSMAN POWLER: My former Sunday school teacher, Judge Bell, former colleagues, Mayor Jackson and Bob, and all friends, I just want to take 30 seconds to say I'm honored to be a part of honoring the men and women in blue, and that I don't think you will ever know how much you owe today to the men and women who are our police officers.

I was on the Police Committee of the Board of Aldermen for four years before going to Washington, and I just want to remind you that in addition to the traditional role of law enforcement that we ask these men and women to uphold, we are now asking them to be psychiatrists in reconciling domestic disputes, we are asking them to be social workers in tracking down our lost children, we are asking them to be drug experts; we are even -- and I know Judge Bell would agree with me -- asking them to be Constitutional lawyers, having the latest decisions on search and seizure in their minds before assuming their duties every day.

We owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude, and I am very pleased, as just one representative of the public sector, that all of our communities have come together to pay this long overdue tribute, on a continuing basis, to these people who do society's dirty work for ourselves.

Thank you very much.

(General applause)
CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Congressman Fowler.

It is now my great pleasure to introduce to you our principal speaker and honored guest, a leader in our national Government, and a leader in our State and city before he was summoned to Washington as a Member of the President's Cabinet.

Judge Griffin Bell is a native Georgian, as you all know; he was born in Americus, the county seat of Sumter County, now better identified as on the outskirts of Plains.

He's a cum laude graduate of Mercer University Law School, and has served his State and nation with great distinction, with honor and with dedication.

Early in his career, as Special Counsel to the Governor of Georgia in the early 1960's, Griffin Bell played a crucial role in preserving public education during that most difficult period. But it was during his long and dedicated service on the United State's Court of Appeals for the Fifth Judicial Circuit, that he became so well-known for his judicial courage, forthrightness, and strong commitment to the principles of justice, mercy, human dignity and equality before the law.

For fifteen years, he served on the Fifth Circuit bench, writing more than 500 signed and published opinions, many of them dealing with major questions of highly sensitive and political significance. Judge Bell's hand was at work.
in such momentous decisions as those knocking down Georgia's county-unit system of elections, and the decisions requiring fair and equitable treatment in the reapportionment of legislative and Congressional seats.

During his service on the Federal bench, Judge Bell in 1965, was appointed by then-Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr., of Atlanta, as Chairman of the Atlanta Commission on Crime and Juvenile Delinquency, which took on the assignment of identifying the root causes of crime in our Metropolitan area, and recommending ways of dealing with the ever-growing problems of crime and delinquency.

Among the recommendations of the Bell Commission, as it was then known, was the creation of a permanent, independent Citizens Crime Commission to serve as an informational, educational, watchdog agency. The premise of the Bell Commission was that an informed, law-abiding citizenry is the key to reducing and controlling crime.

The result of that Commission's work was today's Crime Commission, which seeks to carry out the objectives of the Bell Commission. So this occasion, then, has an extra special significance for us.

Judge Bell's accomplishments in the field of jurisprudence are much too numerous to recite. Let me just note that he served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Judicial Center, providing leadership in developing
systems and procedures for improving efficiency in our courts.

He served as Chairman of the Task Force appointed by the American Bar Association and the Chief Justice of the United States, to develop systems for the more effective delivery of justice.

So when Jimmy Carter was elected President, he obviously needed an Attorney General with a solid background in law, and he turned immediately, and correctly, to Judge Griffin Bell. Griffin Bell's calm, firm leadership has brought renewed confidence in the Department of Justice, and he has moved quickly and effectively to reorganize the Department and to upgrade the standards of conduct and professional performance by our top Federal law enforcement agencies.

He also provides important support and counsel to the President as one of his most valued advisors.

Ladies and gentlemen, may I present a man of the times, and of all times, the Attorney General of the United States, the Honorable Griffin B. Bell.

(General applause)

ATTORNEY GENERAL BELL: Thank you very much.

Chairman Redfern, Chairman Kimball, Mayor Jackson, Congressman Fowler, ladies and gentlemen, and distinguished guests -- I saved that for last because the police officers
here are the distinguished guests, and I bow to no person being proud of
the Atlanta Police Department, and the Mayor has already
asked you to stand; I'd now like to ask all other police offic-
cers who are here from the Greater Atlanta Area to stand.

(General applause)

ATTORNEY GENERAL BELL: I want to thank Bob Redfern
for the warm introduction; it was one of the best I've
heard in a good while, Bob. We don't get too many like that
in Washington.

I want to say a word about Wyche Fowler. Wyche
has been a great help to me in Washington, and I'm sure that
he's in the same shape that I'm in -- I never thought that
I'd be dealing in foreign intelligence of the nation. I
didn't know the Attorney General had anything to do with it,
but when I first got to Washington, I found out that the
foreign intelligence and counterintelligence, and the CIA
and FBI were the subject of news stories every day, mostly
complaining about something that happened seven or eight or
ten years ago.

I'd grab the morning paper, upon seeing a headline,
and then I'd see that it happened in 1962, 1964.

Well, we came to the conclusion that we had to do
something about foreign intelligence to cause the American
people to have more confidence in the system, and what we
did was introduce and pass something call the Foreign
Intelligence Surveillance Act, which means that in the future we'll be able to go to court, to a special Federal court, to get court orders before engaging in some types of surveillance.

Now, this will bring the third branch of the Government -- the courts -- a branch in which the public has great trust--into the system, and I think it will make the system a great deal stronger.

I mention that today because of the fact that when Wyche came to the Congress, his first assignment was to the new House Intelligence Committee. We have a special Committee on Intelligence, or Select Committee, it's called, in the House and Senate, and Wyche was a great help in having this legislation passed.

One of my people told me one day while it was being debated in the House that one of the finest speeches made was by Wyche Fowler. I called him to thank him, and he said:

"Well, it was hard to do. I'm a freshman, and I stayed out as long as I could stand it, but I finally waded in."

and that's the kind of support that we need, and it's the kind of activity that helps our country.

And thank you, Wyche.

(General applause)
And I want to say one other word about something here on a more personal, Atlanta level, and this has to do with the Mayor.

Doctor Lee Brown is a person that I recruited more than a year ago to take a high position in the Justice Department. We were waiting on this position to open, and he came by to see me one day and he said that he was thinking about withdrawing his name, because he had been to Atlanta, where Mayor Jackson had interviewed him about becoming Commissioner of Public Safety, and he wanted to get my advice on it.

And I said:

"Well, I have an ambivalent feeling. As much as I like the Justice Department, I think I like Atlanta more, and maybe you'd better give serious consideration to going to Atlanta."

So I told the Mayor that I have no doubt that Lee Brown would succeed. If he does not succeed, he's the Mayor's man; if he does succeed, he's my man.

Wyche has been in Washington not quite as long as I have been there, but almost the same time, and I think we are now probably in Phase II in Washington. Phase I I used to describe with a story a lot of you have heard me tell many times, and I had to stop telling it because the President appropriated it and told it on national television, and I had
to stop telling it, and that was that, explaining what shape
Washington was in when we got there.

It's a story of a man who was charged with being
drunk and setting the bed on fire, and he said:

"Your Honor, I plead guilty to being drunk,
but the bed was on fire when I got in it!"

That was Phase I. It's pretty hard now to say
anything about the problems we inherited. You know, we've
been around there a good while, and we've had to deal with
them, and a lot of them are becoming our problems. So
Phase II, I think, can be best told by Bill Moyer's story
that he likes to tell, about the Territorial Governor of
Nevada, who wrote back to Washington, explaining what things
were like in Nevada, and he said:

"It is hard to be a Christian here, and I
did not remain one long."

I hope we're not getting in that shape, but we
have been around Washington nearly two years now. That's
not to knock Washington. I've learned not to do that.

I've had some unusual experiences since I became
Attorney General. I have 3,800 lawyers, and we had this case
in the Supreme Court called the Snail Darter Case; we had
lost it in the lower court, and it involved the Tellico Dam
up in Tennessee, and I told the Solicitor General to find
some case for me to argue in the Supreme Court. The Solicitor
General argues most cases with people on his staff, but the Attorney General can take such cases as he wants to argue.

So he told me he thought I'd enjoy arguing the Snail Darter case, and I looked it over, and it looked like a winner to me. I didn't want to lose the case. You know, I could have sent another lawyer to lose.

Well, you all know the answer: I lost the case. I managed to lose it. They told me it couldn't be lost, but I lost, 6 to 3.

One of the other interesting things we had to happen, and this didn't really happen to me personally, but they had a man working over at the Department of Transportation, who stole $850,000. The money was destined for Atlanta, to help build a rapid-transit system. He -- I want to tell you what he did with the money, because it's very interesting, has a lot to do with white-collar crime.

He bought ten automobiles, one houseboat, and one topless go-go bar! Unfortunately, the go-go bar was across the street from the FBI.

We arrested him, confiscated his property, ended up with a go-go bar. We had a hard time selling that; also had a hard time keeping Justice Department employees out of it. Finally sold it, whereupon the lead dancer quit. She said she would not work for another employer.

Well, I think maybe I ought to talk about something
serious today, and I'll just tell you a little something about what we're doing about preventing crime and detecting crime.

The main duty of the Attorney General, according to the United States Code, is to investigate and prosecute crime. That is the sole authority of the FBI; we're trying to get a new charter for the FBI that goes into more detail about what they're supposed to do, but that's our business.

We have 55,000 people in the Department of Justice; 20,000 in the FBI, and that includes 8,000 special agents, 800 of whom are accountants. And 4,000 people in the Drug Enforcement Administration, and that's our investigative team.

There are 10,000 people in the Justice Department who are sort of off on the side, and that's the Immigration and Naturalization Service. They are part of the Department; they were transferred there just before World War II started.

It was an agency that had been in the Labor Department, had been in the State Department and had been in the Treasury Department.

But everything else other than the INS is dedicated to investigating crime and prosecuting crime, or representing the Government in civil suits, bringing suits on behalf of the Government or defending the Government.

So today I want to just talk about the crime side.
President Carter told me, just after he asked me to serve as the Attorney General, that he wanted me to get up a new approach to the control of crime, and I thought about it a good bit, talked to some of my top people, and we came up with this approach.

We decided that we could not do everything. It would have to depend on State and local law enforcement -- 95 percent of all law enforcement is at the hands of State and local forces. So we have a very narrow role to play.

Taking that concept, we started thinking about what we could do best, and what the need was. What should the FBI be doing? What can they best do? What needs to be done that no one else can do?

We then had to set priorities, after we decided what those needs were, and then we had to design a system to accomplish those priorities.

We designated four areas of criminal activity for Federal priority.

Number 1 priority is not crime, in a sense; it's counterintelligence. We'll take that first. The FBI has a great role -- the only role in our country in counterintelligence.

Then we moved to crime, and we decided the greatest need was white-collar crime, and organized crime. White-collar crime includes what we'd call "program fraud." In
Washington, everything is said in a polite way, because you don't want to offend anyone. But what program fraud means is that you're stealing from the Government. And when I started saying that, it was a shock; it caused shock waves for anybody to be so plain in language.

Then right behind those two -- organized crime and white-collar crime--comes public corruption. Now, that ought to be handled by local law enforcement, but oftentimes it is not. We have some 800 public corruption investigations going now. You'll see in the paper from time to time where we send public officials to the penitentiary; some are Federal, in high places, some are State, some are local, but they all fall under the head of public corruption.

And then the fourth is narcotics trafficking. We feel that we have no role in small narcotics matters, possession matters, those sorts of things; that's left for local law enforcement, State law enforcement.

But we do have a heavy responsibility in trafficking, particularly as to narcotics brought in here from other countries, and as they move throughout the country.

Now, criminal activity in these four areas, we think, does incalculable damage on a national scale. There are crimes that local law enforcement agencies often do not have resources to combat. They require multi-district jurisdiction, and interagency coordination that is more accessible
to the Federal authorities.

I've centralized authority for overseeing all of these activities in the second-ranking person in the Department of Justice, the Deputy Attorney General, Ben Civiletti. Ben works very closely with Director Webster, the new head of the FBI, and Peter Bensinger, who's the head of the Drug Enforcement Administration, and who was selected by President Ford, and was a good person and we've kept him in that position.

We are trying to bring those two agencies together on a working basis. Not a merger, but on a working basis; DEA probably at an early date will bring in as a Deputy a person who has been trained by the FBI. They are working some joint task force operations now; the DEA has decided that they don't have the forces or the facilities or people to handle many of the more intricate type investigations that the FBI can do, such as money trails.

There's a lot of money in narcotics trafficking, so if we're working together -- and I'm pleased at the way the two groups are working together.

There are more than 100 different Federal agencies involved in law enforcement, in one degree or another, so before we get to working with local and State law enforcement we have to get our own house in order.

Ben Civiletti is working with the President's reorg-
anization project to insure that all the Federal resources, these 100 or more agencies, are used effectively without waste, without overlap, and without conflict.

The common denominator in these four priority areas I've named is that they make a lot of money for the criminals involved. If you don't get caught, crime seems to pay, and pays well. One of these days I'm going to move into another phase, and that's going to be to take all the money. We can take a lot of it now under the Rico statutes, but you shouldn't be able to retain any profit from crime.

Crime as a commercial enterprise reaches into many parts of our lives, and it costs every one of us -- each one of us -- money. It damages our nation, by weakening our economy, by threatening the integrity of our public officials, and by threatening the effectiveness of our institutions.

To meet the challenge of the new breed of criminal entrepreneur, the Government must expand the ranks of those who are highly trained in investigating sophisticated financial transactions. As I said, the FBI now has 800 accountant investigators; we're working to recruit more, and to retrain other investigators in this area.

However, merely increasing the number of investigators and auditors will not suffice. The Department of Defense, for example, has over 4,000 investigators, and 6,000 auditors. It is still a prime victim of serious fraud and
abuse. Of more importance -- far more importance -- is the investigator’s skill and expertise. Experience has demonstrated that to handle sophisticated economic crimes, investigators have to possess the ability to penetrate complex schemes, reconstruct intricate financial transactions, and follow logical audit trails.

One of our most effective tools has been to utilize and expand the "strike force" concept, to set up teams of agents and experts from several different agencies, each with special investigative skill, in areas such as tax, securities dealings, fraud schemes and labor racketeering. We're using such teams to carry out a number of important investigations, such as the current investigation of the GSA.

Also our investigation in the frauds in the Health, Education and Welfare area, particularly in the area of Medicaid and Medicare fraud.

In addition to the strike-force approach -- we've stabilized that concept; it was in doubt when I got there. The previous Administration was thinking of doing away with the concept; I have decided to keep strike-forces, and we've added two more already. That doesn't mean that they are additional United States Attorneys' offices; that was a problem. They are not parallel U. S. Attorney's offices, they are strike-forces. They work with the United States Attorneys, and we're not having any problems.
We have 95 United States Attorneys' offices; in 29 we have recently set up economic crime units -- people who are really specialists in investigating and solving economic crimes.

I've said that we have the FBI and DEA working together; we have the FBI and the U. S. Attorneys' offices working together better than ever before. We have a Public Integrity Section which was set up under President Ford and Attorney General Levi, to handle these public corruption cases, and we have expanded that. We kept it and expanded it.

Congress has just passed a law creating -- I don't know, how many, Wyche?--15 or 20 Inspector Generals offices in agencies. We had two already, one in HEW and one over at the Energy Department. We'll in a few days probably get an Executive Order from the President directing the Justice Department to help set these Inspector General offices up, where they have their own inspectors and auditors, and set up a coordinating council between them and between us.

I think this is going to be a big help. We are learning a good deal in the GSA investigation about the approach we ought to take.

Then we are trying to better train our lawyers. We have set up a Trial Advocacy School at the Department; we're expanding the number of days that you attend. There
was one there already, but it was just for Assistant U. S. Attorneys; we expanded it to include all of our lawyers who try cases, and within six months or so, I expect to have it modeled exactly like the best trial advocacy school in our country, which is the National Institute for Trial Advocacy. I interviewed a person yesterday to bring in, to head that up, and to be the liaison between me and the U. S. Attorneys of the country.

Lastly, in this approach, is better coordination of Federal, State and local governments. We have a complex form of government; we call it "Federalism." But it's three levels of government any way you cut it, and someone has to give leadership to coordinating these three levels of government.

I perceive that to be the responsibility of the Federal Attorney General. I've taken on that task, and I started out by meeting with the State Attorneys General, and we now meet with them on a quarterly basis. I have all the U.S. Attorneys meeting with the State prosecutors on the local level, FBI works with the local police and with the State police.

We're pulling all that together, and then we will divide the work. We'll decide who can do what best. We are already in the process of doing that; there was a good deal written lately that they thought the FBI had gone out of the
bank robbery business. Well, we hadn't gone out of the bank robbery business, but there are many local police forces who have bank robbery squads. If they can handle the bank robberies as well as the FBI, then the FBI would be better off doing something else.

We did reduce the financial budget for bank robberies by 11 percent. That's a very small decrease, and we'll more than make that up by this new approach we're taking. We're far from going out of the bank robbery business; by coordinating the local, State and Federal effort, we may even do a better job, but we did point out that three times as much money is lost by banks and savings and loans in inside fraud than is lost by robberies, and we need to work, of course, on both.

Now, you might say: what are we doing to help local police? As you know, since 1969 we've had an agency called the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. It's in the Department of Justice, it's spent in the billions, and I would hate to hazard a guess as to how much of it has been waste -- pure waste. A great portion of it goes to overhead; not so much our overhead -- we had 800 employees there when I came in and I reduced it to 600.

The waste is on the State and local level, as near as I can see. We are reorganizing that, and we expect to take the fat out, and that more money will go for the police
effort than has ever gone before, on our plan. The Congress will be considering our reorganization; we'll break it up into three parts. One will be the grant part, just as they have now; you can have all the planners you want, in Atlanta or anywhere else, so long as you pay half of it. That's our new system; we won't be able to pay you for all the people you can find anymore, but we're going to spend our money on the police effort and law enforcement effort.

Then we'll have a new Bureau of Statistics, where we'll have a national collection of statistics, and we'll know really what the law enforcement problem is in the country for the first time, so we can coordinate it. We don't have that today.

And then we'll have a National Institute of Justice, which will be doing research, and not only research, but once something we think ought to be tried, we'll be able to go and try it. We'll have the money to try it out.

So that's the three parts, and I think it's going to work very well indeed.

There are just two other things I want to mention, just for a minute on each one.

You'd be interested to know, because the Justice Department is your Justice Department, that I do now have it reorganized, and we've made it into an independent place in the Government, as much as you can, given the fact that the
President has a duty, under the Constitution, to faithfully execute the law. He told me to make it as independent as I could.

We've made it neutral. To have law in a country dedicated to equal protection of the law, and equality under the law, the law has to be neutral; everyone has to be treated the same. We have made the Justice Department into a neutral zone in the Government.

I copied what happened in England when they had a Watergate, in 1924. The word got out that some member of the Cabinet in the MacDonald government, had tried to influence the English Attorney General as to a prosecution. The English have such a high regard for the law that the government fell, and I had Professor Meador, whom I brought in from the University of Virginia Law School, study all that, and we came up with a system somewhat like that, which I won't take the time to detail. I detailed it about three weeks ago to the lawyers in the Department, in the Great Hall, but I can assure you that we are a neutral place now, and that it's very difficult, and will be in the future, for anybody to make even an improper approach on the Department of Justice, much less have influence there.

The last thing I wanted to say is about our country. We've been through some hard times in the last 15 or 20 years, in the sense that we have been disturbed. A lot of things
that we used to do, we don't do any more. We had to go through the civil rights revolution of the 1960's, and that took some adjusting, but it also took -- the people who run the Government--it took their minds off of running the Government. They got off on an issue.

That was followed immediately by the Vietnamese war and that was followed by the Watergate. So we went through about 15 years in Washington where no one was looking after the store, so to speak. We were just dealing in these great issues.

The great issues have now, I think, been resolved, and we've moved to a period of time where the Government is coming under management, and if I had to describe what we in the Carter Administration are doing, and what I'm doing at the Department of Justice, I would say that we are "fine-tuning" the Government, after a long period of neglect, and that I think that as the days and months go by, you'll be seeing -- you'll be having more pride in your country, in your Government, and you'll think it's running better than it's run in a long, long time.

It's a pleasure to be with you. Thank you.

(General applause)