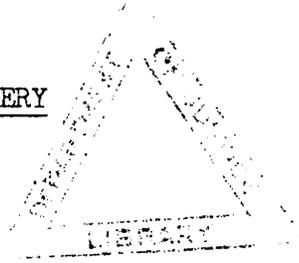


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REMARKS

OF

HONORABLE J. HOWARD McGRATH
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

Prepared for Delivery

at

CONFERENCE OF UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS

Washington, D. C.

Wednesday, May 23, 1951

2:30 P.M.

It is a great privilege for me to welcome the 1951 Conference of United States Attorneys this afternoon. I am happy to welcome you and to express my appreciation for your wholehearted cooperation and hard work since I met with you at the 1950 gathering.

I believe, and I am sure you will agree, that these annual conferences are of inestimable value. They enable the big family that is the Department of Justice and the United States Attorneys to assemble once a year under the same roof and discuss our problems. The accomplishments that resulted from these conferences are far too lengthy to recount, but our history is one of achievement. In 1934, when Attorney General Homer Cummings called the Attorney General's Crime Conference, the entire body of United States Attorneys assembled together for the first time; and since 1939, except for the war years, we have been meeting annually here in the Department. This is the eighth of the current series. This Conference, therefore, has a worthy past and a high objective for the future.

Our agenda for the next three days is heavy. Each Division of the Department will discuss with you problems of major importance. It would be an imposition for me to try to give you a preview of these matters now, so I will confine myself to a subject which at present is very important to me personally, to the Department of Justice and to every United States Attorney. This is the subject of organized crime and rackets, which the Kefauver Committee so strikingly brought home to the general public in recent weeks. The Committee's Third Interim Report, issued May 1, should be read by every United States Attorney.

As I testified before the Kefauver Committee and advised the new Chairman, Senator O'Connor, by letter on May 11, 1951, this Department stands

ready to assist the Committee in the preparation of legislation to effectuate its recommendations and to make its facilities and personnel available to the Committee to the fullest possible extent. This has always been, and will continue to be, our policy.

Months ago we furnished the Committee with the results of the informational survey into so-called national crime syndicates conducted, with your splendid cooperation, by Assistant Attorney General James M. McInerney; and two major factors in the crusade against organized crime--the anti-slot machine bill, enacted into law January 2, 1951, and the proposed anti-gambling communications legislation, recommended by the Committee--originated from the Conference on Organized Crime which I called on February 15, 1950.

Of the 22 recommendations of the Kefauver Committee, we are heartily in accord with all but one, namely, the proposal for an independent Federal crime commission within the executive branch of the Government. It is gratifying to note that, in nearly all the recommendations which are applicable to the Department of Justice, we have already taken steps along the lines suggested. The Department has sponsored legislation.

- (1) to deny the use of interstate communications facilities for transmitting gambling information;
- (2) to punish the giving of contradictory statements under oath, without the Government's having to prove which one is false;
- (3) to empower the Attorney General to grant immunity in return for compelling testimony from those who might otherwise hide behind the constitutional protection against self-incrimination;

- (4) to punish those who harbor aliens illegally in this country;
- (5) to permit deportation of aliens who are convicted of a criminal offense at any time after entry into the United States if the Attorney General determines that they are undesirable;
- (6) to authorize the Attorney General to revoke suspensions of deportation, and to make such revocations grounds for cancelling the naturalization of undesirable persons who have obtained citizenship.

To the above might well be added the anti-slot machine bill, which became law last January. It is evident, therefore, that the Department's record along the lines of the Committee's suggestions is good.

It is difficult for the Department and the United States Attorneys to combat the organized gambling syndicates and racketeers. As the Committee recognized, and as the Director of the FBI and I have frequently pointed out, their activities are largely violations of local criminal statutes. The law enforcement problem they present is basically for the States and municipalities and the power of the Federal Government is very limited. This Department and your offices operate on a "case by case" basis of actual violations of Federal statutes. We are concerned with actual Federal crimes, not with over-all crime in general violation of State and local laws.

The Department made a start along this line in the survey to which I referred a moment ago, in connection with which we compiled, with your help, an index of the major underworld characters in this country and

correlated all information about each which you and our files supplied. In recommending the establishment of a racket squad in the Criminal Division, the Kefauver Committee suggested that one of its functions be the continuation of this project. The Committee also commended my recent decision to convene a grand jury once a year in each district to hear complaints of citizens, local law enforcement officials and investigative agents. Through the testimony of such persons these grand juries will serve the dual purpose of acquainting a representative cross section of the people with the crime situation as it exists in their community, and of keeping the United States Attorney and this Department up to date.

I propose to continue the special emphasis of the Criminal Division in the field of rackets and organized crime. It will supervise the enforcement of all existing and future Federal laws relating to gambling, will continue to gather and correlate information about gangsters and criminals from all sources, including your offices, will generally work with your offices in the handling of the yearly grand jury investigations, and will assist in the conduct of special grand jury investigations in particular districts where the same is warranted. For several years we have had a squad of attorneys which has used the medium of the grand jury to investigate organized criminal activity in Miami, Los Angeles, Kansas City, Newark, Philadelphia and other cities to seek out offenders against the Federal tax, narcotics, white slave and other laws. I believe that this special racket squad, with your help, will serve an important function to our mutual benefit.

As United States Attorneys you can perform a most important function by acquainting yourself fully with the crime situation in your Districts, by

keeping in close contact with investigative agencies, Federal and local, by advising us of any new occurrences, new figures or changes in local underworld activities and, of course, by conducting the yearly grand juries. Please feel free to call upon the Department at any time for whatever assistance you desire. I am confident that this program will facilitate not only a better understanding of the problem but also the institution of specific cases against some of the so-called "overlords of the underworld." If each of us works together in a joint effort to stamp out the many--tenacled octopus of professional crime we will have the satisfaction of having played our part in making this Country a better place for our fellow man, our children, and ourselves.