



# Department of Justice

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REMARKS BY

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BEFORE THE

APPEAL OF CONSCIENCE FOUNDATION

PIERRE HOTEL  
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NOTE: Because Mr. Thornburgh often speaks from notes, the speech as delivered may vary from the text. However, he stands behind this speech as printed.

It's a great pleasure to be here this evening honoring one of the pre-eminent economists of our time, Alan Greenspan. Alan represents a classical American type of which we see far too few examples these days: a person qualified for a lucrative career in the private sector, who nonetheless places his formidable mind and learning at the disposal of his fellow citizens through public service.

It's also a delight to salute a Yale classmate of mine, Gil Grosvenor. Gil, you have contributed to the education and enlightenment of millions, through your work at The National Geographic and, in particular, your efforts with the nation's governors and educational leaders to enhance the quality of our students knowledge of geography.

My geography has been getting an updating since my appointment as Attorney General of the United States. This is, as many of you know, a return appearance for me: I served as head of the Criminal Division a decade ago in the Ford Administration. And if I had to identify the biggest single change in the Department in the years since I last served here, I would have to say it was the growth of our international involvement -- a growth I can probably illustrate most vividly by discussing with you tonight the international aspects of our war on drugs.

- 2 -

Many issues commend themselves to the attention of an organization such as this. But one of the most pressing, in my view, must be the need for greater international cooperation in the war on drugs, a war that deserves all of our support.

The scourge of drugs preys upon young people, devastates families and communities and threatens the well-being of nations worldwide. Drug abuse plagues millions of people and threatens to enslave millions more. It is the great equalizer, victimizing rich and poor alike, male and female, making no distinction on the basis of race, language, culture, or even age.

The toll that drugs exact on our societies extends beyond the individual victim. In a sense, all of us become victims, for our health and safety is at stake when others use drugs. We become victims of the crimes that addicts commit to sustain their habit. Community values crumble. Institutions weaken, and our governments must divert resources and attention to those problems of crime and corruption that invariably accompany drug production, trafficking and abuse. Narcoterrorism flourishes as terrorists and traffickers enter conspiracies of convenience. Drug production and trafficking also have prevented social and economic development, corrupting even whole societies through the tawdry promises of wealth through drugs, and retarding efforts to

maximize the productivity and efficiency of people in the workplace.

Drug traffickers have vast international networks, profits, and arms at their disposal. They have no need to advertise their products, and they are able to gain access to villages, cities, schoolyards, workplaces, and locker rooms.

As drugs make their way from point of origin to point of sale, they pump billions of dollars into the pockets of the traffickers and the dealers, who live at the heights of the high life as a result of the misery and devastation they visit upon others.

If there is anything that could be called a bright side to the world-wide drug problem, it is that because the problem cuts across differences that are otherwise very great, it gives nations grounds for cooperation even while their relations in other areas may be difficult. We have here tonight representatives of religions with very different theological tenets, and nations with very different political systems. Yet we are united on the need to eliminate abuse of drugs.

When we deal with drugs on the international level, we see up close the horrors that the drug trade causes. Consider

Colombia, our neighbor to the South, for example. We see the drug traffickers who ambushed the security chief of a major Colombian newspaper last March, killing him in front of his wife, and shooting his ten-month-old daughter as well. We see the late Colombian Attorney General Carlos Mauro Hoyos, kidnapped and found shot in the head. We see Enrique Parejo, Colombia's ambassador to Hungary, tracked down and shot at in Budapest by Colombian drug traffickers for having opposed them while he was Justice Minister. We see the other honest government officials in Colombia and elsewhere who get miniature coffins in the mail, with pictures of their loved ones inside, courtesy of the drug traffickers.

I serve today as this nation's chief law-enforcement officer, and as chairman of the National Drug Policy Board, charged with the responsibility of spearheading our effort to deal with the problems of drug abuse and illegal drug trafficking. So, in my current position, I can tell you a great deal about how we and other nations are coming to grips with this problem.

Leading our multi-national enforcement efforts is the International Drug Enforcement Conference, or IDEC. This is a consortium of North, Central, and South American nations, with all the nations of Western Europe participating as observers.

- 5 -

Annual meetings of IDEC have been going on since 1983, with the United States represented by our Drug Enforcement Administration.

In August of this year, the IDEC member nations for the first time carried out mutually coordinated anti-drug enforcement efforts in this hemisphere. The results of that month of activity were encouraging: 11 tons of cocaine seized, 244 tons of marijuana destroyed, 118,000 cocaine plants and 13 cocaine laboratories destroyed, more than 1,200 arrests made, seven clandestine airstrips destroyed, and \$3.8 million in cash seized, -- but more important than the statistics was the fact that this cooperative effort was even mounted, overcoming barriers of language, culture, geography and topography, not to mention political boundaries and ideological differences. And there will be more to come.

A second major initiative is one fostered by the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, an undertaking of U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, with enthusiastic support from the United States from the very beginning. The conference was launched in December of 1985, and it first bore fruit in an international gathering in Vienna in June of 1987. It was the largest-scale, highest-level international meeting on the drug problem ever held.

Another such meeting will take place from November 25 to December 20 of this year. At that time, we are hopeful that a major international anti-drug cooperation pact will be signed: the International Convention on Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs. It is expected to provide specific guidelines and some helpful uniformity to multi-national efforts.

Just last week, the governments of the Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, and other Caribbean nations spoke out in the U.N. General Assembly urging that this convention be adopted. These nations are among those where drug transshipment has long been a problem, and where actual drug use is fast becoming a problem as well. Because of their island geography, intricate coastlines, and (in some cases) banking laws that have lagged behind the exigencies of the international money laundering problem, these nations are at a severe disadvantage against the drugs lords.

Yet another initiative is U.S. participation in CICAD, which is the Spanish acronym for the Inter-American Drug Control Commission, a project of the Organization of American States.

In proposing CICAD, the OAS committee that made the proposal made the point that general socio-economic development is a very high priority for most nations of our hemisphere, and that the

- 7 -

war on drugs must be seen as an aspect of over-all development. We can certainly appreciate the truth of this. Economic development requires clear-sighted men and women with a long view and wide horizons -- not drug users who trade their long-range goals for a very short-term kick.

Finally, I would like to point with great pride to our own enforcement operations -- two of which were highlighted last week. In Operation C-Chase, a magnificent law-enforcement sting, the United States discovered major money-laundering channels between the Medellin drug cartel and the world's seventh-largest Bank, the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, based in Luxembourg. Thanks to the U.S. Customs Service, with indispensable help from its counterparts in Britain and France, we nailed down indictments of the bank itself and several of its leading officers, who were going out of their way to launder millions of dollars in drug profits.

Let me explain the name of Operation C-Chase. When you hear it spoken, it might sound like a reference to the ocean, conjuring up images of speedboats. Actually, it's the letter C, as in "C-note," or hundred-dollar bill -- the pocket change of the world of the drug lords.



- 8 -

Then, in another enforcement operation, we announced last week that more than 300 persons had been arrested in a nationwide crackdown on crack cocaine gangs known as the Jamaican Posses. These criminal outfits have staked out a large piece of the nation's drug and firearms trafficking. They have committed kidnappings, robberies, assaults, domestic and international gun running, money laundering, and fraud. And they are among the largest traffickers in crack cocaine, aiming especially at the young. Last week's arrests showed sterling cooperation between Jamaican authorities and federal, state, and local police, and they signal an increasingly vigorous future for federal enforcement against the type of urban terrorism characteristic of these gangs.

Through joint operations, Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties, and other means, the U.S. Department of Justice will be reaching more and more overseas defendants in drug cases. Operation C-Chase and the Jamaican Posses arrests will not be isolated triumphs. It will be merely what the drug lords and their lackeys can expect from an outraged United States and our working partners abroad.

## II.

Meanwhile, at home, our immediate priority must be to persuade Congress to agree on and pass a drug bill that will

- 9 -

significantly toughen law enforcement against drug traffickers and users. As we meet here tonight, differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill are being worked out, and we are optimistic that Congress will give the law-enforcement community the tools it needs to pull up even with -- and keep a step ahead of -- the drug traffickers.

But besides traffickers -- the supply side of the drug problem -- there is also a demand side that has to be dealt with. As the National Drug Policy Board report states, "the solution lies in eliminating the demand for drugs." Without a demand for drugs, no one would seek to supply them.

Our primary focus thus far has been on controlling the supply side of the drug problem and punishing the suppliers -- the traditional role of law enforcement and prosecutors like myself. We must, however, start to pay at least as much attention to the users of illegal narcotics as we do to the source.

Our youngest Americans, in fact, must be the real target of our attempts to destroy the future demand and thus the market for illegal drugs. The best way to accomplish this task is to restore for them a solid moral foundation, so that they can learn the reasons for staying drug-free, and find the reinforcement

- 10 -

they need to turn away from the fleeting euphoria of drugs, towards the legitimate and lasting "high" of socially responsible behavior.

This foundation will be built upon the bedrock of the traditional American values of family and faith, of self-discipline and self-worth, of community support and community responsibility. These are the basic human values that constitute the moral cement of our society. They are what bind us together as a caring people.

We can still find these values at work in our churches, synagogues, and other institutions of worship.

We can find them at work in the courage of citizens who have banded together to confront drug dealers in their neighborhoods.

We can find them at work in the patrol cars and on the beat with the police officers who challenge these ruthless thugs on their own turf.

But let's not forget that unless we apply the values embodied in these men and women in a way that brings about a change in attitudes, we will continue to lose our young people to the ravages of drugs.

I believe this change will be best accomplished if we continue to apply the unique balance of toughness and compassion that has characterized the American way of dealing with the social ills that befall any modern society. In the areas of juvenile delinquency and in penology, this balance has served us well in creating a system of justice that gives wayward youngsters a second chance and adults at least the opportunity for rehabilitation. There is no reason why this time-tested approach cannot be applied to the demand side of the problem associated with illegal drugs.

As for toughness, I believe we must continue to stress the importance of holding users accountable for their share of the criminal havoc wreaked on our society.

I therefore support the provisions of the drug measures before Congress which would permit civil fines for drug possession, deny federal benefits to those with multiple drug-related offenses and provide federal grants for states enacting laws suspending the driver's licenses of those convicted of drug-related crimes.

I favor increasing our efforts on the local, state and federal level to confiscate the vehicles used by buyers, as well as dealers, in the purchase of illegal narcotics. States which

- 12 -

have not done so should be encouraged to enact laws similar to federal statutes which permit this practice and give local law enforcement agencies the same hard-hitting tool we've had on the federal level to deter buyers from prowling our urban areas in search of drugs.

As for compassion, I believe we must intensify our effort on the federal level which already has resulted in a doubling of resources for treatment and a fourfold increase in resources for prevention and education, the real key to success in halting the spread of this insidious epidemic.

Bearing the burden of the education aspect of this effort, of course, will be our schools, where we must increase our support from both the public and private sector to programs which reveal to our students the damaging and debilitating affects of drugs. For example, some schools bring policemen, prosecutors and social workers into the classrooms to strip away the glammers of the drug scene and provide a sobering dose of reality.

To ensure that our educational institutions remain the sanctuaries of learning and safety that they must be, administrators also have cooperated with law enforcement authorities to create and post drug-free zones, where potential pushers are warned of tougher laws which increase the penalties

- 13 -

for those who would peddle their poison within certain distances of school buildings.

Within the classroom, we must restore discipline with sensible policies to enforce environments of mutual respect between teachers and students. Opinion polls over the last several years have found that parents consider the lack of discipline and the use of drugs generally as the two biggest problems facing the schools. They certainly go hand in hand. We can't teach children who are high on drugs and we can't teach children who are disruptive.

Education and prevention, however, do not stop at the classroom door, nor are they confined to government programs. We all have a responsibility in reinforcing those traditional values I mentioned earlier by "de-glamorizing" the role of drugs in our culture.

In some neighborhoods, drug dealers festooned in gold chains and arrayed in designer clothes swagger the streets with a misleading bravado that impresses young children and lures them into believing there is an easy way out of the poverty and despair they see around them. They don't realize that the promising path exemplified by the drug dealers is a dead end, often both literally and figuratively.

- 14 -

We, of course, can offer different role models: individuals like Cynthia Nelson Wesley, an ordinary woman from my home state of Pennsylvania whose afternoon of caring for her children one warm day last July was interrupted by the sound of gunfire.

What she saw when she went to her window was a neighborhood man firing a pistol at a car in what police believe was a battle between rival drug dealers. She didn't realize until later that around the corner from her house lay six-year-old Ralph Brooks, seriously wounded by a bullet which severed his spine.

The 31-year-old mother of two the next day found herself the only eyewitness to the shooting as potentially dozens of her neighbors found excuses or had memory lapses when it came to helping the police. She agreed to cooperate and helped identify the gunman. But before the preliminary hearing, she was threatened by the gunman's parents, harassed by local toughs, offered "hush" money and eventually was forced to relocate. Nevertheless, when the gunman's hearing rolled around a few days later, Cynthia Wesley was there, nervous, but determined to provide the critical testimony that is expected to convict the man who left Ralph Brooks paralyzed from the waist down.

Honored later, Ms. Wesley shyly explained her reasons for cooperating by noting that, "If that happened to my child, I

- 15 -

would want other people to speak up." Speak up she did and, in doing so, provided a sterling example of civic responsibility.

There are other individuals who automatically become role models by the high visibility and very nature of their profession. When these athletes, actors and rock stars speak out on drugs they command enormous respect and attention. It is important that we begin here, too, to de-glamorize drug abuse, to play down celebrities who abuse drugs and highlight those who oppose them. I would encourage media outlets to devote even more of their free time for this purpose and for more negative advertising portraying drugs as the scourge it is and drug dealers as the dregs of society that they are.

Some may say it's impossible to change attitudes about the so-called hard drugs. That the use and even abuse of these drugs are ingrained in a permissive society.

However, they probably are the same people who thought the use of tobacco and alcohol could not be curtailed and that attempts to reveal these products as health hazards would never overcome the sophisticated Madison Avenue techniques promoting their allure. Anyone aware of the growing movement to ban smoking in public places, the declining use of hard liquor or of



- 15 -

the efforts to stem drunken driving knows how successful public campaigns to discredit those addictive drugs have been.

Attacking the demand side, then, will require that we muster all resources of the public and private sector to find ways to reinforce and reinterpret, if necessary, the traditional values we all hold so dear.

What we must attempt to do as a society is not so much to protect our young people but to provide for their human spirit so that it can be strong and free to soar where it will in the natural pursuit of the self-enrichment that has worked so well for so long in this great world of ours.

So in a sense I have taken you full circle this evening. Beginning with an overview of the international nature of the drug problem and the international efforts being mounted to fight it, I have ended right here, back at home, reminding you that back home is where the real solution begins -- with an effort to reduce the demand for drugs by changing attitudes, values, and responses to the allure of drugs; by involving us all in an undertaking which can only benefit us all; by, in short, an appeal to your conscience as thinking, concerned leaders of this great community. Thank you.