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U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

Law Enforcement and Technology

by

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Thank you Chuck for that gracious introduction. It's always nice, after you leave Capitol Hill and you no longer work for a particular senator, that you can then take credit for things you normally would have credited to the senator. A lot of people have asked how I got so interested in the technology issues, especially while I was up on the Hill.

Chuck didn't tell you that I do something else on Sunday afternoons, which brings me close to technology advancement. I'm an official in the National Football League, and I became very familiar with a detection system called "Instant Replay" we used last year.

Instant replay was a useful technology tool when used appropriately. However, for those of us who stood down on the field waiting and waiting, we began to realize that there may be a better way to do this.

I think, using that analogy, it seems that some of the technologies we may hear about at this conference will have to prove their "practical worth as well."

Probably the last thing you wanted to listen to, a week before the election, is somebody involved in politics. You have probably heard all the politics you want to hear. Luckily, the crime and drug control technology has always had wide bi-partisan support, so I don't think this will sound to partisan.

What I'd like to do is discuss where I think we've gone since the passage of the legislation creating CTAC and then give you a few thoughts as to where I think we're headed, and what things may need to be changed.

By the way, I appreciate disagreement. As I said, on Sundays on the football field, I hear a lot of disagreement; so there's no problem at all.

I'd like to break this down into three areas: (1) changing times, (2) changing attitudes, and (3) hopefully, changing budgets. The change in times means that we're going to begin to look more domestically at how we're going to solve some of the problems we have here at home.

As we came back from the Persian Gulf with great fanfare and pride, where technology helped us to win that war, people began to say there must be ways we can also use technology to better defeat the crime

and drug problem. There was a lot of discussion on the Hill concerning that. I think that's still continuing. But it's going to require us to change focus during these times. Can we get assets from the military and from the intelligence community, and redirect those inwardly to assist not only federal, but state and local law enforcement? I think there's an opportunity for that to happen. The question is: Will other things happen to make this come to fruition? This is going to require some attitude change.

When we talk about changing attitudes we should look at two specific arenas, if you will. First, look at the law enforcement community; and then, look at private industry. Tony made pretty clear some of the specific things he's looking for, and he gave reasons for his doubts about other things. Government agencies and law enforcement have to realize that there are technologies out there that may help them, and they need to be willing to change their attitudes toward using new technology.

I could use an analogy in the forfeiture area, which is something with which I was involved in the early 80's. Congress said, "Go after assets in addition to simply making arrests." For a while, there was apprehension from the law enforcement community. "Hey, I don't get any credit for going after assets! By the way, it will take a lot of time; and it's a lot of paperwork. I do get internal credit for making busts, for bringing in bodies, arresting people." It took a while to change some of the attitudes, not just on the street level, but also at the administration level. It wasn't until agents were rewarded for bringing in major seizures of cash or assets, and for really cleaning out some of these organizations that the attitude toward using forfeiture laws began to change. Over time we have done that as part of the overall program; and now, not only is success measured by arrests, but also by bringing in the assets.

I think there are similar things needed in the technology area also. Some law enforcement agencies are going to have to recruit people who recognize there are benefits to technology; who can operate some of the equipment.

On the other side of the coin, industry and the scientific community have to produce items that are going to be practical and going to be of use. You have to start from the agent's standpoint. They have to think: "Will they use this? Will they sit down at a computer; will they take this out in the field with them?" That will happen but only if the agents and the heads of the organizations can see the merit in using the technology. It's got to be a

priority. The people in the field need to be told, "This is the direction we want to go. These are the kinds of people we want in the field. Help us get to that point."

It is changing, and it's going to take some time. But it is crucial that when agents do use the technology, that you don't hear, "It's not available when you need it, sometimes it works; sometimes it doesn't." Nothing will turn people off quicker than to have new technology which won't be useful when, as they say, the rubber meets the road.

Also, an understanding of resource limitations is needed. Traditionally, and I think people from a number of agencies will agree, the R&D area has not been a high priority in those agencies. Added to that problem, due to lower budgets, when you look at the kind of technologies people in the field do need, the question becomes: Are there going to be the resources to really follow through; to get through prototype to the point of something you can actually put in the hands of law enforcement.

I'm going to talk a little more about changing some attitudes in government. At this point in time, there are substantial limitations. This is not DOD. These are not things with which we've been familiar in the past, like multi-year funding, R&D budgets,

and fenced-in budgets. When somebody in an agency needs to focus on something other than R&D, they shouldn't be able to go and steal that budget. It could mean a two or three year project to actually produce some valuable new technology. It also means that you can't just take something off the shelf. I say this to industry. Sure, there are a lot of things on the shelf that may have an application; but if you think you can just take something and ramrod it into the law enforcement community, I think you're going to meet a lot of resistance. Again, recognize what their needs are. There are probably some differences. If you're willing to make some adjustments, some changes, you may actually have something that will be of great benefit. Although I'm not in their position, I suspect there would be a lot of resentment, if somebody walked over from DOD with something that is no longer used, or never quite got there, and said, "Hey, I have something for you that I think you can use," without making adjustments to really fit the law enforcement community and their needs.

Where does this lead to? How do we get to what, I think, from a congressional standpoint, is the most important thing: changing priority and changing budgets. I do think, regardless of which administration it

will be, that this will continue to be a priority. It can be a priority because we are beginning to organize in a way patterned after DOD experience. I give great credit to Al and the Counter-drug Technology Assessment Center (CTAC) for finally producing a document like the Counter Drug Enforcement Research and Development Blueprint. It lays out for the first time, and pulls together, the kinds of things we are going to try to do.

From my experience, it's a lot easier for individual agencies when they have more support. When they come up for budgets, they get picked apart internally. The Customs' budget and the DEA's are getting picked apart in the R&D area. If you have a document that says, "This is what we need: We're spending $13 billion dollars in the so-called war on drugs, and we need x-dollars to deal with the R&D side of the war on drugs." Not that, individually, DEA has to fight and scrap for their budget; but overall, we need a budget of $250 to $300 million dollars. I think that'll happen on the Hill, but it needs to be presented in a package. It needs to be presented a little bit differently than it has been in the past, where all the individual ⁻ agencies had to go up there and fight tooth-and-nail just to protect their rather small budgets. I think we're beginning to make progress in that direction.

Many of you heard the story about Chuck DeWitt's organization, the National Institute of Justice, and the body armor issue. That came about through a partnership with industry and government. There can be other stories like that. It just requires willingness, commitment, and hopefully some additional funding from Congress.

Chuck has also been working to emphasize the less-than-lethal area. This obviously goes beyond drug detection, but lethal force is, I think, a major concern and interest to the law enforcement community. This gets into state and local law enforcement. Police chiefs everywhere in this country would like to be proactive, rather then being reactive in responding to an incident. Less-lethal technology could actually be preventive in many instances. It could be an important tool in saving officers' lives and avoiding incredible liability suits by citizens. I think that whole area has exciting potential.

I also think it's good that Chuck has hired a fellow from the military, David Boyd, to head up the Science and Technology Division. That's a new direction for the Justice Department which is very positive. I think these kinds of things begin to recognize that domestically, we have some incredible needs in the crime and drug control area.

Technology can definitely play a role; but it's going to require some changes in terms of how industry assists the government, and in terms of the government's willingness, as well as law enforcement's willingness, to look at how technology can help them. We are making progress, but we're not there yet. We still have a long way to go. Thank you.