



# Department of Justice

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REMARKS OF

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AT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S SUMMIT ON CORRECTIONS:  
"EXPANDING CAPACITY FOR SERIOUS OFFENDERS"

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Good morning and welcome.

Thank you all for taking time out from your busy schedules to participate in this summit.

I know we at the Department of Justice are going to benefit greatly from this opportunity to exchange ideas with this distinguished and select group.

I hope that each of you will find these next two days rewarding as well.

Last year, the attorney general held a summit on violent crime.

It was a wide-ranging conference, touching on a broad spectrum of issues -- all related to combatting violent crime.

That conference was very productive.

I know it stimulated ideas and actions in a number of communities.

This year, I thought it would be useful to focus the summit on a particular -- but critical -- aspect of the violent crime problem.

The theme of this summit is: "Expanding Capacity For Serious Offenders."

The focus of this summit is the serious violent offender -- the chronic predator -- and the challenge that we face in ensuring that there will be sufficient capacity in our jails and prisons to handle these dangerous offenders effectively.

## I.

Let me say at the outset, that no one -- least of all those of us in law enforcement -- is under the illusion that we can solve the problem of crime in America simply by locking people up.

We all recognize that to make long term reductions in crime we need to take steps to rebuild our communities and those institutions -- the family, schools, religious institutions and community groups -- that instill values in our youth.

But these institutions, and the social programs that are designed to assist them, cannot succeed in an atmosphere of crime and violence.

It is increasingly clear that tough law enforcement measures to make our communities safer are an absolute prerequisite for social programs to be successful.

Indeed, the problem today is that many of our efforts at revitalizing our urban communities are being strangled by crime.

Its hard to raise healthy families in housing projects overrun by drug traffickers.

Its hard for children to learn in schools dominated by violent gangs.

A primary task for law enforcement is to create the atmosphere in which social rehabilitation is possible.

This requires incapacitating the chronic violent offenders who prey upon society and who are responsible for so much of the violent crime that plagues our cities.

Now, not everyone who commits a crime -- even a violent crime -- automatically requires lengthy incarceration.

Some of the people who commit violent crimes are not habitual criminals.

Sometimes a kid gets into a brush or two with the law (an isolated theft, an assault) and then straightens out.

Sometimes, otherwise law-abiding adults act suddenly and explosively, maybe in the heat of passion, and commit a violent crime -- even a serious violent crime.

While they may be blameworthy, sometimes such offenders may not pose an on-going threat to society at large.

But we know there is another kind of criminal -- the chronic violent predator.

Study-after-study show that there is a small segment of our population who are habitual violent offenders.

Each of these career criminals commits a staggering number of crimes when they are out on the streets -- scores, indeed hundreds, of crimes per year.

Just by way of example, one study of 240 criminals found that they were responsible for half a million crimes over an eleven year period. Other studies show similar results.

This small group of chronic offenders is responsible for a disproportionate part of the predatory violence we see around us

-- the robberies, the burglaries, the rapes, and much of the murder.

You all know the profile.

These offenders typically start committing crimes when they are juveniles and keep on committing crimes as adults.

By now it is clear that they are largely incorrigible.

Recidivism is almost a certainty.

They commit new crimes when they are on bail, on probation, or on parole.

The evidence suggests that, by the third arrest or so, the repeat offender has embarked on a career of crime that will usually prove to be irreversible.

It is not until these chronic offenders reach their late 30's that we see any appreciable drop in their recidivism rates.

With this career criminal group, one thing is clear: The only time we know they are not committing crimes is when they are locked up.

Incarceration is the only effective way to prevent these predators from committing more crimes, and in my view, is the only acceptable response to protect society from such clear danger.

We can debate whether prison can rehabilitate an offender.

We can debate whether prison can deter an offender.

But it is beyond debate that prison incapacitates the chronic violent offender.

The more time these serious violent offenders are held in custody -- whether in prison or in jail -- the fewer violent crimes and victims there will be.

The more these serious violent offenders are prematurely released back onto the streets, the more violent crime and victims there will be.

What does this mean for our correctional system?

It means that the challenge we face is to identify and incapacitate these chronic violent offenders.

Now, I believe that for the most part we have identified them.

Most of these chronic offenders have been arrested numerous times.

Many have been convicted repeatedly.

Unfortunately, all too many are still on the streets because we have not been successful enough in incarcerating them for sufficient periods of time.

And, unfortunately, the reason, all too often, has been lack of adequate prison space.

We all know that in many jurisdictions many violent offenders are not being sentenced to prison because of the lack of prison space.

We know that in many jurisdictions violent offenders sentenced to prison are being paroled or otherwise released as early as possible because of space shortages.

We know that in many jurisdictions violent offenders cannot be detained prior to trial because jails are backed up with sentenced prisoners for whom there is no room in prison.

Today, we have 4.2 million people under some form of correctional control.

Almost 1.3 million are in jail or prison. The remaining roughly 3 million are in some form of non-custodial control or intermediate sanction.

Our objective as correctional officials must be to deal effectively with the full range of offenders.

This means ensuring that we are not using up scarce prison space for those who can more appropriately be dealt with in some other setting -- (and I will have more to say about the role of intermediate sanctions in a moment.)

But it also means that to protect society we must incapacitate for extended periods those chronic offenders who will victimize society whenever they are on the streets.

Our decisions as to these violent predators must be based on a realistic assessment of their danger to society.

We simply cannot let our decisions as to the punishment imposed on these individuals to be dictated by a lack of prison capacity.

All too often today, decisions on incarceration of violent offenders are being made on precisely that basis -- with devastating results for public safety.

The challenge before us in the 1990's, is to ensure that we have sufficient capacity so that when we catch a chronic violent offender we have the ability to incarcerate that individual for a length of time dictated by the public's safety -- and not be compelled to release that individual prematurely simply because there is no room at the inn.

## II.

As we move into the 1990's how do we address this situation?

In this time of scarce resources and tight budgets, how will we ensure that we have sufficient prison capacity to deal effectively with dangerous violent offenders?

It seems to me that we have three major tasks before us.

First, we must ensure that we are allocating our existing resources as effectively and smartly as we can.

Second, we should do everything we can to operate our facilities and programs as efficiently as possible, cutting costs without compromising quality.

And third, we must look for ways to expand our capacity as economically as possible.

Let me briefly review each of these areas and identify what I think are some of the key issues that we will be examining over the next two days.

## III.

First, as I said, we must explore ways to allocate our existing resources as efficiently and smartly as we can.

Each prison bed is a valuable resource.

It costs an average of \$21,000 a year to operate a prison bedspace.

### A.

It is important that -- to the extent possible -- we use these scarce resources for dangerous or chronic offenders and

that we not fritter them away on non-serious offenders who do not pose a risk to the community.

That is why developing effective non-custodial control mechanisms as well as intermediate sanctions is so important.

If we can develop ways to effectively supervise and punish non-serious offenders without tying up prison space, then we will be better able to devote our valuable prison resources to dangerous or chronic offenders.

So it is extremely important that we continue to explore ways of managing less serious offenders.

For this reason, 18 months ago the Department of Justice hosted a national conference devoted entirely to the issue of intermediate sanctions.

And, as you can see from our agenda, we hope to devote substantial attention to intermediate sanctions at this summit.

Also, as I know many of you are aware, various department components are heavily involved in promoting alternative sanctions.

The National Institute of Corrections, the National Institute of Justice, and the Bureau of Justice Assistance all have a variety of programs underway that seek to enhance our capacity to manage less serious offenders.

I am looking forward at this summit to the exchange of ideas on alternative sanctions and methods of supervision.

Let me sound a note of caution.

As we consider alternative sanctions as a means of better allocating our existing resources, I think it is important that we not allow these approaches to be sold as something they are not.

With all the budget pressures that exist today, some public officials may be tempted to see alternative sanctions as a cheap and easy solution for the prison capacity crunch.

The lure of non-custodial options could become an excuse for not making needed investment in traditional correctional facilities and their operation.

So it is important that we keep alternatives in perspective.

Alternatives to traditional prison incarceration are appropriate for non-serious offenders.

They are not appropriate for chronic or dangerous violent offenders.

Moreover, as you know, many of these non-custodial alternatives may not be appreciably cheaper than custodial supervision in correctional facilities.

If carried out properly, with a view to public safety, supervision outside a facility may be just as expensive as supervision inside a lower-security facility.

And finally, I do not think we can hold out the prospect that we can liberate very much existing prison space by diverting non-serious offenders into alternative sanctions.

The fact is that we are probably not wasting much of our existing bedspace on people who should not be there.

93% Of all state prisoners and 88% of all federal prisoners are either recidivists or are currently serving a prison sentence for a violent offense.

So the notion that our prisons are full of people who should not be there is simply false. To the extent we can recapture any space from the current inmate population, I think it will be at the margin.

In that regard, while violent offenders should get priority, we still need some bedspace for other categories of offenders.

We still have to have the capacity to deter and punish drug traffickers.

Curtailling the drug trade is critical to freeing our communities from the grip of violence.

If we effectively de-criminalize drug trafficking by eliminating prison time as a sanction, we can make no progress in the drug war.

We also must retain some ability to incarcerate serious white collar criminals.

While perhaps not as physically threatening to the community, their crimes can still have a devastating impact -- as we recently saw in the s&l debacle.

White collar crimes may be those that are most deterrable by the prospect of prison time.



Nevertheless, with all that said, it is clear that we must allocate existing resources wisely to ensure that we are not wasting prison space on those who do not belong there.

Any effort to maximize prison capacity for violent offenders, must include careful consideration of intermediate sanctions and non-custodial supervision.

B.

As we look at the best allocation of existing resources, another major issue we should discuss is the space being taken up by criminal aliens.

Twenty-five percent of the inmates in federal prisons are non-U.S. citizens, as are a substantial number of those in state prisons and local jails.

The problem is particularly serious in some states, such as California, Texas, Florida, New York and Illinois.

We could free up thousands of prison beds if we got rid of those criminals who are not citizens and who have no right to be in the country.

I believe that we should pursue at least a four-prong attack on the problem of illegal aliens in our prisons.

First, the Department of Justice has recently stepped up enforcement efforts to stop illegal aliens at the border and to apprehend and rapidly deport those who have made it in.

This effort includes additional border patrol agents, additional criminal investigators, additional funding for equipment such as lighting, sensors and physical barriers, and a criminal alien tracking center to help identify and deport criminal aliens more rapidly.

We are also exploring legislative changes to make it possible to exclude or more quickly deport illegal aliens in certain circumstances.

Second, we are working on ways to speed up the processing of illegal aliens currently in prison so that they can be deported immediately upon completion of their sentence without having to be released into the community.

As you may know, we have taken steps to expand our in-facility processing, known as the Institutionalized Hearing Program, so that aliens are ready for deportation by the time their sentences are completed.

I will act vigorously to further expand that program.

Third, we should explore additional ways, without sacrificing public safety, to speed the removal of illegal aliens from our prisons.

We need to balance the need to punish illegal aliens who commit crimes with the reality of limited prison capacity and the need to use our scarce prison space for violent offenders.

In this regard, we should explore the possibility of making modest adjustments in sentences for aliens convicted of relatively less serious offenses, who have already served significant periods, and who are prepared to stipulate to immediate deportation.

This would free up the spaces they are currently occupying for more violent, chronic offenders.

Of course, any such system could only work if Congress passes significant penalties for illegal re-entry by any individual released.

Fourth, we should explore ways to make greater use of prisoner transfer -- sending alien prisoners to their home countries for completion of their sentences.

Today we are limited to situations where the prisoner consents to transfer.

One possibility would be to consider modest adjustments to sentences for prisoners who consent to such transfers.

This might induce a number of additional alien prisoners to consent to voluntary transfers.

I am also exploring the legal and policy issues raised by the involuntary transfer of illegal alien prisoners.

If a system of involuntary transfers could be successfully implemented, it could hold forth substantial promise for reducing the number of illegal aliens in our prison.

Again, any proposals in this area would require stiff penalties for illegal reentry.

#### IV.

Let me turn to the second major task before us -- making our facilities more operationally efficient.

We all know that the major cost of prison space is not its construction but its operation.

Construction represents only 3 to 5 percent of the real cost of prison over its lifetime.

As I said, average cost of operating each prison bed is \$21,000 a year.

It seems to me that we must do all we can to reduce these operational costs of our correctional institutions without sacrificing their security or their humaneness.

A.

In this regard, proper classification of prisoners is an area that deserves special attention.

The cost of incarcerating a prisoner can vary substantially depending on the security-level of the facility to which he is assigned. For example, the cost of maintaining a prisoner in a higher security facility may be 3 times the cost of maintaining that same prisoner in a correctional camp.

An important way to promote operational efficiency is for a correctional system to accurately classify and stratify its prisoners based on objective assessments of each prisoners risk of escape, risk of violence and other appropriate manageability and security factors.

Generally speaking, a prisoner should be assigned to the lowest level facility commensurate with this risk assessment.

Great operational cost savings can accrue to a correctional systems that assigns its inmates based on a sound classification scheme.

And so over the next two days we will be sharing experience and ideas on inmate classification.

B.

Another particularly acute operational problem is health care.

Some states now spend over \$7 dollars per inmate per year on health care.

This amounts to the taxpayers spending \$2,555 per year on health care for each prisoner. This is more than the average law-abiding citizen spends for health care for each family member.

There must be some common-sense ways to reduce these costs without compromising the essential human needs of inmates, and I know we will be discussing various options at this summit.

Moreover, with your help, the national institution of corrections and other justice department components can serve an ongoing role as a clearinghouse for information on ways to reduce these and other operational costs.

This function also can be served very well by some of the professional organizations that are represented here today.

The American Correctional Association, the American Jail Association, the Association of State Correctional Administrators, the National Association Of Blacks In Criminal Justice, and the American Probation and Parole Association and others have the expertise and ability in their ranks to help in this process as well.

#### C.

In addition to looking at ways to cut operational expenses, another way to reduce costs is to generate offsetting revenues, both by user fees and prison industries.

I believe user fees are an important tool.

They serve as a means to provide additional resources in a time of tight budget constraints.

They are also important as a matter of simple fairness. Taxpayers provide for prisoners' room, board, and medical care.

Law abiding citizens must pay for these necessities themselves.

It is only fair that prisoners pay a portion of these costs, whenever possible.

In addition, user fees may also be appropriate to help pay for inmate drug testing programs.

In this year's federal budget, we are including a proposal to fine prisoners for the cost of their first year of incarceration.

We anticipate recovering from approximately 9% of the inmates.

Prison work and prison industries are also important tools which we will be discussing over the next two days.

Requiring inmates to work is consistent with the punitive function of imprisonment.

More positively, it also teaches discipline and prepares inmates for reintegration into the community.

There are also indications that prison work may assist in reducing crime by lowering recidivism rates.

And, prison work can be an extremely important means of reducing costs and generating offsetting revenues.

Inmates can maintain the facility itself, and can perform such tasks as sorting trash for recycling and doing nonhazardous environmental clean up in parks, and other areas.

Inmates working in prison industries can produce a variety of products for use in the prison to save money, or for sale to help generate revenues.

Our challenge is to find suitable projects for inmates to help teach useful skills and a sense of responsibility, and to generate revenues to offset the costs of incarceration, without reducing the opportunities for employment for law abiding workers.

D.

Another factor that affects operational expenses is litigation.

I realize that the ability of many states to manage their own prisons and jails efficiently has been hampered by the involvement of courts in their day-to-day operations.

The 1970's and 1980's saw a flood of litigation, particularly in the federal courts, by prisoners challenging the conditions in state and local facilities as a violation of the U.S. Constitution.

During this period, many lower courts mistakenly applied a vague "totality of the circumstances" or "overall conditions" standard to find that states were in violation of the Constitution.

Many courts during this period went far beyond what the Constitution requires, or even permits, in remedying purported

constitutional violations -- specifying the particulars of prisoners' diets, food temperature, exercise, visitation rights and health care.

Some courts even went so far as to require court approval of the design plans for new prisons.

Worse still, some courts imposed caps on the population of state and local facilities, forcing cities and states to turn loose violent offenders.

In my view, it is not the role of judges or court-appointed special masters to run prisons.

Rather, the appropriate role of the federal courts is to adjudicate specific disputes concerning alleged constitutional violations, and otherwise to leave the management of prisons and jails to local correctional professionals.

That means several things.

First, federal courts should interfere only to remedy specific constitutional violations.

They should not insist upon compliance with a set of standards or any other level of comfort not required by the Constitution.

Second, once a state has remedied the specific constitutional violation identified by the court, the court's involvement should end.

Once a violation has been cured, control and management of the prison should be returned to the appropriate state officials.

Third, the Department of Justice will not use the federal courts to impose burdens that go beyond what is required by the constitution.

Finally, it is wrong for courts to impose an arbitrary population cap based on the now-rejected legal theory that the "totality of the circumstances" in the prison require a cap.

The proper approach is for the court to order that the specific constitutional violations identified be remedied, not to require the state to release dangerous criminals back onto the streets.

I have already begun to implement these new policies in litigation in which the United States is a party.

In Texas, for example, I announced that I support Attorney General Dan Morales' motion to terminate the 20-year-old Ruiz litigation without any permanent court-imposed limitations on the operation of Texas prisons.

I reiterate today my belief that the Ruiz litigation should be terminated.

I have also been working closely with Governor Engler and Attorney General Kelley in Michigan, as well as with Ken McGinnis, the Director of Corrections in Michigan, to bring to a close federal-court litigation concerning several of Michigan's largest prisons.

In appropriate cases, I am also willing to lend a hand to states and localities tied up in litigation in which the Department is neither a party nor an intervenor.

Just last week, the Justice Department filed papers as Amicus Curiae urging the federal district court in Philadelphia to lift a cap on the population of Philadelphia's jails that is wreaking havoc on public safety.

Let me add, however, two brief observations.

First, some people have said that if we remove existing population caps and other extra-constitutional limitations on state prisons, the conditions in some prisons will lapse into the dark ages.

I am confident that will not happen.

By and large, the people who work in corrections today are top-notch professionals, and they have no interest in seeing conditions in prisons deteriorate.

In choosing whether to get involved in lifting existing court-imposed conditions, I have placed great reliance on the professionalism of the people involved.

Of course, if constitutional violations recur, inmates are free to vindicate their rights in court, and in appropriate case, the United States remains ready, willing, and able to vindicate prisoners rights.

Second, frankly, one of the positive effects of population caps has been to force state legislatures to make appropriate investment in prisons.

While that salutary effect does not justify the unwarranted intrusion of a court-imposed population cap, nor should the

lifting of these caps be seen as a substitute for investing more in corrections.

We cannot allow the lifting of caps to become an excuse for public officials to fail to invest in needed new capacity.

Any state that thinks that it is sufficient simply to pack more criminals into existing space is likely to end up right back in the middle of burdensome litigation.

#### V.

The third major area we will be examining at this summit is how we can expand our prison capacity most efficiently.

The average cost of constructing a new prison bed is \$53,000.

We should look for ways to reduce the cost of construction.

Innovative design can play a critical role.

Not only can smart plans cut the direct costs of construction, they can also -- through staff-efficient designs -- substantially reduce operational costs over the life of the facility.

In my view, the national institute of corrections and other justice assistance components, are uniquely positioned to expand their existing clearinghouse functions regarding prison construction, and I have asked them to do so.

We will also be discussing enhancing the process for making closed military bases and other surplus federal properties available to states and localities for use as prisons.

This is an idea that the Department has supported and pursued itself for a portion of the Bureau of Prisons' expansion program.

Moreover, the military can provide more than just property. Recent reductions in military personnel have freed up thousands of highly professional, highly trained men and women who can be recruited into the field of corrections.

I strongly encourage state corrections officials to contact local military offices to inquire into the availability of recently-discharged personnel.

Programs like the defense outplacement referral service for civilian DOD employees and the centralized applicant referral



service for uniformed personnel, can be used to good effect, as can increased use of targeted recruiting at military bases.

I pledge the assistance of the Justice Department in following through on ideas that may be developed during this summit for further uses for closed military bases or former military personnel.

Finally, we will also discuss a variety of potential approaches to the concept of regional prisons managed by consortia of states or even private entities, and the potential costs savings that may be associated with those approaches.

## VI.

So it clear that our agenda over the next two days is a broad one.

But even as we spend our time looking at better allocation of existing resources, opportunities for more efficient operations, and approaches for cost-effective expansion -- it seems to me that we have one overarching and critical challenge in the years ahead.

We must remind our fellow citizens and our leaders of the importance of investing adequate resources in correctional systems.

Some people say that we cannot afford to invest more in corrections, I say we cannot afford not to invest more in corrections.

While some focus on the cost of building and maintaining prison space, I think it is time we focused on the costs of failing to provide adequate prison space.

Simply put, prisons are a sound investment.

The premature release of violent offenders costs society far more than the expense of building and operating adequate prison space.

Although incarceration is not cheap, the cost to society of not incarcerating dangerous criminals is far greater.

A study published in 1988 by Mark Cohen, formerly on the staff of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, estimated the annual aggregate cost of crime to victims -- including direct losses, pain and suffering and risk of death -- at \$92.6 Billion in 1985 dollars.

And behind these dollars and cents is real-life suffering.

Let me give you one recent example of the price we pay for not keeping a dangerous criminal in prison.

Just this month, in one state a "model prisoner" was paroled after he served 10 years on a 30 year sentence for two aggravated sexual assaults and robbery.

Within 5 months of his release into an intensively supervised parole program, this parolee was arrested and charged with the brutal killings of 5 women and the aggravated assault and attempted murder of two other women.

This is perhaps an extreme example; lets hope so.

But we simply cannot close our eyes to the extremely high recidivism rates among probationers and parolees.

We cannot ignore the fact that at least 30% of murders, 25% of rapes and nearly 40% of robberies are committed by persons on bail, probation or parole.

The costs of keeping violent predators in custody is far less than the terrible toll they exact on the streets.

And let's not forget the high costs that premature release of violent offenders imposes on the criminal justice process itself.

Much of the police and judicial resources we spend in catching, investigating, and trying offenders are frittered away as the offenders are prematurely let go --simply to be recycled through the system yet again.

And there are other costs we sometimes don't think about.

If we don't pay to put the bars up around predators, then the victims pay to put the bars up around themselves.

I have visited many inner-city neighborhoods around the country in recent weeks as part of our Weed and Seed program.

I've seen row-upon-row of houses surrounded by bars -- bars on the windows'; bars around the porches; bars over the doors.

The amount of money we as a society spend on these and other security measures -- essentially making ourselves prisoners -- is staggering.

And then there are the incalculable, yet far larger costs to society of crime, such as lost sales, when people are afraid to go out to do their shopping; lost jobs, when businesses move out

of high-crime areas; lost opportunities, when schools become the playground of gangs and drug dealers, rather than places where inner-city kids can learn their way out of poverty; and lost tax revenues, when sales, businesses and jobs evaporate.

And so, when we stop to think about it, it becomes clear that investing in adequate prison space is not only the morally right thing to do, it is also the economically right thing to do.

And yet, despite the enormous need for additional prison space, spending on corrections remains a very small percentage of state and local budgets.

In fiscal year 1990, only 2.5% of the spending by state and local governments was for corrections (about \$24.7 Billion).

In innumerable other areas, we as a society have recognized the need to invest substantial resources in order to avoid the risk of harm.

-- For example, we invest tens of billions of dollars to reduce the loss of life in car crashes, including investment in highway barriers and safety devices.

-- Or we spend tens of billions a year to regulate air quality and billions to regulate hazardous waste disposal, in order to avoid the harm caused by exposure to pollutants and toxins.

-- We spend billions on asbestos removal alone.

The public appears to accept the need for these substantial expenditures, even though some of them guard against relatively speculative or remote harms.

We are willing as a society to spend millions just to avert one premature death.

For example, each year statewide periodic motor vehicle inspection programs cost \$12.6 Million per each life saved.

Various academic surveys of people's willingness to pay to avoid risks of death indicate that public spending of up to \$2.6 Million to avert one death would be justified.

If we applied the same logic -- and cost/benefit analysis -- used in our other public health and safety programs to corrections, we would be investing much greater amounts in corrections.

As I pointed out earlier, at least 6,500 homicides are committed each year by persons on bail, probation or parole.

Using the \$2.6 Million per life saved figure, would mean, if we used the logic of other programs, spending \$17 billion to avert these homicides. This would almost double what we are spending now on corrections, and this does not take into account all the other non-lethal crimes to be averted -- the burglaries, rapes, assaults and robberies.

Obviously, I am not suggesting that we double our corrections budgets.

But I am saying that the notion that we cannot afford to spend more on corrections is flatly wrong.

## VII.

In closing, let me say what I said at the outset. Law enforcement cannot solve the problem of violent crime alone.

Rather, the long term solution to the problem of crime in America is a coordinated approach designed to strengthen social institutions and allow law abiding people to reclaim their communities.

But the foundation to the success of any such approach must be removing the chronic violent offender from the streets, so that we have an atmosphere in which social rehabilitation is possible.

The challenge to those of us in the corrections community is to provide the necessary prison capacity to incapacitate these violent predators.

Without this capacity, real progress in reducing crime simply is not possible.

Without this capacity, social rehabilitation cannot occur.

And, without this capacity, it is the law abiding citizens, rather than the criminals, who will be living behind bars.

This summit can play an important role in meeting this challenge.

We are all in this together.

We all face daunting tasks with scarce resources.

But I think the evidence is clear that the investment needed to expand prison capacity is one that we, as a society, cannot afford not to make.