



## TRANSCRIPT OF REMARKS

*Rep. Jane Harman September 29, 2002  
Full Disclosure Network 10th Anniversary Breakfast  
California Yacht Club, Marina del Rey, California*

Thank you, "Emmy" (Leslie Dutton) and hello to a lot of good friends and to Sheriff and Mrs. Baca who have just arrived. Sheriff, I am very proud to be your partner. I am very glad that we work together on some of the issues. It is good to come by and celebrate with Leslie. I had met her years ago through a mutual friend, Ginny Leeuwenburgh, who unfortunately is not able to be here because of illness. But Ginny said "I know somebody you need to meet, she is a powerhouse." That was understatement, right?

Leslie has achieved everything she set out to do and I admire that enormously. Leslie ought to be a role model to all the women in this room. You can do it, you go girl. You can get there, you just have to have high goals and I always say that if you want to get a job done, put a woman in charge. Clearly that is why I think too, Leslie's drive and talent have achieved this, not just this (Emmy Award), but the opportunity which she has taken full advantage of to help educate the citizens of Los Angeles County on our dangerous world.

I want to take a few moments today to talk about our dangerous world and the world we all live in. First of all I want to say, to law enforcement in this room that I admire and respect and love you. I think that what you do is selfless, helpful. You put your lives on the line for the rest of us. And it has really been a privilege for me over a decade in public life to work closely with you, I appreciate the friendship, I appreciate the support and I really want to just applaud everyone in this room who works for law enforcement.

I have been saying that the time we live in is "all Iraq, all the time." And this Administration has managed to turn everyone's full time attention, to what we should do about Iraq, which I believe is a dangerous place. And, I believe we should do something about Iraq. But I want to talk to you for just a few minutes today, about my view that Iraq is one of three critical things that we need do. And I want to start with the other two.

The first event is to pass the Homeland Security Department Legislation which has been pending in Congress since shortly after 9/11. When the President issued an Executive Order establishing the Homeland Security Office in the White House, I felt the office needed more teeth. I did not think it would be adequate to have an assistant to the President, which is the position Tom Ridge has, pulling together 120, One hundred and twenty, no kidding, federal agencies who have some responsibility for homeland security and then connecting them vertically with our very talented first responders. I didn't think it would be adequate just to have an assistant to the President doing that. And so I kept saying Tom Ridge, needs a real job [a Cabinet level position]. That was my sound bite for a year.

Ultimately there was bi-partisan, bi-cameral legislation introduced in the Congress. I was one of the original sponsors and then the President presented his idea, which was a little different from ours. Ours had a big White House Office and a much smaller new department. His has a smaller White House office and a very big new department. But that was fine with me, he is our President, I support his plan. And, I signed up very early, I was one of the few Democrats to co-sponsor it and helped shepherd it through the House. It did pass the House by a bi-partisan vote, just before we recessed for the August recess. Ever since we came back after the August recess, it has been pending in the Senate. There are several fights going on about what role the President can have, in changing civil service rules and how big the department is and so on and so forth. And my view was and is that we have got to get on with this.

Compromises are fine, giving the President some flexibility but not some total flexibility over civil service rules is fine. There has been a proposal to do that and change some of the other aspects of this that are troublesome to people. Fine-tuning the White House office is fine, but we have to pass this bill. Until we have one national integrated strategy for homeland security, we won't be safe enough.

We will never be 100% safe, but we need someone with the authority to pull together the functions of 120 departments to make absolutely certain that information is shared vertically with first responders like (L.A. County Sheriff) Lee Baca to make certain that 37 billion dollars worth is spent appropriately and that lots of it gets to our local communities because as we all know every act of terrorism is local. It happens on someone's real estate. It could happen here and we need resources, the training, the people and the system, that will work here to protect us.

So I think that we are a year late now and I am very, very disappointed that the Senate has not acted. I am even more disappointed to learn in the news over the week end that Senate leader Tom Daschle has now said that in order to have the Iraq debate in the Senate, which is starting later this week, he is going to take the Homeland Security bill down, until the Senate acts on Iraq. I cannot imagine for the life of me why they can't do both things at once. Why can't they pass this bill in the morning and do the Iraq debate in the afternoon?

I wish they would reconsider and should I run into them I plan to communicate that point of view. So that is one, of the three issues that I think we should keep our eyes on a national level.

The Second issue is one you are all increasingly familiar with and I don't want to give you anymore nightmares than you already have but it is certainly my view that Al Qaeda is alive and well and it is dispersed around the world. There are additional Al Qaeda cells in the United States. I hope there is not one here but there could be. The FBI is on the case looking to see if there are any connections between the shooter at the El Al Ticket counter on July 4th and Al Qaeda, none has been found yet. But I still think it is possible. They may not be connected to him but they may be connected elsewhere. I think you have all heard in the news over the weekend that in the Buffalo cell that was wrapped up

a week ago, they checked the housing that these people lived in. They found pamphlets and other material about suicide bombings. And that is a kind of attack that I hope we never have in the United States, but that I think we cannot rule out. The effect on us would be chilling and I am very thankful that we have the quality of law enforcement that we do in Los Angeles County that keep us safe. That is why the second ball we need to keep in the air nationally is the war on Al Qaeda. We have to finish that war, which could take years. We personally have to make the investments that it will take to win that war. The threat warning system that we have went into high alert for a couple of weeks after 9/11/02 and is now being reduced again to a low level; that is a good sign. But vigilance is necessary and I certainly pledge to you, as the representative of this area, that I will spend what ever time it takes making absolutely certain that our first responders have the resources that they need and our citizenry is as aware as possible.

Just yesterday the new head (she was appointed about two weeks ago) for the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, the head of our public health system, was here in Torrance, meeting with health responders from Los Angeles County. Dr. Julie Gerberding spent many years in San Francisco in the field of infectious disease and she is here because today to announce the CDC program on smallpox. There are protocols for every community and there will be enough vaccinations available and a system for how to do this. No one is recommending that we vaccinate our whole population now because there is a serious risk in doing that. We are vaccinating first responders, and we have a system for vaccinating people should we have signs there will be a smallpox epidemic again in this country. There is a possibility of that. But at any rate, I am proud that she came here on her way to her first public event and we had a meeting in Torrance that was very productive.

I think you are all aware that there are proposed massive health care cuts in the County which are enormously tragic. One of the consequences could be that our only level one trauma center, Harbor-UCLA might close. I think that is an absolutely dreadful idea. I am arguing that bio-terrorism is a very real threat and that some of the funding going to the CDC and the Homeland Security Department ought to be used to keep our trauma system healthy in Los Angeles County since we might reasonably expect a terrorist attack of some kind to come through LAX or the Port of L.A. - both of which are logical targets. The nearest hospital is Harbor-UCLA and it would be dumb and lame to close that hospital. I am trying to work on that . But my point is that the second ball that we have to keep in the air, and I will keep it in the air, is the war on Al Qaeda, which we must win.

The third ball is Iraq, an important issue to address. I support the President's efforts to address it. Having said that I also support some of the other things that he is doing and some of the things that others are also doing to try to address it in a way that involves a coalition of partners in the world. For two reasons: the first reason is that he made his announcement of what he intended to do at the United Nations. He challenged the U.N. and I hope that the U.N. will meet that challenge. We should at least give a small period of time for the U.N. to respond to his challenge. I think it is a good thing that Secretary Colin Powell has been spending time up there trying to round up the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council to act with us.

I am not saying that we need the U.N. to give us permission to act, but I am saying that should we go in with a coalition, should we try to do these coercive inspections, which is now what is being talked about. Inspections, anywhere we want, anytime, with a small multilateral military force, to make sure that we can get into these places. Should we do that, it obviously makes much more sense to do it with a coalition of the world. It also makes more sense to be with a coalition because should we have to act militarily we will have a huge rebuilding job to do there. I don't think anyone disputes this. And again rebuilding needs to be done with a coalition of partners from around the world. I don't think the US alone should shoulder that burden, and the best chance to get the world to be with us, is to go in with a coalition. So I think it is a practical argument that I am making. I frankly think that Saddam Hussein is a world outlaw. He has flagrantly disregarded sixteen U.N. resolutions over eleven years. He has increased his stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction over the last four years when we were not permitted to inspect. And the world ought to respond to that.

So the Iraq issue will have to be on the table with Homeland Security and with the Al Qaeda issue. But we should do it in the right way and that's the action that I am going to support. I think we are going to get to a vote in the Congress in the next few weeks. And if it goes in that direction, my vote will be to act in Iraq.

In conclusion, what really matters is being together as a community. Supporting the strongest, most sensible system of homeland protection for this community. Respecting each other, respecting our civil rights, but understanding that to be safe we have to be more aware and we have to be more vigilant and we have to give our first responders the chance to do the job right. Understand that Al Qaeda is a lethal, ruthless foe that may be living among us. But while being vigilant, we have to be fair. We have to respect each other, but we have to make some tough calls. And being together to make the world safer, we may have to act against these who seek to acquire nuclear capability that could terrorize not just us but our allies every where. Saddam Hussein is hell bent on getting that capability. Again we have to focus on this, make wise decisions, endorse a proper process, but be together. Being a divided nation on the international scene is a very risky strategy. And I am hoping that I can help pull together people of good will in this district. Many of whom feel strongly that we should not be addressing the Iraq issue and persuade them that we should be addressing it in the right way. I am having a series of meetings to try to do that.

And so I just suggest to you that Emmy (Leslie Dutton), over here, is a person has pulled together on a historical basis, some of the big personalities in our recent history, in her new documentary "The Prosecutor & The Presidency". Many of these people were courageous enough to challenge authority and to set some new directions for the United States. Leslie has chronicled this. It is impressive what she has been able to do and she has done it through dogged determination. And we are all here to salute her. When this documentary is shown next year, you will all understand how a few people really have made a difference in the recent history of the United States.

I would also like to think, by the time you watch this documentary, that you will be able to see how the hard work of some of the local leaders here, and particularly, the tall guy over there, [Sheriff Lee Baca], pulling together the Terrorism Early Warning Group, when he did, way ahead of 9/11, made a difference in keeping you safe. And those are the kinds of things I think about on a this Sunday morning and I just came by to say hi and to tell "Emmy" over there [Leslie Dutton] that she is a Superstar.