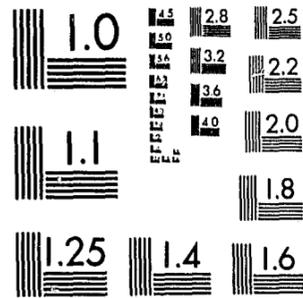


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National Institute of Justice
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C. 20531

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101369



Department of Justice

STATEMENT

OF

JOSEPH E. DIGENOVA
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

NCJRS

BEFORE

APR 22 1985

ACQUISITIONS

THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON POSTAL PERSONNEL AND MODERNIZATION
COMMITTEE ON THE POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONCERNING

POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE

ON

OCTOBER 17, 1985

101369

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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As the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, I thank the Subcommittee for holding this hearing and allowing me the opportunity to describe the excellent professional relationship between my office and the Postal Inspection Service. As their partner in the federal effort to combat major criminal activity, my office considers the Service to be a dynamic and integral part of progress in federal law enforcement.

I must note at the outset that I am unable to comment upon the actual management policies and practices of the Postal Inspection Service relating, for example, to the case-priority system and the career-path program since they involve, of course, management decisions internal to the Postal Service. However, I can address myself to the priorities and personnel practices of the Inspection Service in terms of the quality results, professionalism, and expertise of the Inspectors with whom we work. My perspective on these subjects derives from a clear benefit of the career path program, namely; providing very experienced Inspectors to my District who produce significant results.

As the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia and as a manager, I must continually re-examine and, if appropriate, adjust prosecutive priorities and legal resources as a matter of necessity. This is especially true in this unique district, the Nation's Capital, where my office is responsible

for prosecuting the more serious common-law offenses, as well as violations of federal law. Having scarce resources, it is imperative to assure that we focus our efforts on major criminal activity, both in the investigation and prosecution of cases. The case-priority system of the Inspection Service, corresponds in most parts, to established guidelines of the Department of Justice. While we rank priorities differently based on the differing missions of the agencies, we share mutually the central theme of combating major criminal activity.

It is simply because we are distinct entities with distinct missions that our perceptions may also be rationally distinct in regard to a specific priority. To illustrate: I consider police and political corruption cases or fraud, waste and abuse in governmental agencies to be high priority matters. For their part, the Inspection Service may not consider these matters as important if the criminal activity does not significantly affect the Postal Service, its customers, or its employees. In this regard, I would generally expect the Inspection Service to defer to another agency for investigation. However, if I need their support in a particular case, the case-priority system would afford the Inspection Service the flexibility to assist me. In a world filled with trade-offs competing for limited resources, such a system appears to me essential for expedient managerial decision-making and effective law enforcement.

The Inspection Service is our full partner here in the federal city in regard to all local crime, whether violative of either the D.C. or the U.S. Code. Moreover, and somewhat astoundingly in considering its relatively small size, the Investigative Service is also charged both with investigating all criminal acts committed against the Nation's mail, as well as the physical and human resources of the United States Postal Service. Discharging these most significant responsibilities requires scrupulous concern for investigative priorities and judicious use of resources.

Towards this end, the effectiveness of the case-priority system can be measured in terms of the results and quality of the investigative efforts expended within it. Here, the Postal Inspection Service deserves great praise. I see the fruits of their labor in cases submitted to my office and nearby districts and in conversations with other United States Attorneys. The Inspection Service has provided leadership in the investigative work in cases nation-wide involving fraudulent medical degrees, an issue which continues to receive wide-spread public concern. It has developed massive white-collar crime cases. The impact on the financial establishment of such investigative abilities is a salutary one for law enforcement. In my own District, an indictment was recently returned relating to alleged fraudulent procurement practices involving billions of dollars conducted by

former high-ranking postal officials and co-conspirators contracting with the Postal Service and another government agency.

In other areas, the Inspection Service has recently completed two additional significant investigations which demonstrate the quality of their work and produced the following prosecutions for:

- theft of more than \$52,000 in stolen food stamps, credit cards, savings bonds, Federal, State and business checks; and
- theft of more than 1,000 checks, Treasury and commercial, worth more than \$325,000;

Thirty-five arrests have been made or are pending in these investigations.

Indeed, in a recent evaluation of the Washington Division of the Inspection Service by their Regional officials, it was my pleasure to commend the Service for the quality of its investigations, excellence of its reports and overall professionalism. They do the work and they do it in an outstanding fashion.

Additionally, the Investigative Service will provide a service to two specific entities coordinating national law enforcement, the Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee (LECC) and the Economic Crime Council (ECC). Recently, I held a LECC meeting in my District. I emphasized the need to increase our efforts to combat child pornography. The Inspection Service

was appointed to the subcommittee to spearhead the work. I fully expect quality results since the Inspection Service is the recognized leader in the federal law enforcement community with respect to this repulsive criminal activity. With respect to the ECC recently established in the Department of Justice, I fully anticipate major contributions by the Inspection Service because of their ability to effectively challenge white-collar crime when the mails are an essential element of the scheme.

Against these impressive contributions to law enforcement, I understand that the mere arrest statistics of the Inspection Service are being viewed as a criteria of success. I am constrained to suggest to the Subcommittee that this evaluation appears not only to be incomplete, but also, to understate the qualitative measure of the Inspection Service's investigative effort and its impact on successful prosecution and reduction of major criminal activity. I will defer further comment in this regard to the Inspection Service and trust that they will satisfactorily explain to the Subcommittee the goal of managerial policies on the issue. I would only add that a management strategy designed to achieve a significant reduction in major criminal activity must be viewed as a whole, not upon partial analysis of perceived problem areas.

Earlier in my testimony, I described myself as a beneficiary of Inspection Service policies. I understand that the Career Path Program, as it is named, is designed to ensure the presence of sufficient quantities of experienced investigators in those areas where the most serious and complex crime problems exist. The District of Columbia has been designated as one of those crime problem areas. While one may choose to debate which areas are more crime-ridden than others, significant postal crimes, both in number and complexity occur in or around major metropolitan areas. Therefore, it is fitting that qualified and experienced Postal Inspectors be assigned to these areas. I have benefitted by this policy as have other U.S. Attorneys located in other major cities.

In closing, we are witness to the spirit, work ethic, and professional pride of these Postal Inspectors with whom we have worked. The case priority system and the Career Path Program are means to manage limited resources; achieve significant results and maintain morale. Notwithstanding the development of new alternatives, these policies are needed to ensure effective enforcement of postal laws.

END