

REMARKS

OF

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OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS

AT THE

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE  
DOMESTIC RADICALIZATION PROGRAM  
KICKOFF MEETING

ON

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WASHINGTON, DC

Thank you, Greg [Ridgeway]. I'm so glad to join Greg in welcoming all of you to the Office of Justice Programs. And I'm delighted that the Deputy Attorney General has taken time out of his very busy schedule to join us. I'm thrilled he could be here, and I look forward to introducing him in a moment.

I want to just take a minute to emphasize that the work all of you are doing is so important, not only to our mission at OJP and the Department of Justice, but to the Administration's – and our communities' and our nation's – efforts to strengthen national security. The issue of domestic radicalization is an ongoing concern of law enforcement and security experts across the country, but it's one we know too little about. That's why we issued the solicitation for these grants, and that's why we have engaged you – to further our understanding about the nature of domestic radicalization and about what we need to do to confront the challenges it presents.

This program builds on work OJP has been involved with since the mid-1990s through the State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training – or SLATT – Program. Since 1997, we've provided more than \$42 million under SLATT to train state, local, and tribal law enforcement on identifying emerging threats and stopping terrorist acts, directly reaching more than 123,000 law enforcement professionals. And these trainings are becoming increasingly popular. Last year, we trained almost 11,000 people, the highest number since 2002, when demand increased due to 9/11. We've also held 74 train-the-trainer workshops which have, in turn, trained almost a quarter-million personnel.

SLATT has also helped strengthen our nation's intelligence infrastructure. The Terrorist Incidents database housed on SLATT's secure Web site is a key component of the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative, or NSI, which is, itself, a cornerstone of our nation's anti-terrorism architecture.

The goal of NSI is to make sure that quality, relevant data are shared among the larger law enforcement community, while ensuring privacy and civil liberty protections. It's a comprehensive prevention program aimed at helping law enforcement identify behaviors indicative of terrorist activity. There's also a strong community awareness element that emphasizes the public's role in reporting suspicious activities. And I think it's always important to bear in mind the vital role the public plays in these efforts.

So we're really engaged in improving our nation's ability to recognize terrorist plots and prevent terrorist acts from occurring within our borders. The research you are conducting will enhance that ability, and enhance our body of knowledge developed across the federal government. It will give us better information about the motives and means of homegrown terrorists, and it will help us better determine what we can do to prevent the seeds of violent radicalization from taking root in our communities.

I'm excited about the contributions your projects are certain to make to our body of knowledge, and I look forward to today's discussions.

It's my privilege now to introduce the Deputy Attorney General.

Since he was sworn in two years ago, Jim Cole has helped lead the Department's efforts to strengthen national security. He's deeply and personally engaged in the critical interagency coordination across the federal government that helps to keep our nation safe. In particular, he has been a strong supporter of state and local law enforcement, working closely with OJP to ensure that they have the resources they need to protect our communities. And he's very invested in the Department's work on countering violent extremism.

He also understands the critical importance of research to improving our nation's ability to identify and prevent terrorism. His presence here today is a testament to that.

It's a privilege to have him here with us today. Please welcome Deputy Attorney General Jim Cole.

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