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I ran into Paul in the cafeteria. He was eating; I sat down; and he was more talkative than usual. He started rather calmly talking about "two of the organizations that supported us have begun vacillating in their support." and ended by expressing some frustration. "How do you sell this bill? How do you even get people to pay attention?"

The news was that the DA Assoc. which had been supporting the legislation, with the proviso that a couple of lines be changed, now has said that they find the two lines still unacceptable, and they oppose it. "I don't think it's their final position. Their executive director called this morning and invited us to make another presentation before the group at their annual meeting here in Washington on May 17. I, of course, said yes. The fact that he called leads me to believe they are still willing to listen. They should support the bill even with the offending language. They got most of what they wanted. They object to the provision that gives a department of Justice official the opportunity, in rare cases, to override the local district attorney in initiating a prosecution. We think that is an essential provision of the bill and it is nonnegotiable. I think they'll go along in the end. Even if they don't, it isn't disastrous. But it is serious. They are among the people who have to implement the legislation. When one of the groups that has to carry out the legislation is opposed to it, that can be trouble. The problem is that the opposition of the DA's could produce serious and active opposition in the Congress. People who are already opposed can use the DA's stand to support their position. It isn't the group that is so important. But in large cities, the DA is a very significant political figure. They have very close ties to Senators and congressmen. For example, the Boston DA is leading the

the charge. He's taken the most extreme position against the bill--that no prosecution can be initiated except on the signature of the local DA. I don't know if he's pushing Senator Kennedy or Senator Kennedy is pushing him, but the active opposition of Kennedy could make things very difficult. If one or two Senators get interested in stopping the bill, they can probably do it in the Senate. If a couple of Senators put a hold on it, we may never get it to the floor."

Specter will be the chief speaker at DA convention.

"Our original timetable called for the bill to be reported out of the Committee around May 1st. Now, we won't be able to do anything until at least May 17. So we probably won't get it to the full committee til May 20 or later. And we won't get it to the floor until June. What worries me then is that we won't get a vote on the floor. It will be in competition with so many other bills"

Only one Senator has opposed it so far - Metzenbaum.

He thinks Thurmond's support will be crucial in full committee.

He talked a lot about the substance of the bill. "It's such a novel idea. We've had the same experience every person or group we've presented it to. At first they are skeptical, dubious, confused. Crime control people are influenced by the last fight they had and they tend to want to go back to the thing they fought over the last time. When they hear that our bill is about crime control, they go check and say "oh, yes, the issue there is gun control. Or, the issue is putting more money in the hands of the local authorities. They aren't willing to see that neither of those approaches are the answer. It's almost an ideology that we are running into. If they do take the time to look at our bill, they say 'oh that's just a piddling little bill, the real problem is gun control." They don't see that this bill actually

does something. It doesn't tinker with language. It takes some very evil people off the streets and puts them away. It's the only bill around that does something to control crime. But it's so novel, so subtle, so complicated, so different. How do you sell it to the people? How do you get their attention? I'm getting a little weary."

I said I'd like to see it pass. "So would my client. He told me so this morning with great vehemence. Four different times in a meeting, he said 1688 was the highest priority."

As we walked from the cafeteria to his office, he asked me for my advice. He said they sent info to all the offices twice, and he guessed that 98 Senators hadn't read it and knew nothing about it. He repeated how novel and complicated the bill was and despaired of anyone taking it seriously. I said that all bills depended on momentum that got built in subcommittee and full committee--that most Senators wouldn't focus till they had to. He said that was helpful to him. He also asked me what arguments they should use and I said I thought the best one was that "it's the only game in town if you really want to do something about violent crime. He brightened and said "The President certainly jumped at that argument. That's the way he saw it." I thought it interesting that he should ask me 'how to do it' and confide his frustration. It's because he and his office are new at the job.

The other group that's giving them trouble is the ABA. Their criminal justice subcommittee endorsed it. But their criminal Justice Council came out flatly against it. "I don't think that will hurt us much. Nobody gives a lot of credence to the Bar Association in matters of crime control. They are perceived as a bunch of criminal lawyers who are against all kinds of crime control."

I asked about the House. "We have problems there. Rodino doesn't want to look at it. Our only other hope is Bill Hughes. He's gone from non-committal

to mildly opposed... Arlen introduced a bill that is very compatible with Huges bill on legal assistance. And we'll try to get it passed in the Senate. That's all we can do. People say, 'Go back and talk to him again.' But what good would that do. We've shot all our ammunition."

He believes that if it comes to a vote, it will pass. But he sees the main problem as getting it to the floor.

"Arlen is determined to get it passed." His use, again, of determined to describe AS. \*I think it's a generalization about Arlen that he has an amateur staff. He has no Hill experience close to him. Sylvia has had it. But Gordon, Dan, Bill W., Bill L., Paul, Bruce, Jonathan, Keve are all amateurs. And Arlen is, too. So they will have a slow learning curve. And he may have a staff shakeup before he girds for reelection.