

Full Transcript of Spitzer Remarks at Retirement Party of Dekraai Prosecutors Scott Simmons & Dan Wagner

Video was posted to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6DrjYUqaRk>

Video says the party was on December 5, 2019.

Simmons: “And last but not least, another name I think you’ll probably recognize, we’d like to ask to come up and say something on our behalf, is the district attorney of Orange County, Todd Spitzer.”

Spitzer: “Well it’s, whoa – sorry about that. Wow, it’s great to be here.

I started in the Office in 1990, as many of you know, and I worked with these fine gentlemen and I have nothing but respect and admiration for them. Dan and I – when I came back to the office in 2008, we started a Bible study and we prayed together at lunch. And uh, - but we were open for all religions, I just want you to know.

So I’m obviously here to thank them for their service. But I also want to say something about this last 72 hours in particular. And I want to share with you some major inspiration that I have found for myself through these two gentlemen, and I wanted to share why.

I know – because I just came back from Washington, meeting with the Department of Justice – and John Barnett was talking a little bit about this earlier – that there was evidence, in their case that they were responsible for, that came to light that had nothing to do with them. And they were really unfairly blamed. And they took a lot of responsibility on their shoulders that was completely inappropriate.”

I have read the transcripts of all these interviews, and I’ve read their transcripts, and it broke my heart when these discussions occurred about how all of this came to light.

Many of you know that about ten days ago that I was informed myself that the Sheriff’s Department was not booking evidence in who-knows-how-many thousands of cases. I came here to thank them [*Spitzer gestures to Wagner and Simmons*], but I also want to share with you that I came here to both apologize, but to tell you about my inspiration because of these two men. I vowed that never again in the Orange County District Attorney’s Office, would any law enforcement agency fail to disclose information or evidence and put that on the shoulders of the prosecutors ever again in the history of this county. That will never happen again.

And so, yeah, I’m in a— I’m in a fight right now with the Sheriff’s Department. You’ve seen that on the front pages of the newspaper again. But the reason I’m fighting that fight, for the failure to turn over evidence to our office is because I’m fighting this fight because these gentlemen inspired me to know that can never happen again in our Office.

And I want to thank you, okay? Because I know what honorable men that you are. And I know what great men you are. And I know how much you care about our practice of law. And I know how much you care about the ethics of our profession. And so, I apologize.
[Spitzer turning to both Wagner and Simmons.]

On behalf of the – I – the office let you down. The office let you down at a time when you needed the support of the office most. And as you go on and have this great, successful practice, everybody out here who's going to stay in the office needs to know, that that can't happen again and will never happen again. Never. We're going to stand up and make sure that we always have all the information we need to disclose and prosecute and be transparent and fulfill our ethical duties. That can never happen again. So on behalf of the Orange County District Attorney's Office, and both of your phenomenal careers, and everything you laid on the table for our office – your blood, sweat, and tears; the cost to your families and your friends over time – I just want to thank you. I want to thank you for everything you've done for us.”

[As audience applauds, Spitzer turns towards Simmons, shakes his hand and hugs him, then does the same with Wagner.]