



For Immediate Release

October 25, 2004

Business Leaders Discuss Imperative of Achieving Legal Reform

America's civil justice system nominally exists to fairly and predictably referee private disputes and compensate those who suffer injuries. However, in the past twenty years, this system has veered off course from its original purpose, harming the economy and undercutting the interests of the very consumers, shareholders, and employees it exists to protect. The corrosive effect of litigation on America's entrepreneurial spirit and culture, and the measures needed to restore balance to the legal system, was the subject of a recent discussion among three leading business executives and former Attorney General and Pennsylvania Governor **Dick Thornburgh**. Today, Washington Legal Foundation (WLF) released the results of that discussion through the latest edition of its CONVERSATIONS WITH publication format.

This CONVERSATIONS WITH project brought Governor Thornburgh, who is Counsel to Kirkpatrick & Lockhart and WLF's Legal Policy Advisory Board Chairman, together with **Bernard Marcus**, co-founder of the world's largest home improvement retailer, The Home Depot, Inc.; **Maurice ("Hank") Greenberg**, Chairman and CEO of American International Group, the world's leading financial services organization; and **Steven Hantler**, Assistant General Counsel to DaimlerChrysler Corporation and one of the nation's leading experts on legal reform.

In the discussion led by Governor Thornburgh, the three participants touched upon a wide range of subjects and concerns they have with the legal system and the ongoing efforts to reform it. Their answers reflect the reality that legal reform is a long-term project that requires further commitment from business leaders, as well as a more dedicated focus on educating the public and encouraging the involvement of those most affected by runaway litigation —shareholders, employees, and pensioners.

Washington Legal Foundation is a national, non-profit public interest law and policy center. By utilizing a unique approach in forwarding its mission — publishing timely legal studies, engaging in innovative litigation, and communicating directly to the public — WLF has become the nation's most effective advocate of free enterprise.

Copies of this educational paper can be obtained by forwarding a request to: Publications Department, Washington Legal Foundation, 2009 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036