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New Crime Team In Justice Dept.

Washington

The Justice Department is creating a new section of about 20 attorneys to prosecute cases of bribery, extortion and other corrupt practices by public officials, it was announced yesterday.

The new Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division will provide "a rationalized focus for dealing with this problem" and will end the fragmented way the department has handled corruption cases in the past, said Assistant Attorney General Richard Thornburgh, head of the Criminal Division.

Thornburgh said he believes the change is consistent with a recommendation of the Watergate Special Prosecution Force that the department establish a permanent unit to concentrate on prosecuting corruption cases.

Associated Press