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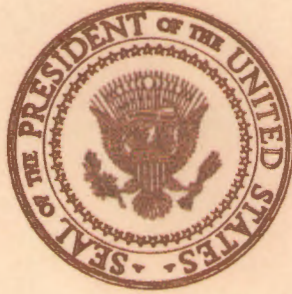
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Last Updated: 05/3/2023



Crack/Cocaine Awareness Month, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Cocaine poses a serious threat to our Nation. Long masquerading as glamorous and relatively harmless, cocaine has revealed its own deadly truth—cocaine is a killer. It can cause seizures, heart attacks, and strokes. It is indifferent in its destruction, striking regular users and initiates alike. The tragic deaths this past summer of two promising young athletes force us to recognize the terrible price this deadly drug exacts.

The tragedy of ruined lives and lost opportunities for personal growth and productivity cannot be adequately measured in dollars. It is too heavy a price for our citizens and for our Nation. As the consequences of cocaine use have been revealed, public awareness of the cocaine problem has increased. Yet many individuals continue to use cocaine, whether out of ignorance or unwillingness to believe its high risks. More than 22 million Americans have tried the drug at some time, and 5.8 million are current users.

Despite the best efforts by law enforcement officials, cocaine continues to come into our country at alarming levels, supplied by ruthless criminals who draw their power from public acquiescence. Bigger supplies and lower prices have put cocaine in the hands of people who were never before tempted to use it.

Today an even more devastating form of cocaine—"crack"—has appeared. Crack is smoked, producing immediate effects in the user. It is relatively inexpensive, but is so powerfully addictive that the user, even a first-time user, feels an overwhelming compulsion for more. Crack is used by people of all ages. Tragically, it is sold to and used by even 11- and 12-year-olds. To mothers and fathers, boys and girls at this age are children. To a cocaine dealer, they are just another market.

The Congress, by Public Law 99-481, has designated October 1986 as "Crack/Cocaine Awareness Month" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of that occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of October 1986 as Crack/Cocaine Awareness Month. I call on each American to seek every opportunity to educate yourself and others about cocaine and to be unyielding in your intolerance of cocaine users and inflexible in your commitment to a drug-free America.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eleventh.

Ronald Reagan