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Luncheon. April 23, 1982

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(Parvin/AB)
April 20, 1982
10:30 a.m.

MRS. REAGAN: AD COUNCIL LUNCHEON
APRIL 23, 1982

-- Thank you. When I attended an Ad Council event last fall, I was on the program with Smokey the Bear. Today, I'm on with Ambassador Stoessel. Both, in their own areas, are in the business of putting out fires. Anyway, I want to thank the Ad Council for the work you are doing and say how happy I am to be here. It's not often I have the chance to address people with such great influence on our popular culture, so I hope you don't mind if I do a little lobbying.

-- I have become more and more involved in the problem of drug abuse among our young people. And I'm grateful the Ad Council is a firm ally in our battle against the drug threat. So many of my emotions get tangled in this issue: hurt and fear, when I see what drugs have done to some of our kids; hope, when I visit prevention programs where elementary school children are learning the dangers of drugs; and anger, when I think how some in the media have glamorized drugs to our young people.

-- When I am out talking to kids, I often ask them if they think the media glamorizes the use of drugs and the answer is always a resounding yes. All too often, the media -- and here I'm talking about those in entertainment, advertising and news -- present the idea, perhaps unconsciously, that

drugs are acceptable. Well, drugs are not acceptable; drugs injure individuals and shatter families.

-- We've all seen the TV shows where the punchline is about getting high or getting good stuff. To those writers and comedians, let me say -- it's not funny anymore. Children are being destroyed and lives are being ruined, and that's not something to laugh about. An occasional TV special on drug abuse cannot counter the constant stream of messages in regular programming saying drugs are okay; drugs are cool.

-- And I wonder if the news media know what perceptions kids are picking up from some of their stories, especially the stories about the therapeutic effects of a chemical found in pot. I was at a drug conference in Atlanta a few weeks ago and I heard a speaker tell of a fifth grader who said if you smoke pot you won't get cancer or have to wear glasses. Now how do you suppose a fifth grader gets ideas like these?

-- The message is everywhere. In a very popular movie about three working women, there's a scene where the women get hilariously high on pot. It may seem like a harmless comedy, but doesn't it say something deeper? And in many dramas, the lead no sooner enters the room than he or she is at the bar pouring a drink. There is example after example on TV and in our movies.

-- There are even perfumes named after illicit drugs. They may sound mysterious and exotic, but again they create the aura of drug acceptability. The lyrics of modern songs shout at kids to get high and get stoned. And the drug paraphernalia shops cater to kids as surely as candy stores once did. Our culture in a myriad of ways is reinforcing the notion of drug acceptability.

-- I've come here today to ask for your help. The role of the Ad Council has always been to communicate -- and you have done it well. Today I'm asking you to communicate with your media colleagues who make the decisions on what America's children see and hear. Let them know the subtle damage they are inflicting on our kids. Let them know there are millions of parents looking to them for responsibility and balance as to how drugs are represented. And let them know the terrible, terrible cost of drug abuse. So thank you for letting me be part of this luncheon and thank you again for your aid in the battle against drug abuse.

(Parvin/AB)
April 19, 1982
12:00 noon

MRS. REAGAN: AD COUNCIL LUNCHEON
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-- Thank you. When I attended an Ad Council event last fall, I was on the program with Smokey the Bear. Today, I'm on with Ambassador Stoessel. *In both, in their own areas, are in the business of putting out fires.* ~~Now Smokey's very nice, but, Ambassador, I'm glad you were a shirt.~~ Anyway, I want to thank the Ad Council for the work you are doing and say how happy I am to be here. It's not often I have the chance to address people with such great influence on our popular culture, so I hope you don't mind if I do a little lobbying.

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(Parvin, AB)
April 15, 1982
12:00 noon

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~~--I've come here today to ask for your help. Many of your media colleagues make the decisions that determine what America's children see and hear. The parents of these children are asking for responsibility and balance in how drugs are represented. And I am with them 100 percent. The role of the Ad Council is to communicate. Today I'm asking you to communicate with your colleagues in the media~~

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