

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library  
Digital Library Collections

---

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

---

**Collection:** Speechwriting, White House Office  
of: Speech Drafts

**Folder Title:** Nancy Reagan: First Ladies  
Conference on Drug Abuse. April 24, 1985

**Box:** 436

---

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: [reagan.library@nara.gov](mailto:reagan.library@nara.gov)

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

MRS. REAGAN: CLOSING REMARKS  
FIRST LADIES DRUG CONFERENCE  
APRIL 24, 1985

--First let me thank our speakers for their presentations. The people you heard today are my colleagues and my teachers. Over the past several years they've become something more as well--companions in the cause to free our children from drugs. I wish I could share the wonderful, supportive feeling these people have brought to my life, not to mention the lives of thousands of parents and children. I hope you'll contact them so they can add to your understanding as they've added to mine.

--In one of his novels Hemingway wrote of a character, "He was awake a long time before he remembered his heart was broken." That quote reminds me of my own country. It took the United States a long time before we realized the pain and suffering drug abuse was causing our young people. These speakers know very well the heartbreak that drugs create, but they also know the cure--commitment.

--Every message we heard today was about commitment--from parents, from communities, from the government, from the individual. And from hearing the discussions, your commitment to the children of your own nations was clear, too. Joan Brann said something earlier that struck me as the very essence of why we're here and why we care. She said, "Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man."

--Well, neither should we mortals be discouraged. We simply need to tap the reservoir of commitment that rests within each of our nations. Tomorrow in Atlanta, we'll hear more about the hazards of drugs to both the individual and society, but we'll see something even more important--the strength and warmth and togetherness of parents determined to protect their children from drug abuse. Let me again thank each of the First Ladies for their participation. I look forward to seeing you all in the morning.

CLOSING REMARKS, FIRST LADIES CONFERENCE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 1985

-- FIRST, LET ME THANK OUR SPEAKERS FOR THEIR PRESENTATIONS. THE PEOPLE YOU HEARD TODAY ARE MY COLLEAGUES AND MY TEACHERS. OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, THEY'VE BECOME SOMETHING MORE AS WELL -- COMPANIONS IN THE CAUSE TO FREE OUR CHILDREN FROM DRUGS. I WISH I COULD SHARE THE WONDERFUL, SUPPORTIVE FEELING THESE PEOPLE HAVE BROUGHT TO MY LIFE, NOT TO MENTION THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN. I HOPE

1

YOU'LL CONTACT THEM SO THEY CAN ADD TO YOUR UNDERSTANDING AS THEY'VE ADDED TO MINE.

-- IN ONE OF HIS NOVELS HEMINGWAY WROTE OF A CHARACTER, "HE WAS AWAKE A LONG TIME BEFORE HE REMEMBERED HIS HEART WAS BROKEN." THAT QUOTE REMINDS ME OF MY OWN COUNTRY. IT TOOK THE UNITED STATES A LONG TIME BEFORE WE REALIZED THE PAIN AND SUFFERING DRUG ABUSE WAS CAUSING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE. THESE SPEAKERS KNOW VERY WELL THE HEARTBREAK THAT DRUGS CREATE, BUT THEY ALSO KNOW THE

2

CURE -- COMMITMENT.

-- EVERY MESSAGE WE HEARD TODAY WAS ABOUT COMMITMENT --  
FROM PARENTS, FROM COMMUNITIES, FROM THE GOVERNMENT, FROM THE  
INDIVIDUAL. AND FROM HEARING THE DISCUSSIONS, YOUR COMMITMENT TO  
THE CHILDREN OF YOUR OWN NATIONS WAS CLEAR, TOO. JOAN BRANN SAID  
SOMETHING EARLIER THAT STRUCK ME AS THE VERY ESSENCE OF WHY  
WE'RE HERE AND WHY WE CARE. SHE SAID, "EVERY CHILD COMES WITH  
THE MESSAGE THAT GOD IS NOT YET DISCOURAGED OF MAN."

3

-- WELL, NEITHER SHOULD WE MORTALS BE DISCOURAGED. WE  
SIMPLY NEED TO TAP THE RESERVOIR OF COMMITMENT THAT RESTS WITHIN  
EACH OF OUR NATIONS. TOMORROW IN ATLANTA, WE'LL HEAR MORE ABOUT  
THE HAZARDS OF DRUGS TO BOTH THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY, BUT  
WE'LL SEE SOMETHING EVEN MORE IMPORTANT -- THE STRENGTH AND  
WARMTH AND TOGETHERNESS OF PARENTS DETERMINED TO PROTECT THEIR  
CHILDREN FROM DRUG ABUSE. LET ME AGAIN THANK EACH OF THE FIRST  
LADIES FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION. I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL  
IN THE MORNING.

THE WHITE HOUSE

OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY'S PRESS SECRETARY

---

MRS. REAGAN'S CLOSING REMARKS  
FIRST LADIES CONFERENCE ON DRUG ABUSE  
EAST ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 1985

-- First, let me thank our speakers for their presentations. The people you heard today are my colleagues and my teachers. Over the past several years, they've become something more as well -- companions in the cause to free our children from drugs. I wish I could share the wonderful, supportive feeling these people have brought to my life, not to mention the lives of thousands of parents and children. I hope you'll contact them so they can add to your understanding as they've added to mine.

-- In one of his novels Hemingway wrote of a character, "He was awake a long time before he remembered his heart was broken." That quote reminds me of my own country. It took the United States a long time before we realized the pain and suffering drug abuse was causing our young people. These speakers know very well the heartbreak that drugs create, but they also know the cure -- commitment.

-- Every message we heard today was about commitment -- from parents, from communities, from the government, from the individual. And from hearing the discussions, your commitment to the children of your own nations was clear, too. Joan Brann said something earlier that struck me as the very essence of why we're here and why we care. She said, "Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man."

Closing Remarks  
First Ladies Conference  
Wednesday, April 24, 1985  
Page Two

-- Well, neither should we mortals be discouraged. We simply need to tap the reservoir of commitment that rests within each of our nations. Tomorrow in Atlanta, we'll hear more about the hazards of drugs to both the individual and society, but we'll see something even more important -- the strength and warmth and togetherness of parents determined to protect their children from drug abuse. Let me again thank each of the First Ladies for their participation. I look forward to seeing you all in the morning.

THE WHITE HOUSE

OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY'S PRESS SECRETARY

---

MRS. REAGAN'S OPENING REMARKS  
FIRST LADIES CONFERENCE ON DRUG ABUSE  
EAST ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 1985

-- I'm so very happy to welcome you here to the White House for this very historic meeting. I think we all agree we're here for one reason -- the well-being of our children. The presence of 18 First Ladies from around the globe says clearly that drugs are a threat to our children no matter where they live. Even if nothing else were to be accomplished today and tomorrow, your attendance has sent a message to people everywhere -- drugs are maiming our children.

-- But in addition to focusing the world's attention on drug abuse, we have another goal -- to share our experiences and learn from them. We have paid a tremendous price for drug abuse in the United States and you're starting to see the same effects in your countries. This is an important time for us to join together in looking at our common drug problem.

-- In my travels to learn about drug abuse, I've heard so many painful stories, but they're not stories really -- they're lives, flesh and blood realities. And the tragedies in Cincinnati are no different than those in La Paz or Rome -- children are suffering.

-- But drugs aren't content tearing apart individuals and families. Nations feel the effects as well. Drugs rip right through the moral fiber of our countries. They twist values and prevent others from developing. They distort economies, and they



Opening Remarks  
First Ladies Conference  
Wednesday, April 24, 1985  
Page Two

destroy that sense of belonging called patriotism or nationalism. Because young people on drugs care for nothing -- not country, not family, not even themselves -- nothing except drugs.

-- This conference is a chance for us to compare and trade ideas, and really, it's understanding that in the long run will defeat drug abuse. As my husband said, even if you could put police shoulder to shoulder along a border, this would not stop the demand. The demand is coming from our people, especially our young people who are searching for something within themselves. This conference is also a search, a search for a common understanding among nations of the drug problem, and that is why I am so pleased that you have come. And now, I'd like to introduce my teacher and guide in the field of drug abuse. He is also deputy assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Drug Abuse Policy, and he will be our moderator today... Dr. Carlton Turner.