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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON


January 6, 1989

TO: MRS. REAGAN  
FROM: JACK L. COURTEMANCHE *JLC*  
SUBJECT: GENERAL DRUG SPEECH

Attached is the General Drug Speech, which Landon Parvin has prepared for you to use after January 20th.

✓cc: Elaine Crispen

*OLD  
Drafts*



(Parvin-12/26/88)

MRS. REAGAN: GENERAL DRUG SPEECH

Thank you, I'm delighted to be here with the \_\_\_\_\_.  
And I want to thank you not only for making me feel so  
welcome, but for inviting me to speak about something that's  
very important to me, and something that's of enormous  
consequence to the nation--and that's the drug epidemic.

For most of this decade, I've been active in the fight  
against drugs. I can't tell you the things I've seen or  
heard. You've all read about the rock stars, athletes,  
even elementary school teachers and principals who've died  
or been ruined by drugs.

But, it's worse than you may imagine. In one city, a  
baby is sold for a bag of cocaine. In another, a seven-  
year-old boy is shot and paralyzed while trying to flee a  
gun battle between dealers. An armed 11-year-old girl robs  
a store to get money to buy drugs. A 13-year-old girl, who  
appeared in the largest grossing movie of all time, checks  
into an alcohol treatment center. All over the country,  
babies are being born addicted to drugs. One nurse said,  
"They're like little caged animals trying to get  
out...crying, trembling and perspiring."



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When drugs are affecting the lives of even our children, imagine the damage drugs are doing to the larger society.

Ladies and gentlemen, something horrible is going on out there. I know. I've seen the effects of drug abuse with my own eyes.

I can't begin to tell you the pain and tragedy that drug abuse is causing this country. Just before we left the White House, someone told me that I had received more mail than any First Lady in history. Most of it was about drug abuse. And I think I probably got the saddest mail of anyone in America. I received tear-stained letters from mothers who poured out their hearts about what drugs had done to their sons and daughters. You could actually see the tear spots on the stationery. I got letters from brothers and sisters and friends, confused about what was happening to someone they loved. I received letters from young people themselves, young people addicted to drugs who were desperately struggling to get free.

Let me read you a letter that I received from a 16 year old girl. I've read it before to audiences, because it says all there is to say about drug abuse:

"Dear Mrs. Reagan,

"It's taken me many months to finally write you. At the age of 13, I was a regular user of anything and everything: pot, LSD, heroin, even nail polish remover, and if I was really desperate, Liquid Paper. I really don't

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know why I became a drug user. I guess because I never really liked myself. And, now, I hate myself even more.

"I destroyed my parents' hearts; out of three boys they thought their one and only little girl would follow their footsteps and be a good girl. I failed them. . .I hurt them...

"Drugs are terrible, and it was a horrible, vicious cycle I lived in--drugs took me over. I can remember one time when I was high I needed a fix so bad, I had sex with a man around 55 years or older, for \$500 worth of drugs, it was worth it at the time. I was once pregnant, but because of the drugs I had the baby when it was 5 months into my pregnancy--the baby's arm was at its leg and its ear was at its cheek--the baby died.

"Drugs ruined my life, and I regret it so much. I long for the day when anyone will say to me, '...I love you because of who you are, not who you were.'

"...Mrs. Reagan...please reach kids my age and younger --don't let what's happened to me and which destroyed my life happen to them."

How can anyone ignore such a plea? This young girl wrote to me, but in a sense her plea is for all of you, too. She was asking for help, not just for herself, but for others, especially the younger children.

I've often thought that if anything is sacred, our children are sacred. And they are so vulnerable to drugs. In this country, virtually every child will be forced to



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make a decision on whether to use drugs by age 12 or 14. Many children face the decision in grade school. In some schools, children wear beepers so that they can deliver drugs.

Yes, we must do everything in our power to stop the flow of drugs into this country. But we could have police on every corner and there'd still be a drug problem in America. And, yes, we must have adequate treatment centers for those seeking to overcome their addictions. But we could have treatment centers in every neighborhood and yet this still wouldn't keep the children coming along from using drugs. The real solution to the drug crisis is to dry up the demand, and that can come only through education.

And I define education broadly. We must teach our children to say no to drugs and understand the reason why they must say no. And we must also teach them to believe in themselves.

If we talk to our children, play with them, work with them, share with them, they will come to understand their own self-worth, their value as individuals. That self-esteem, combined with a clear knowledge of the dangers of drugs, is the best inoculation against drug abuse.

And we've come a long way in recognizing the horrors of drug abuse. You know, when I first started working against drugs I couldn't get anyone to focus on the problem. There was almost a stigma attached to being against drugs. It was unfashionable. It was narrow-minded in our live-and-let-

live society. For years, drugs were even glamorized; they were treated so casually that comedians on television even made jokes about being high.

Misconceptions still remain. One of the worst is that drug use is a victimless crime, that drugs don't hurt anyone except the person who's using them. Yet there are consequences to drug use beyond an individual's personal and selfish high.

The drug cartel murdered Colombia's Attorney General, Carlos Mauro Hoyos, who was active in trying to halt cocaine traffic to the United States. Half a dozen men in three jeeps ran his car into a curb, sprayed it with machine gun fire and killed his two body guards. Mr. Hoyos was later found, blindfolded and handcuffed, his skull shattered with bullets.

And, ladies and gentlemen, the people who casually use cocaine are responsible, because their money bought the bullets. They provided the high stakes that murdered those men, plus hundreds of others in Colombia, including supreme court justices, scores of judges handling drug cases, policemen and soldiers.

The notion that the mellow marijuana user doesn't hurt anyone is just as phony. A few months after playing a major role in destroying a 10,000 acre marijuana plantation, U.S. drug agent Enrique Camarena was kidnapped by Mexican drug traffickers. He was tortured in ways I will not describe and then he was beaten to death. The murderers made a tape



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of his anguished death. It was horrible. And this country's casual marijuana users cannot escape responsibility for their fellow American's death, because they, in effect, bought the tools for his torture.

You can almost daily pick up a paper and read of innocent civilians being killed or hurt in the battle between rival drug gangs. In Los Angeles, an innocent girl was murdered on the street when two drug gangs opened fire on each other. In Washington, D.C., a woman was killed in her kitchen when a drug deal in a parking lot went awry, and a bullet flew through her second floor apartment window. There is example after example all over this country.

The casual user may think when he uses drugs in the privacy of his nice condo, listening to his expensive stereo, that he's somehow not bothering anyone. But there is a trail of death and destruction that leads directly to his door. And he cannot morally escape responsibility for the actions of drug traffickers and dealers. Let me be absolutely clear, the casual drug user is an accomplice to murder.

None of us is safe from the consequences of drugs. Christy Johnson was taking the train from Washington, D.C. to New York to visit her sister before heading back to classes at Stanford University. Unknown to the passengers, another locomotive passed several warning signals and crossed into the path of the passenger train. The crash



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killed 16 innocent people and injured 175 others. Christy never made it to her sister's; she was killed in the crash.

The investigation determined that the engineer and brakeman on the freight train were smoking marijuana prior to the crash--sixteen people killed because of an engineer's personal indulgence in a joint of marijuana. Don't tell Christy's mother and father that casual drug use is a victimless crime. Don't try to tell them that drugs hurt no one but the user.

And it is outrageous that various courts, unions and civil liberties groups believe drug testing of railroad workers involved in accidents is unconstitutional. People on drugs are driving trucks and buses on our highways. They are working with explosives. They are maintaining and repairing jet engines. These are people who hold our safety in their hands. And the safety of the public should take precedent over extreme rights of individual privacy. There is a dangerous drug epidemic in this country and everyone better begin to realize it.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must be absolutely unyielding and inflexible in our opposition to drug use. There is no middle ground.

You here today are fortunate. You're not as vulnerable as the 12 or 13 year old, who has some drinks, which lowers his inhibitions, so he takes a pill or a snort to be accepted by his peers. And then he takes more drugs, more frequently.

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You are accomplished people. You look forward to life and to its hopes. Can you imagine being young and yet without the spark and enthusiasm of youth? Can you imagine not caring about anything in this world except what you're going to shoot up your arm? That is what it means to be young and possessed by drugs.

You have a moral duty to prevent this loss. You have the responsibility to be intolerant of drugs and to be forceful in your intolerance. You have the obligation to remember the words of the poet Whittier, who unwittingly explained the essential tragedy of drug abuse by the young:

"For of all the sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these: It might have been."

Thank you for inviting me and thank you for your hospitality.



"White House"  
stump speech

(WHstump2)

green LTC disk  
Nancy Reagan



Thank you, I'm delighted to be here. And thank you, \_\_\_\_\_, for your introduction. You're much better at it than I am. At one of the inaugural events back in 1985, I was supposed to come up to the microphone, say a few words and then introduce the guest of honor, the President of the United States. Well, I did get up and say a few words but I simply went back to my seat, forgetting you know who. So we all set there quietly until Ronnie finally leaned over and said, "Honey, I think you're supposed to introduce me."

So I've decided introducing people is harder than it looks.

Your program committee asked if I would talk today about my years in the White House. And I'm happy to do that, because they were wonderful, exciting years that changed me forever. So let me talk about those years for a few minutes and then I'd also be happy to answer any of your questions.

One thing most people don't realize -- and I certainly didn't realize it until I'd gotten a few bumps and scrapes -- is this: you just don't move into the White House, you must learn how to live there.

Life in that mansion is different. And I don't mean simply because it's the only house in the country that comes equipped with central heating, air conditioning, and surface-to-air missiles. And I don't mean because the contents of your waste baskets are shredded and burned; your food is first tasted by others; your peace of mind unsettled by the knowledge that a military officer with a black briefcase containing the nuclear codes is always only seconds away from you husband. Those things are a price you pay for the honor of living there.

And it is an honor. You live in a house filled with 38,000 objects of historical and artistic value, a priceless collection. I think my husband could become curator. He read both volumes of Seale's history of the White House. And in the evenings, when the house was quiet and deserted of tourists and staff, he'd go to the various rooms and study what they once looked like and what happened in them.

Like previous presidential families, we lived on the 2nd and 3rd floors. And even though this is where the Lincoln Bedroom and supposedly Lincoln's ghost are -- which my husband believes our dog Rex has seen -- we came to feel very much at home. I really came to love that beautiful old house.

The White House is a wonderful family of butlers, maids, florists, chefs, telephone operators, gardeners and other household members, who work there president after president. And if I ever get the time, I'd love to watch that PBS series, "Upstairs, Downstairs," because all the people who live in a big house do become part of each other's lives.



They helped us through difficult times -- the shooting, the operations, the political controversies. And we were involved in their lives, too.

When we said goodbye to that family in January, it was very emotional. The members of the residence staff were in tears and so were we. They were so good to us.

But it's not just the history of the place that's so magnified. Everything is larger than life. The highs are higher. In one week last spring, for example, I was at the Kremlin with the Gorbachevs, at Buckingham Palace with Queen Elizabeth and at Disney World with a group of the most wonderful people anywhere -- the foster grandparents. Just being an eyewitness to the history that occurs around you daily is a rewarding, enlightening, at times even thrilling, sensation.

By the same token, the lows are lower. The lowest point, of course, was when a bullet got within an inch of my husband's heart. I think in a way the bullet actually got closer to my heart, because for the next eight years I worried every time he set foot outside the White House. For eight years I said a little prayer for his safety every time he went beyond the gates. That takes a certain toll. And when we returned to California I was exhausted for an entire month. A friend asked if I was eight years tired. And I think that was the case.

Yet, without a moment's hesitation I can tell you that I wouldn't trade our time in the White House for even extra years added to my life.

The highs and lows are exaggerated even further by the tremendous scrutiny of the media. It really is like nothing you can imagine. At least, I never could have imagined it, and I was accustomed to the public spotlight, or so I thought.

I was terribly naive when I arrived. I remember during the 1980 campaign telling Helen Thomas, the reporter for UPI, that there would always be part of my life that would be private. She said, "You have no idea what it's like until you get there." And she was right. I was completely unprepared for the intense scrutiny.

I don't mind telling you that my first couple of years were rocky. I thought the White House, America's house, should be the best it could possibly be. It never crossed my mind people would criticize this.

Remember the china? Believe me, there was a time I never wanted to hear the word china again. Not one cent of taxpayer money was ever used yet it became a hot, political issue. Actually it was a donation from a foundation but no one ever mentioned that.

Remember my sprucing up the various rooms? I felt a deep obligation to maintain that historic place -- again no taxpayer

money, but another controversy. I'm pleased to say, however, that while I was First Lady we did get the White House officially declared a museum, which gives it certain protections.

And remember the flaps over the designer dresses? I guess I should have heeded what Thoreau said, "Beware of all enterprises requiring new clothes." Of course, that was easy for him -- he lived on a pond. But why shouldn't a First Lady do everything she can to promote and showcase and celebrate America's designers? I think they're fabulous.

I was just as unprepared for some of the outrageous things I'd read about myself in the papers. I read that I wanted the Carters to move out of the White House early; that I banned sumo wrestlers from the Rose Garden; that I planned to tear down a wall in the Lincoln Bedroom. Later the focus of the stories changed to the influence I had with my husband. You can imagine how impressed I was to read that I was calling the shots on the nuclear arms talks.

No matter what you do, the stories will continue. Some are amusing. Some are absolutely maddening. Some hurt. What I finally learned is that you never stop being hurt by such stories, but you do stop being surprised.

So you just ignore them and go on with your duties. Believe me, you certainly have enough to do. I'll say more about my drug work in a moment, but the ceremonial function alone is a full time job. To give you a brief idea: in eight years, I hosted over 100 Christmas parties. There were thousands of dinners, lunches, teas, receptions and political events to hold or attend. Now, a First Lady doesn't have to involve herself in organizing all the dinners and parties; she has a Social Secretary. But I love flowers and table decorations and color, so I enjoyed the planning.

Although no matter how well you plan, little funny things are always happening,

- like the time the wife of the French President couldn't make her entrance into the room because Ronnie had his feet firmly planted on her dress;

- like the time at the state dinner when Ronnie, the visiting head of state, his wife and I were all supposed to walk down the corridor together toward the guests and the press, which I did, only to realize I was striding along all by myself;

- like the time I was wooing a wealthy woman to contribute to the White House Historical Association and as I was bidding her goodbye, I stood up and my wraparound skirt unwrapped and fell around my ankles.

Yet in spite of all the ceremonial demands on your time, there's one job that I believe is a First Lady's primary concern. She is first of all a wife. That's the reason she's there.



A president has advisers to counsel him on foreign affairs, on defense, on the economy, on politics, on any number of matters. But no one among all those experts is there to look after him as an individual with human needs, as a flesh and blood person who must deal with the pressures of holding the most powerful position on Earth.

This sometimes got me into trouble, trouble I don't regret one bit. Following one of my husband's operations, the medical team said he needed six weeks of recuperation. I'm a doctor's daughter, and I take a doctor's advice seriously. Yes, there are demands of government, but there are also basic personal rights no president should be denied. As a wife, I believed my husband had as much right to a normal recuperation as any other husband. I think it's an important, legitimate role for a First Lady to look after a president's health and well-being. The White House staff wanted to get him back to work too soon. I said no. And if that interfered with their plans, then that was just the way it was going to be.

You know, the first role I ever had on stage, I played a character who'd been kidnapped and kept up in an attic. In the second act, I ran down the stairs, said my one line; whereupon they captured me and took me back to the attic. There are those out there who think first ladies should be kept in attics, only to say our lines, pour our tea and then be put away again.

Neither marriage nor politics denies a spouse the right to express an opinion.

When I was in the spotlight for having influence with my husband, A.M. Rosenthal wrote in the New York Times, "Of course, the wife of the president ..... will give him opinions, tell him what she thinks of the Secretary of State and farm subsidies. When they go up to their living quarters at night is she supposed to talk about dresses and hairdressers? Any man who married a woman that vapid shouldn't be president anyway."

Now the positive side of all this scrutiny is that it also enables a First Lady to focus the nation's attention on the things that really matter. For me, that was the problem of drug abuse among our young people.

So hoping to raise the awareness of the drug epidemic, I travelled to scores of cities in 30 states and nearly a dozen foreign countries to make people aware of the drug problem. Every mile, every meeting was worth it. And I'm still travelling for the cause.

The drug problem is worse than you may imagine. In one city, a baby is sold for a bag of cocaine. In another, a 7-year old boy is shot and paralyzed while trying to flee a gun battle between dealers. An armed 11-year old girl robs a store to get money to buy drugs. A cocaine addict beats her 10-year old son with a

pipe until he gives up the \$11 he'd earned washing cars. In a hospital at this very moment, a baby is being born addicted to drugs. One nurse said, "They're like little caged animals trying to get out ...crying, trembling and perspiring."

When drugs are affecting the lives of even our children, imagine the damage drugs are doing to the larger society. Imagine the damage they're doing to our future.

My work against drugs has provided me with most fulfilling years of my life. I will always be involved with the anti-drug movement. It's now very much a part of my life, and I'm not about to give up this cause simply because my husband is no longer President.

A First Lady genuinely has the power to make a difference. And to make a difference is what all of us want in our lives. The first time I received a letter saying that I had saved a person's life, I wept. I never dreamed I had the ability to do that -- to influence people who were unknown to me.

In closing, let me tell you something Albert Schweitzer said that has become very meaningful to me. He said, "One thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have found how to serve."

Well, I'm very happy, because over those eight years, amid the exaggerated ups and downs of life at the White House, I found what was really important. I found how to serve. And for that I will be forever grateful to you and to all of the American people.

Thank you for inviting me and thank you for your hospitality.



4/25 5pm

(Parvin):

## MRS. REAGAN: "LIFE IN THE WHITE HOUSE" STUMP SPEECH

Thank you for being here today. And thank you, \_\_\_\_\_, for your invitation. You are much better at it than I am. At one of the press conferences back in 1985, I was supposed to come up to the podium, say a few words and then introduce the next speaker, the President of the United States. Well, I did get up and say a few words but I simply went back down and sat down and you know who. So we all sat there until the lady finally leaned over and said, "Honey, I think you should go up and introduce me."

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Like previous presidential families, we lived in the large apartment that takes up the entire second floor. And even though this is the floor with the Lincoln Bedroom and supposedly Lincoln's ghost - which my husband believes our dog Rex has seen - we came to feel very much at home. You might think it would be hard to feel at home in a museum, but that was not the case for us.

The White House is a wonderful family of butlers, maids, florists, chefs, telephone operators, gardeners and other household members, who wait there president after president. And if I ever get the time, I love to watch that PBS series, "Upstairs, Downstairs" because all the people who live in a big house do become part of each other's lives.

They helped us through difficult times: the shooting, the operations, the political controversies. And we were involved in their lives, like the time the sweet, totally trustworthy woman who helped us pack and do other personal chores was taken into custody for--believe it or not--gun running. She had been duped because she was so innocent. But, as you can imagine, for a while there we were quite concerned about her.

When we said goodbye to that family in January, it was warmly emotional. The members of the residence staff were in tears and so were we. They were so good to us.

But it's not just the history of the place that's so magnified. Everything is larger than life. The highs are higher. In one week last spring, for example, I was at the Kremlin with the Gorbachevs, at Buckingham Palace with Queen Elizabeth and at Disney World with a group of the most wonderful people anywhere: the foster grandparents. Just being an eyewitness to the history that occurs around you daily is a rewarding, enlightening, at times even thrilling, sensation.

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