

Edward Kennedy, and other members of the Kennedy family to observe this day. Robert Kennedy would wish us not to dwell upon his loss but to celebrate his life and carry on his legacy. In his all too short life, he lost much, but he never lost faith. In suffering, he struggled to find wisdom.

On the night our Nation lost Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy appeared before a shocked and grieving crowd in Indianapolis. The night was cold; the moment, tense. Hunched in a black overcoat, he stood before the crowd and said, "Let us dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago, 'to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world.'"

Like Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy dedicated himself to that, and his life enriched and ennobled our Nation. Robert Kennedy ran for President, he said, to close the gaps between black and white, between rich and poor, between old and young. In a time of division, more than any American, he bridged those gaps, reaching out to starving families in the Mississippi Delta and to factory workers in Chicago, to migrant workers in Northern California and struggling teens in Harlem. He touched their lives and, just as important, they touched his.

He changed and grew as a result, becoming a fuller person and a better, wiser leader. In changing times, Robert Kennedy was one of the first to see that old solutions did not always fit new challenges, either at home or abroad. We can do better, he so often said, and he pushed his Government and himself to do no

less. To him, in a time of change, labels like "left" and "right" meant little. Dogmas that kept us from moving forward were to be discarded. But he did not discard his passionate convictions or his steely determination to act on them. They infused his public service and his last campaign with a power and purpose we can still feel today.

Yes, Robert Kennedy's legacy is alive today in the work of his family in public service, in the work of those of us he inspired, in the hearts of his fellow Americans. The distance of three decades cannot silence the strength of his words or lessen the impact of his actions. We still hear his voice appealing to the best qualities of the American spirit. We still strive to answer his insistent challenge to do good and to do better.

And on this day of reflection, when the thoughts of all Americans are with his large and loving family, we can do the memory of Robert Kennedy no greater honor than to dedicate ourselves as he did, to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:45 p.m. on June 5 at a private residence in Boston, MA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 6. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 5, but the first three paragraphs were embargoed for release until 10:06 a.m. on June 6. The remainder of the transcript was made available for immediate release on June 5.

Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem in New York City

June 8, 1998

Mr. Secretary-General, President Udovenko, Executive Director Arlacchi, distinguished fellow leaders: Today we join at this Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly to make common cause against the common threat of worldwide drug trafficking and abuse.

Let me begin by thanking my friend President Zedillo for his vision in making this session possible and for his courageous resolve against drugs. And I thank all the nations represented

here who are committed to fight for our children's future by fighting drugs together.

Ten years ago, the United Nations adopted a pathbreaking convention to spur cooperation against drug trafficking. Today, the potential for that kind of cooperation has never been greater or more needed. As divisive blocs and barriers have been dismantled around the world, as technology has advanced and democracy has spread, our people benefit more and more from nations

working and learning together. Yet the very openness that enriches our lives is also exploited by criminals, especially drug traffickers.

Today we come here to say no nation is so large and powerful that it can conquer drugs alone; none is too small to make a difference. All share a responsibility to take up the battle. Therefore, we will stand as one against this threat to our security and our future.

The stakes are high, for the drug empires erode the foundations of democracies, corrupt the integrity of market economies, menace the lives, the hopes, the futures of families on every continent. Let there be no doubt, this is ultimately a struggle for human freedom.

For the first time in history, more than half the world's people live under governments of their own choosing. In virtually every country, we see the expansion of expressions of individual liberty. We cannot see it all squandered for millions of people because of a perverse combination of personal weakness and national neglect. We have to prove to the drug traffickers that they are wrong. We are determined, and we can make a difference.

Nations have shown that with determined and relentless efforts, we can turn this evil tide. In the United States, drug use has dropped 49 percent since 1979. Recent studies show that drug use by our young people is stabilizing, and in some categories, declining. Overall cocaine use has dropped 70 percent since 1985. The crack epidemic has begun to recede. Last year, our Coast Guard seized more than 100,000 pounds of cocaine. Today, Americans spend 37 percent less on drugs than a decade ago. That means that over \$34 billion reinvested in our society, rather than being squandered on drugs.

Many other nations are making great strides. Mexico set records for eradication in 1997. Peruvian coca cultivation has been slashed 42 percent since 1995. Colombia's growing aerial eradication program has destroyed tens of thousands of hectares of coca. Thailand's opium poppy growth is steadily decreasing, this year alone down 24 percent.

The United States is also a partner in global law enforcement and interdiction efforts, fighting antidrug and—funding antidrug and crime training for more than 8,250* officials last year. In 1997 Latin American and Caribbean governments seized some 166 metric tons of cocaine.

* White House correction.

Better trained police, with improved information sharing, are arresting more drug traffickers around the world.

Joint information networks on suspicious financial transactions are working in dozens of countries to put the brakes on money laundering. By the end of the year 2000, the United States will provide assistance to an additional 20 countries to establish and strengthen these financial intelligence units. We must and we can deprive drug traffickers of the dirty money that fuels their deadly trade.

We are finding strength in numbers, from the antidrug alliance the Western Hemisphere forged at the recent Summit of the Americas, to the steps against drugs and crimes the G-8 leaders agreed to take last month. The U.N. International Drug Control Program, under Executive Director Arlacchi's leadership, is combating drug production, drug trafficking, and drug abuse in some of the most difficult corners of the world, while helping to make sure the money we spend brings maximum results. I applaud the UNDCP's goal of dramatically reducing coca and opium poppy cultivation by 2008. We will do our part in the United States to make this goal a reality.

For all the achievements of recent years, we must not confuse progress with success. The specter of drugs still haunts us. To prevail we must do more, with dynamic national strategies, intensified international cooperation, and greater resources.

The debate between drug supplying and drug consuming nations about whose responsibility the drug problem is has gone on too long. Let's be frank: This debate has not advanced the fight against drugs. Pointing fingers is distracting. It does not dismantle a single cartel, help a single addict, prevent a single child from trying and perhaps dying from heroin. Besides, the lines between countries that are supply countries, demand countries, and transit countries are increasingly blurred. Drugs are every nation's problem, and every nation must act to fight them on the streets, around the kitchen table, and around the world.

This is the commitment of the United States. Year after year, our administration has provided the largest antidrug budgets in history. Our request next year exceeds \$17 billion, nearly 6 billion of which will be devoted to demand reduction. Our comprehensive national drug control strategy aims to cut American drug use and

access by half over the next 10 years, through strengthened law enforcement, tougher interdiction, improved treatment, and expanded prevention efforts. We are determined to build the drug-free America and to join with others to combat drugs around the world.

We believe attitudes drive actions. Therefore, we wage first the battle in the minds of our young people. Working with Congress and the private sector, the United States has launched a major antidrug youth media campaign. Now, when our children turn on the television, surf the Internet, or listen to the radio, they will get the powerful message that drugs are wrong and can kill them.

I will be asking Congress to extend this program through 2002. With congressional support and matching dollars from the private sector, we will commit to a 5-year, \$2 billion public-private partnership to teach our children to stay off drugs.

Other nations, including Mexico, Venezuela, and Brazil, are launching similar campaigns. I had the pleasure of talking with the President of Brazil about this at some length yesterday. I hope all our nations can work together to spread the word to children all around the world: Drugs destroy young lives; don't let them destroy yours.

The United States is also working to create a virtual university for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, using modern technology to share knowledge and experience across national borders. We will launch this effort next month in New Mexico, with an international training course on reducing drug demand. Government officials and other professionals from Mexico, El Salvador, and Honduras will work with experts on drug abuse and gang prevention from the U.S. The course will be linked via satellite to the U.S. Information Agency's WORLDNET system, so that anyone with access to WORLDNET can tune in.

Our National Institute for Drug Abuse in the United States, which funds 85 percent of global

research on drugs, will post on the Internet live videotapes of its drug prevention and treatment workshops. This means that anyone, anywhere, with access to a computer and modem—a parent whose child is addicted to drugs, a doctor trying to help, a researcher looking for a cure—anyone will be able to obtain the latest, most advanced medical knowledge on drugs.

Such sharing of information, experience, and ideas is more important than ever, and that is why I am especially pleased to announce the establishment of an international drug fellowship program that will enable professionals from all around the world to come to the United States and work with our drug-fighting agencies. The focus will be on the priorities of this special session: demand reductions, stimulants, precursors, money laundering, judicial cooperation, alternative development, and eradication of illicit crops. These fellowships will help all of us. It will help our nations to learn from one another while building a global force of skilled and experienced drug crusaders.

Together we must extend the long arm of the law and the hand of compassion to match the global reach of this problem. Let us leave here determined to act together in a spirit of trust and respect, at home and abroad, against demand and supply, using all the tools at our disposal to win the global fight against drugs and build a safe and healthy 21st century for our children.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the Assembly Hall. In his remarks, he referred to U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan; U.N. General Assembly President Hennady Udovenko; Pino Arlacchi, Executive Director, U.N. Drug Control Programme; President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico; and President Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.