

**SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY WELCOMES PRIME MINISTER
GORDON BROWN TO JFK LIBRARY**

April 18, 2008

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Thank you, Paul Kirk, for that generous introduction. Paul does an excellent job as Chairman of the Library Foundation. All the Kennedys love Paul. It's a wonderful memorial to Jack, and we're very grateful for everything Paul's done so well for the Library and our family.

It's a great honor and privilege today for me to welcome Prime Minister Gordon Brown and his extraordinary wife Sarah to the Library. For more than a decade, Vicki and I have enjoyed a wonderful friendship with both of them.

We've come to know them both well during their annual summer visits to Cape Cod. I know the Prime Minister plays a mean game of tennis. And if my sailboat Mya could speak, I'm sure she'd be delighted to tell us that the steady hand at the helm in those visits is now at the helm of Great Britain.

Gordon was generous in inviting me to deliver a lecture on social justice at the Institute in London bearing the name of a leading member of the Labour Party in Britain, John Smith, in November 2000. He honored me recently by inviting me to lunch in London with his two incredible sons, John and Fraser!

I was also very touched to read his eloquent chapter on Robert Kennedy in his book on "Courage" published last year about world leaders with the special ability to inspire all humanity. Our planet certainly needs more of them today, and we're honored to have the Prime Minister here now as a world leader in his own right.

All of us are very proud of the remarkable ties of history and heritage that bind the United States and Great Britain. Our ties are strong, deep and enduring, and in these troubled times they surely offer the best hope for a better and more peaceful planet in the years ahead.

That warm relationship is based on profound mutual respect, and a genuine commitment to the fundamental principles and ideals we share. Our common goal is to advance the cause of freedom and the basic human rights of all peoples everywhere. Our mutual vision of the world is a future of lasting peace and prosperity, in which all people have the opportunity they deserve to fulfill their dreams.

In his Inaugural Address 47 years ago, President Kennedy challenged Americans to "ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country." Prime Minister Brown has taken those words to heart in his long and impressive service

to the people of Great Britain.

He was born in Scotland, and at the age of 16, he was one of the youngest students to attend Edinburgh University. He became the youngest rector of the University in its history, and went on to earn his Ph.D. in History there, with a thesis on “The Labour Party and political change in Scotland in the years after the First World War.” He spent four years as a lecturer on politics at Glasgow College of Technology, three years as a journalist for Scottish television, and was elected to Parliament in 1983, where he has served the people of the United Kingdom with extraordinary skill, distinction, and dedication ever since.

He became the powerful Chancellor of the Exchequer under Prime Minister Blair, and presided over the longest-ever period of growth in the history of his country. He was so highly skilled and successful that he was asked to stay in that position for ten years -- the longest anyone has held that office in nearly two centuries.

As Prime Minister today, he is deeply committed to improving the lives of all the people of the UK. He has persuasively argued that a central mission in dealing with the new global economy is to provide genuine educational opportunities for all his people.

In his view, every person in the UK – every person – must be able to deal individually with globalization.

He has joined actions to his words. He is passionate about eliminating child poverty, so that every child in the UK has an equal start in life. At a time when our own efforts to reduce child poverty have lagged, the UK has aggressively implemented innovative policies that have lifted almost two million children out of poverty, and he is committed to ending poverty in the UK by 2010.

Prime Minister Brown understands that children represent the future of his nation. He’s been a driving force behind Britain’s efforts to ensure that all three and four year olds will have early education, and he’s personally committed to raising Britain’s minimum wage.

On Northern Ireland as well, he’s an important and indispensable ally in the ongoing effort to maintain and build on historic gains of peace and reconciliation in recent years.

Prime Minister Brown’s remarkable ability to advance the causes that our nation cares so deeply about as well reflects his extraordinary leadership and vision for a better world. He refuses to back down from tough, complicated issues, and he refuses to abandon people who suffer from great hardship and oppression.

He understands the reality and severity of the threat of global inequality. In his heart and soul, he believes we have the knowledge, the ability, and the technology to end poverty in today’s world, if we have the moral and political will to do so.

He has never hesitated to act on these beliefs, and it's made him a world leader in reducing poverty. At the G-8 Summit of major industrialized countries in 2005, he negotiated a landmark commitment to seek the eradication of poverty for the world's poorest countries. By next year, Great Britain will become the largest donor to the World Bank's lending program for those countries.

The Prime Minister has also worked skillfully to eradicate disease around the globe. His commitment to minimizing the suffering and death caused by HIV and AIDS is matched by few. Last week, Britain announced it will make a huge contribution to the global battle against malaria by providing one-sixth of the mosquito netting needed to meet the current worldwide shortage. His initiative is a major contribution to one of the defining moral challenges of our age -- the battle against epidemics in the developing world. Hopefully, inspired by this example, America will renew and strengthen our own commitment to the international program that provides urgently needed worldwide assistance to combat AIDS, TB, and malaria.

He has also been a strong supporter of the food aid program sponsored by former Senators George McGovern and Bob Dole, which provides about \$100 million annually in international food aid to schools and child nutrition programs in poor countries. He continues to press for innovative ways to end hunger in all developing countries.

To combat the threat of terrorism in Africa, Prime Minister Brown once suggested to me that we could significantly undermine the appeal of radicalism by providing hope and opportunity and upward mobility through a massive investment in education. It would cost, he said, a mere \$10 billion dollars and be divided by the United States, the European Union, and the countries of Asia.

He continues to shine the international spotlight on the genocide in Darfur, and he's been personally and deeply involved in diplomatic efforts to end those brutal crimes against humanity.

On all of these issues and many others, the Prime Minister has fought with great boldness, passion and dedication, and his commitment is making a large difference in the lives of millions of peoples throughout the world.

He often states that the guidance of his parents and the words of Dr. Martin Luther King were among his highest sources of inspiration. As Dr. King said, "Everyone can be great because everyone can serve." These were words that Gordon Brown learned in his youth and he honored and heeded them all his life.

He's one of the finest public servants I know, and I'm honored to call him my friend. He's a leader of great principle, integrity, and courage. He knows how to confront the difficult challenges before us in today's demanding and ever-changing world. It's a very special honor to welcome him to my brother's library, and to introduce him now -- Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

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