

## **The 1960s and Beyond**

President John F. Kennedy was a major proponent of fitness and its health-related benefits for Americans of *all* ages. To reflect this concern, he broadened the scope of the President's Council on Youth Fitness by changing its name to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and appointed Bud Wilkinson as its head. Kennedy also prompted the federal government to become more involved in national fitness promotion and started pilot youth fitness programs. Another major influence during this time was Dr. Ken H. Cooper, widely recognized as the "father of the modern fitness movement." Cooper advocated a new philosophy that focused on disease prevention instead of disease treatment. Early in his career, Cooper stressed the necessity of providing epidemiological data to support the benefits of regular exercise and health. Data from thousands of individuals became the foundation for his "aerobics" concepts. Dr. Cooper's message, programs and ideas established the model from which fitness has proliferated up to modern times.