

*Mar. 21 / Administration of George W. Bush, 2001*

All of you are part of the humanizing mission which is part of the “Great Commission” and the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center, which we will dedicate tomorrow, will bring this message to generations of Americans in this Capital of our Nation. The best way to honor Pope John Paul II, truly one of the great men, is to take his teaching seriously, is to listen to his words and put his words and teachings into action here in America. This is a challenge we must accept.

But you know something about our country? With the right focus and the right leadership, it’s a challenge this Nation will accept, because this is a great land. The greatness of the country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. And again, I want to thank those of you who inspire and teach love and compassion and hope.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:18 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

## Statement on Proposed Legislation To Implement the Faith-Based Initiative

*March 21, 2001*

Earlier this year, I sent to the Congress my agenda to rally America’s armies of compassion to address many of our toughest community challenges.

Government does not have a monopoly on compassion. And while Government cannot be replaced by charities, it should welcome them as partners, not view them as rivals.

Today, on a bipartisan basis, Members of the House and Senate took important first steps to advance this agenda to aid churches, synagogues, mosques, and communities in helping neighbors in need.

I welcome the bipartisan proposals that have been offered in the House by Rep-

resentative J.C. Watts, Representative Tony Hall, and Speaker Dennis Hastert, and in the Senate by Senator Rick Santorum and Senator Joseph Lieberman. These new legislative initiatives demonstrate that momentum continues to build behind my agenda to rally America’s armies of compassion. They represent a bipartisan consensus that Government must support our quiet heroes who are lifting lives and healing neighborhoods one heart and one act of kindness at a time.

I will continue to work in a bipartisan fashion with Congress to help those most in need by encouraging charitable giving and eliminating barriers to charitable works.

## Remarks to the National Newspaper Association Government Affairs Conference

*March 22, 2001*

*The President.* Thanks for coming, and thanks for having me. Diane, I appreciate so very much the invitation. Ken, thank you for escorting me up here. And Jerry, thank you for that kind introduction. I do

remember the Fourth of July parade. I remember how hot it was. And next time, let’s make it a Christmas parade. *[Laughter]* He comes from a great town in a State I love a lot.