

say, “Neighbor, what can I do to help you?” Support your teachers. Get involved in a faith-based program, understanding that faith can change people’s hearts, and by changing people’s hearts, we can change their lives. The way to fight evil is through the gathering momentum of millions of acts of kindness, is to show the world the true face of the American people.

I am so optimistic about this country because I understand our resolve and our unity. I understand our courage. You know, probably the most meaningful event that took place, as far as I’m concerned, right after September—or during the September 11th and afterwards—was Flight 93, when Americans were on a telephone to their wives. They said the Lord’s Prayer. They then said to their wives, “I love you,” and drove an airplane in the ground to save other people’s lives. This notion about us being a shallow, materialistic society went down the tubes with the courageous people on Flight 93.

It leads me to believe that out of these acts of incredible evil will come some great good. If we remain strong, the world will be more peaceful. And here at home, I think we have an opportunity to help change a culture, one that has said, “If it feels good, go ahead and do it,” and

“If you’ve got a problem, blame somebody else.” I see a different culture, one in which we understand we’re all responsible for the actions we take in life, that we’re responsible—that part of a responsibility era means that each mom and dad in America must love their children with all their heart and all their soul. A responsibility era calls us all to help neighbors in need. A responsibility era recognizes the worth in serving a cause greater than self. A responsibility era understands that sacrifice for the good of your fellow human beings is worth it.

Listen, this is a fabulous nation. It’s a fabulous nation not because of our Government. It is a fabulous nation because of the hearts and souls of the American people. And it is such a huge honor to be the President of the United States, of such a great land.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:25 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Minneapolis Hilton and Towers. In his remarks, he referred to Gene Frey, who introduced the President; Patricia A. Harvey, superintendent, Saint Paul Public Schools; and Ron Eibensteiner, chair, Republican Party of Minnesota.

## Remarks to the White House Conference on Preparing Tomorrow’s Teachers

March 5, 2002

Well, thank you all for coming to the White House. I appreciate the focus of this summit more than you can possibly know, because I understand the important role a teacher plays in the lives of our children. I’ve had some firsthand experience with teachers playing a role in my life. I married one, thank goodness. And I appreciate Laura’s leadership on this important subject, and I also appreciate the calm and

steady demeanor she brought in time of crisis for the country. Good job.

I want to thank Lynne Cheney for being here as well. She is a brilliant lady who knows a lot about education reform. Dick and I both married above ourselves. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Rod Paige for being here. You know, when I picked somebody to run the Department of Education, I was

looking for somebody who had actually been in the trenches of the public school system. I really didn't want a theorist; I wanted a practical person. And when I was the Governor of Texas, I noticed that the test scores for children who weren't supposed to learn in Houston, Texas, were improving. And I realized it had to do with a lot of the leadership capacity of our Secretary of Education. I want to thank you, Rod, for being here today, and thank you for taking on the tough jobs.

I appreciate Sandra Feldman. I'm going to say something about her a little later on. Where's Sandra? Hey, Sandra. Thank you for coming.

I want to thank my friend Mark Yudof, who's the head of the University of Minnesota. Where are you, Yudof? Anyway, there he is. Hi, Mark. Charles, how are you? We flew back from Minnesota last night, and Mark is here because he understands that teacher colleges must be relevant in the lives of teachers if we want every child to learn.

I appreciate the Members of Congress who are here. I will tell you that I signed a really good piece of legislation, the "no child will be left behind" legislation. It is historic; it is landmark; it would not have happened without Ted Kennedy. And I appreciate your leadership on that, Senator.

I want to thank Johnny Isakson for being here. Johnny and Ralph Regula, thank you both for coming. Lindsey Graham is here, from South Carolina. Lindsey is going to sponsor a piece of legislation that will allow for teachers to have loan—those who teach in Title I schools or teach in high need areas will be able to forgive up to \$17,500 in college loans. And I appreciate that.

I understand Chairman Boehner was able to listen to Laura but didn't care about hearing me—[laughter]—so he left. And Susan Collins is going to sponsor legislation for the tax relief for teachers' out-of-pocket expenses, which I'll talk about a little bit too.

But we've set a high bar here in Washington as a result of Federal reform. We expect a lot. We expect children to learn. We believe every child can learn, and we want to know whether they are or not. We want to measure. See, we believe that if you hold—if you use the accountability system properly, you can determine whether a curriculum is working or not, whether classroom instruction methodology is working. But as importantly—more importantly—you can detect problems early and secure them before it's too late. Every child matters, and that's exactly what the heart of this legislation is all about.

And as a result of the piece of legislation, we're expecting a lot from our teachers. We really are. We expect them to know their subjects. We want new teachers to be able to pass rigorous examinations, so as to not only earn the confidence of parents and administrators but to increase the professionalism of a very important field. We expect teachers to be able to communicate basic skills, and we expect our teachers to welcome measurement and accountability. We expect them, as always, to be examples to our children, to live a life of good character.

And our teachers have a right to expect certain things from us. First, they have the right to expect every parent to teach their children good manners and respect for the teacher in the classroom. Teachers have the right to expect support for their professional development, and teachers have a right to be treated like the professionals they are.

Laura and I will spend a lot of time in the country honoring the teaching profession, making sure it's clear to Americans from all walks of life that being a teacher is noble and important and an incredibly important part of the future of our country.

This administration is committed to a goal, and I know it's shared by Members of Congress, that we'll have a quality teacher in every classroom in America. We have backed that commitment, thanks to the

work of members of both political parties, with the greatest Federal investment ever in quality teachers and principals. We have made \$3 billion of grants available to States to recruit, to prepare, and to train teachers, a 35 percent increase over last year's budget.

We're focusing much of the teacher training effort on specific needs, like special education or math or science, and one of my passions, early reading. The Reading First program is aimed at making sure every child of every background can read by the third grade. Reading is the new civil right. If you can't read, you can't realize the great American Dream. We want every child to read, and I believe with the right focus, right effort, every child will read in America, and the country is going to be a lot better off for it.

We're going to make sure teachers have the tools necessary to meet the goals we've set. One of the things we're going to do is create a clearinghouse, the most recent and most reliable information, on what works in teaching. We want teachers to be able to access the best information. We want those who are interested in improving their skills to be able to do so at the click of a mouse.

We want to make sure the teachers control their classrooms. And part of the legislation I signed was the teacher protection law, which says that teachers and principals and school professionals can take reasonable actions to maintain order and discipline in the classroom without fear of a Federal lawsuit. I think that if we really are sincere about supporting our teachers, we must understand that a calm classroom, a respectful classroom is a necessary ingredient for a teacher to be able to do his or her job.

We support teachers who sacrifice for their students. I don't know if people realize this, but on the average, teachers deduct up to \$400—now spend \$400 out of their pocket to pay for supplies. My first reaction is, that's not right—it's not that

the fact isn't right—it's not right that they have to do that. But in that they do have to do it, it makes sense to allow a teacher to deduct that expense. If a business person can deduct a meal, a teacher certainly ought to be able to deduct the cost of pencils or a Big Chief tablet.

Teachers need our support. And they need our support in more than just training teachers; they need our support in empowering teachers. And one of the important parts of the bill that I signed divests power out of Washington, gives teachers more flexibility in the classroom and more authority to the local districts.

And that includes the flexibility to spend the money wisely. Districts will be able to use the \$3 billion to meet their specific needs. It may be in recruiting, in recruitment for teachers. It may be to spend money on teacher development. It may be to meet needs by spending more money on teacher salaries. But flexibility is one of the hallmarks of this new piece of legislation, and all wisdom isn't here in Washington. The truth of the matter is, if we really are going to set high standards and expect people to meet them, we've got to trust the local folks to chart the path to excellence. And that's what this bill does. We're not only giving them more responsibility; we're giving them freedom.

The great task of education reform is now to meet these goals and to make sure our teachers have got the capacity to do so, to make sure they're well-trained, to make sure they've got the best science available to them, to make sure we gather information and share it with the professionals in the classroom.

It's also to recognize the worth of teaching. And one of the things Sandra Feldman has done as she's led the American Federation of Teachers is she's brought a lot of class to the teaching profession. I ran into Sandra—she said, "Is there any way we can work together?" I said, "You bet. You bet there is."

And so today it's my honor to announce that the Department of Education and the American Federation of Teachers is going to work together to provide teachers with research-based information, to make sure teachers can do their job. Teachers will be given the opportunity to teach—to understand what works.

Somebody said, "What does it mean, scientific-based education?" My attitude is, does it work? Does the curriculum actually teach a child how to read? Our teachers must know how to teach reading. They must know what works when it comes to teaching reading, if we expect them to meet national goals of every child reading by the third grade. I look forward to hearing the progress that is made between the Department of Education and your organization, Sandra.

As well, we're going to work together to identify programs that encourage and prepare folks to become teachers. I know you've heard of Teach for America or Troops for Teachers. There are all kinds of ways we can attract people into the teacher ranks. And we must be innovative and creative to do so. We're going to need 2.2 million teachers over the next decade in order to make sure America is an educated society. And again, Sandra, thanks for taking a leadership role.

I believe so strongly in education. I know that as we battle the ills of our society, poverty and hopelessness, education is the great beacon and the great hope. I strongly believe that our public school system will continue to meet the challenges of the 21st

century. And I'm not afraid to advocate change where change is needed. And I look forward to joining forces with those who are just as committed as I am to an excellent public school system, as committed as I am to battling a system which oftentimes gives up on children by just simply shuffling them through. That's inadequate for the America that I know, because every child matters and every child counts.

We've laid the groundwork, Senator, for a reform movement that will recognize the worth of each and every individual. And that movement will be fulfilled as we make sure our teachers are given the tools and skills and orderly classrooms necessary to achieve a grand and noble objective for our country.

I want to thank you all for coming for this very important conference. May God bless your work, and may God continue to bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:02 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sandra Feldman, president, American Federation of Teachers; Mark G. Yudof, president, University of Minnesota; and Charles Miller, chairman, board of regents, University of Texas System. He also referred to Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, approved January 8, 2002; and Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103-382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89-10).

## The President's News Conference With President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt *March 5, 2002*

*President Bush* It's my honor to welcome President Mubarak to the White House again. The United States has got a close and meaningful relationship with Egypt.

The relationship is a cornerstone for our policy in the Middle East. I value my friendship with President Mubarak. I always appreciate our candid conversations.