

of American States have signed the Convention (Barbados and Belize signed in the past year), and 25 members deposited their instruments of ratification with the Organization of American States.

Since the last report, the realization that corruption threatens political and economic stability, undermines democracy, and can create conditions ripe for terrorism has focused governments on the need to actively combat this international scourge. The Inter-American Convention contributes to this fight in the Americas and serves as a model to other regions. With the development of an effective evaluation mechanism, the Convention will help establish a new level of transparency and accountability.

This report also outlines the steps taken to establish an evaluation mechanism, known as the Committee of Experts, to oversee implementation of the Convention.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that we continue to combat corruption in our hemisphere and across the globe.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 8.

Remarks at Rufus King International Baccalaureate High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin May 8, 2002

The President. Thank you very much for that warm welcome. I'm—it is an honor for me to be here. I want to thank you for the invitation. As you can tell, I'm going to spend a little time talking about education, and a good place to talk about education and educational excellence is in centers of excellence. Rufus King International High is a center of excellence. So is Clarke Street Elementary, and I appreciate the invitation.

As my friend the Secretary of Education said, he is traveling around the country to spread the word that we passed new legislation in Washington, DC, new education reform. I'm honored to join him here in the great State of Wisconsin as part of his tour. His job is to implement the law as quickly as possible so that no child is left behind, and I want to thank Rod for his hard work.

You know, I picked him because he was a superintendent of schools in Houston, Texas, a tough school district. But he be-

lieved every child could learn; he believed in setting high standards. He worked hard; he made a huge difference on the frontlines of education. So, instead of picking somebody who knows the theory of education or somebody who talks the philosophy of education, I actually picked somebody who did the work of education. And he's doing a great job.

I want to thank your Governor for traveling with me today—it's an honor to be in the presence—who has made public education his top priority. I want to thank Scott Walker, the executive-elect of Milwaukee. I appreciate Dr. Spence Korte, who is the superintendent here in Milwaukee Public Schools. I want to thank Jeff Spence, president of School Board District Two, for being here. Jeff, thanks for coming. Of course, I want to thank your fine principal for inviting me here, Andy Meuler. I want to thank Keith Posley as well, who is the principal at Clarke Street.

I'm fixing to go over to Clarke Street with Keith. I'm looking forward to it. I appreciate you being here.

I want to thank the students for inviting me. I appreciate you giving me the chance to be here. I guess some of you all are about to graduate. [Applause] Don't get carried away. It hasn't happened yet. [Laughter] I noticed the fine teachers at this school were clapping when I said that. They want you paying attention.

And by the way, I do want to thank the teachers—I'm going to spend a little more time on the teachers later—but you know, you can't have a high school as good as this unless you've got great teachers. And I want to thank the great teachers who are here.

The reason I mentioned the class getting ready to graduate is because you're the first high school class to have graduated in a long time in a time of war. You're the first high school class to have graduated with America under attack. And I want to talk a little bit about that today.

You need to know, as citizens—all of us need to know that we're in for a long struggle. We're in for a struggle to defend our freedom and to defend our values. These aren't political values; these aren't the values of one political party or another. These are the values of all Americans, the values that believe that freedom is important and essential: Freedom to worship the way we want to worship, the freedom to speak your mind, except when the President is speaking—[laughter]—the freedom of the press—freedom. And our freedoms are under attack by people who hate America because of our freedoms. And we're not going to let them hurt America again. We will do everything in our power.

This isn't the kind of war that you're used to studying in the textbooks. This is a kind of war we've never seen before. We face a group of international killers—and that's what they are—who are kind of a—hide in caves, and they're not necessarily an organized government. And

they're on the run, and we're going to keep them on the run.

It's just important for you to know—it's important for you to know that this nation does not seek revenge; we seek justice. We seek justice. It's going to take a while, and you need to know that as well. But the good news for America—and the bad news for the enemy—is that I'm patient, and America's patient. I'm determined, and America's determined. We're a united country, particularly when it comes to defending that which we value, that which we hold dearly.

It's important for you all to understand that when our country speaks, that we mean it, and we do what we say. I said, "Either you're with us, or you're against us." I meant that. The good news is, there's a lot of nations with us; a lot of governments understand what is at stake. Civilization is at stake. We cannot allow terrorists to determine the fate of our respective nations.

I also made it clear that we were going to do everything possible to deny sanctuary—that means places to train, places to recruit, places to—places from which to fight—deny sanctuary to the terrorists. And we did that. Thanks to a mighty United States military and our coalition, we threw out a barbaric regime.

See, this is a regime called the Taliban, that said, "If you're a young girl, you don't get to go to school." Think about that. Think about growing up in a country that says, if you happen to be a female, education isn't available to you. And if you expressed yourself, if you said, "Oh, I don't like the way they think; I don't appreciate that piece of public policy," then you go to jail. See, we were dealing with a barbaric regime. You need to know your Government and our allies and our friends went into Afghanistan to free a country. We didn't go to conquer a country; we went in to free a country, because we believe in freedom for every individual, no matter where they live in the world.

America is still not safe from attack, because they still want to get us, they still want to harm America. But we're doing everything in our power to prevent that. You need to know that. You need to know our law enforcement officials are talking at the Federal, State, and local level. We're sharing information. We're running down every lead. We've got a homeland security initiative that works with our brave police and fire and EMS teams all across the country.

No, we're doing everything in our power. But the best way to make sure that we protect innocent lives, the best way to make sure that Americans can go about their life is for you to know that this Government is going to chase down the enemy one by one, no matter how long it takes, and bring them to justice.

Our job is not only to make America safer, but it's to make America better, a better place. Our job is not only to make the world safer, but it's to make the world a better place. That's why if we're tough and strong and diligent when it comes to fighting terror, we have a chance to bring peace in places in the world. I think out of the evil done to America can come some incredible good around the world. I truly believe that. Out of evil can come good. And at home, out of evil can come good as well. And it starts with making sure that every child gets a good education.

And what does that mean? What are the principles of a good education? Well, it starts with having high standards, high expectations. It starts with having people who believe that every single child can learn, that certain children—there's some attitude amongst some that says, "Well, if you're raised this way or if English isn't your first language, you can't learn." That's not the way people think here. That's not the way Andy thinks. That's not the way the teachers think. They believe in high standards and excellence. They know this: They know that if you lower expectations, if you lower the bar, if you believe certain children can't

learn, guess what's going to happen? Certain children won't learn. And that's not satisfactory, as far as I'm concerned.

And by the way, if you believe in high standards and if you believe if you challenge the students that they can achieve, then you also welcome accountability. You say, "We're willing to see whether or not expectations are being met." In other words, if you have high—now, look, I know you don't like to take tests. When I went to high school, I didn't like to take tests. I didn't appreciate it one bit. [Laughter] But—don't get carried away. But I've grown. I understand that how can you possibly tell whether standards are being met or whether expectations are being met if you don't test, if you don't hold people accountable?

And so a competent principal like Andy, he welcomes accountability, because he believes every child can learn. The State of Wisconsin must welcome accountability in grades three through eight as well in order to achieve educational excellence.

We've got to trust the local people. We've got to trust the Andys, the teachers here. We've got to trust the Keiths, the principals all across—the parents. Listen, one size doesn't fit all. We don't want all power on how to run the schools in Washington, DC. It would be a classic mistake; it would be a huge mistake. All wisdom isn't in Washington. As a matter of fact, the best wisdom for educating the children of Wisconsin is right here in Wisconsin.

And so the new bill we passed says we trust local people. We want to empower the people of Wisconsin to make the right decisions. We want to empower the principals and provide as much flexibility at the local level as possible. One size doesn't fit all. You've got to trust the local folks to chart the path to excellence for every single child.

As well, in order to make sure that we meet our goals, to meet high expectations, we've got to make sure our teachers are

well-prepared, well-trained, they've got power in their classrooms. And that's one of the things about this bill that I want to spend some time talking about.

First, I'm proud to be in the presence of Alexis Ludewig, the Teacher of the Year for the State of Wisconsin. I want to thank you for being here, Alexis—St. Germaine Elementary. It was my honor to welcome Alexis and Teachers of the Year from every State in the Union to the White House the other day. It was a special moment for me, and it was an exciting time to really be able to thank teachers.

Teaching is such a noble profession. It's an important part of making sure that no child is left behind. So, for those of you who are interested in how to—if you're thinking about a career, about how to best serve your community and serve yourself by helping other people, think about becoming a teacher. I was told that over 85 percent of you are going to go to college; that's a lot. That is fantastic news. Think about becoming a teacher.

I'm going over to Clarke; I'm going to see, I hope, Sherrion Perkins, who had received Milwaukee's Excellence in Education Award in December. She's a reading teacher. You know what makes her special—is that, one, she wants to use curriculum that works. She doesn't want—she wants to discard—[*applause*]
—she understands the science of reading. She also believes every child can learn. That's her attitude. That's what makes her a fine teacher.

And then, here, of course, you've got Donna Cassillo, who teaches—where's Donna? *Adonde está*, Donna? *Adonde*? Oh yes, right, good to see you, Donna. Thank you very much. *La doctor, la doctor*, thank you very much. I appreciate you both. I appreciate—okay—[*laughter*]
—*silencio*.
[*Laughter*]

So here's the deal. How do we make sure that teachers are well-trained, well-equipped, well-prepared? That's the question we've got to ask. And so we spent—hold on. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Not a bad answer. "More money," he said. It's exactly what we did in the 2002 budget. We spent 3 billion more dollars on teacher recruitment, teacher training, teacher preparedness. And that's important.

The way you recruit teachers is for people in our communities to remind would-be teachers the importance of the profession. That's what teachers can be doing now in their classrooms. I know you're doing that by being great role models.

Laura, the First Lady, my wife, who I love dearly, is going to spend a lot of time recruiting—[*applause*]. I admit it, proudly so; I do love her a lot. She's a fabulous, fabulous First Lady who is going to spend time reminding people that classroom teachers, people in the classroom, are incredibly important for America.

We've got to make sure that teachers are properly trained, and we've got to admit that sometimes our teacher colleges don't train teachers well enough. And therefore, we have to retrain teachers, retrain teachers on curriculum that works, make sure teachers are able to match their hearts with skill in the classrooms. We want to make sure that new teachers are prepared to teach, and therefore, they need to pass an exam in their course—new teachers, upon graduation, must be able to show—pass an exam in their specialty. I think that's important. Particularly for teachers who are now in the classroom, who view their profession—rightly so—as professionals, you want to make sure that others joining your ranks, upon certification, are able to pass an exam in the course in which they're supposed to be teaching. They're supposed to have subject matter—supposed to understand the subject matter.

One of the things in the new bill that's important for teachers to know is that there's what's called the Teacher Protection Act. It says that teachers and principals and school board members can take reasonable

actions to maintain order and discipline in the classroom without the fear of being sued. And that's good law, and that's important law. The teacher must be able to control his or her classroom in order to be able to impart knowledge. I don't like it when frivolous lawsuits disrupt quality education, and I'm proud of this part of the bill. I worked on it, campaigned on it, and I really think it's going to make a big difference for the professionals who are in the classroom.

I also—if you're someone who has borrowed money to go to college and you want to teach math or science or special education in what they call a low-income area, you should be allowed to forgive up to \$17,500 of your college debt. In other words, we're going to use the ability to forgive debt to encourage teaching.

But the key thing for teachers with this pot of money out there is for States to have the flexibility to meet the needs of the teachers and the teaching profession, whether it be to recruit or pay or retention bonuses or teacher development. It's not up to the Federal Government; it's up to the States and local school boards to make that decision.

So we've got the ingredients for success in education. I truly believe it. As Rod mentioned, this is a bipartisan bill. That means that both Republicans and Democrats worked on it. It's not a party bill; it's not a bill—it's a bill that's good for America. It's a bill that sets a framework for change and excellence. It's a bill that says success is the only thing that we expect in America. And where we find failure, we must challenge failure. It's unacceptable—just unacceptable—to have children trapped in schools that are mediocre, that won't change, that won't teach, because we have high expectations in America and high hopes.

No, we're fighting evil around the world. And one way to fight it here at home is to make sure every child gets a good education. And another way to fight it, and

I want you all to listen carefully, for those of you who are wondering about America and what—our worth and what this country is all about: If you want to fight evil, do some good. You see, if you want to fight evil, love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself. The great strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens.

We have this kind of materialistic world—it must have seemed that way to the enemy. When they hit us, they must have said, "This country is so self-absorbed, so selfish, so materialistic, so self-centered that it would never respond—maybe file a lawsuit or two, but never respond." And they were mistaken, because that's not what we're made out of. On the one hand, we're tough. On the other hand, we're compassionate. On the one hand, we will do what it takes to defend liberty, as I mentioned. But on the other hand, we can show the world what we're made out of by loving a neighbor.

If you're interested in serving your country, go to your church or synagogue or mosque; start a program that loves a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself. Why don't you go to the Boys and Girls Club and help mentor a child after school? Why don't you walk across the street and tell a neighbor who may be a shut-in that you love them and ask them what you can do to help them? It's these acts of kindness that help define the soul of America.

I met a young lady today at the airport named Tammy Krohn—where are you, Tammy? There she is, Tammy Krohn. Tammy Krohn is an AmeriCorps volunteer. Tammy Krohn has said, "What can I do to help my country? What can I possibly do to make a difference in the lives of my fellow citizens?" She is a resident elementary school teacher for children with special needs. She trained a golden retriever that will serve someone with physical disabilities. Oh, some say, "Well, you know, that's not that big a deal." It's a big deal to the person she's helping. You

see, America changes, America becomes a better place one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. And what Tammy knows is that one person can't do everything, but one person can make an enormous difference in the lives of somebody who needs help.

And that's my call today. To those of you who live—are going to college—you got a great education here, you're going to go to college, I just want you to remember that if you're interested in fighting evil, if you're interested in making this Nation as strong as it possibly can be, help some-

body in need. Take time out of your day, take time out of your life to be a part of the vast army of compassion which exists all across this great land.

I want you to know you live in the greatest country—the greatest country—on the face of the Earth, and I am proud to be your President. God bless, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. in the school's gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Scott McCallum of Wisconsin.

Remarks at Clarke Street Elementary School in Milwaukee May 8, 2002

The President. I'd like to thank my friend Rod Paige, who is the Secretary of Education. Scott McCallum, your Governor—welcome to your Governor. I want to thank the teachers who are here. Thank you all for teaching.

I'm here because this is a great school that believes every child can learn. It starts with a mindset that says every child can learn. That means there's high expectations, and there's a willingness to make sure every child is learning. I appreciate the curriculum you're using. We went—a reading program that we're quite familiar with in Texas—Rod and I are from Texas—and it's a program that works. You're using a curriculum that has been proven to work, and that's important. I want to thank the parents who are here. You've got a responsibility to make sure your children come to school polite, prepared, ready to learn. Make sure you encourage them to read more than they watch TV. I know that's a monumental task, but it's important. It's important to make sure every child learns to read. And parents have got a lot of responsibility to make sure their children learn to read.

I want to thank the Boys and Girls Clubs that are involved here as well. I appreciate that. We're going to change America one heart and one soul and one conscience at a time. And the Boys and Girls Clubs are an integral part of providing help, particularly in after-school programs. And I want to thank you for being here.

Okay, I've got some questions for you. Ready? How many of you are going to college?

[*The students raised their hands.*]

The President. That's good news. See, that means you've set a goal. In order to meet that goal, you've got to really be good readers, and you've got to study and listen to your teachers.

How many of you read more than you watch TV? [*Laughter*] With all due respect to the cameras, I hope you read more than you watch TV. You learn a lot more. It will help you get ready. See, if you raised your hand and said you wanted to go to college, in order to make sure you help achieve that goal, practice your reading. A good way to do it is to turn your TV sets off and practice.