

from weapons of mass destruction (WMD), including nuclear, radiological, biological, and chemical weapons. This strategy is integral to the National Security Strategy of the United States of America and the National Strategy for Homeland Security. We will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes and terrorists to threaten our Nation and our friends and allies with the world's most destructive weapons.

Weapons of mass destruction pose a grave danger. They could allow America's adversaries to inflict massive harm against our country, our military forces abroad, and our friends and allies. Some rogue states, including several that support terrorism, already possess WMD and are seeking even greater capabilities as tools of coercion. For them, these are weapons of choice intended to deter us from responding to their aggression against our friends in vital regions of interest. For terrorists, WMD would provide the ability to kill large numbers of our people without warning. They would give them the power to murder without conscience on a scale to match their hatred for our country and our values.

Our national strategy to combat WMD is based on three pillars. We will pursue robust counterproliferation policies and capabilities to deter and defend against the use of these weapons. We will strengthen nonproliferation measures to prevent states and terrorists from acquiring WMD. We will increase our preparations to respond effectively to any use of WMD against us or our friends and allies. To succeed, we must use new technologies, strengthen our intelligence capabilities, work even more closely with allies, and establish new partnerships with other key states, including former adversaries.

The need to prevent, deter, defend against, and respond to WMD threats presents our Nation with a difficult and complex challenge. The strategy I have issued today asks much of our Federal Government, our State and local institutions, and indeed, every citizen. The threat is real and the stakes are high. Success against this threat is a requirement of history—one that the United States will meet with confidence and determination.

Remarks at the White House Conference on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania *December 12, 2002*

The President. Thanks a lot for the warm welcome. It's a pleasure to be back in Philadelphia, a city known for the history that was made here and the spirit of compassion which is found here.

I'm honored to spend the time with you all. I thank you for your interest in our country. You love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength. You love your neighbor. And by the works that come from your faith, you are building a more just and generous nation. And we are grateful for your efforts.

I appreciate the tremendous turnout for this White House Conference on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. I think it's a really important conference. Many faiths and many traditions are represented here. Yet we share the same belief that every person in need is a worthy child of God. And we share the same goal: We must bring the hope and healing of faith-based services to more and more Americans.

Government has often been slow to recognize the importance of faith-based and community efforts. That's changing, and

more changes are needed. So today I'm announcing a series of actions to stop the unfair treatment of religious charities by the Federal Government. If a charity is helping the needy, it should not matter if there is a rabbi on the board or a cross or a crescent on the wall or a religious commitment in the charter. The days of discriminating against religious groups just because they are religious are coming to an end.

And I want to thank the members of my Cabinet who have traveled here today, Mel Martinez and Ann Veneman. I appreciate the fact that two fine United States Senators from Pennsylvania are here, Rick Santorum and Arlen Specter. I'm honored they have traveled with me to this fine event. I see Congressman Greenwood is with us as well. Thank you for coming. Anybody else from the Congress? They'll get the message.

I want to thank Mike Brown, who's the Deputy Director of FEMA, who is here. Of course, I want to thank your mayor, John Street. I appreciate the fact—I appreciate the very fact that the mayor understands the importance of encouraging faith-based programs to change the neighborhoods and the lives of the good people of Philadelphia.

I want to thank Cardinal Bevilacqua for coming. Your Eminence, it's good to see you, sir. I want to thank Franklin Graham. I want to thank all the leaders, the generals, the soldiers in the armies of compassion who are here with us today.

Today I landed Air Force One—one of the things I try to do is herald the heroes of our society. I met Gary Hobbs, the USA Freedom Corps greeter, the former NFL player for, of course, the Eagles, who volunteers as a mentor for disadvantaged children. I want to thank Gary for his support and his service.

Every generation of Americans must rise to its own challenges, and the challenges facing this generation are very clear. We must overcome great dangers to our coun-

try, wherever they gather. We're waging a war—we're waging an unrelenting effort in this war to dismantle a terrorist network which has attacked America.

I have no greater obligation than to protect our country and to defend our freedoms. We will confront outlaw regimes which hate our country and arm to threaten civilization, itself. We have that obligation, to recognize the world changed for America on September the 11th, 2001. Before that date, it seemed like we could use the oceans to protect us from gathering dangers. We could be confident that nobody could possibly hurt America—hurt Americans on American soil, and that changed. And therefore, our Government and your leadership must have a realistic assessment of the dangers we have faced and we will face. We have acted, and we will act again, to protect the American people and to keep the peace.

We must also rise to a second challenge facing our country. This great and prosperous land must become a single nation of justice and opportunity. We must continue our advance toward full equality for every citizen, which demands the guarantee of civil rights for all. Any suggestion that the segregated past was acceptable or positive is offensive, and it is wrong.

Recent comments by Senator Lott do not reflect the spirit of our country. He has apologized, and rightly so. Every day our Nation was segregated was a day that America was unfaithful to our founding ideals. And the founding ideals of our Nation and, in fact, the founding ideals of the political party I represent was and remains today the equal dignity and equal rights of every American.

And so the—and this is the principle that guides my administration. We will not, and we must not, rest until every person of every race believes in the promise of America because they see it in their own eyes, with their own eyes, and they live it and feel it in their own lives.

We have work to do. We must be honest about it. We have got a lot of work to do in this country, because there are pockets of despair in America. There are men and women who doubt the American Dream is meant for them. There are people who face the struggles of illness and old age with no one to help them or pray with them. There are men and women who fight every minute of the day against terrible addictions. There are boys with no family but a gang and teenage moms who are abandoned and alone. And then there are the children who wonder if anybody loves them.

We've reformed welfare in America to help many, yet welfare policy will not solve the deepest problems of the spirit. Our economy is growing, yet there are some needs that prosperity can never fill. We arrest and convict dangerous criminals, yet building more prisons is no substitute for responsibility and order in our souls.

No Government policy can put hope in people's hearts or a sense of purpose in people's lives. That is done when someone, some good soul, puts an arm around a neighbor and says, "God loves you, and I love, and you can count on us both." And we find that powerful spirit of compassion in faith-based and community groups across our Nation, people giving shelter to the homeless, providing safety for battered women, giving care and comfort to AIDS victims, bringing companionship to lonely seniors.

I saw that spirit of compassion earlier today when I visited adults and children involved in a program called Amachi at the Bright Hope Baptist Church right here in Philadelphia. In the Amachi program, good people from more than 50 churches in this area serve as mentors to the children of prisoners. They share their time and attention. They just serve as a friend.

Most of us find it difficult to imagine the life of a child who has to go through a prison gate to be hugged by their mom or dad. Yet this is the reality for almost

a million-and-a-half American boys and girls. They face terrible challenges that no child deserves to face. Without guidance, they have a higher risk of failing in school and committing crimes themselves. The volunteers of Amachi, who are with us here today with the children they are loving, are such wonderful givers of guidance and love.

I'm told that "amachi" is a Western African word that means, "Who knows what God has brought us through this child." That attitude is the inspiration of a good mentoring program. No child is a problem or a burden. Every child is a priority and a blessing. That is the message of the Almighty God who cares for these, and that is the message carried to the city by the volunteers of Amachi. And I want thank them for being here today. And I want to thank them for their love. And I want to thank them for their example for other Americans to follow.

Faith-based charities work daily miracles because they have idealistic volunteers. They're guided by moral principles. They know the problems of their own communities, and above all, they recognize the dignity of every citizen and the possibilities of every life. These groups and many good charities that are not specifically religious have the heart to serve others. Yet many lack the resources they need to meet the needs around them.

They deserve the support of the rest of us. They deserve the support of foundations. They deserve the support of corporate America. They deserve the support of individual donors, of church congregations, of synagogues and mosques, and they deserve, when appropriate, the support of the Federal Government.

Faith-based groups will never replace Government when it comes to helping those in need. Yet Government must recognize the power and unique contribution of faith-based groups in every part of our country. And when the Federal Government gives contracts to private groups to provide social services, religious groups

should have an equal chance to compete. When decisions are made on public funding, we should not focus on the religion you practice; we should focus on the results you deliver.

The Amachi program receives 38 percent of its funding from the Federal Government. My administration has been working for nearly 2 years to encourage this kind of support to good faith-based programs. And we're making some progress. The Department of Housing and Urban Development, run by Mel—we've changed regulations in eight programs which cover over \$8 billion in grants to encourage competition that includes faith-based groups. We've opened up more than \$1 billion in after-school programs to competition, including faith-based groups. We're reaching out to grassroots community groups and helping them learn the complicated process of grantmaking. I see a lot of heads nodding when it comes to complicated process. [Laughter]

Yet there's a lot to do. In Government, we're still fighting old attitudes, habits, and rules that discriminate against religious groups for no good purpose. In Iowa, for example, the Victory Center Rescue Mission was told to return grant money to the Government because the mission's board of directors was not secular enough. The St. Francis House Homeless Shelter in South Dakota was denied a grant because voluntary prayers were offered before meals. A few years ago in New York, the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty was discouraged from even applying for Federal funds because it had the word "Jewish" in its name.

These are examples of a larger pattern, a pattern of discrimination. And this discrimination shows a fundamental misunderstanding of the law. I recognize that Government has no business endorsing a religious creed or directly funding religious worship or religious teaching. That is not the business of the Government. Yet Government can and should support social

services provided by religious people, as long as those services go to anyone in need, regardless of their faith. And when Government gives that support, charities and faith-based programs should not be forced to change their character or compromise their mission.

And I don't intend to compromise either. I have worked for a Faith-Based Initiative to rally and encourage the armies of compassion. I will continue to work with Congress on this agenda. But the needs of our country are urgent, and as President, I have an authority I intend to use. Many acts of discrimination against faith-based groups are committed by executive branch agencies. And as the leader of the executive branch, I'm going to make some changes, effective today.

First, in a few minutes—you'll be happy to hear—[laughter]—I am going to sign an Executive order directing all Federal agencies to follow the principle of equal treatment in rewarding social service grants. Every person in every Government agency will know where the President stands, and every person will have the responsibility to ensure a level playing field for faith-based organizations in Federal programs. No funds will be used to directly support inherently religious activities; yet no organization that qualifies for funds will ever be forced to change its identity.

And secondly, I have directed specific action in several Federal agencies with a history of discrimination against faith-based groups. FEMA will revise its policy on emergency relief so that religious nonprofit groups can qualify for assistance after disasters like hurricanes and earthquakes. HUD and HHS, who provide so much grant money to communities across America, will revise their regulations to reflect the principle of nondiscrimination.

In addition, we're issuing a guidebook which you've received. The book explains in plain English—[laughter]—how faith-based groups can qualify for Government grants. It gives guidance on what you can

and cannot do with taxpayers' money. We're going to distribute this guidebook widely. We will continue to hold regional conferences like this one all around the United States of America. The rules for dealing with the Government are clear, and we want more and more faith-based charities to become partners in our efforts, our unyielding efforts to change America one heart, one conscience, one soul at a time.

Through all these actions, I hope that every faith-based group in America, the social entrepreneurs of America, understand that this Government respects your work, and we respect the motivation behind your work. We do not want you to become carbon copies of public programs. We want you to follow your heart. We want you to follow the Word. We want you to do the works of kindness and mercy you are called upon to do. [Applause] Thank you.

For too long—for too long, some in Government believed there was no room for faith in the public square.

Audience members. Preach on, brother!

The President. I guess they've forgotten the history of this great country. People of faith led the struggle against slavery. People of faith fought against child labor. People of faith worked for women's equality and civil rights. Every expansion of justice in American history received inspiration from men and women of moral conviction and religious belief. And in America today, people of faith are waging a determined campaign against need and suffering.

When Government discriminates against religious groups, it is not the groups that suffer most. The loss comes to the hungry who don't get fed, to the addicts who don't get help, to the children who drift toward self-destruction. For the sake of so many brothers and sisters in needs, we must and we will support the armies of compassion in America.

The steps we take today will help clear away a legacy of discrimination against faith-based charities. In the new year, I will

announce further initiatives to help community groups that serve their neighbors.

Our Nation needs more mentors, particularly mentors for children whose mom or dad is in prison. Our Nation needs more centers to treat addiction. Our Nation must recognize that if we can change a heart, we're more than likely to change someone's habits and addiction on drugs and alcohol. Instead of building towering bureaucracies, Government should be finding new and creative ways to support local efforts.

I call this approach compassionate conservatism. And in my State of the Union Message, I will ask members of both political parties to move forward with me on this vision. By promoting the compassion of our people, by promoting the great strength of America, we will bring new hope to neighborhoods all across this land.

You know something about America? We meet every challenge that faces our country. That's why I'm so optimistic about our future. And we will answer the call of our times. We will defend our freedoms, and we will lead the world toward peace. And we will unite America behind the great goals of justice and compassion.

In the work of compassion, it is not the people in Government who are the experts; the people in this room are the experts. The people in this room are helping lead America to a better day. You just need to know that. And you need to know that I am incredibly grateful for what you do. There is a saying: Nobody can teach you how to be a good servant of God; you have to learn it on the job. And you are doing that job so incredibly well.

Audience member. And you are, too!

The President. I appreciate your commitment—I appreciate your commitment. I appreciate your service. I appreciate your love.

And now I'm proud to sign this Executive order providing equal treatment for faith-based charities all across the greatest land on the face of the Earth, the United States of America. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Downtown Marriott Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua, Archbishop of Philadelphia; and Franklin Graham, chairman and chief executive officer, Samaritan's

Purse. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. The Executive order on equal protection of the laws for faith-based and community organizations is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Announcing the Appointment of Stephen Friedman as Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and Director of the National Economic Council
December 12, 2002

The President. Good afternoon. I'm pleased to introduce the newest member of my economic team, Mr. Steve Friedman. Welcome, Steve. I also want to welcome Barbara and Susie and Caroline and David and Sam. We're glad you all are here, and thank you for your sacrifice.

Steve Friedman has spent a career at the center of American enterprise and finance and job creation. He's an innovative economic thinker, a proven manager, and he's a business leader of national standing. He has served the country as a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and as Chairman of a task force on modernizing financial management at the Pentagon. Steve is a graduate of Cornell University, and he holds a law degree from Columbia University and serves as chairman emeritus of that university's board.

I'm delighted that Steve will be joining the White House staff as Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and Director of the National Economic Council.

He replaces a dear friend, Larry Lindsey. I appreciate so very much Larry's service to our country. He has a distinguished career here in the White House. He's earned the respect of the President and everybody who has worked with him.

I selected Steve for his wide experience and steady and sound judgment. He understands the free enterprise system. He

knows how the economy works. And he shares my objectives for stronger economic growth, high standards of corporate integrity, more small businesses across our Nation, and greater trade across the world.

I will work with Steve and others on a growth-and-jobs package that we will present to the new Congress. In order to continue our economic recovery, we will propose further steps to add new jobs, reduce the burden on our taxpayers, and to strengthen investor confidence. Our economy is strong, and we're going to make it even stronger. It's important work, and Steve Friedman will be a key member of our team. And I'm pleased to welcome him to full-time public service.

Thank you very much, Steve. Appreciate it.

[*At this point, Director Friedman made brief remarks.*]

The President. You're welcome. I'm glad you're here. Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:05 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Director Friedman's wife, Barbara, and their children Susie, Caroline, David, and Sam. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Director Friedman.