

feeling about our strengths and our flaws, our successes and our needs.

The Pope reminds us that while freedom defines our Nation, responsibility must define our lives. He challenges us to live up to our aspirations, to be a fair and just society where all are welcomed, all are valued, and all are protected. And he is never more eloquent than when he speaks for a culture of life.

The culture of life is a welcoming culture, never excluding, never dividing, never despairing, and always affirming the goodness of life in all its seasons. In the culture of life we must make room for the stranger. We must comfort the sick. We must care for the aged. We must welcome the immigrant. We must teach our children to be gentle with one another. We must defend in love the innocent child waiting to be born.

The center we dedicate today celebrates the Pope's message, its comfort, and its challenge. This place stands for the dignity of the human person, the value of every life, and the splendor of truth. And above all, it stands, in the Pope's words, for the "joy of faith in a troubled world."

I'm grateful that Pope John Paul II chose Washington as the site of this center. It brings honor, and it fills a need. We are thankful for the message. We are also thankful for the messenger, for his personal warmth and prophetic strength, for his good humor and his bracing honesty, for his spiritual and intellectual gifts, for his moral courage, tested against tyranny and against our own complacency.

Always, the Pope points us to the things that last and the love that saves. We thank God for this rare man, a servant of God and a hero of history. And I thank all of you for building this center of conscience and reflection in our Nation's Capital.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:39 p.m. on the Catholic University campus. In his remarks, he referred to his mother, Barbara Bush; Adam Cardinal Maida, archbishop of Detroit; Edmund Cardinal Szocka, president, Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State; and Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, archbishop of Washington.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Vice Premier Qian Qichen of China and an Exchange With Reporters

March 22, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome our distinguished guest from China. China is a great country. China has got vast potential, and we've got common interests in China. And I look forward to discussing our interests. Our relationship, of course, will be a complex relationship; there will be areas where we can find agreement, such as trade. There will be some areas where we have some disagreements.

I look forward to committing to this distinguished leader that any disagreements we will have, we will conduct ourselves with mutual respect. I will be firm, and I suspect he will be firm, in our opinions, but we will do so in a respectful way. It is in our Nation's best interests that we have good relations with China.

And before I introduce our distinguished guest, I do want to say how much I'm looking forward to going to China. I'll be going next fall; the Government has invited me to go to Beijing. I accept the invitation. We'll work out the arrangements, but I'm really looking forward to it.

As a young man, I visited my mother and dad in China in 1975, and I look forward to my return. I can't wait to see the change, the contrast between when I was a younger fellow and now, kind of an older guy. [*Laughter*] But I'm looking forward to coming to your country, sir.

Welcome.

Vice Premier Qian. I fully agree to what President Bush just said. Indeed, China and the United States are major countries. To maintain friendly relations and cooperation between China and the United States is in the interest of Asia, the Pacific region, and the world at large.

Where we have shared interests, we can advance our relationship forward. Where we disagree, we can have very good exchange of views. Some issues can be approached in the spirit of seeking common ground, while shelving the differences.

I'm sure ways can be found to solve all the problems. I view my visit as a very successful one, because in the exchange of letters, President Jiang and President Bush already reached common consensus, which has laid a solid foundation for the growth of our relationship in the new century.

We are looking forward to welcoming President Bush in China in the coming fall.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

Gao Zhan/Taiwan

Q. What do you have to say, sir, to your visitor about the detention of an American University professor and, until recently, her husband and son, who is an American citizen? And secondly, are you inclined to allow the sale of destroyers to Taiwan?

President Bush. I will echo the sentiments that the Secretary of State said today about the fact that a U.S. citizen was detained without any notification. I look forward to discussing this with our honorable guest and will do so.

We have obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act, and we'll honor those obligations. No decision has been made yet as to the sale of weapons to Taiwan.

One of our guests from the Chinese press.

President's Upcoming Visit to China

Q. Mr. President, what are your expectations for your forthcoming trip, October, to Shanghai and Beijing?

President Bush. I look forward to seeing the modernization that has taken place. I look forward to seeing the beautiful countryside that I remember so well.

But most of all, I look forward to getting to know the leaders of China. I think the best thing I can do is to—the best thing our delegation will do is to be able to sit down, face to face, and have an honest dialog.

People will find that I'm a straightforward person, that I represent my country's interests in a very straightforward way, but I will do so with respect.

Q. Mr. President, is there anything that China can say or do that would influence your decision about which weapons to sell Taiwan?

President Bush. This meeting will give me a chance to confirm the fact that I will

honor our obligations under the Taiwan relations law. I look forward to explaining that as clearly as I can to our distinguished guest. If he cares to bring up the subject and wishes to make a case, I will be glad to listen, but no decision has been made yet. And I'll do what I think is in the best interests of our relationships and in the best interests of conforming to obligations we have.

Q. Mr. President, may I speak in Chinese?

President Bush. Are you with the Chinese press, because your English is perfect.

Q. Yes.

President Bush. You speak better English than I do. [*Laughter*]

Human Rights/Former President Bush

[*At this point, the journalist spoke several words in Chinese and then resumed in English.*]

Q. —about the gathering outside of the Falun Gong. The State Department has decided to sponsor a resolution to condemn the human rights. And for the past few years it has been failed. And I just wonder, Mr. President, what are you going to try to tell the Chinese side how to improve their human rights?

And my second question is regarding—the Chinese seem very warm to your father; they come, delegation after delegation, visiting your father. Are you going to be taught by your father regarding your China policy?

President Bush. Well, the Chinese, I'm convinced, like my father because he married well. [*Laughter*] My mother is very well respected in China, as is my dad, because they spent time there, and they befriended a lot of folks who are now leaders.

It will come as no surprise to our Chinese guest that I'm a believer in religious freedom, and I will make a—state it politely and as clearly as I can that ours is a nation that respects religious freedom; ours is a nation that honors religious freedom; and that our relationship will move forward, but it will certainly be a lot easier to move forward in a constructive way when our people with whom we conduct our affairs honor religious freedom within their borders.

Q. Thank you.

President Bush. I'd like to thank the press for not violating the beeper policy. [*Laughter*]

Q. We didn't want to get Gordon [Assistant Press Secretary Johndroe] in trouble again. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Gordon became an international figure. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:03 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to scholar Gao Zhan, an unpaid fellow at American University, who has been detained in China since February 11, and her husband, Xue Donghua, and their 5-year-old son, U.S. citizen Andrew Xue, who were held separately for nearly a month. Vice Premier Qian referred to President Jiang Zemin of China. The Vice Premier spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Proclamation 7417—Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A., 2001

March 22, 2001

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

With the dawn of a new century, America's youth face a world of nearly unlimited possibilities. New advances in technology, medicine, and science offer the potential for great progress. We must ensure that every child has the technical skills needed to pursue success in their respective fields. However, they also require the wisdom and understanding to make sense of an ever-changing world.

As teachers, parents, and citizens, we have a responsibility to pass on more than just academic knowledge to our children. We also need to provide them with the moral strength to see them through turbulent and challenging times. An education that nurtures goodness and kindness gives direction and dignity to the lives of our young people and strengthens our communities. Humanity has long recognized such core and never-changing ethical values as vital to the well-being of a society and its citizenry.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, clearly understood the importance of fostering character. His es-

tablishment of educational, social, and rehabilitative institutions bettered the lives of people both in this country and abroad. As he once said, "All educational efforts are basically meaningless unless built on the solid foundation of good character." Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the Rebbe's birth, but his legacy of teaching that a nation's true greatness is measured by whether it produces citizens of compassion and character remains timeless.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 4, 2001, as Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A., 2001. By teaching children the highest standards of ethical behavior, Americans prepare our next generation of leaders to pursue meaningful lives as members of a decent and caring society.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

George W. Bush

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 26.

Exchange With Reporters During a Tour of the Salvation Army Senior Center in Portland, Maine

March 23, 2001

Expulsion of Russian Diplomats

Q. In response to the fact that the Russians responded in kind—

The President. They can make whatever decisions they deem necessary. Our country took the right course of action.

Q. What message does it send, though, do you think?

The President. It says that we will be firm and consistent in our foreign policy.

[*The tour continued.*]