

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:35 p.m. in the Daytona Beach Jet Center Corporate Hangar at Daytona Beach International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; William C. France, chairman and chief executive officer, International Speedway Corp. and NASCAR, and his wife, Betty Jane; Teresa Earnhardt, widow of NASCAR champion Dale Earnhardt; and Speaker Tom Feeney, Florida House of Representatives.

### Remarks to Senior Corps Volunteers in Daytona Beach

January 31, 2002

**The President.** Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Well, it's good to be here with my little brother. [Laughter] Last night when we arrived, I had the honor of saying hello to, it looked like, a couple thousand citizens there. And I said I always like to go to States that have got a really good Governor. [Laughter] And I did.

I want all the moms here to know that any success I've had, any success Jeb has had, is the result of having a strong mother. So my advice to the young in Florida is, always listen to your mother. [Laughter]

Jeb and I know one thing, and that is that America can change, one heart, one soul at a time. We understand that a compassionate tomorrow and a safe tomorrow requires Presidents and Governors and mayors and county officials to rally the true strength of the country, which is our people.

You know, the enemy hit us the other day, a while ago. They didn't understand America. They thought we were weak and materialistic and soft. Instead, they have found a patient, determined, compassionate nation that stands in the way of their efforts to spread evil.

In my State of the Union Address the other night, I chose to spend time talking about the spirit of unity in our country. To me, it is one of the most—as I said, I stand in awe of the American people, individually and collectively. I know—I know how strong we are as a nation. And now our job is to take that spirit and extend it for years to come.

I like to describe it this way: Our culture has said, if it feels good, do it. Our dream

or my dream for the country is that we usher in a culture that says, each of us are responsible for the decisions we make in life. We're responsible for loving our children. We are responsible for serving goals greater than ourself, and that means becoming involved in the communities in which we live.

And so we're here today in Volusia County to herald a Senior Corps program that embodies the spirit that I was defining in my speech, a program that recognizes the power of recruiting volunteers to work side by side with police and fire and emergency rescuers to make sure that this county is more secure in its future.

I want to thank Terry White, who is the Florida secretary of elder affairs. I mention the Florida office because we understand at the Federal Government, since I had been a Governor, that sometimes the Federal Government can help, and sometimes it can get in the way. I want to be—I want to have an administration that helps and doesn't thwart the efforts of local people. So I look forward to working with your Governor, and I look forward to working with the cabinet he's put together, to pass power out of Washington to local governments. The government that's closest to the people is that which works the best, as far as we're concerned.

And somebody who understands that is Congressman John Mica, and I want to thank John for being here, as well. I want to say a word about John. One of the—obviously, right after the attack, we realized the Federal Government had a responsibility to make sure our air travel was more secure. And as a result of his leadership and the leadership of others—but John had a major role to play—I was able to sign a good airline security bill that made traffic as secure as it possibly could be.

And thanks to the result of our efforts, Brother was informing me today that people are beginning to travel more, coming back to this great destination State called Florida. I'm glad they're traveling more. I hope they travel more to Florida. It's good for our economy, and it's good for our Nation when people do that. But John, thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

I also am so glad the chairman of the Corporation for National and Community Service is with us, the former mayor of Indianapolis, Indiana, a man who understands what compassionate conservatism is all about, a guy who did a fabulous job of revitalizing Indianapolis through a faith-based initiative that was strong and powerful and locally derived, and now a man who is in charge of making sure that the initiatives I'm outlining get instituted, and that's Stephen Goldsmith. Thanks for coming, Steve.

And with him is the CEO, Les Lenkowski. In my speech, I talked about making sure AmeriCorps and Senior Corps expand. Les's job is to follow through. I'm one of these accountability guys. I understand, sometimes in the political process, all you hear are words. I like to back them up with action. I like it to be known that——

**Audience member.** You bet!

**The President.** You bet. [*Laughter*] I like to know that it's one thing to lay it out; it's another thing to follow up. I'm a followup guy. Les understands that. And so, when we say we're going to have an active effort to recruit, I will be asking Les and John Bridgeland, who is now working for me, head of the USA Freedom Corps, "What are the results? Have we been able to deliver what we said?" And I'm confident we will, particularly since the spirit in this country is so strong. I'm confident—when I stood up in front of the Nation and said, "I ask you to dedicate 2 years of your life, 4,000 hours for the rest of your life, to service for your country"—and I believe America will respond. I truly believe it.

One thing we've got to do is make sure that people understand how to respond. Now, don't get me wrong; I understand there are thousands of Americans who are now volunteering in America. And for that, I am incredibly grateful. I know there are hundreds and thousands of man-hours being given to make sure communities are better off, and we applaud those efforts. What I'm saying is, to those who are already volunteering, "Keep going. We need your help."

And some aren't sure where to go; you see, some aren't sure how to help. And so we set up the USA Freedom Corps. And I want people to understand that if they want to

help, they need to call 1-877-USA-CORPS. If you want to be a part, just call that number, and we will help direct your heart to a program that needs your help. Or if you happen to be an Internet surfer, we've got a Web page, [usafreedomcorps.gov](http://usafreedomcorps.gov)—usafreedomcorps, spelled c-o-r-p-s, .gov. It will give you a chance to find out what we're talking about. It will give you a go-by as to how you can help.

And there are some fantastic programs right here in Volusia County that others ought to recognize, that work. One is Citizens on Patrol. We basically—we, the county and the State, have said there are numerous seniors who have got a lot to offer, people who might be retired but their brains haven't retired and their experience hasn't been retired, so let's figure out how to get them involved in the community. So they've got a program called Citizens on Patrol. More than 200 volunteers put in 51,000 hours in the year 2001 to help serve as eyes and ears of local law enforcement. If a child is missing, they help look. If something is odd, they help notice.

I don't know if you remember, but I talked about, digging into those Al Qaida caves in Afghanistan, we found some of their aspirations in terms of creating harm for America. For example, they targeted some of our cities or some of our infrastructure. Citizens on Patrol here in Volusia County patrol the water treatment plants and water treatment facilities in this county. I was up in Maine the other day, and I was informed that as a result of a collaborative effort with the Coast Guard and the FBI, lobstermen now patrol the coast of Maine, looking for something unusual. Part of having a homeland defense is to have people on alert. And I appreciate this program. So if people in this part of the world want to help be a part of the first defense on homeland security—and that is, help patrol neighborhoods or patrol areas or industrial complexes to make sure nothing unusual is happening—a great program is Citizens on Patrol, right here in Volusia County.

Part of the homeland security initiative that I outlined is to make sure that there is a proper strategy in place for responding to an emergency. That's why we're focusing resources on bioterrorism, airport security, a

better border—better border programs. We've got to understand who's coming in and who's coming out of the country in a better way, it seems like to me. But one of the things we also need to do is to have emergency response strategy. If something were to go wrong, there needs to be a collaborative strategy between city and county and all jurisdictions within that will be able to respond properly.

One of the interesting programs here through Senior Corps and the senior programs in Volusia County is the Community Emergency Response Volunteers, CERV. They have got lists of seniors who they call if there's an impending emergency. They help put kits together to make sure that if there's an emergency, people are well treated. They have been assigned schools to go to if there's an emergency during evacuation.

All this, by the way, is transferable to our war against terror, is to make sure the homeland of the United States is more secure. And so I want to thank the seniors in this county. And the innovative entrepreneurial spirit of convincing people of how to volunteer in a constructive way is so good here.

And America—Americans are asking how you can help. Here's another way to help: to serve your Nation by being a part of an emergency response team. There are retired doctors, retired nurses that can help hospitals; there are retired policemen and firemen that can help fire—there are people that want to help. Here's a good way to help.

And finally, one of the things that—one of the incredible parts of 9/11 is that the Nation understands how important compassion is. I mean, the way I view this is that we're fighting evil, and I don't see any shades of gray. And the best way to fight evil is with acts of kindness. The best way to fight evil is for people to love their neighbor.

People say, "Well, I want to be a part of the war on terror." Okay, go love a child. Find somebody who needs help. One thing we ought to do in the Nation is to find those children whose parents may be in prison and team them up with a mentor, so that that child understand there is at least somebody in our society that says, "I love you."

And there is an important role for seniors, people who understand the importance of

love. And so, there's a Foster Grandparent Program here, as a part of Senior Corps. It's a program that says, if you care for children—and most foster grandparents obviously have had a little experience with raising children—please, we want your help. We want you to serve as a mentor. We want you to provide a part of a hopeful future for a child.

I'm fully aware of the importance of Senior Corps for the future of the country. That's why I'm here, to herald successful programs within the Senior Corps fabric. Our goal is to recruit 100,000 new Senior Corps volunteers—100,000. We've got a Web site. We've got a phone number you can call. Please pass the word. It is an initiative that will help really solidify the spirit of compassion, a responsibility era that's beginning to emerge in our country.

I leave here to go to Atlanta, Georgia, to talk about the need for us to recruit teachers in classrooms. Part of fighting terror is to make sure our children are educated. And we need more teachers, and particularly hard in neighborhoods where some teachers may not want to teach. And so I'm going to herald a great program later on today that's as successful as the Senior Corps program here in Volusia County. Obviously, you can tell that I've got great optimism for the country, a great hope for our future.

My most important job as the President is to protect America, is to make sure that we've got a homeland defense that's well coordinated and active. And even though the enemy thinks they're going to hit us again, you need to know your Federal Government is doing everything we can to stop them.

We are on full alert. Our FBI, for example, has got a new mission, and that is to prevent attack. Oh, they've got their other jobs to do, but their primary focus is, "What can I do, what can I do as an FBI agent, to gather as much intelligence as possible to prevent a possible attack from happening?"

Another way, we've got to make sure we share information with local authorities. When we get a piece of information, I can assure you we'll be on the phone notifying people about the appropriate response. But we're looking, and we're listening, and we're

active. And the enemy knows that they have awakened a mighty giant.

But the best way to make sure we secure our homeland, the best way we make sure that children can grow up in a peaceful world, a world that understands the power and promise of freedom, is to find the enemy where they hide and bring them to justice. And that's exactly what this Nation is going to do.

Oh, I know some of the people around the world are saying, "Well, you know, he can't possibly mean that, now that they've looked like they're successful in Afghanistan. Gosh, don't you think it's about time they just kind of go on home?" No. It's now time to stand for freedom and to make it clear to terrorists and/or nations that are willing to develop weapons of mass destruction that could be used against us that we will not tire and we will not falter.

This great Nation has been given a chance in history to make the world more free, and I promise you we'll seize that opportunity. We'll be wise and deliberate about how we pursue our grand objective, but we'll pursue it.

Time isn't on our side. As these nations develop these sophisticated weapons, they need to know—not how, but our intention is to hold them accountable. And the rest of the world needs to be with us, because these weapons can be pointed at them just as easily at us. And we cannot let terror and evil blackmail the United States or any other freedom-loving country in the world.

I'm proud of our country. I'm proud of the spirit of America. I am proud to be the President of the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth. I said in my speech that one way we'll overcome evil is through the gathering momentum of millions of acts of kindness and decency and compassion. And I'm proud to be in a room of part of that momentum.

May God bless you all, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:42 a.m. at the Volusia County Fire Services Training Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida.

## **Remarks to the Community in Atlanta, Georgia**

*January 31, 2002*

Thank you all very much. Saxby, thanks so very much for your kind words in your introduction. This country is fortunate to have such a good man be the chairman of the Subcommittee on Terrorism and Homeland Defense. It's important that we have good leadership in roles that relate to making sure our land is secure, and the State of Georgia sent a good one up there in Saxby Chambliss.

I'm honored to be in the company of other members of the Georgia delegation. As you know, I'm a proud member of the Republican Party. I'm traveling today with proud members of the Democrat Party, but we're all proud Americans, first and foremost.

I'd like you all to welcome Cynthia McKinney and Congressman John Lewis from Atlanta, Georgia. Thank you all. I appreciate your being here. I got a little Georgia briefing on the way in from the airport from a man who understands this State pretty darn well, a marine—I was about to make a huge mistake and say former marine—[laughter]—and your former Governor, Senator Zell Miller.

I want to thank other locally elected officials for being here, and I particularly want to thank a member of my Cabinet. This man is a man who understands public education. He understands it well. You see, I picked him out of the trenches. I didn't find somebody, somebody who can talk theory to be the Department of Education—head of the Department of Education. I found somebody who has practiced. And when I asked him to join my team, he was the superintendent of the Houston Independent School District, a school district that was committed to make sure there was excellence for every child, and no child—I mean no child—would be left behind. Please welcome the Secretary of Education, Rod Paige.

We are on our way, after this chance for me to tell you about how I think things are going, to Booker T. Washington High School to talk about the need for folks to teach. I'm going to spend a little time at the end of this talk, talking about that. But Rod is here