

The rebuilding herself
with great hope and
great



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The rebirth of South Central Los Angeles a decade after it was torn apart by riots can be an example for a nation still recovering after last fall's terror attacks, President Bush said Monday. Bush told an enthusiastic audience at First AME Church that the unrest had given way to positive change.

" Out of this violence and ugliness came new hope," Bush said. Where burned-out hulks of buildings stood, businesses now thrive, examples of " what is possible in America when people put aside differences," Bush said. Prior to his speech, Bush spoke with community and business leaders who told him " investment in South Central Los Angeles is first and foremost good business policy, and it obviously is good social policy as well." QUICKVOTE Have race relations in the United States improved in the last decade? Yes No View Results CNN NewsPass Video Trio remembers L.

A. riots Sights and sounds of the riots Reliving the L. A. riots The faces of the L. A.

riots MORE STORIES Bush: South Central is example for AmericaEx-police chief: Morale low in Los Angeles forceLos Angeles riot still echoes a decade laterCaught on tape: King beating stirs video revolutionPost-riot reforms bring new challenges to LAPDEXTRA INFORMATION Gallery: A look backBy the numbers: The L. A. riotsKey players: Where are they now? RESOURCES Five years later, wounds from L. A. riots still sting" Ten years after civil unrest that made history, the community is rebuilding herself with great hope and great promise," he said.

Bush then returned to education, one of his favorite topics. " Reading is the new civil right," he told the audience composed primarily of blacks. " If you

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can't read, you can't possibly be educated, and if you are not educated, you can't succeed. " In order to make sure that everybody, and I mean everybody — I don't care how you vote — everybody gets a shot, we've got to make sure everybody gets educated.

" Bush used the church audience to make another pitch for federal funding of faith-based programs in the delivery of services such as health care. " Government can hand out money, but government cannot put hope in people's hearts. It cannot put faith in people's lives," he said. " Faith is a powerful motivator." Although his comments were warmly received, some religious institutions say they do not want to perform such functions out of fear they would distract them from their primary goals. The president said he knows first-hand the impact faith can have on a person's life.

" I'm just a humble sinner who sought redemption," he said. " Preach, Mr. President," one member of the crowd exhorted. Bush then toned down his enthusiasm. " I don't want to get too far," he said laughter.

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