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Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Jacques Chirac of France in Genoa, Italy

July 21, 2001

President Bush. Mr. President, thank you for coming by. I'm looking forward to our discussion. The meetings have been very productive here in Genoa. We've discussed a lot of important issues and agreed upon—had some important agreements, starting with the need to advance trade in the new round of global trade discussions.

We also understand that countries such as France and the United States must assume more responsibility, helping nations help themselves, particularly on the continent of Africa. We had a fantastic meeting last night with some of the continent's leaders. President Chirac was most eloquent about Africa and our responsibilities, and world leaders agreed with him, and I did, too.

And as well, I'm very concerned about the violence. It's a tragic loss of life that occurred. It's also tragic that many police officers have been hurt, men and women who have been trying to protect democratically elected leaders and our necessary right to be able to discuss our common problems.

In Washington, DC, Mr. President, I said as clearly as I could, and I'll say it here again, those who claim to represent the voices of the poor aren't doing so. Those protesters who try to shut down our talks on trade and aid don't represent the poor, as far as I'm concerned.

I appreciate the work of the Italian Government, the mayor of Genoa, the good people of this country for providing a secure atmosphere where the G–8, democratically elected leaders, as well as leaders from Africa, Central America, Asia—leaders who represent the poor of the world could come—the poor of the world, by the way, who spoke very clearly and eloquently about the need for nations such as ours to open up our markets, nations such as ours to help develop education infrastructures, nations such as ours to forgive debt——

President Chirac. And health.

President Bush. ——and health, absolutely, and health. So this has been a very productive meeting. It's been productive because we've met and agreed. It's also very productive because it gives me a chance to continue dialog with a friend such as Jacques Chirac.

People may not remember, but even before I became sworn in as President, in between the election, when it finally ended and my swearing-in, the first world leader I met with was President Chirac. I knew him to be a man of principle. He articulated his principles to me then, and he continues to do so, for which I am most grateful.

So Mr. President, thank you for being here. I'm honored to have you.

President Chirac. *Merci.* I must say that I absolutely share the feelings expressed by President Bush, share as concerns the efficiency of the organization of the summit, the efficiency which has been somewhat overshadowed by the events. But it was, indeed, a very positive summit. And it has enabled us to become aware of the problems of populations of Asia and Africa.

Last night at dinner was very instructive. We have spoken with mainly African leaders who have decided to take greater control over their own destiny, and we have pledged ourselves to support them in their desire for sustainable development.

Obviously, we have all been traumatized by the events. I shall not give any judgment, except to say that the elected leaders of our countries have to consider the problems that have brought tens of thousands of our compatriots, mainly from European countries, to demonstrate—to demonstrate their concern, to demonstrate their wish to change. And my last thoughts will be for the people of Genoa, who have been, indeed, as traumatized as we have by the events in the city.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. President.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:06 p.m. at the Jolly Marina Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Giuseppe Pericu of Genoa. President Chirac spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Proclamation 7456—Parents' Day 2001

July 21, 2001

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Being a parent is the most important job in the world. As we hold a newborn in our arms or embrace an older adopted child, the promise we make in our hearts to love, protect, and nurture our children stays with us and with them forever. We are eternally linked to the children whom we are blessed to parent and to the generations before us who helped shape our lives.

Both mothers and fathers play a vital role in giving children the best possible start in life. As parents, we provide our children with the love and support they need to grow up to be caring individuals and responsible citizens. The care we express and the values we instill help our children achieve their greatest potential and ultimately will determine the future of our Nation.

Unfortunately, children who lack a strong parental presence in their lives can suffer over both the short and the long term. Study after study has demonstrated that children who grow up without both parents in their home are more likely to end up in poverty, drop out of school, become addicted to drugs, have a child out of wedlock, or go to prison. Single-parented children who avoid these unfortunate outcomes will nevertheless miss out on the balance, unity, and stability that a two-parent family can bring.

Recognizing that strong families make a strong America, I have committed my Administration to help parents do better by encouraging the formation and maintenance of loving families. We have proposed several major initiatives designed to promote responsible fatherhood, strengthen families, and make adoption easier and more affordable, so that every child has a better chance of living in a stable and loving home. We also have achieved widespread support for the historic reform of our public education system that will significantly improve our schools. This improvement is founded on the core principles of my education reform agenda, which include: accountability; flexibility; local control; and more choices for parents.

Government bears an important responsibility to provide excellent schools and educational programs that leave no child behind; but Government cannot replace the love and nurturing of committed parents that are essential for a child's well-being. Many community organizations, centers of faith, and schools offer services and programs to help parents improve their child-rearing skills. As we observe Parents' Day, I encourage all Americans to join me in honoring the millions of mothers and fathers, biological and adoptive, foster parents, and stepparents, whose selfless love and hard-working efforts are building better lives for their children and our Nation.

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 and consistent with Public Law 103–362, do hereby proclaim Sunday, July 22, 2001, as Parents' Day. I urge all Americans to express their love, respect, support, and appreciation to their parents, and I call upon citizens to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

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

George W. Bush

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on July 25.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany and an Exchange With Reporters in Genoa

July 21, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to be meeting today with one of America's strongest friends and Allies and one of Europe's strongest and best leaders. I appreciate Gerhard Schroeder's openness, his grasp of