

and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
July 16, 2004.

The President's Radio Address *July 17, 2004*

Good morning. Every day in America, parents struggle to raise their children in a culture that too often glorifies instant gratification and irresponsible behavior. During this time of great change in our Nation, Government must stand with families to help them raise healthy, responsible children.

Yesterday, the Federal Government released its annual report called "America's Children in Brief." This report collects a broad range of statistics that tell us about the promises and challenges facing America's young people. The good news is, is that we have made significant progress during the past decade. Strong families and communities are instilling responsibility and character in our children, and we are seeing encouraging results.

Violent crime among our teenagers has decreased dramatically. From 1993 to 2002, the rate of teens committing violent crimes dropped 78 percent, and the rate of teens becoming victims of violent crimes dropped 74 percent. Among our youth, smoking and illicit drug use have declined. Teen birth rates have fallen to the lowest levels ever recorded, with the greatest progress occurring among African American teenagers.

Studies tell us that children raised in a household with married parents are far less likely to live in poverty, fail at school, or have behavioral problems. Fortunately, after a decades-long downward trend, the percentage of children living with married parents has remained steady since 1995. And through our proposed Healthy Marriages Initiative, my administration is committed to ensuring that more of our chil-

dren grow up in a stable home with a married mother and father.

We are headed in the right direction, but we still have work to do, so my administration is acting to encourage teens to make healthy choices. Although teen drug use has decreased, we can and must do more. We know that random drug testing in schools is effective, and it allows us to identify kids who need help. In my most recent budget, I proposed spending an additional \$23 million for school drug testing. And although teen birth rates have declined, about 3 million of our teenagers contract sexually transmitted diseases each year. So we've requested a doubling of Federal funding for abstinence-only education programs. We have also requested \$25 million for our Character Education Initiative. This program will encourage schools to develop curricula that promote good character and help children develop a sense of responsibility to their community. Today I urge the Congress to act on all these important initiatives.

When parents, schools, and government work together, we can counter the negative influences in today's culture and send the right messages to our children. As yesterday's report shows, we are making progress in changing the culture of America from one that said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we are responsible for the decisions we make in life. The decisions our children make now will affect their health and character for the rest of their lives. And when they make the right choices,

they are preparing themselves to realize the bright future our Nation offers each of them.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:16 a.m. on July 16 in the Cabinet Room at the White

House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 16 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Ricardo Lagos of Chile and an Exchange With Reporters

July 19, 2004

President Bush. We'll answer a couple of questions. First, I'll say something; the President will say something. I'll call upon an American correspondent; he'll call upon a Chilean correspondent; and we'll do this two times.

First, *bienvenidos*. I'm glad you're here, Mr. President. Ricardo Lagos is a very wise man, who is—understands the politics of South America very well and is very worldly, and so I always enjoy visiting with him. He's a man of good advice and sound counsel. And so I'm looking forward to our continued discussions over lunch.

One of the things that has worked well is the free trade agreement with Chile, and we talked about that today. It turns out, Chilean exports to the United States are up, but United States exports to Chile are up as well. And that's a positive development. It's good for the people of Chile, and it's good for the people of the United States. And our relations are strong, and they're important relations.

And so, Mr. President, welcome. I'm glad you're here. I'm looking forward to our continued discussions.

President Lagos. Thank you. Well, let me tell you that I am extremely happy to be here again, to be able to discuss and talk with President Bush about what are the major areas in the region. Also, we were update on the later developments in the Middle East.

And at the same time I think, as President Bush have say, our free trade agreement has been working in the right direction. And we're extremely happy to see that. Later on, we would like also to see what do we have in the next APEC meeting in November and what are the trade discussions in the Doha round next month—next week.

And I will say that so that from the point of the view of the region, President Bush has been able to have a lot of commitments to the region, and we were discussing also our own commitment in Chile with regard to Haiti, what we are doing in the region. And I think that it's very important, as President Bush has told us, in a sense, that the U.S. is going to continue backing, helping the Haitian people. In Spanish?

President Bush. Si.

[At this point, President Lagos spoke in Spanish, and no translation was provided.]

President Bush. Pues, la primera pregunta de el hombre de AP.

President Lagos. I will translate. [Laughter]

Q. Thank you.

President Bush. That would be you.