

A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia and an Exchange With Reporters in Heiligendamm

June 7, 2007

President Bush. Vladimir and I just had a very constructive dialog, particularly about missile defense. He expressed his concerns to me. He is concerned that the missile defense system is not an act that a friend would do. He made some interesting suggestions. As a result of our discussions, we both agreed to have a strategic dialog, a opportunity to share ideas and concerns between our State Department, Defense Department, and military people.

This will be a serious set of strategic discussions. This is a serious issue, and we want to make sure that we all understand each other's positions very clearly. As a result of these conversations, I expect there to be better understanding of the technologies involved and the opportunities to work together.

I told Vladimir we're looking forward to having him up to my folks' place in Maine the beginning of July. And we'll be able to continue our discussions, our bilateral discussions on a variety of issues.

President Putin. I'd like to confirm what the President of the United States has just said—except for one thing. I have not said that friends do not act in this way. [Laughter] We have an understanding as well as common threats, but we have differences. The difference is ways and means in which we can overcome these threats. We considered the proposal by the American side very thoroughly, and we have ideas of our own. I have stated these ideas in a thorough way.

The first proposal is to use the radar station rented by us in Azerbaijan which is entitled Gabala. Yesterday I had a conversation of this matter with the President of Azerbaijan. The existing agreement with Azerbaijan makes it possible for us to do this, and the President of Azerbaijan stressed that he will be only glad to contribute to the cause of global security and stability.

We can do it automatically, in an automatic regime. And in this case, the system which is to be constructed can cover not only part of Europe but the entire Europe without any exception. This will fully exclude the possibility for the missile debris to fall on European states because they will fall in the ocean. This will make it possible for us not to change our stance on targeting our missiles. On the contrary, this will create necessary grounds for common work.

But this work should be multifaceted with the engagement of states concerned in Europe. And we agreed with George that our experts will start doing it as soon as possible. This will make it impossible—unnecessary for us to place our offensive complexes along the borders with Europe. And this will make unnecessary to place the appropriate American complexes in outer space.

But we hope that these consultations will not serve as cover—to cover some unilateral actions, and I have told George about that. Because as soon as a country, for instance, Iran, carries out its first test of its long-range missile, our reconnaissance means and American reconnaissance means will register this immediately. Three to five years will be necessary from the first test until the system is operational. This time is fairly enough to deploy any ABM system. Therefore, no matter how long our talks are going on, we will never be late. The major thing for these negotiations is that they should be viewed and should take into account joint interests in the security area.

I'm grateful to the President of the United States for a constructive dialog today.

President Bush. We'll answer one question apiece. Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters]. Then we got to go to a meeting.

Missile Defense System

Q. President Putin, are you saying now that you do not consider the missile defense issue a serious threat to your country anymore? And were you satisfied with what President Bush presented to you in this meeting?

President Putin. I think that if we work together to overcome the threats we are discussing today and if we take into account the concerns of each other, if we make this work

transparent and if we provide for an equal access to the system, then we'll have—through the management of this system—then we will have no problem. And I'm, of course, satisfied with the spirit of openness in which we discussed this problem today on behalf of President of the United States.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. My question is for both Presidents. In your today's dialog, what was more, constructive things or rather differences? What prevailed?

President Bush. Well, you just heard that, the desire to work together to allay people's fears. There's a lot of people who don't like it when Russia and the United States argue, and it creates tensions. Russia is a great country, and so is the United States. It's much better to work together than it is to create tensions.

Thanks. See you later.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:07 p.m. at the Kempinski Grand Hotel Heiligendamm. President Putin referred to President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan. President Putin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Stem Cell Research Legislation

June 7, 2007

Today the United States House of Representatives, with its vote on the embryonic stem cell bill, chose to discard existing protections on human life. This bill puts scientific research and ethical principle into conflict, rather than supporting a balanced approach that advances scientific and medical frontiers without violating moral principles.

My administration has sought to understand the dilemmas of stem cell research not as a choice between science and ethics but as a challenge to advance medicine while meeting our solemn obligation to defend human life. That is why in 2001, I authorized the first Federal funding for research on embryonic stem cells, under careful safeguards.

This policy encouraged ethical research, while requiring taxpayer funds not be used to support the creation, destruction, or harming of living human embryos.

Recent scientific developments have reinforced my conviction that stem cell science can progress in ethical ways. Researchers have been investigating innovative techniques that could allow doctors and scientists to produce stem cells just as versatile as those derived from human embryos but without harming life, and the House vote on this bill took place just after significant advances in stem cell research were reported in leading scientific journals. These reports give us added hope that we may one day enjoy the potential benefits of embryonic stem cells without destroying human life.

I am disappointed the leadership of Congress recycled an old bill that would simply overturn our country's carefully balanced policy on embryonic stem cell research. If this bill were to become law, American taxpayers would, for the first time in our history, be compelled to support the deliberate destruction of human embryos. Crossing that line would be a grave mistake. For that reason, I will veto the bill passed today.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 5.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Lech Kaczynski of Poland in Gdansk, Poland

June 8, 2007

President Kaczynski. Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to welcome everybody to the meeting between President Kaczynski and President Bush.

The talks have been longer than expected, yes. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, we have had a longer meeting with President George W. Bush, and the subject of the conversation were the issues of interest to the United States of America and for Poland, our country.

Certainly we talked about the issue of missile defense system. We talked about problems pertaining to the relations with our very important Russian partner. We talked about the situation in Iran a little, also, a little about