

The President's News Conference With Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany in Berlin
May 23, 2002

[The Chancellor's remarks are joined in progress.]

Chancellor Schroeder. —welcome you most warmly here to the garden of the Chancellery. We have exceedingly been looking forward to this visit of the U.S. American President, George W. Bush. And the results of our conversations I think are such that we have every reason to be pleased.

U.S. American are in an exceedingly healthy state. It's a very friendly atmosphere; that has become abundantly clear in all of our conversations. But I also think that there is a tremendous amount of agreement between the two of us and our two countries as regards the assessment of the situation around the world.

Now, to begin with, we have started to talk about, very intensely, about the U.S. American-European relations. I think what the American President and the Russian President have agreed together regarding questions of disarmament, but also regarding the process of approachment of Russia towards NATO, that that is of historic importance. And I would very much say that—and we both agree that this process is going to be topped by what we're going to be doing in Rome on the 28th of May together. The world is going to be a safer place for it, and I think it's a tremendous success not only of America but of this special U.S. American President.

We then, obviously, talked about the ongoing necessity to continue with our joint fight against international terrorism. And I have been able to brief the President about my visit to Kabul and about the necessity of maintaining the protection force on the ground, the ISAF. They are the force to guarantee a minimum of security and, therefore, a minimum perspective of hope

of reconstruction for people in this country. This is also important: We want to rebuild economic and social structures in the country. We're very much in agreement that we have every reason to trust the interim Government with Interim President Karzai and to give them all of the support that they need to move their country forward as a way of their own momentum.

Now, we very much agree that it is necessary and important to make sure we move the peace process forward in the Middle East. I have emphasized very strongly that the President's speech in Washington was a milestone regarding this situation. He went in and made it abundantly clear what we all believe in—at least we, too, certainly believe in—that Israel has got a guaranteed—[inaudible]—right of safe existence within strong and reliable borders, that it needs to be recognized by all of its neighbors, and that by the end of the day, certainly there is going to be an independent Palestinian state too.

And we're very much agreed that this is a job to be done by the international community of states, certainly by means of the Quartet that arose from Madrid—the United States of America, the United Nations, Europe, and Russia. Now, this Quartet is hopefully going to support the constructive process as well as they can, because we really need stability and peaceful development for this region, specifically.

We very much share the concern about the existing conflict between Pakistan, on one hand side, and India on the other hand. And we're very much agreed that we have to do whatever we can to bring a peaceful solution to this conflict. I mean, we must make sure that no further escalation happens over there.

Now, moreover, we addressed questions of interest regarding trade with one another. We also addressed some other issues that are in existence regarding our bilateral relations.

Thank you.

President Bush. Well, thank you, Chancellor. It's an honor to be here in this historic city. I want to thank you for your hospitality, and I want to thank you for treating Laura so well.

The Chancellor and I have met—I think it's now five times, and I value our friendship. I appreciate the frank discussions we have. I'm here to let the German people know how proud I am of our relationship, our personal relationship, and how proud I am of the relationship between our two countries. Germany is an incredibly important ally to the United States of America. We respect the German people. We appreciate democracy in this land. We appreciate the struggles that Germany has gone through, and we value the friendship going forward.

My speech today at the Bundestag will talk about the problems that we can solve together, that we share so much particularly when it comes to values and a deep and abiding concern for humanity and for peace. One of the things I like about Gerhardt is, he's willing to confront problems in an open way. And he is, hopefully like people consider me, a problemsolver, that we're willing to use our respective positions to solve problems, such as making sure our respective homelands are secure from terrorist attack. I'm going to talk clearly about that today, about the need for us to continue to cooperate and to fight against terror—people who hate freedom, people who are challenging civilization itself.

I want to thank again the German people and the German Government for the commitment to Afghanistan. The Chancellor made a very tough but, I think, correct decision in sending troops to Afghanistan, and those troops have performed brilliantly.

I know you've lost life, as have we. And our hearts go out to the families of the soldiers who died. But in my judgment, the sacrifice is necessary, because we defend freedom, and freedom is precious.

We talked about weapons of mass destruction and the need for us to be concerned about weapons of mass destruction. As I will mention in my speech, one way to help our mutual security is to work together to solve regional problems, and we spent a lot of time talking about the Middle East. The German Government has been very helpful in helping set the foundation for peace. Both of us agree that there ought to be two states, a Palestinian state and obviously the Israeli state, living side by side in peace, and we're working in that direction. A hot topic today, of course, in the world and one that we spent a lot of time talking about is, as Gerhardt mentioned, the India-Pakistan issue.

My point is, is that we've got a reliable friend and ally in Germany. This is a confident country led by a confident man, and that's good. That's good for world peace. It's good for those of us who love and embrace freedom.

So, Mr. Chancellor, thanks for—thanks for giving me a chance to come and visit with you. Thanks for your hospitality. Thanks for giving me a chance to speak to the Bundestag here in a little bit.

We'll be glad to answer a couple of questions for you.

Chancellor Schroeder. There is the possibility to put three questions from each side. Please, possibly, that the guests could start.

President Bush. Did he just call on you? Okay—[laughter]—okay, I'm sorry. Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press], have you got a question? [Laughter]

Q. I do—

President Bush. That's right.

Q. This is a question to President Bush—

President Bush. Wait a minute. How many questions are you going to ask?

*Intelligence Before September 11 Attacks/
Iraq*

Q. Should the American people conclude there were some intelligence lapses before September 11th? And can you please explain why you oppose an independent commission to look into the matter and why you won't release the August 6th memo?

And quickly to you, sir, do you think there should be a regime change in Iraq?

President Bush. Well, first of all, I've got great confidence in our CIA and FBI. I know what's taken place since the attacks on September the 11th. Our communications between the two agencies is much better than ever before. We've got a much better—doing a much better job of sharing intelligence.

I, of course, want the Congress to take a look at what took place prior to September the 11th. But since it deals with such sensitive information, in my judgment, it's best for the ongoing war against terror that the investigation be done in the intelligence committee. There are committees set up with both Republicans and Democrats who understand the obligations of upholding our secrets and our sources and methods of collecting intelligence. And therefore, I think it's the best place for Congress to take a good look at the events leading up to September the 11th.

The other question?

Q. The August 6th memo—

President Bush. Oh, yes. Well, one of the things that is very important, Ron, is that the information given to the President be protected, because we don't want to give away sources and uses and methodology of intelligence gathering. And one of the things that we're learning is, in order to win this war on terror, we've got to have the best intelligence gathering possible. And not only have we got to share intelligence between friends, which we do, but we're still at war; we've still got threats to the homeland that we've got to deal with. And it's very important for us to not

hamper our ability to wage that war. And so there are ways to gather information, to help improve the system without jeopardizing the capacity for us to gather intelligence, and those are the ways I support.

Chancellor Schroeder. Saddam Hussein is a dictator, there can be no doubt, nothing else. And he does act without looking after his people at all, whatsoever. We're agreed when it comes to that. And we're also agreed to the fact that it is up to the international community of states to go in and exercise a lot of political pressure in the most—possible way. The United Nations have decided to do so as well. We need to pressurize him so that international arms inspectors can get into the country to find out what weapons of mass destruction can be found in his hands. I mean, there is no difference there between President Bush and myself when it comes to the assessment of this situation.

We then obviously also talked about the question as to what should happen in the future, what could happen in the future. I have taken notice of the fact that His Excellency, the President, does think about all possible alternatives. But despite what people occasionally present here in rumors, there are no concrete military plans of attack on Iraq. And that is why, for me, there is no reason whatsoever to speculate about when and if and how. I think such speculation should be forbidden. That certainly is not the right thing for a Chancellor, and I am in this position.

We will be called upon to take our decision if and when, after consultations—and we've been assured that such consultations are going to be happening—and then we'll take a decision. And before that, I think we should not speculate about serious questions like this one.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President—[inaudible]—Chancellor, looking beyond Iraq, given the fact that Syria, too, in U.S. terminology, is a state sponsor of terrorism, given the fact

that Saudi Arabia is anything but a democratic, rule-of-law, pluralistic society, how do both of you want to have this whole region, the Middle East, look like once the fight against terror is over?

President Bush. Yes, it's a great question. Would you care to go first, Mr. Chancellor? [*Laughter*] I'll be glad to answer it, if you like.

First, you need to know that in order for the region to be peaceful and hopeful, there must be a resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. I believe that strongly. And that's why my Government and I feel strongly that we've got to work toward a vision of peace that includes two states living side by side.

And the positive news is that many Arab leaders understand that they have got to be a part of the process now. We spent a great deal of time talking to the Saudis, for example—you mentioned the Saudis. They must be a party to the process. They have—sometimes in the past, the process has not gone forward because there hasn't been, as we say in America, the buy-in by the parties; they haven't been a party to the process. And I'm pleased to report, as you can probably see in your newspapers, they are now; they're involved.

I think one of our—and the reason I mention that is because I think their involvement to a process that I'm optimistic will succeed will then enable us to continue to more likely have an effect on promoting values that we hold dear, values of rule of law and democracy and minority rights. The institutions of change are more likely to be effective with our ability to achieve a peace in the Middle East. And so much of the ability to promote reform, which we're for, hinges on our abilities and capacities to get something done. And it's going to take a while, I believe, but nevertheless, we are making progress. And my administration spends a great deal of time on the Middle East, because we understand it is a linchpin for convincing regimes to adopt

the habits of freedom that sometimes we take for granted in our respective countries.

Chancellor Schroeder. Well, I don't think I've got to add a lot to what's been said, but possibly so much. I think there cannot be peace in the Middle East without the United States of America and without them being active in this field. And it was not without reason that I pointed to the tremendously important speech of the President. It's very important. And that is why we support the efforts towards peace undertaken by the United States, but also by all other members of the so-called Quartet. We are supporting this in the framework of the European Union, but we're also doing it through bilateral channels. And my impression is—and here yet again, I fully agree with the President—that a certain degree of progress is visible in this process.

Now, obviously, we cannot be satisfied with the degree of progress, but still we have moved a little bit, and there is no alternative to the way that the President just described. There is no such thing as a magic formula to solve this tremendously difficult problem. Nobody has such a formula. And that is why I think the task that the President just described is certainly one that needs to be seriously supported by the European Union and us, bilaterally.

President Bush. Steve Holland, Reuters.

Q. Thank you very much.

President Bush. A fine man, fine man.

Chancellor Schroeder. We'll see that once he's put his question. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. There you go.

Russia and Iran

Q. When you meet with President Putin tomorrow, how are you going to talk him into ending nuclear cooperation with Iran?

President Bush. Well, that's a—that's going to be a topic. One way to make the case is that if you arm Iran, you're liable to get the weapons pointed at you, that you've got to be careful in dealing with a country like Iran. This is a country that doesn't—it's not transparent; it's not open.

It's run by a group of extremists who fund terrorist activity, who clearly hate our mutual friend Israel. And you know, it's very unpredictable. And therefore, Russia needs to be concerned about proliferation into a country that might view them as an enemy at some point in time. And if Iran gets a weapon of mass destruction deliverable by a missile, that's going to be a problem. That's going to be a problem for all of us, including Russia.

So that's how I'm going to make the case. We've got a lot of work to do with Russia. I will continue to make the case. As you know, Steve, I have brought that subject up ever since I've started meeting with Vladimir Putin.

The good news is, we're—our relationship is a friendly relationship; that I view President Putin as a friend. I view Russia as a friend, not as an enemy. And therefore, it's much easier to solve these difficult issues, an issue like proliferation, amongst friends.

And I want to appreciate the Chancellor's kind words about tomorrow's treaty signing. It's going to be a positive development for America and, I believe, a positive development for Europe. And then, of course, we're going to Rome afterwards, and that, too, will be a positive development for Europe and America. And it is within the—it's in this positive relationship and positive atmosphere that we're more likely to be able to achieve satisfaction on nonproliferation.

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, the Chancellor just said that your Government does not seem to be very specific right now when it comes to plans to attack Iraq. Is that true, sir? And could you, nevertheless, try to explain to the German people what your goals are when it comes to Iraq?

And secondly, by German standards, Germany has already shouldered a huge burden in military terms of the fight against

terrorism. Are you satisfied with that, or do you want Germany to do more?

President Bush. First, what the Chancellor told you is true.

Chancellor Schroeder. Of course it is. [Laughter]

President Bush. I'm surprised anybody would doubt your word, Chancellor. [Laughter]

Yes, look, I mean, he knows my position, and the world knows my position about Saddam Hussein. He is a dangerous man. He is a dictator who gassed his own people. He's had a history of incredible human rights violations. And he is a—it's dangerous to think of a scenario in which a country like Iraq would team up with an Al Qaida-type organization, particularly if and when they had the capacity—had the capacity, or when they have the capacity to deliver weapons of mass destruction via ballistic missile. And that's a threat. It's a threat to Germany; it's a threat to America; it's a threat to civilization itself. And we've got to deal with it. We can play like it's not there. We can hope it goes away. But that's not going to work. That's not going to make us safer.

And I told the Chancellor that I have no war plans on my desk, which is the truth, and that we've got to use all means at our disposal to deal with Saddam Hussein. And I appreciate the German Chancellor's understanding of the threats of weapons of mass destruction, and they're real. Now, I know some would play like they're not real. I'm telling you: They're real. And if you love freedom, it's a threat to freedom. And so we're going to deal with it, and we'll deal with it in a respectful way.

The Chancellor said that I promised consultations. I will say it again: I promise consultations with our close friend and ally. We will exert a unified diplomatic pressure. We will share intelligence. We love freedom and so does the Chancellor, and we cannot allow these weapons to be in a position that will affect history.

Listen, history has called us to action. I don't want to be in a position where we look back, and say, "Why didn't they lead? Where were they when it came to our basic freedoms?" And we are going to lead.

What was your other part of your question? That's what you get for asking long questions, or what I get for answering long answers.

Germany's Role in the War on Terrorism

Q. That's perfectly all right. The second question was, sir, that Germany has already shouldered a huge burden in military terms, and do you expect more—

President Bush. Germany has shouldered a significant burden, and we are very grateful for that. The Chancellor and I talked about how to make sure we complete the task in Afghanistan, which is to continue chasing down the killers, by the way, and to find them before they hit us, but as well is to leave institutions behind so that Afghanistan can run herself, so Afghanistan can be a peaceful nation, so Afghanistan can function. And we both recognize that our presence is going to have to be there for a—for quite awhile. And the Chancellor made that commitment, and I appreciate that. I'm very satisfied with the commitment of the German Government.

Yes, Terry [Terry Moran, ABC News].

Disposition of the Russian Nuclear Arsenal

Q. Thank you, sir. On the subject of weapons of mass destruction, the strategic arms agreement you'll sign in Moscow does not address what many people say is now the greatest threat posed by the Russian arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, and that's proliferation to terrorists or rogue states because of insufficient security. What specific plan do you have to address that issue with President Putin? Do you believe the Russian Government is doing a good job securing those weapons? And what do you say to critics of this arms deal who say that by taking the material off the war-

heads, you provide more opportunities for terrorists to get them?

President Bush. Well, I guess to start with the critics, I'd say, would you rather have them on the launchers? Would you rather have the warheads pointed at people? I would think not.

Secondly, this issue about the so-called loose nuke issue has been around for quite a while. This isn't anything new. This is a problem that we are jointly working on. As you know, Terry—and others may not know—we've got what's called Nunn-Lugar, which is a significant expenditure of taxpayers' money to help Russia dispose of and dismantle nuclear warheads, which we're willing to do. As a matter of fact, the '03 budget is nearly a billion dollars toward that end.

We're working with Chancellor Schroeder on what's called 10-plus-10-over-10: \$10 billion from the U.S., 10 billion from other members of the G-7 over a 10-year period, to help Russia securitize the dismantling—the dismantled nuclear warheads.

And President Putin understands that. He understands the need to work closely with all of us. Listen, he understands that a loose nuke could affect his security as it affects somebody else's security. He's a wise man; he's aware of the issues that we confront. That's why he's one of the best partners we have on the war against terror. He understands the implications and consequences of terror. And he also recognizes that a nightmare scenario is a dirty bomb or some kind of nuclear bomb in the hands of a—in the hands of any kind of terrorist organization.

Chancellor Schroeder. Last question.

President's Security Bubble/Addressing Issues of Hope

Q. Mr. President, at the present you are visiting a kind of ghost town around here. Do you feel a bit of pity about not to meet the Berlin people—[inaudible]—visit first? And then secondly, when discussing

ways to find a—[inaudible]—peace, did you discuss on social and developmental matters too, these means? Is there a chance that you'll come back to the table to sign the Kyoto treaty?

President Bush. No. [Laughter]

Q. Then what are your aims, concerns in the Johannesburg summit in August? Will you take part of it—[inaudible]?

President Bush. Okay. Let's see, part one of a four-part question. I live in a bubble. That's what happens when you're the President. So unfortunately, I don't get to see as much of Berlin as I'd like to see. That's just life. So when I come back at some point in my life, Mr. Chancellor, you can show me around. We'll go fishing together.

No, I don't—yes, of course, whether it be in Berlin or Moscow or anywhere else, I mean, I'm a person who likes—I like to meet people. I like—I enjoy people. I had one small glimpse of Berlin last night when we went to a restaurant. It was my pleasure to shake hands with everybody or most everybody in the restaurant. I enjoy that. It frustrates me not to be able to see this growing city. But that's just life in the bubble. That's just what happens when you're the President, and I knew that going in, so I'm not griping about it.

Yes, the human condition is very important to me. I mean, it is—and that's one way to make sure that the terrorists are less likely to be effective in their recruiting, is to promote those conditions necessary for human beings to realize their full potential, such as good health and good education and prosperity—those habits necessary for the growth of prosperity. And I will address that in my speech to the Bundestag.

And I don't know whether or not you followed it, but we've laid out an initiative called the new Millennium Fund, where

after 3 years our Government will be spending \$5 billion a year—new money—for development. And that money is going to go promote—to countries which are willing to fight corruption and promote rule of law. Look, you can give all kinds of money to corrupt societies, but it's not going to help the people; it will help the few. And I'm tired of that. I want to encourage reforms in society that help people.

You know, I'm desperately concerned about AIDS. I know the Chancellor shares my grief. And we've put a significant amount of money on the table. But eventually I hope to see a strategy that will work. It's one thing to commit money; it's another thing to insist that the money actually work and start saving people's lives. And when that happens, we'll commit more money.

So, you bet, we're going to talk—we've talked about and will continue to talk about the human conditions necessary to really make sure the whole world is able to be free and at peace.

Thank you all.

Chancellor Schroeder. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 1:28 p.m. in the courtyard at the Kanzleramt. Chancellor Schroeder spoke in German, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Bush referred to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. Chancellor Schroeder referred to Chairman Hamid Karzai of the Afghan Interim Authority; and ISAF, the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary did not include the complete opening remarks of Chancellor Schroeder. A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks to a Special Session of the German Bundestag
May 23, 2002

The President. President, thank you very much for your kind introduction. And thank you for giving me this chance to be here today. President Rau, thank you very much; Chancellor Schroeder. I understand former Chancellor Kohl is here. I want to thank the members of the Bundestag. How are you, sir? I was a little nervous when the President told me that you all are on vacation. [*Laughter*] I can just imagine how my Congress would react if I called them back to hear a speech of mine when they were on vacation. [*Laughter*] But thank you for coming. I'm so honored to be here, and my wife Laura and I really appreciate the hospitality that you've shown us.

I've had the pleasure of welcoming your Chancellor to Washington three times, and we have established a strong relationship. Mr. Chancellor, I'm grateful.

And now I am honored to visit this great city. The history of our time is written in the life of Berlin. In this building, fires of hatred were set that swept across the world. To this city, Allied planes brought food and hope during 323 days and nights of siege. Across an infamous divide, men and women jumped from tenement buildings and crossed through razor wire to live in freedom or to die in the attempt. One American President came here to proudly call himself a citizen of Berlin. Another President dared the Soviets to tear down that wall. And on a night in November, Berliners took history into their hands and made your city whole.

In a single lifetime, the people of this capital and this country endured 12 years of dictatorial rule, suffered 40 years of bitter separation, and persevered through the challenging decade of unification. For all these trials, Germany has emerged a responsible and prosperous and peaceful nation. More than a decade ago, as the President pointed out, my dad spoke of Ger-

many and America as partners in leadership, and this has come to pass. A new era has arrived. The strong Germany you have built is good for the world.

On both sides of the Atlantic, the generation of our fathers was called to shape great events, and they built the great transatlantic alliance of democracies. They built the most successful alliance in history. After the cold war, during the relative quiet of the 1990s, some questioned whether our transatlantic partnership still had a purpose. History has given its answer. Our generation faces new and grave threats to liberty, to the safety of our people, and to civilization itself. We face an aggressive force that glorifies death, that targets the innocent, and seeks the means to matter—murder on a massive scale. We face the global tragedy of disease and poverty that take uncounted lives and leave whole nations vulnerable to oppression and terror.

We'll face these challenges together. We must face them together. Those who despise human freedom will attack it on every continent. Those who seek missiles and terrible weapons are also familiar with the map of Europe. Like the threats of another era, this threat cannot be appeased or cannot be ignored. By being patient, relentless, and resolute, we will defeat the enemies of freedom.

By remaining united—

[*At this point, there was a disturbance in the audience.*]

The President. By remaining united, we are meeting—we are meeting modern threats with the greatest resources of wealth and will ever assembled by free nations. Together, Europe and the United States have the creative genius, the economic power, the moral heritage, and the democratic vision to protect our liberty and to advance our cause of peace.