

of the U.S. Armed Forces. Our thoughts and prayers are with the France family.

Statement on the Death of Senator Craig L. Thomas
June 5, 2007

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the death of Wyoming Senator Craig Thomas. During nearly 23 years of public service as a Senator, Congressman, and State legislator, Senator Thomas was a tireless and effective advocate for the people of his beloved home State. He was a man of character and integrity, known for his devotion

to the values he shared with the people of Wyoming. He leaves a lasting legacy as a guardian of Wyoming's lands and resources and our country's national parks. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Senator Thomas's wife Susan, his family, and friends.

Interview With Members of the White House Press Pool in Heiligendamm, Germany
June 6, 2007

The President. Let me start off by talking about my speech yesterday. The purpose of the speech is to remind our allies and those who are wondering as to whether or not the United States is firmly committed to democracy that we are. I strongly believe that we are in a war with a group of ideologues and that we can eventually win this war by promoting an alternative ideology.

And so the speech yesterday was to speak clearly to people around the world that the United States is committed to this freedom agenda, that there is a realistic reason why we promote freedom, that it's for our own security. There's a moral imperative to promote freedom, and that is to recognize that there are people who live in societies that are still repressive and that free nations have an obligation to work to secure their liberty. I made it very clear that democracy takes time, that it takes different forms in different places, but nevertheless, there are

underlying principles which are essential to free societies.

I pointed out that freedom has made great progress over 20 years. The reason I did that was, one, to express my optimism about the future. But, two, make it clear that things—the freedom agenda just doesn't bloom overnight; it takes hard work. But I also made it clear, it's necessary work. And then, as you know, I went around the world and talked about different spots around the world.

And I think it's very important for the G-8—nations in the G-8 to recognize the power of liberty to transform societies. And so I'll be talking, of course, about that here. I think it's important for nations that are free to recognize they have an obligation to help others. I was moved by the people I met. It was just very heartwarming to meet with heroic souls that do have the capacity, with proper support, of changing their societies and, therefore, changing the world.

Anyway, it was an important speech to give. It's always important for the American President to keep setting an agenda based upon values. And those of you who followed me know full well that I believe that liberty has transformed Europe, liberty has transformed the Far East, and I believe liberty can transform the Middle East. And I'm determined to advance that cause.

Here at the G-8, there's obviously a variety of subjects. One, it's going to be very important for us to continue to discuss climate change in a way that actually accomplishes an objective, which is the reduction of greenhouse gases over time and the advancement of technologies, which will yield to better environmental policy as well as energy security.

The United States can serve as a bridge between some nations who believe that now is the time to come up with a set goal, as well as a—I said, the remedy, and those who are reluctant to participate in the dialog. So I laid out an agenda that can move the process forward within the framework of the United Nations, that, in essence, says that we'll be setting a goal at the end of 2008—that “we” being the major emitters—within the framework of the U.N. In other words, this will fold into the U.N. framework. And that enables us to get China and India at the table to discuss how we can all move forward together.

Secondly, in my speech, I said we'll come up with our own policies to meet an interim goal for our country as well as a national goal—or international goal for the rest of the world. And I'll be talking to Angela about that at lunch. I think it fits into her desires to see the process move forward. One of the concerns was, is that there would not be a constructive result of this meeting that basically announced that there should be a post-Kyoto framework. And we will achieve that objective here at the G-8 because we will have set a post-Kyoto framework.

This is an important subject. I also hope we spend an equal amount of time on HIV/

AIDS on the continent of Africa or reducing malaria on the continent of Africa or helping feed the hungry. So it's a—and finally, it's going to be important for us to continue to discuss vital cooperation on fighting extremists and radicals who still pose a threat to our respective nations. The temptation is to sit back and say, well, maybe they're not dangerous anymore because they haven't launched an attack on our respective homelands. They are dangerous, they do want to attack, and the best way to deal with it is to work closely together.

Anyway, I'm looking forward to this. It's obviously a lovely spot. I've been here before. I think some of you came with me—nice and relaxing. Went for a good-hour bike ride today with a couple of Secret Service agents and some German police, got out in the woods and charged around, felt pretty good about it.

Q. Can we ask some questions?

The President. No. That's all I wanted to tell you. Go on home. [Laughter] I feel so good about life, I'm not going to answer questions. [Laughter] No—yes, you can, please. Please ask a few.

Missile Defense System/Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. What kind of military response would the United States take if Russia retargeted its missiles on Europe, as President Putin has threatened?

The President. As I said yesterday that Russia is not an enemy. There needs to be no military response because we're not at war with Russia.

You know, my first meeting with Vladimir Putin, I told him, I said, “What we need to do is get the cold war behind us and work constructively on how to deal with the threats of the 21st century.” Russia is not a threat; nor is the missile defense we're proposing a threat to Russia. So I'm going to talk to Vladimir about that. I've already talked to him about it once on the telephone. I sent Bob Gates to talk to him.

And we'll have a good dialog about how we can constructively work together to deal with—modernize our capacity to deal with the threat to the—the true threats.

So I don't see any military response needed. Russia is not going to attack Europe. The missile defense system is not aimed at Russia. As a matter of fact, I believe it would be in Russia's interest to participate with us, and have made that offer and will continue to make the offer.

Q. Do you take that threat seriously, though?

The President. I don't think Vladimir Putin intends to attack Russia—I mean, Europe. So I'll talk to him about it, but it's—if he's saying, "The missile defense system is a threat to us," our—the need, therefore, is to make clear there is not.

By the way, a missile defense system that is deployed in Europe can handle one or two rocket launchers. It can't handle a multiple-launch regime. Russia has got an inventory that could overpower any missile defense system. The practicality is, is that this aimed at a country like Iran, if they ended up with a nuclear weapon, so that they couldn't blackmail the free world.

Q. What do you make of his motivation for all—

The President. I haven't had a chance to talk to him about it. I'm going to.

Q. Right, and say, this is just some sort of misunderstanding that he doesn't—you don't see any political purpose behind what he's doing?

The President. For his own sake inside his country? I'm not sure. I haven't had a chance to visit with him about that. As you know, I've got a visit here, and then I'll visit with him in Maine.

Kosovo/United Nations Security Council

Q. Do you think it might be an effort to obtain bargaining chips for negotiating over other issues, like Kosovo?

The President. I talked to him about Kosovo the other day, and I don't recall missile defense coming up. In other words,

it wasn't a quid pro quo. So, he's got deep concerns about Kosovo, and so do we. It's an issue that we're just going to have to continue to work with him on. We believe we ought to move the Ahtisaari plan forward through the United Nations, and he's got reservations about it.

Democracy in Russia

Q. Garry Kasparov, who you met with yesterday, has said that Russia is now a police state, and he said the West should stop giving Putin democratic credentials. What do you—

The President. I think there are—as I said yesterday, society has advanced a long way from the old Soviet era. There is a growing middle class; there is prosperity; there's elections. It's interesting you would ask the question. Do you think he is trying to position himself at home? Thereby meaning that he is concerned about public opinion, which is a sign that there is a—when public opinion influences leadership, it is an indication that there is involvement of the people. I think what you're referring to is the upcoming elections. Is he trying to say something about the upcoming elections? I frankly haven't talked to him about that aspect. But if, in fact, he is concerned about the upcoming elections, it does say something about the state of the political scene in Russia.

And as I said yesterday, we've got a friendship with Russia, and there is a lot of common interest in Russia. But I expressed concerns about what were Western expectations and what has now happened inside Russia, for example, rule of law or some press decisions he's made. I've had these discussions with Vladimir frankly over my time as President. I remember our meeting in Slovakia. It was a good, frank discussion about decisions he's made, and he asked me about decisions I made.

Now, the fundamental question is, does it make sense to have relations with Russia? I think it does. Do we agree on everything? No, we don't. Are there areas where we

can work together? You bet. And that's why I call it a complex relationship.

Same issue with China. China has got a—we've got an economic interest in China. We've got interest with China in working with North Korea, just like we have with Russia. And yet we disagree with China's reluctance to advance the democratic process.

International Cooperation on the Environment/Climate Change

Q. On the issue of climate change, are you frustrated at always being portrayed as the odd man out? And what do you make of the portrayals of the U.S. trying to upstage Merkel with your climate announcement last week?

The President. Well, Angela Merkel and I have had a lot of discussions about this issue. And as I told you, she was interested in whether or not there should be a—whether or not we agree there ought to be a post-Kyoto framework. And my announcement clearly said there should be one and that the United States will be directly involved in developing that framework.

I've got a very substantial record when it comes to advancing technologies to make the air cleaner in the United States. We've actually had a reduction of greenhouse gases and—in spite of the fact that our economy grew. In other words, it's hard to reduce greenhouse gases in the face of economic growth, but we were able to do so. We've laid out a substantial initiative when it comes to tailpipe emissions, and that is the reduction of our usage of gasoline by 20 percent over a 10-year period. So I'm looking forward to telling people exactly what we've done here in the United States.

Q. Will you give any ground on the two-degree target that she wants?

The President. No, I talked about what I'm for—remember? I said I'm for sitting together with the nations, to sit down and discuss a way forward. I think when people

really look at what I've said, they say, well, that's an interesting way to bridge the difference between what China has said, for example, and what others in Europe have said. And in order for there to be—first of all, you're not going to have greenhouse gas emissions that mean anything unless all nations, all emitters are at the table. And if China is not a part of the process, we all can make major strides, and yet there won't be a reduction until China and India are participants. And what I have said, is, here's a way to get China and India at the table.

Pakistan

Q. Can I go back to your democracy speech?

The President. Yes. Did you like it?

Q. I loved it.

The President. Thank you. Say that in your stories.

Q. I'll say it anywhere. [Laughter]

The President. What did he say?

Q. I'll say it anywhere.

The President. Okay, good. How about in print? [Laughter]

Q. Oh, well—

The President. That may be taking it too far. [Laughter]

Q. How do you square your commitment to democracy and as a priority for your foreign policy with what we're seeing in Pakistan now, major ally in the war on terror, but also a place where a core leadership of Al Qaida has found some sanctuary in tribal areas. The Government has been taking a repressive attitude toward a free press; it's got into this conflict with the judiciary, firing the chief justice. Have you had conversations with Musharraf about democracy in his country? Do you want to see free and fair elections in Pakistan?

The President. I do, and said that in Pakistan the time I was there, standing right next to President Musharraf. And we do discuss democracy, as well as routing out foreigners in his country who are an

equal threat, a threat to America and a threat to him.

It's a very—Pakistan is an important ally in this war against these extremists. As you mentioned, there are some in his country, and I'm convinced that he would like to rout them out. But it's not easy territory in which to rout people out. We've had some successes inside Pakistan, thanks to his leadership. And in terms of the democracy issues, he's going to have to deal with it. And the interesting question is, is the issue about uniform, and he addressed that at the last—only time I've been in Pakistan. He said he would seriously consider—I don't want to put words—you'll have to pull up the press conference.

Spread of Democracy

Q. But if you think democracy is the best way to confront radicals and terrorists, shouldn't we be pushing hard for democracy to really get established in Pakistan?

The President. Well, democracy is—it's a lot more established in Pakistan than some of the other nations I mentioned. And there's upcoming elections. And what you're seeing is a lot of posturing about the election process, and it's not perfect. Neither was our democracy perfect for 100 years when we enslaved people.

And so it's—we do push for democracy. We push in the context of the reality on the ground as well. I mentioned Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is a close ally in the war on terror. His Majesty has done and his services have done the world a service, a good service by bringing people to justice. And he is also making some incremental reforms. He will go at a pace slower than some would like to see; nevertheless, he's moving. And the question is, is there progress?

We live in a world where people expect things to happen overnight, and that's just not the way it works. I think it's going to be important for whoever is President to take a long-term view of the ability of

democracies to progress and, therefore, change.

I mentioned South Korea as an example of what I'm talking about. I'm sure—I suspect that if a President were having this conversation with a press corps in the sixties and seventies, they'd say, well, we're for democracy; therefore, how come you're not? How come it hadn't happened yet in South Korea? And yet it did eventually happen in South Korea.

The process and progress move at different paces and different places, and the role of the United States is to help encourage them along, while at the same time achieving certain national objectives. It just so happens that the key national objective in the beginning of the 21st century is to make sure we don't get attacked again and innocent people get murdered. And so we can do both. We can say that in the long run, the best way to secure your society is through liberty. In the short run, let's work collaboratively to protect ourselves.

Missile Defense System/Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Can I go back on missile shields for a second?

The President. Yes.

Q. Vladimir Putin says that you're building a shield for weapons that don't exist now—

The President. Right.

Q. Doesn't he have a point? Do you see why he might be suspicious of that?

The President. Well, I would argue that it's best to anticipate what might happen and work to see that it doesn't happen, as opposed to not be prepared if it does happen. I mean, if somebody pops up with a weapon and says, "Hands up," people will say, well, how come we didn't have a shield? And so it's—I think we need to do both. I think we need to protect ourselves of what might happen and then work collaboratively to make sure it doesn't happen.

Q. On the missile defense system: If there's a misunderstanding between President Putin saying that this is a threat towards Russia and the U.S. saying it is not, what's more important, pushing the system through or maintaining a solid, good relationship with Russia, especially since he's leaving office?

The President. I think it's important to make sure we have a system to protect ourselves against the threats of the 21st century, the true threats. And that would be the threat of rogue regimes using a weapon of mass destruction to either blackmail and/or attack allies and friends, cells moving through our societies with the intent upon killing, radical forces undermining young democracies. Those are the threats, and therefore, we need to address them.

And I will continue to work with President Putin—Vladimir Putin—to explain to him that this is not aimed at him. And there's all kinds of ways you can do that. One is total transparency between our militaries and scientists—military people and scientists, which I'm more than happy to do.

President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia

Q. Do you see this as hurting the relationship between you and President Putin?

The President. No. As I said, it's a complex relationship. We've had issues before. I think if you look at the history of our relationship, there's been some moments where we've agreed and moments where we disagreed. That's just the way—that's what happens when you've got nations that are influential.

And we've had our disagreements with different allies, had disagreements with France over Iraq. We've had disagreements with other nations, but that doesn't mean they're not friends, or that doesn't mean we can't work with them.

Yes, sir.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Are you at all concerned, though, that this current state of the relationship between you and President Putin might have some implications for the outcome with regard to Iran? You've sort of relied on his——

The President. Well, we've been working very closely with Russia on Iran, and I don't think that this—first of all, my comments yesterday were very realistic in the sense that said, we're friends; we've got a complex relationship; we can work together, but we've had some disagreements. I just don't see how—why that, those kinds of statements are going to prevent the United States and Russia from working closely together on key issues like Iran or proliferation, areas where we can get along.

Obviously, there's disagreement. You mentioned Kosovo. No question, he doesn't agree with our position. And so we've got to work together and see if we can't understand each other on a lot of issues. But it's an interesting question about, well, shouldn't you just scrap the system? And the answer is, is that the system exists in the first place to deal with threats. And that's why it needs to go forward.

Situation in Sudan/United Nations

Q. Can I ask about Darfur?

The President. Yes.

Q. Have you expressed your frustration with why the international community hasn't been moving on Darfur? You obviously introduced sanctions. Would you be prepared to see a no-fly zone over Darfur to have some direct interaction?

The President. We would consider that. And, yes, I've expressed my frustrations.

Q. You would consider it in what context? Would you want to see other people help establish——

The President. Look, I want to see other people helping Darfur and—by joining us and sending clearer and stronger messages to President Bashir. And yeah, I'm frustrated. It—because there are still people

suffering, and yet the U.N. process is moving at a snail's pace. As you know, I gave this speech at the Holocaust Museum and caveated it because the Secretary-General asked for a reasonable period of time to see if he could not get the process moving.

Q. And the reasonable period is over?

The President. Yes, it was. That's why I gave my speech. And I don't know if you noticed, but Sudan is now headed to peacekeeping at the U.N.

Iran/Trial of I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby

Q. Sir, will you pardon Scooter Libby?

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. It's interesting, isn't it? And the second in charge is Iran.

Q. And a no-fly zone, have you—

The President. I can't give you all the tactics on it yet, but I understand the principle and said so in my speech that we would consider such.

Listen, that was a sad day for—yesterday was a very sad day for Scooter and his family. But there's an ongoing process, and it wouldn't be appropriate for me to discuss it until the process has run its course.

Q. Do you think it says something about you and Vice President Cheney, that you continue to embrace a man who has been convicted and sentenced?

The President. No, it's a sad day for him, and my heart goes out to his family. And it wouldn't be appropriate for me to discuss the case until after the legal remedies have run its course.

Q. Well, there's a lot of speculation that you are going to pardon—

The President. Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Back to Russia?

The President. Yes, back to Russia. [Laughter]

Q. Fun stuff. [Laughter]

Q. Nice going, Terry. [Laughter]

Q. Yeah, right. [Laughter]

Q. You seemed to have carefully calibrated your response to some of the comments that you made—

The President. Well, I think what you ought to do—look, I would suggest going back and looking at a series of my responses. In other words, put—and yesterday was an important speech to give about democracies. And I think in terms—if you want to really figure out how I conduct relations with Russia, it would be helpful for you—if you're interested in writing a genuinely—I know you are—an in-depth piece about how I've conducted relations with Russia to look at different comments I have made relative to different moments of drama or moments of discord or moments of agreement.

And I have always said that, one, this is an important relationship. It's an important relationship because when we work together, we can solve problems. I've also said it's a complex relationship because there are disagreements. You asked why—I haven't had a chance to talk to him about it. The insinuation was that he's doing this for internal political reasons. I can't make that the case, and it would be unfair for me to put words in his mouth, and so therefore, I won't.

I've also said it's important for there to be a personal relationship between me and President Putin so that we can have frank discussions in a way that enables us to more likely deal with the problems we face. That's why I'll visit with him here, and that's why I'm looking forward to welcoming him to my dad's house in Kennebunkport. It's an opportunity to continue to have a serious dialog with serious players in trying to keep the peace.

There will be disagreements; that's just the way life works. And—but that doesn't necessarily lend itself to speculation that somehow the relationship between me and the President is not a positive relationship. It is a positive, and I'm going to work to keep it that way.

There are some who say we shouldn't have any relations with Russia. I strongly disagree with that. I think it's important for us to maintain relations with Russia and—on a variety of fronts, whether it be—you know, look, I want him to join the WTO for a reason. I believe it's—I think if trade increases between Russia and the United States, it's important to have some structure and ways to resolve the inevitable disagreements that will arise. And that's what happens not only with a nation like Russia; that's what happens all the time in Europe. There's trade disputes where there needs to be a dispute resolution mechanism. And that's one of the things that the WTO provides.

Yes, sir.

Russia/Energy Resources

Q. You talked about the need to prevent extremists from getting their hands on oil in the Middle East or anywhere else. How would you characterize how Vladimir Putin manages his country's energy resources?

The President. Well, first of all, he is—he has got the opportunity to really develop the greatest asset of Russia, and that's her brainpower. He's inherited a very difficult situation in Russia. The demographics indicate that it will be a shrinking society for a variety of reasons. One, it's health care system is good in parts of the country and not so good in other parts. They've got a needle issue; they've got HIV/AIDS issues. They've got a series of issues that he knows he has to deal with. They've got an old pensioner system. So that cashflow from oil will enable him to modernize his society, and he's making steps to do that.

Secondly, it is a—obviously, it creates tensions with Europe. His being a sole source of natural gas for certain countries creates a degree of tension, and that's why the European Union and Russia are continuing to work through their issues.

The fundamental question is, will he make enough investment in his oil infrastructure to take advantage of these

cashflows and, at the same time, make an investment inside his country? And he believes he is committed, enhancing human capital. The question is, is that—is the middle class going to continue to grow? It looks like it has grown substantially in the past.

This country, again, is certainly not perfect in the eyes of many Americans. On the other hand, if you consider where it's come from, it has made substantial progress toward a freer society in the sense that there is a middle class that's growing and will eventually make more demands. Now, having said that, there's been—as I said yesterday, there's been some backtracking. We had expectations, and those expectations weren't met.

Progress in Iraq

Q. Can I ask about Iraq? The idea of the surge seemed to be to buy some time for the political leaders in Iraq to make progress on reconciliation. Have you seen any real, meaningful progress on that front?

The President. Yes, look, they're close to getting an oil deal done. It's—it hadn't been the closure on certain issues, but they're working hard to get it there.

Q. Is that—I mean, they've been talking about that for a long time. It doesn't seem that they—the increased security operations have moved them to speed—

The President. Well, I think on certain fronts, they have made progress. They've got a budget that's now moved out. They've got a—I know they're working on an oil law. They're working on different—discussing whether or not they have Provincial elections, and we hope they get—hope these issues come to fruition.

But you're right, that's what the surge is intended to do, plus provide enough time for these Iraqi forces to step in, prevent the sectarian violence from spilling out of the capital. What's difficult is the fact that Al Qaida continues to kill. And it frustrates the Iraqi people, and it should frighten the American people that Al Qaida is active in Iraq looking for a safe haven from which

to launch further attacks. And they're the primary—they're the ones primarily responsible for these EID [IED]* and suicide bombers.

Alternative Fuel Sources

Q. Can I go back to Brendan's [Brendan Murray, Bloomberg News] question for a second?

The President. What was it?

Q. About Russia's economic situation and the use of its oil wells. I guess my question is, are you concerned that Russia's enormous energy wealth is going to kind of create a situation where its leaders are vulnerable to the arrogance of power? In other words, they've got an immense amount of wealth concentrated in their hands, and inevitably that tends to make people act in aggressive ways, doesn't it?

The President. I think what—one reason why I promote rule of law throughout the world is to make sure that that very scenario doesn't accelerate. A second initiative that we all have got to take is to diversify away from hydrocarbons, and that's what will eventually yield to national security and economic security for countries that are dependent upon hydrocarbons from other places, such as ourself.

You know, there is—there are mechanisms in place to basically enable nations to protect themselves; the EU is a mechanism. If you noticed, there's constant jockeying here in Europe with Russia about security. No question, some nations are concerned about their supplies of gas being used for political purposes. And therefore, all of us need to work collaboratively to convince nations not to do that, whether it be Russia or any other nation that is supplying hydrocarbons to the world.

You've heard me say, we import oil from places that don't necessarily like us. Oil is fungible, by the way. But nevertheless, we do. And therefore, it is in our interest, just like it's in the interest of other countries,

to diversify. And that's really going to be the interesting challenge here as we move forward in this 21st century. One of the dividends of diversification through new technologies is better environmental quality. And that's why this issue is—it's got a real poignancy, as far as I'm concerned. One, I know we can be better stewards of the environment. But also, at the same time, it ends up making us less dependent on crude oil from overseas, in our case.

It's coming, and the question is, how do you stimulate new technologies? What is the most effective way to get technologies to the market that will enable the world to control greenhouse gases, for example? And that's really where the—see, once you get people to agree to a goal, then the next question that needs to be answered is, how best to achieve that goal? We've taken the lead in achieving that goal by spending billions of dollars on new technologies.

We've got new technologies being advanced in cellulosic ethanol. That will help nations once that becomes able to compete in the market. There's new battery technologies being promoted, primarily out of Japan. But nevertheless, it's—will have the beneficial effect of enabling people to drive without the use of gasoline. Clean coal technologies are going to be a really important part of a strategy to deal with what will be an international goal.

And so the question is, how best to stimulate that type of investment? And that's an important discussion to have here at the G-8. It's also an important discussion to have at home.

Iran

Q. Iran—President Ahmadi-nejad says that Iran's nuclear program cannot be stopped. Is he right?

The President. Therefore, let's build a missile defense system. And, yes, we're going to work to stop him. That's why we are constantly working through diplomatic channels to continue to apply pressure. And

* White House correction.

I mentioned the other day, I think we need to go back to the U.N. Security Council. And we'll see.

Spread of Democracy

Q. You mentioned South Korea earlier. Do you think South Korea could be a model for Iraq?

The President. I think that—first of all, the situation inside South Korea is different—or was different than it is in Iraq. On the other hand, U.S. presence enabled the South Korean economy and system to evolve and, at the same time, provided assurances to the Chinese and the Japanese.

And you hear me say that—and compare the situation in the Middle East to what happened in the Far East. It's not to say that the cultures were the same or the difficulties in the different countries are the same. It is to say, however, that the U.S. can provide a presence in order to give people confidence necessary to make decisions that will enable democracies to emerge and say to other people, step back and let the democracies emerge.

It's very interesting to note that the U.S. presence in the Far East was welcomed by different countries with different interests. But it helped achieve an objective for all of us, and today, the Far East is peaceful. And it wasn't peaceful at the end of the Korean war; it was a place where thousands of Americans had lost lives.

And so the comparison between Korea and the Middle East is, again, not to say that the religious situation was the same—of course, it was different—nor to say that some of the influential players were the same; it's different. But it is to say that given time, these democracies will emerge.

President Nicolas Sarkozy of France

Q. What do you think of the new French President?

The President. I haven't met him yet—I have met him—excuse me—but not as President.

NOTE: The interview began at 11:45 a.m. at the Kempinski Grand Hotel Heiligendamm. In his remarks, the President referred to former President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland, United Nations Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Future Status Process of Kosovo; Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; President Umar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir of Sudan; Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations; and President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran. A reporter referred to Russian chess grandmaster and political activist Garry Kasparov. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks Following Discussions With Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany in Heiligendamm

June 6, 2007

Chancellor Merkel. Well, ladies and gentlemen, this was our first meeting here during the G-8 meeting with the President of the United States of America. And we wanted to use this meeting in order to prepare the agenda of all of the issues that we're going to discuss here during the sum-

mit meeting. And it was a very satisfactory meeting, indeed, although in some areas there remain a few things here and there that we still need to discuss.

But what we would like to see coming out from this G-8 summit is, we would like to send a signal as to how we wish