

and free life. I appreciate the sacrifices the people of this country have made to support the troops and their families. I firmly believe that the actions we're taking are laying the foundation of peace for generations to come. I think people will look back at this moment in history and say: Thank God there were people who still stood strong for liberty and freedom as the alternative to tyranny and oppression.

We discussed a lot of issues. I appreciated your leader's advice on Kosovo. It's important advice, and I took it seriously. Kosovo must be independent, and I thank them for their advice as to how to best achieve that.

I made it clear the visa policy needs to be changed. And I care deeply about the Bulgarian nurses. We're working on a strat-

egy to make sure that these nurses come home as quickly as possible.

We had a constructive, candid, important conversations today. Our friendship is strong, and we intend to keep it that way.

So I'd like to propose a toast to the President, his good wife, to the people of Bulgaria, and to the friendship between the United States and Bulgaria.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 12:36 p.m. in Sunny Hall at the National Museum of History. In his remarks, he referred to Zorka Petrova Parvanova, wife of President Parvanov; Prime Minister Sergei Stanishev of Bulgaria; and Georgi Georgiev Pirinski, chairman, Bulgarian National Assembly. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Parvanov.

## Remarks at the American University in Bulgaria in Sofia June 11, 2007

*The President.* Well, listen, thank you all for introducing yourselves. I want to thank you very much, Olga, for giving me a chance to visit with these students.

First of all, I'm looking forward to hearing about your stories and your dreams. There's no question that education is what's going to help change the world; it'll certainly change your personal lives. But it also has the opportunity to change regions in the world. And I am excited that all of you have had a chance to go to higher education and that you aspire beyond your current education to achieve new things, new dreams—Michigan State Law School—I mean, Michigan Law School—excuse me—or mathematics. I mean; it's uplifting for me to be with you.

America strongly supports education initiatives at home and abroad. I think the best thing we can do is to invite students to come to our country. You'll see what

America is really like when you come. But you don't have to, you know, just come to America to study. You can study all over the world, and then go back to your countries and become productive citizens and apply what you've learned and help your countries grow, because the potential in this part of the world is wide open. We kind of have to do a little political work in some places, but it's wide open. And we wish you all the very best. I'm honored to be with you.

Stanko, why don't you share some thoughts with us.

*Stanko Stankov.* Well, I have to—I mean, I agree with the point about education. There are many challenges here in the region, especially after Bulgaria now entered European Union. And this period of transition, I think, is going to be best dealt with by having a good education and having

competent people who can stand up to the challenge and just face it the proper way.

*The President.* So, Stanko, what was your major?

*Mr. Stankov.* My major was business administration.

*The President.* Oh, that's right. Yeah. And so what are you going to do?

*Mr. Stankov.* Oh, first I'm going to do some work here in Bulgaria, because I need some work experience before I apply to a grad school in the United States—that's where I hope to apply. And after I do this work for 2 or 3 years, I'm going to go probably to the States and study, do my masters there. And after that, well, we'll see.

*The President.* And have you found a job?

*Mr. Stankov.* Yes, I'm being interviewed still. And tomorrow I have a very important interview. [Laughter] My next job interview. [Laughter]

*The President.* Well, if the interviewer is listening—[laughter]—Stanko is looking for a little work. [Laughter] It'll make your mother happy when you find a job, won't it?

*Mr. Stankov.* Yes, she will be happy.

*The President.* That's good. Well, thank you very much, Stanko. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:57 p.m. at the Elieff Center for Education and Culture. In his remarks, he referred to Olga Borissova, director, Centre for European Programmes, American University in Bulgaria. Participating in the event were Stanko Stankov, Katya Georgieva, Hristina Jordanova, Nita Gojani, and Filjor Broka, recent graduates, and Nemanja Gruicic, student, American University in Bulgaria; Dilyana Mincheva and Bilyana Hristova, students, University of Sofia; and Hawa Ansary and Stanislav Andreev, recent graduates, American College of Sofia.

## Remarks at the Victims of Communism Memorial Dedication June 12, 2007

Thank you all for coming. Please be seated. Dr. Edwards, thanks for your kind words. Congressman Lantos, no better friend to freedom, by the way; Congressman Rohrabacher, the same. Members of the Czech and Hungarian Parliaments; Ambassadors; distinguished guests; and more importantly, the survivors of Communist oppression: I'm honored to join you on this historic day.

And here in the company of men and women who resisted evil and helped bring down an empire, I proudly accept the Victims of Communism Memorial on behalf of the American people.

The 20th century will be remembered as the deadliest century in human history. And the record of this brutal era is commemorated in memorials across this city.

Yet until now, our Nation's Capital had no monument to the victims of imperial communism, an ideology that took the lives of an estimated 100 million innocent men, women, and children. So it's fitting that we gather to remember those who perished at communism's hands and dedicate this memorial that will enshrine their suffering and sacrifice in the conscience of the world.

Building this memorial took more than a decade of effort, and its presence in our Capital is a testament to the passion and determination of two distinguished Americans: Lev Dobriansky, whose daughter Paula is here—give your dad our best—and Dr. Lee Edwards. They faced setbacks and challenges along the way; yet they never gave up, because in their hearts, they