

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir V. Putin on Upcoming Consultations on Strategic Issues

July 22, 2001

We agreed that major changes in the world require concrete discussions of both offensive and defensive systems. We already have some strong and tangible points of agreement. We will shortly begin intensive consultations on the interrelated subjects of offensive and defensive systems.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Pope John Paul II at Castle Gandolfo, Italy

July 23, 2001

Pope John Paul II. Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you on your first visit since you assumed the office of the President of the United States. I warmly greet the distinguished First Lady and the members of your entourage. I express heartfelt good wishes that your Presidency will strengthen your country in its commitment to the principles which inspired American democracy from the beginning and sustained the Nation and its remarkable growth. These principles remain as valid as ever as you face the challenges of the new country opening up before us.

Your Nation's Founders, conscious of the immense natural and human resources with which your land has been blessed by the Creator, were guided by a profound sense of responsibility towards the common good to be pursued in respect for the God-given dignity and inalienable rights of all. America continues to measure herself by the nobility of her founding vision in building this society of liberty, equality, and justice under the law. In the century which has just ended, these same ideals inspired the American people to resist two totalitarian systems, based on an atheistic vision of man and society.

At the beginning of this new century, which also marks the beginning of the third

millennium of Christianity, the world continues to look to America with hope. And it does so with an acute awareness of the crisis of values being experienced in Western society, ever more insecure in the face of the ethical decisions, indispensable for humanity's future course.

In recent days, the world's attention has been focused on the process of globalization which has so greatly accelerated in the past decade, and which you and other leaders of the industrialized nations have discussed in Genoa. While appreciating the opportunities for economic growth and material prosperity, which this process offers, the church cannot but express profound concern that our world continues to be divided no longer by the former political and military blocs but by a tragic faultline between those who can benefit from these opportunities and those who seem cut off from them.

The revolution of freedom of which I spoke at the United Nations in 1995 must now be completed by a revolution of opportunity, in which all the world's people actively contribute to the economic prosperity and share in its fruits. This requires leadership by those nations whose religious and cultural traditions should make them most attentive to the moral dimension of the issues involved.

Respect for human dignity and belief in the equal dignity of all the members of the human family demand policies aimed at enabling all people to access to the means required to improve their lives, including the technological means and skills needed for development. Respect for nature by everyone, a policy of openness to immigrants, the cancellation or significant reduction of the debt of poorer nations, the promotion of peace through dialog and negotiation, the primacy of the rule of law—these are the priorities which the leaders of the developed countries cannot disregard. A global world is essentially a world of solidarity. From this point of view, America, because of her many resources, cultural traditions and religious values, has a special responsibility.

Respect for human dignity finds one of its highest expressions in religious freedom. This right is the first listed in your Nation's Bill of Rights, and it is significant that the