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## THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

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### **Press Briefing by Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice**

Hotel Korsk  
Brdo Pri Kranju, Slovenia

6:30 P.M. (L)

**SECRETARY POWELL:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Dr. Rice and I are pleased to be with you, to spend a few moments answering your questions.

I just might begin by saying that I believe today's meeting between President Bush and President Putin was a fitting capstone to the Week of Europe, as we call it in the National Security Council and State Department, where President Bush had a chance to travel widely across the continent, beginning in Spain, where we reinforced the bilateral relationship that we have with Spain; continuing on to NATO, where he had the opportunity at the North Atlantic council for the first time to meet with all his fellow heads in government -- government and state of NATO, and to explain his thoughts with respect to America's continuing role in Europe, to emphasize the fact that we went into the Balkans together and we will come out together; to have an opportunity to express his ideas on a strategic framework for the future -- a future that is quite different than the past we have come out of, as we have come out of the Cold War era.

And then on to Goteborg, where he had a chance to meet with members of the European Union, and they had frank discussions with respect to global climate change. And then on down to Warsaw, where in a remarkable day yesterday we saw an outpouring of affection and support, not just for the President, but for Polish-U.S. relations. And I think the President gave a landmark speech yesterday, with respect to our belief in the future of Europe and the fact that we seek no enemies and there are no enemies, in our view, any longer, behind what used to be the Iron Curtain.

And then, finally, here today, where these two gentlemen had the chance to take the measure of each other, to express their hopes and aspirations concerning the future of the relationship between Russia and the United States.

So I think it's been an excellent week and I'm glad it ended in this very, very fine way, here in Slovenia. And let me express our appreciation to the authorities, the leaders here in Slovenia for the hospitality they've extended to us.

The meeting was about an hour and 40 minutes, just the two of them, with interpreters and note-takers. And Dr. Rice was a note-taker, so she has much more information and insight as to the meeting than I did -- or, I do -- I was in a separate meeting with Foreign Minister Inanov, and then we assembled, all of us, in a final short plenary meeting of about 15 minutes.

With that, I would invite your questions and Dr. Rice and I will field them, depending on the nature of the question.

Q Mr. Secretary, your career was spent, as you've noted, in a time of blue lines and red lines on the map. I wonder if you could tell us what kind of a moment it was for you when Putin read that 1954 directive, and what it said to you about the prospects for future NATO-Russia cooperation?

SECRETARY POWELL: Well, I think there is every opportunity for future NATO-Russia cooperation. I did spend most of my life looking at the red side of the map from the blue side of the map, separated by an Iron Curtain. But some years ago, I had Dr. Rice's job, and I watched that whole thing disappear. And I watched the world become a mosaic of changing colors and parts.

And now I am so pleased to be the Secretary of State as I see that change continue, and I look forward to a productive relationship with Russia. There is no reason, as both Presidents noted, that we cannot be friends, that we cannot be partners, that we cannot cooperate in a number of different spheres, that we can't help each other move forward into the 21st century.

So as an old soldier, I was deeply moved by not only the activities of today, the meetings of today, but everything I have seen this week. I have been this week in places that used to just be on my target list in the old days. And now they are part of a free Europe, a Europe founded on democratic principles and values, and I'm pleased that I'm still around to be a part of it.

Q Sir, can you tell us, when do you intend to start your consultations with Mr. Ivanov on the new security framework, and this will include missile defense?

SECRETARY POWELL: We'll begin rather quickly. Foreign Minister Ivanov and I will have overall responsibility for it, but there will be parts underneath that where the Defense Department will be our lead agency working directly with their ministry of defense. And Dr. Rice and I will set up our committees in consultation with Minister Ivanov and Minister Ivanov, and I would hope to see these consultations begin as quickly as possible.

So we're anxious to move ahead. And Foreign Minister Ivanov and I talked about it again today. I don't have a specific date for you.

Q Mr. Secretary, to paraphrase President Putin, he said the 1972 ABM Treaty lies at the center, or the cornerstone, in his words, of the modern architecture of arms control. Can you give us a sense -- we had a pretty good sense before this meeting -- how wide the gap was between the two countries on that issue? Did it narrow any significantly today, and how do you go from here?

SECRETARY POWELL: I think I may ask Dr. Rice to talk to this, because she was in the room. But I think both sides laid out their position. I don't share President Putin's view that it remains at the center of the entire arms control structure or the entire strategic framework that exists between our two nations.

It was a treaty that was written for the time of the red and the blue map of 30-odd years ago, and I think it is quite appropriate, in light of a new world, in light of changed circumstances, to review anything that is from that era to see if it is still relevant, and why not talk about changing it.

It was interesting that President Putin made that point, but he also said, now let's get into a dialogue to see what it is that we think should be updated. So at the same time that he held his position, he also invited dialogue.

Q Dr. Rice, if you would expand on that, please?

DR. RICE: Yes. I would also say that there was a great deal of interest on the Russian side and the question of new and common threats, and I think a desire to explore that further. As you know, President Putin has said publicly several times that he believes that there are new threats, and that was expressed again today in the meeting with the President.

He also said in his press conference, a new security architecture. And so I think we'll have serious consultations, discussions about what constitutes now that new security architecture. But I think there is an openness to dialogue, there is an openness to discussion, and I felt that they established a very good basis to move forward.

Q On that dialogue, did the gap close any in the differences of opinion on the ABM Treaty and its centrality?

DR. RICE: Well, as the Secretary said, they had an hour and 40 minutes together, and then an additional 15 minutes. But they covered a wide variety of subjects. It would be a mistake to think that even the bulk of this conversation was about missile defense or the ABM Treaty; it was not. It was about a whole wide range of issues. This was one small part of the discussion, and they did not try, as the President said, to get into a negotiating session about trying to close the gap.

But I think it is also important to note that they gave experts -- both the Secretaries of the Foreign Ministry and State and the Defense Secretaries -- a desire to go now and talk about concrete issues.

Q Dr. Rice and Secretary Powell, during the campaign, Bush seemed to be very skeptical about Russia, especially compared to the Clinton administration, and critical of the way the Clinton administration tended to personalize relations between the countries, and embodied in their two leaders.

It seemed today that we were witnessing a personalization of diplomacy in a way that maybe you criticized in the past. I'm wondering, I mean, they seem to have had a very warm meeting, they talked about how they trusted each other. How do you look at that now? And, also, any other atmospherics for those magazine writers in the room that you could provide would be great.

DR. RICE: Doing the work for all of you, all right? (Laughter.)

On the issue of personalization, no one has ever said that it's not a good thing for the President of Russia and the President of the United States to have a good, warm relationship, to be able to look each other in the eye and to expect each other to be straightforward. That was never the issue.

The issue was whether or not the United States started to equate reform with Boris Yeltsin. And I think you heard something very important, actually, from President Putin that I don't remember hearing earlier in the

history of U.S.-Russian relations, because he took full responsibility for creating conditions in Russia in which economic capital would begin to flow to Russia.

He talked about the work that Russia had to do. And I think that the United States can clearly try to be a partner; the United States can be supportive; we can send the Secretary of Commerce and Treasury and trade representatives and support Russia in WTO accession when it is ready. But we cannot do the Russian's work for them. And I think that was the tone of this meeting.

This President has been very clear that he wants a good relationship with President Putin, but that he's going to be realistic both about those things about which we agree and those things about which we disagree. And he did so, the two of them, in an atmosphere that was respectful and, frankly, quite straightforward.

Q Did you hear in anything President Putin said or as what we're seeing emerges, the possibility that there could be some kind of agreement and embrace of the ABM that would allow us to do what we want and would allow them to have the sort of reassurances that they seem to --

DR. RICE: Well, Frank, as I said, they only talked about this issue for a period of time with the President kind of allaying out a vision. But I do believe that they are open to discussions and I believe that both the Secretary and I have said to you that we are open to discussions about what constitutes the new security framework.

We are quite convinced that it's time for the world to move on, pass the ABM Treaty, to deal with the new threats, to deal with offensive reductions, defensive forces that can contribute to deterrence and new nonproliferation efforts. And, by the way, they did spend a good deal of time on nonproliferation issues.

And so we believe that there is a new security framework to be had. Its form is really up for discussion. And I think they set in course a very high level set of discussions to get that done.

Q I'm wondering what kind of talk there was between the two Presidents on actually reducing nuclear arsenals?

DR. RICE: Again, they did not talk in specifics. The President laid out the framework that you have heard him lay out. President Putin listened, said that he looked forward to further discussions. But they didn't get into details.

Q Did they agree on the basic idea that it was important to reduce nuclear arsenals on a general level?

DR. RICE: Well, I think we have known for some time that the Russian Federation feels strongly that nuclear reductions are in its interest, and the President has made clear that he believes that getting to a level that is consistent with our deterrent needs is important to us. So I don't think that there was anything there to bridge.

Q Dr. Rice, Mr. Secretary, when President Putin said today that he agreed with President Bush that the U.S. and Russia can be good allies, is that meant, allies in the sense that the members of NATO are allies?

SECRETARY POWELL: Let's call it small "a." I think he was talking in terms of a partnership, friends, countries that could get together, that have mutual and shared interests, that can work together. I don't think he was talking about an alliance in the sense of a military alliance or a political alliance.

Q Are you ruling that out?

SECRETARY POWELL: I'm not ruling anything in or our at the moment.

Q Can I ask you to elaborate on your answer to Jay's question on the atmospherics? For example, who's idea was it to take a walk in the woods? Did the President enter the meeting intending to invite him to Crawford or did that just develop? I mean, what were the atmospherics?

DR. RICE: The President had said -- really it wasn't planned hours in advance. The President said, I would like to invite him to come to Washington, and I think on the spot then President Putin invited the President to come to Russia. It was a quite remarkable meeting in that it was both warm and straightforward. Sometimes meetings are warm because people are trying to blur differences. This was not the case. This was a case in which I think President Putin feels he had his say, in which President Bush felt that he had his say, but they maintained a kind of warmth about it, a kind of respect about it.

And, frankly, I think both men, I think, connected on a kind of sense of humor. The President mentioned the point about the daughters being named after mother-in-laws. That was kind of an interesting moment. But it was really not a very scripted meeting. It was a meeting in which the exchanges were long. There was a lot of dialogue between them on every issue. They went into depth on some issues; others, they left to their experts to do.

But it really was one of the more remarkable meetings of this kind that I've been in, because it was extremely straightforward. They did not blur their differences. The President brought up freedom of the press. The President brought up Chechnya. Mr. Putin brought up concerns that he had about the region to his south. They did not try to blur their differences, but it was still a very warm meeting.

Q In his speech in Warsaw yesterday, the President seemed to put the United States' weight behind full membership of NATO. Did President Putin understand that speech in that way, and what was his general response to the possibility of the Balkan states coming into it?

DR. RICE: The President, in his speech in Poland, I think simply laid out some important principles, which were that he believes NATO should continue to expand. He and the allies, as Lord Robertson said, believe that something should happen at Prague. There cannot be a zero option at Prague. The President also clearly said that there should be no geographic and historical red-lines, and that no one has a veto. He did not bother -- he did not need to reiterate that to President Putin. President Putin had read the speech, he understood that.

But the President did reiterate that there was nothing for Russia to fear with Europe moving toward it, that this is an alliance of democracies and peace-loving states, and that he looked forward to a relationship that completely took cognizance of Russia's European-ness in much the way that he talked about in Poland. But President Putin did not comment directly on specific areas, specific questions that the President had raised -- or specific points that the President had made in Poland.

We'll miss the plane if we don't get out of here.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END 6:45 P.M. (L)