

plan, which is a supervised, independent Kosovo.

This is a difficult issue, and I understand it's a difficult issue. But the U.S. Government supports this supervised independence. We believe in free societies, and we believe it will eventually lead to peace. But there's no—no border has been withdrawn in that sense, Stretch. It's a—Kosovo is a—Kosovo itself's borders have been clearly defined. The type of government has changed. Now, as part of the Ahtisaari plan, we fully expect this independent Kosovo to honor minority rights within their borders. And so my—our position has been clear.

Secondly, you asked about whether or not the United States of America should be able to listen to terrorists' phone calls coming into the United States. And the answer is, absolutely we should be doing this. There is still an extremist threat. People still want to attack our country, and we better understand what they're thinking and what they're planning and who they're talking to.

And yet, unfortunately, a law passed to give our professionals the tools has expired. And it's expired because people want to take class-action lawsuits against private phone carriers and other companies that have—were believed to have helped us protect America. It's not fair to say to a company that was believed to have helped us, it's important for you to help us, and then you get sued for billions of dollars. And such a policy would make it very difficult to get companies to fully cooperate with us in the future.

The law is expired, but my fellow citizens must understand, the threat to America has not expired. And our citizens who are paying attention to this debate must understand, without law, America will be more vulnerable to attack. Democrats and Republicans supported this law, and the House leaders must bring it to the floor, where it will pass with both Republican and Democrat vote. And if this law is allowed to expire, America will be more vulnerable. And that is inexcusable, and it's indefensible.

Czech Opposition Leaders' Visit to Syria

[At this point, a reporter asked a question in Czech, and no translation was provided.]

Prime Minister Topolanek. Well, actually, I think the same as you think. Well, if he traveled with Mr. Zaoralek—together with Mr. Zaoralek, then I think it is unforgivable.

Well, first of all, I would like to say that these activities of the opposition leaders and their foreign policy does not really serve the interests of our country. And I would like to remind you that when I was in the opposition—and we were in the opposition—we never created any kind of foreign policy on our own. And therefore, I understand the reasons for this visit to Syria. I would be much happier if they traveled as tourists and nothing else.

I would like to actually mention that I got this present from the state Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Gutierrez. It is a bracelet, and there is a simple word on it, which is *cambio*, meaning “change.” And in Cuba, you can actually get arrested for wearing this bracelet. But when I come back home, I will wear this just for the sake of Mr. Paroubek and Mr. Zaoralek. [Laughter]

President Bush. Thank you. Thank you all.

Prime Minister Topolanek. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:54 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland, United Nations Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Future Status Process for Kosovo. Prime Minister Topolanek referred to Parliament Member Lubomir Zaoralek and Leader of the Opposition Jiri Paroubek of the Czech Republic. Prime Minister Topolanek spoke in Czech, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Special Envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference Sada Cumber and an Exchange With Reporters

February 27, 2008

The President. A while ago, I announced that I would be naming a Presidential Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Conference, and I am pleased to announce it's Sada

Cumber. He's a very successful businessman, a person who knows the Islamic world. He's agreed to serve in that capacity, and, Sada, I want to thank you very much.

We just had a discussion about his mission. And the core of his mission is to explain to the Islamic world that America is a friend—is a friend of freedom, is a friend of peace, that we value religion, that—matter of fact, we value it to the point where we believe that anybody should be able to worship the way they see fit, and we respect that.

And his is an important job. There's a lot of misperceptions about America, and Sada is going to be a part of our effort to explain the truth. And when people hear the truth about America, when they know that we're a land full of compassionate people and that we value other people's opinions, that they'll slowly but surely begin to better appreciate.

Now, a lot of people love America; don't get me wrong. After all, there's a lot of people trying to come here because of what we stand for. But we've got work to do in certain areas. And I can't thank you enough for going and really will strongly support you in your work.

Special Envoy Cumber. Thank you.

The President. Thank you very much, sir.

William F. Buckley, Jr.

Q. Any thoughts on Buckley?

The President. I just had the—I just hung up with Christopher Buckley, the son of William F. Buckley. I expressed Laura and my sadness over the passage of this very important figure in American political thought. He was a great author, a great wit, and a leader. And Chris said that his dad died at his desk. And I asked whether it had been a—I know it's a painful experience for Chris's heart, but he said that his dad died a peaceful death. And we got to thank God for that and thank God for his life.

Q. Did you talk to him much during this—[inaudible]—sir?

Q. You once said Buckley moved conservatism into the Oval Office, that he moved conservatism from the margins of American society into the Oval Office.

The President. No question, he was a—one of the great political thinkers. He influenced a lot of people, including me. And he

was—I can remember those debates they had on TV. And he was so articulate, and he captured the imagination of a lot of folks because he was—he had a great way of defining the issues. It was erudite, and yet a lot of folks from different walks of life could understand it. And he's a big figure in our history, and he'll be missed. And we ask for God's blessings on his soul. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:01 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks Honoring the 2007 World Series Champion Boston Red Sox

February 27, 2008

The President. Welcome. Thank you for coming. Please be seated. So Tim Wakefield's batterymate is Doug Mirabelli; mine is the Vice President. [Laughter] We're glad you all are here. The mighty Red Sox Nation has stormed the South Lawn.

It's my honor to welcome the owners of the Red Sox. The principal owner is John Henry. Tom Werner is the chairman—and my longtime buddy Larry Lucchino. Thank you all for coming, and congratulations. We appreciate the other owners who are here as well. I'm proud to be here with Terry Francona; the captain of the mighty Red Sox, Jason Varitek; the MVP of the World Series, Mike Lowell. They're mentioned because I'm trying to entice a gift out of them. [Laughter]

We appreciate very much members of the administration who are here. Don't linger. [Laughter] Welcome the Members of the United States Congress—Massachusetts and Connecticut and probably Rhode Island and—[applause]—yes. [Laughter] Thanks for coming.

I'm real proud for the Red Sox baseball club, its players, the players' families, all those associated with this unbelievably successful franchise. You know, you've—Red Sox Nation extends beyond the South Lawn, extends beyond New England. It obviously goes to the Caribbean and even the Far East. And so we welcome Japan's Daisuke here to the South Lawn. His press corps is bigger than mine. [Laughter] And we both have