

Pres. Bush and PM Tusk from 4

and genuine warmth. It doesn't really happen often that people of such a high position are so open and so friendly as you. From the very beginning, I was absolutely convinced that this meeting can bring us definitely closer to the wealth of good solutions.

I am also very glad, Mr. President, that both during our meeting and also here, you appreciate very much the contribution we are making with our troops in Iraq and in Afghanistan. For us Poles, it is really a very big effort, and we really are happy, that such an important ally appreciates it.

What really is most important from this meeting, Mr. President, that in the spirit of those talks and also in the agreement, which we have made during this conversation, we can draw the conclusion from that the United States can count on Poland whenever it needs, and Poland can count on the United States whenever Poland is in need. And this is our belief, the embodiment of the idea of solidarity, in the international dimension, and I want to thank you very much for this.

And what is really important for both parties, we came to a conclusion, both during the talks and also the cooperation which we would like to develop together, is that the missile defense system and the modernization of the Polish forces, as well as the reinforcement of the global security system, which also influences the Polish security system, that all these issues come in one package, and that this is really something which gives us very much good hope for the future. This is a very good (inaudible) for us, and once again I want to thank you for that.

PRESIDENT BUSH: Thank you, sir. Feller.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Secretary Rice was able to help get peace talks restarted in the Mideast during her trip, so what is it now that you want Vice President Cheney to get? What is your specific goal for him?

PRESIDENT BUSH: The Vice President will be on an extensive itinerary, as you know. His goal is to reassure people that the United States is committed to a vision of peace in the Middle East, that we expect relevant parties to obligate themselves -- uphold their obligations on the road map; that we fully see the threats facing the Middle East -- one such threat is Iran -- and that we will continue to bolster our security agreements and relationships with our friends and allies.

The Vice President will be taking a very hopeful message to the Middle East that progress in Iraq is necessary for peace in the Middle East. And so it's -- I'm looking forward to his trip and I'm really appreciative of the fact that he's going.

Do you want to call on somebody from the Polish media?

Q. Mr. President, is there any breakthrough as far as the missile defense system is concerned?

PRESIDENT BUSH: Well, I think there's a commitment to a system that respects Polish sovereignty, -- that will ensure that the people of Poland will not be subjected to any undue security risks, that the system is necessary to deal with the realities of the threats. Obviously there's a lot of work to do, because many times a strategy on paper is a little different from the details. And so our experts are working through a system to make sure that the people of Poland are comfortable with the idea. This is the kind of issue that all kinds of rumors and worries can grow out of -- and we just want to assure people that it's necessary, and at the same time there will be this modernization effort that takes place.

PRIME MINISTER TUSK: What is really very important is what we stressed in the conclusion of this meeting today, that we wanted to stop the speculations on intentions expressed by the United States and expressed by Poland. Our joint intention is to cooperate in all aspects of

global security, American security, and Polish security. And an element of the security is the missile defense system.

What I would call a breakthrough is my conviction that though the President of the United States and the American party understand quite clearly our expectations. And if I may use this expression, I think that you have set the perspective of Poland on the principle of the cooperation here. And as you said, Mr. President, all the technicalities pertaining to the face of the negotiations and all those technical issues, they will be solved by experts.

PRESIDENT BUSH: Matt.

Q. Yes, sir. Back on the Middle East, what do you think of Israel's plan to build 750 new homes in a settlement near Jerusalem? And what, if any, threat or complication, do you see to your administration's peace efforts?

PRESIDENT BUSH: We expect both parties to -- involved in the Middle Eastern peace process to adhere to their obligations in the road map. And those obligations are clear. And to this end, the Secretary of State is dispatching the general that we named to be the coordinator of road map activities to the Middle East, for him to conduct meetings with the relevant parties.

The key question is whether or not a vision can prevail that will enable people who reject violence and extremists -- enable them to see a better tomorrow. That's what we're working toward. And, you know, this is a part of the world where people have heard promises before, and they've been vague promises. Now, they've got a President and an administration willing to work for two states, two democracies, side by side in peace.

There are three major forces that are -- we're now witnessing in the Middle East. Two of those forces adhere to peace: Israel and the forces of President Abbas. And then there's one force in the Middle East, and some suspect that they're funded from outside governments and outside movements, all aiming to destabilize democracy; all aiming to prevent the vision where people can live side by side in peace; all wanting to destroy Israel.

And the fundamental question is, will there be enough will and determination to reject those forces of extremism, and to stand up and support those who long for peace? And our mission is exactly along those lines. And I'm optimistic that we'll be able to achieve a vision that shows a way forward, and I'm optimistic leaders will step forward and do the hard things necessary so people don't have to live in deprivation and fear. And so that's our focus, and that's our mission.

Q. Mr. President, it's getting to be embarrassing for Polish politicians to talk about visas in the Oval Office, but it's even more embarrassing for my countrymen to apply for visas. And it would be really ironic if Poland would become a third missile defense site, and Polish citizens would still have to apply for visas. So can we expect that, before your watch is over, something will change, and maybe we'll convince the lawmakers on Capitol Hill to do something about this?

PRESIDENT BUSH: Well, thank you very much. First of all, the Prime Minister, of course, brought up the issue. And he was very firm about the need for a friend to treat a friend as a friend when it comes to visas.

Look, this is a tough issue. And we changed law. And now there are ways forward for the people applying for visas. A lot of it has to do with rejection rates. And as the Prime Minister noted, the rejection rates are changing quite dramatically, and so of course, this will be taken into account.

I fully understand the frustrations. And if I were living in Poland, -- and wanted to come to America, I'd be frustrated, too. And the truth of the matter is... we're

going from one era to the next. We're going from a time when the -- during the Soviet era, where there was a different motivation by the people. And we're adjusting. And I fully understand the pace of adjustment doesn't meet expectations inside Poland.

And so I'm very sympathetic. But the law is changing. The paradigm is shifting. And I hope at some point in time, obviously, that the frustrations of our friends and allies are able to be eased with more moderate visa policy.

Thank you, sir. Thank you all. □

Winnietki - Katyn film from 6

white half to his comrade. While the comrade wipes his boots with that half of the flag, the soldier places the now "red flag" back into its holder. In another scene, a young woman refuses to cooperate with the authorities and is led away. She looks back, hesitating for only a moment, until she realizes that there is not a trace of compassion on the face of her captor. Slowly she disappears down a descending spiral staircase to an unknown fate.

A door into the film opened for me after reading two novels by Susan Vreeland. The Luncheon of the Boating Party delves into the lives of Impressionist painter Pierre Auguste Renoir and his contemporaries. The Forest Lover paints a portrait of Emily Carr, an Expressionist painter of Native American totem poles (!) in the Pacific Northwest. The books sparked my innate Polish curiosity to learn more about both art forms. I discovered in Webster's II New College Dictionary that Impressionism is also, "A literary style marked generally by the use of details and mental associations to inspire subjective and sensory impressions rather than the re-creation of objective reality." Expressionism in art emphasizes "subjective expression of the artist's inner experiences." When we connect with these impressions and expressions of the artist, we gain both an understanding of the work of art and a deeper awareness of our selves.

Some people have criticized the film claiming it was hard to follow, constantly shifting back and forth in space and time, confusing and vague. But isn't that exactly the kind of uncertainty both the officers in the prison camps and the civilians at home endured? Might this be Wajda's way of allowing viewers to share in some small way the inner experiences of the characters? It takes time to recognize all the nuances an artist wishes to convey in a film, painting, poem or composition of music. That's why great art is constantly revisited in museums, reprised in concert halls and reread in books. Perhaps Wajda's moving film of the Katyn atrocity will enable us to replenish our spirits and restore hope in humanity through the healing gift of catharsis. Antoine de Saint-Exupery says it beautifully, "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye." □

Polish students in England from 4

Then there was Anna Labno, with six A grades at A-level, who was fought over by Cambridge and MIT. Anna turned Cambridge down for MIT, partly because the American university's scholarship covered more of her costs.

Małgorzata Cholest also won a place at Cambridge, where she is still a student. This year the college -- which has 865 pupils, most boarders -- has two Polish scholarship girls: Agnieszka Bulatowicz, 17, and Gabriela Hajduk, 18

Gabriela, who is taking six A-levels and studies about 10 hours a day, comes from a village in the south of Poland where her father is a car mechanic. Her mother not only looks after four children at home but also Gabriela's extraordinary collection of 65 abandoned parrots.

She started the collection four years ago and says that the parrots have inspired her to study either zoology or animal behaviour at university (she is considering applying to Cambridge).

Gabriela, who admits that her English "did not exist" when she arrived, says that she is still occasionally thrown by the slang used by the Cheltenham girls: "prep" instead of "home-work", for instance. But when it comes to doing prep Gabriela acknowledges that, yes, she probably works harder than many of her classmates, spending about four hours a night poring over her books.

Surprisingly, even though she is doing twice as many A-levels as most British children, she finds the syllabus easier than in Poland.

Not only do Polish children have to study 14 subjects for their sixth-form diploma but there are more surprise tests, too. However, classes at the college are much smaller: "There are only seven people in my geography class. There were 36 in Poland."

Clad in school uniform of olive-green jumper and discreetly striped navy trousers Agnieszka -- whose father, a doctor, cried when she won the scholarship -- says that she too is studying six A-levels.

A star linguist, she wants to learn Chinese, possibly at Cambridge, before going into business. "Chinese has the reputation of being a very hard language -- I want to rise to the challenge," she says.

What do she and Gabriela make of the boarding school that is their new home? "It's like a castle," says Gabriela. Agnieszka reveals that before she arrived at the college, which is built on the site of the town's former spa, her only encounter with English boarding schools came from the pages of Harry Potter

"In Poland, I thought a prefect was something JK Rowling invented," says Agnieszka. "It was shocking to find they exist. I had never heard of net-ball before either.

"Before I came here, I heard loads of things. The girls are so posh, from rich, good families. The truth is they are so nice and down-to-earth."

There is just one thing about the college that Agnieszka would change: the taps. "You have two taps in bath-rooms in England: one is very hot and one is very cold," she says. In Poland, by contrast, everyone has mixer taps. When her parents visited before Christmas her father observed, "They really do need Polish plumbers." □

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