relations with Vladimir Putin," there's a reason why. Because if you're—in order to have somebody listen to you, they got to at least have an open mind. And it's hard to have an open mind if the only thing you're doing is try to blast away on a regular basis about your disagreements publicly. I've chosen not to do that.

Therefore, I'm optimistic we can reach accord on very important matters. I think a lot of people in Europe would have a deep sigh of relief if we're able to reach an accord on missile defense. And hopefully we can. One of the things that, hopefully, is clear to the Russian side is that this system is not aimed at Russia. After all, it doesn't take many missiles to overwhelm the kind of system we're talking about. And Russia has got plenty of missiles if they want to overwhelm. This is really aimed at a potential missile launch, for example, out of the Middle East. And therefore, I think it makes sense for us to be able to be in a position, if people so choose to share information and fully understand the operational activities of a system, so as to build confidence.

So we'll see how it goes. I'm looking forward to it.

Russian Leadership

Q. Do you think President Putin continues to pull the strings?

The President. You know, I just don't know. It's an interesting question. That's speculative.

Q. It's what we do for a living. [*Laughter*]

The President. Not me. [*Laughter*]

Thank you all. Enjoyed it.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:53 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House and was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 27. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; President Traian Basescu and Prime Minister Calin Popescu-Tariceanu of Romania; former Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Memorandum on Certification Concerning U.S. Participation in the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur Under Section 2005 of the American Servicemembers' Protection Act

March 26, 2008

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Certification Concerning U.S. Participation in the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur Under Section 2005 of the American Servicemembers' Protection Act

Consistent with section 2005 of the American Servicemembers' Protection Act (Public Law 107–206; 22 U.S.C. 7421 *et seq.*), concerning the participation of members of the Armed Forces of the United States in certain United Nations peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations, I hereby certify that members of the U.S. Armed Forces participating in the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) are without risk of criminal prosecution or other assertion of jurisdiction by the International Criminal Court (ICC) because the United Nations Security Council has permanently exempted members of the U.S. Armed Forces participating in UNAMID from criminal prosecution or other assertion of jurisdiction by the ICC for actions undertaken by them in connection with UNAMID by deciding, in Resolution 1593 (2005), that "personnel from a contributing state outside Sudan which is not a party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of that contributing State for all alleged acts or omissions arising out of or related to operations in Sudan established or authorized by the Council or the African Union, unless such exclusive jurisdiction has been expressly waived by that contributing State."

You are authorized and directed to submit this certification to the Congress and arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 27.

Remarks at the National Museum of the United States Air Force in Dayton, Ohio

March 27, 2008

Thank you all very much. Thank you all. General Metcalf, thanks. Thanks for welcoming me back here. I am really pleased to be back to Wright-Patt, and it's great to be on the inside of the National Museum of the United States Air Force, which is a fabulous place. I hope our fellow citizens come and see it. It is a great tribute to the airmen who've flown the missions and secured the skies and defended America's freedom.

I want to thank the folks who maintain this shrine. I thank you for giving me a place to park Air Force One. [*Laughter*] And I appreciate the hospitality of the people who serve our country here at Wright-Patt. And I want to thank you for coming to give me a chance to share with you an update on the historic work our Nation is undertaking in Iraq.

Over the past year, we have seen significant security gains result from the surge. Less visible are the political and economic changes taking place, from major pieces of legislation being passed to simple signs of normalcy. This progress isn't glamorous, but it is important. And that's what I'm here to talk about today.

But before I do so, I want to thank not only General Metcalf, but I want to thank Congressman Jim Jordan for serving our country. I appreciate the State auditor, Mary Taylor, for joining us today. Thank you for coming. I am grateful that the mayor, Mayor McLin, took time to come by and say hello. Madam Mayor, thank you very much for your—[*applause*]. Appreciate the other State and local officials.

I do want to thank General Bruce Carlson, commander of the Air Force Materiel Command, Colonel Colleen Ryan, and all those who wear the uniform. I'm proud to be with you, and I'm proud to be your Commander in Chief.

I thank very much the fact that Susan Kettering came, vice president of the Kettering Family Foundation. And the reason why she's important and the foundation is important is, they've been strong supporters of this museum.

And finally, I want to recognize Amanda Wright Lane, great grandniece of Orville and Wilbur Wright. Thanks for coming. Nothing wrong with having famous relatives. [*Laughter*]

This museum pays tribute to a—to great aircraft and great airmen and women, from the first fliers of the Great War to the aces of World War II to the daring pilots of Korea and Vietnam. And over the past 6 years, a new generation of American airmen and women have joined that storied history. After all, the Air Force was critical in liberating the people of Afghanistan and the people of Iraq and taking the fight to the enemy overseas so we do not have to face them here at home. On a fateful day in this war, airmen delivered justice to the Al Qaida terrorist Zarqawi in the form of two precision-guided, 500-pound bombs.

The military achievements in Iraq have been accompanied by a political transformation. It can feel like distant history, but it was only 5 years ago that Iraq was one of the most brutal dictatorships on Earth, a totalitarian nightmare where any election was a sham and dissenters often found themselves buried in mass graves. In a matter of 15 months, the Iraqi people reclaimed their sovereignty. They went on to choose an interim Government and to ratify the most democratic Constitution in the Arab world. And in December 2005, 12 million Iraqis elected a Government under that Constitution, a display of courage that defied the terrorists, disproved the critics, and should always inspire the world.

Tragically, the progress threatened to unravel in 2006. The new Government Iraqis elected took months to form. In the meantime, a terrorist attack on a Shi'a shrine in Samarra drove sectarian tensions past the breaking point. Sunni extremists, including Al Qaida terrorists, and Shi'a extremists, some backed by Iran, slaughtered innocent Iraqis in brutal attacks and reprisal killings. And across the country, political and economic activity was set back.

We took a hard look at the situation and responded with the surge. This dramatic shift in policy had two primary goals. The first was