



## Interview With Sergey Buntman of Ekho Movsky

### Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Moscow, Russia

May 15, 2007

**QUESTION:** Okay, I will do my first question. The question; its very strange situation of Mr. Putin's speech on 9 of May. It seemed to compare the American foreign policy to with the Reich. It's now the situation is clear and President Putin, if he gives some -- any explanation of this subject?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, I have talked to my Russian colleague Sergey Lavrov about this and he says and assures me that the President was speaking of extremists, not of the United States. That would be, of course, fitting because the United States was an ally of Russia against Nazism. And also, if in fact that is what the President meant, then we accept that that is what he meant.

But we do need to make certain that we lower the level of the rhetoric between our countries because it makes it hard to concentrate on the many concrete accomplishments, the many concrete aspects of cooperation that we have.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Let's go to the concrete (inaudible) problems. You know Kosovo is main problem. If Russia puts a veto on the independence of Kosovo, the United States are they ready to recognize Kosovo in unilateral way?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, we --

**QUESTION:** Are you ready?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Yes. Well, we are trying to get to the place where we can take care of Russia's concerns, the concerns of Serbia and of others in the way that the resolution is drafted. So we - the French have put out a resolution on Kosovo. It does not say Kosovo must be independent, but it allows for Kosovo to be independent. And it's important now to recognize that Kosovo will never again be part of Serbia. It's not possible. So before we get to the point at which Russia makes a decision, we still have some work to do to see if we can accommodate everybody's concerns and everyone's interests.

**QUESTION:** What do you think for how much time it can be worked and for the - some kind of independence for Kosovo? It will take how much time?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, I think not very much longer. The --

**QUESTION:** No? A year?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, no --

**QUESTION:** Two?

**SECRETARY RICE:** No, I think we will go to the Security Council for a vote very soon, in a matter of weeks. But the key is that people are worried about two things. They're worried about the precedent, that there may be others who say, well, if Kosovo was independent, why can't we be independent?

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible.)

**SECRETARY RICE:** (Inaudible) others. But it is not a precedent.

**QUESTION:** Why?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Kosovo is a special set of circumstances coming out of the special history of the Balkan wars. It is before the Security Council because of that history. And there isn't any chance now for Kosovo and Serbia to live together, and it would be best for both of them to get on with their futures. Serbia is a great nation. The Serbs are a great people. Serbia needs to be integrated into Europe. But as long as this issue is there, it's going to be difficult to do that. So Kosovo has a future. Serbia has a future. Both have a European perspective. And I think we need to do that.

The other issue that people worry about is the protection of Serbian minorities in Kosovo.

**QUESTION:** In Kosovo.

**SECRETARY RICE:** In Kosovo. And there, there would be a period of what we're calling supervised independence where the international community could make certain that Serbia is fulfilling all of its obligations. It would also be the case that we are working, perhaps through a special envoy and other means, to make sure that the Serbian minorities, religious sites, religious practices, are all protected. We have a very strong interest in that as well.

**QUESTION:** Is it possible that some international police forces or military forces to (inaudible) from the Serbian population in Kosovo? What do you think?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, there are already forces, KFOR forces --

**QUESTION:** Yes, and (inaudible) -

**SECRETARY RICE:** And KFOR will remain there. And there's a very strong commitment to making sure that a new Kosovo, an independent Kosovo, would be a Kosovo where all people can live and live safely. The Balkans have had enough wars, enough mistreatment of minorities. It's time for the Balkans now to have a modern future, one that looks to economic development, to engagement with the international system, to educational exchanges among people.

**QUESTION:** Yes.

**SECRETARY RICE:** It's time for that. And so let's get Kosovo behind us - the independent Kosovo, the decision about the independent Kosovo, and move on to that future.

**QUESTION:** Okay. In the Eastern Europe, the United States and Russia have opposite view or point of views on the missile defense system. Did you speak about this problem with Mr. Putin and what do you suggest for United States, Russia and what is the Russian (inaudible)?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, I did say that the United States wants to cooperate with Russia on missile defense. We need to address, to deal with, the threats of today, of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and of the threats that are emerging - missile technology in Iran, North Korea and so forth.

I understand how missile defense was viewed in the 1980s. I understand when the Soviet Union and the United States were enemies that missile defense was viewed as a threat to the Soviet Union. I did not believe that, but I could understand how the Soviet leadership worried about what missile defenses might mean.

In the current environment, we face the same threats -- the United States, Russia, Europe - and so we should be developing the technologies to address those threats. Defensive systems hurt no one. They are simply meant to intercept missile launches that might try and harm our populations.

So this is the point that I made, I've made to the President, I will make to the Foreign Minister.

**QUESTION:** And to President Putin?

**SECRETARY RICE:** And - yes. And that we want to cooperate. Now, I think the technical issues of how we might cooperate, what our missile defense system would do, how it might evolve, that is appropriate for Secretary Gates and me to address with Foreign Minister Lavrov and the Defense Minister. And we have developed a new format - the 2+2 - which we will have meet, I think, early in the fall, and we can have a more regular way of discussing these issues so that there are no surprises.

**QUESTION:** Okay. And another problem is conventional arms, conventional forces in Europe. And President Putin said that Russia can go out of this treaty. Does it concern the United States?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, it's a treaty obligation and it's one of the most important treaties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It's a very important treaty. I know that a lot has changed since 1990 and 1991, but the CFE Treaty is a part of the European architecture at the end - after the end of the Cold War. But there will be a conference coming up. The (inaudible) conference is coming up. It's already scheduled. That is a good point for everyone to make their concerns known about the treaty, and Russia should raise any concerns that it has. I think it would be better to do so in the context of the treaty rather than trying to get out of the treaty.

**QUESTION:** Than outside.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** And the last point is Central Asia, new problem and the American presence in Central Asia with oil and gas problems now, the pipelines. And did you speak to President Putin about it?

**SECRETARY RICE:** We did not discuss this issue today, but I will discuss it with Minister Lavrov. My view is very strongly, and the view of the Administration, we need to have diversity of supply, we need to have diversity of routes, we need to have as many pipelines and as much supply as is economically possible.

In the long run, we all need to be less dependent on hydrocarbons because the environment demands that we find alternative sources of fuel. We are working with Russia on civil nuclear energy cooperation, for instance. Civil nuclear power would give us a way to have power generation without the environmental problems that the carbon-based energy produces.

So we can have a cooperative energy relationship. Energy should not be used in any way as a political tool. It should be an economic basis so that the world economy can have the supplies that it needs.

**QUESTION:** Not a monopoly.

**SECRETARY RICE:** No one needs a monopoly in this area. We - it doesn't work that way any longer. The need for technology, the need for consortia to be able to deal with the very heavy economic costs of building pipelines, of developing oil fields that are very difficult to develop in different parts of the country, in deep water. The days when one can simply control all of the resources are very much behind us.

**QUESTION:** Are we strategical partners, the United States and Russia?

**SECRETARY RICE:** The United States and Russia are clearly in many ways partners on very many issues. We're global partners.

**QUESTION:** Global partners.

**SECRETARY RICE:** We're global partners on trying to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon and dealing with that through the Security Council, on the six-party talks on North Korea. Probably our most important global partnership, to my mind, is the work that we are doing on nuclear nonproliferation. The President has talked about the need to strengthen the nonproliferation regime. We have a landmark agreement on global nuclear terrorism. We have so much work to do together. Sergey Lavrov and I are together in the Middle East Quartet that is trying to promote a peace between Israelis and Palestinians and the Arabs. So we're global partners. We have much cooperation. Sometimes we disagree. We're both big powers with a lot of different policies. We're going to disagree sometimes.

But what I would say is we should do so in a way that respects our partnership, that respects our policies, that respects what we are doing together and we can concentrate on what is concrete. Because the American people, I think, have a natural affinity for the Russian people, for Russian culture, for Russians, and I think Russians for Americans.

And so when I think about where the relationship is going, yes, I think about the work we're doing together on nuclear nonproliferation, but I also think about the many opportunities that we now have for Americans to visit Russia and Russians to visit Americans. I think about the Russian students that I've taught at Stanford and the American students that are studying here. That's the future and that's where I hope we'll concentrate.

**QUESTION:** Thank you very much.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you very much.

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