

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Don Sherwood and the Pennsylvania Victory Committee in La Plume, Pennsylvania
October 19, 2006

Thank you all very much. Please be seated. I'm glad to be back again. Thanks for welcoming me. I am pleased to be here with Don Sherwood. He is the right man to represent the people of the Tenth Congressional District from the State of Pennsylvania.

He has got a record of accomplishment. He has been a strong supporter of those brave men and women who wear our Nation's uniform. He has been a supporter of the Tobyhanna Army Depot. He's a strong supporter of Pennsylvania's dairy farmers. When it came time to make sure highway money was available for Pennsylvania, he did his job that you expect him to do. He's a person who has been working hard to increase jobs here in this part of the world. He's worked to cut taxes on the working people. He understands it's important to keep the people of the district safe. I strongly believe the people in this part of Pennsylvania need to send Don Sherwood back to the United States Congress.

And I'm glad Carol is here with us today. I read Carol Sherwood's letter to the citizens of this congressional district. I was deeply moved by her words. Carol's letter shows what a caring and courageous woman she is. I'm delighted to be here with Carol and their daughter Maria. Thanks for coming.

I am not Sherwood's first choice to be here at the fundraiser. *[Laughter]* Both he and Carol wanted Laura to come. *[Laughter]* But she sends her very best to the Sherwoods, and she, like me, strongly believes Don Sherwood ought to be reelected to the United States Congress.

I want to thank Dr. Ned Boehm, the president of Keystone College—and Regina. Regina told me she broke her foot playing golf. *[Laughter]* In 2½ years, I'm

going to try that out myself. *[Laughter]* But thank you very much for letting us use this facility on this beautiful campus, and thanks very much for being involved in higher education. I appreciate your leadership, and I know the people of this part of the world do as well.

I thank very much Rob Gleason, who's the chairman of the Republican State Committee for Pennsylvania, and Bob Asher, who is the national committeeman. The reason I bring up these folks is that a lot of politics depends upon the capacity of the grassroots to do their job. So first, I want to thank you very much for raising the money, filling the hat. It's important for Don Sherwood's campaign to be able to advertise, and he will continue to do so. But in order for him to win, we got to turn out the vote. And so for those of you who are involved with grassroots politics, I want to thank you in advance for what you're going to do to get people to the polls come November.

I also want to thank my friend Bill Scranton, who's with us today. Bill and Maryla are fine citizens of this part of the world, and I'm proud to call him friend. And I really want to thank you for being here. Thanks for coming.

It's a big campaign coming up, and I like being out on the campaign trail because I like sharing with the people what I believe. And I'm looking forward to working with Congressman Sherwood the next time Congress convenes in—not in a lame-duck session. We got a lot to do. One thing we got to do is make sure we become less dependent on foreign sources of oil. You know, I understand the price of gasoline is dropping, but that should not obscure the fact that we have a national security problem when it comes to relying upon

oil from parts of the world that don't like us.

And so I want to continue to work with Congressman Sherwood to make sure we promote new technologies, new ways to power our automobiles. I envision a day when ethanol becomes more widespread, where Pennsylvania farmers are actually providing the fuel necessary to run our cars. For the sake of economic security and for the sake of national security, we must continue to diversify away from foreign sources of crude oil.

No, we'll work together on issues like health care. I appreciate the fact that he was a strong supporter of Medicare modernization. For the seniors who are on prescription drugs here in this part of the district, they understand that this new Medicare bill is a good bill. No longer do poor seniors have to choose between medicine and food, thanks to people like Congressman Don Sherwood.

But as this campaign gets closer to the stretch, you will hear a lot of rhetoric and a lot of partisan charges coming from the other side. Their goal is to distract you from the two main issues in this campaign, and they are these: Which party will keep your taxes low, and which party will take the steps necessary to defend the United States of America?

My administration, our party, and Don Sherwood have clear records on both these issues. Let me first start with taxes. Republicans have a clear philosophy. We believe that the people who know best how to spend your money are the people that earn that money, and that is you. The Democrats believe that they can spend your money better than you can. So we worked hard to ensure that the working families in this district and all around the country kept more of their paychecks when we enacted the largest tax cuts since Ronald Reagan was President of the United States.

Our record is clear, and so is the record of the Democrats in Washington, DC. When we cut taxes for everybody who pays

income taxes, the Democrats voted against it. When we reduced the marriage penalty, Democrats voted against it. When we cut taxes on small businesses, Democrats voted against it. When we lowered taxes for families with children, the Democrats voted against it. We put the death tax on the road to extinction; the Democrats voted against it time and time again. When the Democrats had a chance to deliver tax relief for the American people, they voted no. This is a party that is genetically hostile to tax relief. *[Laughter]*

With every vote they have cast, they make clear to the American people, higher taxes are part of the congressional Democrats' DNA. When we passed tax relief over the Democrat objections in 2003, the minority leader in the House called it a tragedy and predicted it would not create jobs or grow our economy.

And here are the actual facts: The tax cuts we passed put more than a trillion dollars in the hands of American workers and families and small businesses and farmers, and the American people have used that money to fuel a strong and growing economy. The United States economy is the envy of the industrialized world.

Since overcoming the recession, the terrorist attacks, war, hurricanes, corporate scandals, this economy has had 37 straight months of job growth, since August of 2003. And since that day, we've added 6.6 million new jobs. The national unemployment rate is low. The progrowth economic policies that Don Sherwood supported have made this economy strong, and we intend to keep it growing.

As well, because of growing our economy, which increases tax revenues into the Federal Treasury, and being wise about how we spend your money, we met our goal of reducing our Federal deficit in half 3 years ahead of schedule. Democrats may call this a tragedy; we call it success.

And now you're going to hear that same old, tired rhetoric, Washington Democrats talking about how they're going to raise

taxes only on the rich. You know, they say they're for fairness and they're for tax relief for the middle class. But we've heard this before, and the American people shouldn't be fooled by this kind of rhetoric.

You might remember, back in 1992, the Democrats campaigned on a tax cut for the middle class. They won, but when they took office, the middle class tax cut they promised turned out to be the largest tax increase in American history. The moral of the story is that when you hear Democrats talk about fairness, there's a pretty good chance they're going to try to get in your pocket and raise your taxes.

There is no doubt in my mind that the key issue in this campaign, as far as domestic politics is concerned, is: Who is going to keep your taxes low, and who will raise your taxes? The Republican Party and Don Sherwood will make sure the working people have more money in their pocket.

Our most important job is to protect America. The most important job of the Federal Government is to use all our assets to protect the American people from an attack. We are still under threat. I wish I could report otherwise. I wish I could tell you everything was fine in the world and the enemy wasn't around that would come and try to harm us again. But I wouldn't be doing my job if I reported that. An enemy still plots and plans to attack the American people. These people are nothing but coldblooded killers. They're not religious people. I don't believe religious people kill innocent men and women and children. I believe the President must call these people by what they are: They are evil. And our most important job is to protect the American people from further attack.

You can't negotiate with these people. You can't hope to have a treaty with these people. The best way to defend America from an attack is to defeat them overseas so we do not have to face them here at home.

There are major differences between the political parties on the issue of how best to protect the American people. You know, the enemy has got to be right once, and we've got to be right 100 percent of the time to protect you.

And that's why I thought it was very important to institute a program that would enable our professionals at the Central Intelligence Agency to question people that we captured on the battlefield in order to be able to gain information necessary to do our most important job, which is to protect the American people.

And recently we had a vote on a program in the House of Representatives. When it came time to stand up and be counted, Don Sherwood voted to support the professionals at the CIA. And that cannot be said for most of his Democrat colleagues in the House. The American people must understand that nearly 80 percent of the House Democrats voted to take away this vital tool, which is necessary to protect the American people from further attack.

The other clear example is the PATRIOT Act. This good bill tore down the wall that made it impossible for law enforcement and intelligence to share information. I know that's hard for you to believe, that when intelligence had information, they couldn't share it with those who were responsible for protecting you. But that's what happened. Over time, there was a wall. And so I called for the Congress to pass the PATRIOT Act that enabled us to share information so we could break up terrorist cells, which we have—in California, in Texas, in New Jersey and Illinois and North Carolina, Ohio, New York, Virginia, and Florida. The tools inherent in the PATRIOT Act have been vital and necessary to enable us to do our job, which is to protect the American people from further attack. When this important piece of legislation came up for reauthorization, Congressman Don Sherwood supported this vital law, but more than 75 percent of the House Democrats voted to block it.

There's a fundamental difference of opinion all across the Nation about which party understands the stakes in this war on terror. After 9/11, I decided it was essential that if Al Qaida or an Al Qaida affiliate was making a phone call into the United States of America, we needed to know why in order to be able to do our job and protect you. Recently this bill came up for a vote in the United States Congress. The United States Congressman from the Tenth Congressional District of Pennsylvania voted to support our professionals who are doing everything we can to protect you, but almost 90 percent of the House Democrats voted against it.

Rarely has a single series of votes summed up the difference between the two parties so clearly. If the House Democrats had their way, the PATRIOT Act would have expired; the CIA interrogation program would have been shut down; the terrorist surveillance program would have been discontinued. And that is the record the Democrats have to run on, and it is no record to be proud of in a time of war. We Republicans understand that we must give our professionals all the tools necessary to protect the American people.

Iraq is an important issue in this campaign. I strongly believe that Iraq is a central front in the war on terror. Oh, I know some of them in Washington are saying Iraq is a diversion from the war on terror. That's not what Usama bin Laden thinks. That's not what the number-two man in Al Qaida thinks, Mr. Zawahiri. It's important to listen to the words of the enemy. Both of those men have said that it's just a matter of time for America to lose her nerve and to leave Iraq. And that's what they want to do, so they can have a safe haven from which to plot and plan and to attack America again.

These extremists are bound by a common ideology of hate, and their objective is to establish that ideology throughout the Middle East. Their objective is to topple moderate government. Their objective is to

use energy as a resource to bring the West to its knees. And Iraq is a central part of this war against them.

On this question, the Democrats have been all over the place. Most leading Democrats argue we should pull our troops out of Iraq, some, "Right away," others, "In just a few months," even if the terrorists have not yet been defeated. Others recommend moving our troops to an island some 5,000 miles away. Nineteen House Democrats introduced legislation that would cut off all funds for our troops in Iraq. All these proposals have one thing in common: They would have our country quit in Iraq before the job is done. For the sake of the security of the United States of America, we must defeat the enemy in Iraq. For the sake of world peace, for the sake of peace for our children, we must not let the extremists have their way in this vital front in the war on terror. So America will stay, we will fight, and we will win in Iraq. *[Applause]* Thank you.

This summer, we saw what happens when a Democrat rejects his party's doctrine of cut-and-run. Senator Joe Lieberman, a three-term Democrat from Connecticut, supports completing the mission in Iraq, supports victory in Iraq. And for taking this stand, he was purged from his party. Think about what that means. Six years ago, the Democrats thought Joe Lieberman was good enough to run for Vice President of the United States. Now, because he supports victory in Iraq, they don't think he's fit to be in their party. There's only one position in the Democrat Party that everybody seems to agree on: If you want to be a Democrat these days, you can be for almost anything, but victory in Iraq is not an option.

The stakes in this war couldn't be higher. The security of the United States is at stake, and we have no illusions—it's tough. The fighting is tough, because an enemy understands what a defeat in Iraq would mean for their ambitions. We are a nation

at war, and we must do everything in our power to win that war.

Our goal in Iraq is clear and unchanging: Our goal is victory. What is changing are the tactics we use to pursue that goal and defeat our enemies. In Iraq, we face adversaries who are brutal, and they are sophisticated. Our commanders on the ground are constantly adjusting to stay ahead of the enemy. We have a strategy that allows us to be flexible and to adapt to changing circumstances. We will continue to make the changes necessary to support our troops, and to support those 12 million people in Iraq who want to be free, and to support the new democracy in Iraq that represents the unity of that country. There is one thing we will not do: We will not pull out our troops from Iraq before the terrorists are defeated. We will not pull out before Iraq can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself.

I'm going to make it clear to the American people what a policy of retreat would mean. Retreating from Iraq would allow the terrorists to gain a new state—new safe haven to replace the one they lost in Afghanistan. Retreating from Iraq would dishonor the service of our brave men and women who have sacrificed in that country and have given their lives in that country, which would mean their sacrifice would be in vain. Retreating from Iraq would crush the hopes of the millions of people who just simply want to live in peace, if America were to retreat. Retreating from Iraq would embolden the terrorists and make our country more vulnerable to new attacks. If we were to leave Iraq before the job is done, the enemy would follow us here to America.

We know this because that's what the terrorists tell us. Usama bin Laden states that early American withdrawal from places like Beirut and Somalia are proof that the United States does not have the stomach to stay in this fight. The terrorists are trying to wait us out. They're hoping we will lose our nerve and retreat in disgrace. If we

were to follow the Democrat's prescriptions and withdraw from Iraq, we would be fulfilling Usama bin Laden's highest aspirations. There can be legitimate disagreements on the best way to win this war, and there are. But we should at least be able to agree that the path to victory is not to do precisely what the terrorists want.

The stakes in this war are high, and so are the stakes in this election. I want to tell you—I want you to imagine what the House of Representatives would look like if the Democrats get their way this November. The chairman of the House Ways and Means would be a Congressman who suggested cutting off funding for our troops in Iraq. The Speaker of the House, the official third in line for the Presidency, would be a Congresswoman who voted against renewing the PATRIOT Act, against creating the Department of Homeland Security, against removing Saddam Hussein from power, against continuing the terrorist surveillance program, and against questioning terrorists in the CIA program. The Speaker would be a Congresswoman who has called liberating 25 million Iraqis a grotesque mistake. The Speaker would be a Congresswoman who said catching Usama bin Laden would not make America any safer. No wonder she says this election should not be about national security. *[Laughter]*

Given the Democrats' record on national security, I understand why they want to change the subject. I don't want to change the subject. I'm going to keep talking about this subject until election day. The most important job of the government is to protect you.

We'll win. We will protect the American people by staying on the offense. There's just a different attitude in Washington, if you really listen carefully to the debate. Some believe that we should respond after attack. I understand the consequences of attack, and so do you. We must take threats seriously before they fully materialize.

We got a fantastic group of men and women who wear our uniform. They are motivated, they are skilled, and Don Sherwood and I will make sure they have all the tools necessary to protect the American people.

And we have one other asset at our disposal to protect the American people, and that is the power of liberty. You know, there's an interesting debate in the world about whether or not liberty is universal or not. I believe it is. I believe there's an Almighty, and I believe a gift of the Almighty to each man and woman and child in this world is the desire to be free. That's what I believe. I'm not surprised when 12 million people defied car bombers and said, "We want to live in a land of liberty."

You know, I was amazed that they defied the car bombers, but I'm not surprised, because I believe everybody wants to be free. I believe people have a deep desire to live in peace, and I know that liberty can help yield the peace we want for generations to come. We're in an ideological struggle between those of us who love liberty and extremists who can't stand the thought of liberty. And it's the call of our generation. It's the challenge of our time. But I have great confidence that our generation will rise and meet the challenge like previous generations of Americans.

You know, I was reminded of that, and one of my favorite stories to share with our fellow citizens is my trip down to Memphis, Tennessee, to Elvis's place, with former Prime Minister Koizumi. He was sitting Prime Minister at the time. People say, "Why did you go down there?" I say, "Well, I had never been to Elvis's place, and I thought it would be kind of fun to go down there." Koizumi wanted to go to Elvis's place because he's an Elvis fan. But I also wanted to tell an interesting story about the power of liberty to our fellow citizens.

See, I find it very interesting that an 18-year-old George H.W. Bush volunteered

to fight the Japanese. After all, they were the sworn enemy of the United States of America. And then his son is on an airplane, Air Force One, flying down to Memphis, Tennessee, talking about the peace; talking about how we can work together to convince the leader in North Korea to give up his nuclear weapons ambitions; talking about why it was important for Japan to have a thousand troops helping that young democracy in the heart of the Middle East.

See, Koizumi understands what I know, that democracy will be a defeat to an ideology of hatred in the long run. I found it interesting that my dad fought the Japanese and his son is talking about the peace with the Prime Minister of the former enemy. Something happened, and what happened was, Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. Democracies yield the peace we all want. Someday an American President will be sitting down talking about the peace with duly elected leaders in the Middle East, and generations of Americans will be better off. That's the stake in the election. These are the stakes in this election.

I want to thank you for supporting Don Sherwood. I want to thank you for being involved in the process. Now go out and turn out the vote, and he's going to win.

May God bless you, and may God bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:04 p.m. at Keystone College. In his remarks, he referred to Regina Boehm, wife of Edward G. Boehm, Jr., president, Keystone College; Pennsylvania gubernatorial candidate Bill Scranton, and his wife, Maryla; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea.

Remarks at a Reception for Senatorial Candidate George Allen in Richmond, Virginia

October 19, 2006

Thank you all. Thank you for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome, and thank you for supporting George Allen to be re-elected United States Senator of the great State of Virginia.

I'm proud to be here with him. He's a man who has earned the confidence of the people of this State as a delegate, as the Governor—and a very successful Governor—as a United States Senator. He's the kind of fellow who says he's going to—what he tells you on the campaign trail, he does in office. He doesn't need a poll or a focus group to tell him what to think or what to say. George Allen is a man of strong principle; he is a leader; he is the right man to be the United States Senator from the State of Virginia.

And he married well, and so did I. See, we got something in common. We're both named George, and we both married smart, beautiful women. Laura is very fond of the Allens. She understands that they are honorable, decent people—honest, good folks. We're proud to call them friends, and I know the people of Virginia are proud to call George Allen United States Senator.

I appreciate the Lieutenant Governor—Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling and his wife, Jean Ann, and the family are with us today. Governor, thanks for coming. Speaker Bill Howell is with us. Appreciate you being here, Mr. Speaker.

I had the honor of meeting an interesting fellow at the airport today—as a matter of fact, he was at the steps there when I got off of Air Force One, and we traveled throughout his senatorial district a little bit because we went and bought some pumpkins. *[Laughter]* His name is State Senator Benny Lambert. See, the Allen campaign understands that you reach across party line. He did that as the Governor of the State of Virginia; he has done that as the

United States Senator. There's no doubt in my mind this good man will win by getting the votes of Republicans, discerning Democrats, and wise independents.

I really want to thank you all for coming. I appreciate you contributing to his campaign, and I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here for what you're fixing to do. See, we're getting close to voting time. We're coming down the stretch. And for those of you who are going to be putting up the signs and making the phone calls and going to your houses of worship or community centers urging people to do their duty as an American citizen and voting for George Allen, I want to thank you. A lot of times the grassroots folks don't get the thanks that you deserve. I'm here giving you thanks; I know the Senator gives you thanks. Work hard. We need him in the United States Senate, for the good of the United States of America.

I'm looking forward to continue to working with Senator Allen to diversify our energy. I'm looking forward to promoting ethanol and new technologies so that we can change our habits and become less dependent on foreign sources of oil. For the economic security of the United States and for the national security of the United States, we need to get off oil.

I'm looking forward to continue to work with Senator Allen to make sure that patients and doctors make the decisions for health care, not for people in Washington, DC. Now, there's a lot of domestic issues that I look forward to working with Senator Allen on, but there's no bigger issue than what we do with the people's money—no bigger issue.

There's a lot of rhetoric in these campaigns, a lot of needless noise in a campaign. A lot of time it's to obscure the