

general Jon Bruning, secretary of state John A. Gale of Nebraska; Mayor Jay Vavricek of Grand Island, NE; former President Saddam

Hussein of Iraq; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea.

Remarks at a Kansas Victory 2006 Rally in Topeka, Kansas November 5, 2006

The President. Thank you all very much. It's an honor to be here. Thanks for coming out tonight. So Jim Ryun says, "Do you want a race?" I said, "No, but I want you reelected to the United States Congress." I appreciate you coming. I'm proud to be here with Jim Ryun. He's a decent, honorable man who works hard on behalf of the people from Kansas. He deserves to be re-elected Congressman.

He is a compassionate conservative. He has run his own business. By the way, we've got plenty of lawyers in Washington. [*Laughter*] Send somebody up there who has made a payroll. He started Sounds of Success, that helped children with hearing difficulties realize their full potential. He doesn't need a poll or a focus group to tell him what to believe.

I thank you for being here, and I'm asking you to send this good man back to the United States Congress. I'm not the only one in my family who feels this way; Laura feels this way. Some guy just yelled, "Happy anniversary." That's what I was supposed to say today. You know, no better way to spend your anniversary—your 29th anniversary—with somebody you love, than being here asking for the vote for Jim Ryun. She sends her very best to Jim and Anne.

I'm proud to be here, as well, with Senator Sam Brownback of the great State of Kansas. More importantly, his wife, Mary, is here. Proud to be here with Congressman Todd Tiahrt, who you just heard from, and his wife, Vicki; Jim Barnett, running for Governor, and he needs your vote;

Susan Wagle, running for Lieutenant Governor, she could use your vote as well.

I appreciate very much that Chuck Ahner is with us. He's running for the Third Congressional District here in the State of Kansas. We've got your attorney general for the great State of Kansas here, who's asking for the vote. Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh is with us today.

Most importantly, I want to say thanks to the grassroots activists who are here. You're the folks who put up the signs, make the phone calls, and get your fellow citizens to the polls. I want to thank you for what you have done, and I want to thank you for what you're going to do over the next 48 hours.

We're heading to the finish line, and we're asking for your help. Whatever you do, don't pay attention to the prognosticators, the pundits. See, a bunch of them have already decided that the verdict's in, but they forgot that the folks of Kansas hadn't got to the polls yet. But this isn't the first time this has happened. You might remember in 2004—some of the folks in Washington were listening to the prognosticators, and then they starting picking out their offices in the West Wing. [*Laughter*] And then the people actually voted; the movers weren't needed.

When you turn out the vote and vote yourself and put Jim Ryun back in the United States Congress, we're going to control the House, and we'll control the United States Senate as well. And there's a reason why we're going to win: One, we got you behind us, but also we're going

to win because we share the values and the priorities of the American people.

And we've got a record to run on. We've delivered results. One of the things that Jim and I talk about is the need to make sure our farm economy is strong. See, we believe if the ag sector is doing well, the entire U.S. economy does well.

We also understand that if you become dependent—if you stay dependent on foreign oil, it creates a national security risk. And so therefore, Jim Ryun has worked to make sure that we encourage renewable fuel standards. In other words, we're going to use Kansas products to power our automobiles so we become less dependent on oil. If you're somebody who makes a living because of agriculture, it is in your economic interest to send Jim Ryun back to the United States Congress.

Jim Ryun is a strong, strong supporter of programs to make sure our veterans' health care benefits work. See, he believes in supporting our veterans just like he believes in supporting those who wear the uniform today. If you're involved with defense here in this congressional district, I strongly urge you to support Jim Ryun.

I also want to talk about Jim's belief in family values. He lives them. He not only believes in family values, he practices family values. And he is working to prevent the institution of marriage being redefined by activist judges.

I want to talk about two issues that divide Republicans from Democrats. One of them is taxes, and the other one is the defense of this homeland. Let me start with taxes. We believe that you can spend your money better than the Federal Government can. I don't care what they're telling you here at home; Democrats believe they can spend your money better than you can.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. We also believe that if you have more money in your pocket, more of your own money in your pocket to save, spend, or invest, the economy benefits. That is our philosophy, but you don't ex-

pect us to be in Washington philosophizing. You expect us to be doing something about it. That is why I signed the largest tax cuts since Ronald Reagan was the President.

We cut the taxes on everybody who pays income taxes. We doubled the child tax credit. We reduced the marriage penalty. We cut taxes on small businesses. We cut taxes on capital gains and dividends to encourage investment. And for the sake of our family businesses and for the sake of our farmers and for the sake of our ranchers, we put the death tax on the road to extinction.

We had a spirited debate in Washington over these tax cuts. You might remember some of the Democrats' predictions. They said if we had tax cuts it wouldn't create jobs; if we had tax cuts, it would not increase wages; if we had tax cuts, it would cause the Federal deficit to explode. Well, the facts are in. The tax cuts have led to a strong and growing economy. Last Friday we got more good news about the economy. The national unemployment rate is down to 4.4 percent. In the last 3 months, we've added 470,000 new jobs. Real wages rose 2.4 percent over the past year, and we cut the deficit in half, 3 years ahead of schedule. If the Democrats' election predictions are as good as their economic predictions, we're going to have a good day on November the 7th.

If you live in this congressional district or in any other district around the country, you must understand that if you vote Democrat, you're voting for a tax increase.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Now understand that in a campaign like this, that the Democrats don't want you to know their plans. Listen to the words of the leading Democrat in the House of Representatives, a woman who thinks she's going to be the Speaker, but she's not. She said—when they asked about tax cuts, she said, "We love tax cuts." Well, given her record, she must be a secret admirer. [Laughter] She and her party voted against every single one of the tax

cuts we passed. If this is their definition of love, I'd sure hate to see what hate looks like.

If the tax cuts we passed are allowed to expire, if the tax cuts we passed are not extended, if the tax cuts we passed are not made permanent, you get a tax increase. That's how it's going to work. And so they asked the person who thinks he's going to be chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, "Can you think of any of the tax cuts we've passed that ought to be extended?" And see, the Ways and Means Committee is the tax-writing committee in the House. They said, "Can you think of one?" He said, "I can't think of one tax cut that should be extended." In other words, every one of the tax cuts we passed ought to lapse, which means your taxes go up.

I'll give you an example. If the tax cuts are not extended or made permanent, the child tax credit will go from \$1,000 a child to \$500 a child, see.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. So when you get home this evening and you're sitting around the table—anybody here got four kids? I'll use you as an example. There you are at the table; you got five, okay. Five, okay. She's got five kids. So when you get home: one, two, three, four, five times 500. That's \$2,500. That's your tax increase if you vote Democrat. That's your tax increase if the Democrats take over the House of Representatives. That 2,500 may not seem like a lot to people in Washington, but it seems like a lot to me and Jim Ryun, and that's why we're going to keep your taxes low.

This election is taking place in an historic time for our country, and when our children and grandchildren look back on this period, one question will overwhelm all the rest: Did we do everything in our power to win the war on terror? I wish I could report to you that we were not at war, but we are. We face a brutal enemy that has no conscience, an enemy that does have an ideology.

People in our country wonder why an enemy would want to attack a compassionate people like those of us in the United States, and the answer is, because we thwart their ambitions to spread their dark vision around the world. They believe—we believe in freedom; they don't. We believe in liberty; they don't. They understand America won't change.

You cannot negotiate with these people. You can't hope for the best from these people. The best way to do our most important job—is to protect you—is to defeat them overseas so we do not have to face them here at home.

Part of our strategy is to stay on the offense. The other part of our strategy is to protect you on the homeland. Now, the problem we face is that the enemy has to be right one time, and we have to be right 100 percent of the time. So I went to Congress and said, here are some vital tools that are necessary to protect the American people.

Let me give you three examples. One, there was a wall that separated our intelligence folks from sharing information with our law enforcement people. Now, that's probably hard for you to understand, but that was the reality. In this new kind of war, we must have good intelligence, and the people who are responsible for protecting you must be able to act on it. So I asked the Congress to pass the PATRIOT Act, and the PATRIOT Act made sure that folks had the tools necessary to protect you. And when that bill came up for reauthorization, the vast majority of Democrats in the House and the Senate voted against it.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. It's important for people in this district and around the country to understand there is a different mindset. You cannot wait to respond to an attack. You got to act before the attack.

I felt like if Al Qaida was making a phone call into the United States from outside the United States, we better understand why. If our job is to protect you, we've got to have the tools necessary to do so. When this bill came up in front of the House of Representatives, the vast majority of Democrats voted against it. I felt like it was important that when we picked somebody up off the battlefield, we better understand what that person is thinking.

Let me give you an example. We captured Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. Our intelligence officers believe he was the mastermind of the September the 11th attacks. My attitude is, if he knew about one attack, he might know about another attack, and we better find out why and what he knows.

The vast majority of Democrats voted against giving our CIA professionals the tools necessary to question detainees. There is a different mindset in Washington. The best way to protect you is to make sure our professionals have the tools necessary to do so, and the best way to make sure they do is to send Jim Ryun back to the United States Congress.

We are in a global war against an enemy that wants to strike us. And this war is fought on a variety of fronts. One of the lessons of September the 11th is that when we see a threat overseas, we must take each threat seriously, before it comes to hurt us. It's a lesson that every President must understand in this new world we live in. I saw a threat in Saddam Hussein; Members of the Congress from both political parties saw the same threat; the United Nations saw the threat in Saddam Hussein. The decision I made to remove Saddam Hussein was the right decision, and the world is better off for it.

And today we witnessed a landmark event in the history of Iraq. Saddam Hussein was convicted and sentenced to death by the Iraqi High Tribunal. Saddam Hussein's trial is a milestone in the Iraqi people's efforts to replace the rule of a

tyrant with the rule of law. It's a major achievement for this young democracy. We congratulate the Iraqi people, and as I do so, I congratulate the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States for their hard work. Without their courage and skill, this verdict never would have happened.

Iraq is the central front in this war on terror. Oh, I've heard all the lines, and I know you have as well. "No, it's a distraction in the war on terror," the Democrats say in Washington. Well, that's not what I think, and that's not what our troops think, and that's not what Usama bin Laden thinks. Usama bin Laden has called this fight the third world war. He has said that victory for the terrorists in Iraq will mean America's defeat and disgrace forever. They just think different in Washington. You just got to know that. When you go in the booth to vote, you all got to understand that people don't see this world the way I do. I understand that.

I want you to hear the words of the Democrat—leading Democrat in the House. She said, "The President says that fighting them there makes it less likely we will have to fight them here." I do say that because I believe that. She went on to say, "The opposite is true. Because we're fighting them there, it may become more likely we will have to fight them here."

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Iraq is not the reason the terrorists are at war with us. We were not in Iraq when they bombed the World Trade Center in 1993. We were not in Iraq when they blew up the Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. We were not in Iraq when they bombed the USS *Cole*. And we were not in Iraq when they attacked us on September the 11th, 2001. You do not create terrorists by fighting the terrorists. The best way to protect you is to stay on the offense and bring them to justice before they can hurt us again.

Our goal is victory in Iraq. That is our goal, and we got a plan to achieve victory.

And victory means a government that can sustain itself, govern itself, defend itself, and serve as an ally in the war against these extremists and radicals and terrorists.

We got a plan to do just that, but the enemy has got a plan to prevent us. See, they kill innocent men, women, and children, knowing that those images will be on our TV screens. And they believe that the United States does not have the will or the capacity to stay in the fight for the long run. And they recognize that these images, which justifiably horrify many of our citizens, will cause us to leave before the job is done. But they don't understand this administration, nor do they understand millions of our citizens. We're not going to run from thugs and assassins.

Our goal remains the same. Our tactics constantly shift. I have given our commanders on the ground all the flexibility they need and all the tools necessary to achieve victory. And we got great assets for us. We have a plan for victory that will work, and we got a fantastic United States military.

Any time—first of all, no matter what your view about the decisions I have made to protect America, you owe, and everyone owes, a debt of gratitude for the men and women in the United States military. And those of us in Government owe the men and women in uniform all the support necessary, all the pay, all the training, so they can do the job we've asked them to, and Jim Ryun is a strong supporter for the United States military.

There's something else going for us in terms of victory in Iraq, and that's the Iraqis themselves. They have suffered unspeakable violence, yet they are committed to a government of, by, and for the people. You know, I was pleased when nearly 12 million people went to the polls saying, "We want to live in a free society," but I wasn't surprised. And the reason I wasn't surprised is I believe a gift from the Almighty to each man, woman, and child on

the face of the Earth is the desire to be free, is liberty.

And I believe in the universality of freedom. And I believe it's in our interests to help this young democracy survive. It's in our interests to help them on the political track and on the economic track. And at the same time, we're training Iraqis so they can take the fight to the enemy. We'll succeed. Let me tell you this: If I didn't think we're succeed and if I didn't think the cause was noble and just, I'd pull our troops out.

I can't look at the eyes of a mother or wife or husband or dad of a troop in combat if I didn't believe it was essential to the security of this country. As a matter of fact, the only way we won't succeed is if we leave before the job is done. If people go to the polls, I want you to think about the Democrats' plan for victory: There isn't one.

Iraq is the central front on this war, and yet they have no plan for victory. Oh, some of them say we ought to pull out now. Others say we ought to pull out on a fixed date, even though the job hadn't been done. One of the leaders in the House of Representatives—one of the Democrat leaders said—well, they're going to move the troops 5,000 miles away to an island. Nineteen people in the House said, "We're going to cut off the funds right now." In other words, they're all over the lot, but they agree on one thing: Get out before the job is done.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Listen, I'm not saying these people are unpatriotic; I'm just saying they're wrong. You can't win a war unless you're willing to fight the war. The Democrats have taken a calculated gamble in this election that—they think they can win by just criticizing. That's what they believe. You know, if you happen to run into a Democrat candidate, you might want to ask them the simple question: What's your plan?

See, if they say they want to protect the homeland but opposed the PATRIOT Act, ask them: What's your plan? If they say they want to uncover terrorist plots but opposed listening in on terrorists' conversations, just go ahead and ask them: What is your plan? If they say they want to stop new attacks on our country but oppose letting the CIA detain and question the terrorists who might know about what those plots are, ask them this question—

Audience members. What's your plan?

The President. If they say they want to win the war on terror but call for America to pull out of what Al Qaida says is the central front in the war on terror, ask them this question—

Audience members. What's your plan?

The President. They don't have a plan. Harsh criticism is not a plan for victory, and second-guessing is not a strategy. We have a plan, and part of our plan is to send Jim Ryun back to the United States Congress.

Retreat from Iraq before the job is done will make this country more vulnerable to attack. This is a different kind of war. If we were to leave before the job is done, the enemy would follow us here. Leaving before the job is done would embolden the extremists and the radicals and would dash the hopes of millions of people in the Middle East who want to live a peaceful life.

Leaving before the job is done would dishonor the sacrifice of the men and women who have worn the uniform of the United States. The consequences of leaving before the job is done will be felt for generations. The enemy has made it clear that they want to establish safe haven in order to launch further attacks, just like the safe haven they had in Afghanistan.

They have made it clear that they want to drive us out of the Middle East to topple moderate governments as a part of spreading their dark vision of the future throughout the Middle East. They have made it clear that they would like to control re-

sources like energy in order to extract economic blackmail from the West.

Imagine if these enemy were able to control countries and said, "We're going to pull a bunch of oil off the market to run up the price of your oil unless you abandon your alliances"—alliances with Israel, for example—or, "unless you withdraw from the Middle East." Coupled with all this is a country which doesn't like us trying to possess a nuclear weapon. Thirty years from now, people would look back, if this were to happen, and say, "What happened the folks in 2006? How come they couldn't see the impending danger? What clouded their vision—which caused them not to do their duty?"

I want to assure you, I see the impending danger. I see the threats to a future for our children. Therefore, we will fight in Iraq, and we will win in Iraq.

We got one other thing going for us, and that is the power of liberty. I don't know if you all remember, but recently Laura and I took then-sitting Prime Minister of Japan to Elvis's place in Memphis. [*Laughter*] I'd never been there. [*Laughter*] Koizumi wanted to go there. See, he loved Elvis.

But I also want to tell an interesting story about the power of liberty. After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, my dad and many of your relatives said, "I want to go defend this country," and they signed up by the thousands. By the way, the same thing is happening now. And these Americans fought the Japanese as a sworn enemy in a bloody, bloody war.

And yet I'm on Air Force One, flying down to Memphis, talking about how to keep the peace. Isn't that interesting? My dad fought the Japanese, and his son is talking to the leader of the Japanese—the leader of the former enemy—talking about North Korea, what we can do to work together to prevent the North Korea peninsula from having nuclear weapons.

We were talking about the fact that Japan had 1,000 troops in Iraq. See, the

Prime Minister knows what I know. In this ideological struggle of the 21st century, when you find a young democracy—a form of government which defeats the radicals and extremists—you got to support it. We talked about, “To whom much is given, much is required,” and therefore, we’ll continue to lead the fight against HIV/AIDS on the continent of Africa.

My dad fought them, and I’m working to keep the peace with the leader of the very same country. Something happened. What happened was, Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. The message is, liberty has got the capacity to change an enemy into an ally, and liberty has got the capacity to change a region of the world that is resentful and hopeless to a region of the world that has got hope and optimism. Someday—someday American leaders will be sitting down with duly elected leaders from the Middle East talking about the peace, and a generation of Americans will be better off for it.

And these are the stakes in this election. And I thank you for coming out and giving me a chance to tell you what’s on my mind. In 48 hours, our citizens around this country are headed into the box, and they’ve got clear choices to make. If you believe that your health care decisions ought to remain in the hands of bureaucrats, vote Democrat. If you believe that you and your doctors should control your health care decisions, vote Republican.

If you think trial lawyers should be allowed to continue driving good doctors and honest job creators out of business, vote Democrat.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. But if you believe that we should rein in the trial lawyers and protect our physicians and small-business owners from junk lawsuits, you vote Republican. You think activist judges should be allowed to redefine our country and issue new laws from the bench, vote Democrat.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. But if you believe that the role of the judge is to strictly interpret the Constitution and leave the legislating to the legislators, vote Republican.

If you think Medicare was serving our seniors just fine and did not need to be reformed, vote Democrat. But if you believe we were right to expand choices for our seniors and provide better access to affordable prescription drugs, you vote Republican.

You think your family budget can afford more taxes, vote Democrat.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. If you believe you pay more than enough in taxes as it is, and if you believe that you can spend your money better than the Federal Government can, vote Republican.

And finally, if you think the way to protect America and win the war on terror is to criticize your opponents and offer no plan of your own, vote Democrat.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. But if you believe that the way to win the war on terror is to stay on the offense, and if you believe it is necessary to lay the foundation of peace for generations to come, you vote Republican.

I thank you for coming. Go vote. Get your neighbors and friends to vote. And send Jim Ryun back to the United States Congress.

God bless. And God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:10 p.m. at the Kansas Expocentre. In his remarks, he referred to Kansas State Attorney General Phillip D. Kline; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks at a Florida Victory 2006 Rally in Pensacola, Florida
November 6, 2006

The President. Thank you all very much. He just yelled, “Happy birthday,” to Laura—and happy anniversary. Imagine, in a short period of time, a birthday and anniversary and Republican victory on Tuesday.

I appreciate you recognizing Laura. No doubt about it, she is the A Team in my family, and she’s a great First Lady for the United States. And Jeb Bush has been a great Governor for Florida, and I want to thank you for standing with him during 8 years in which he worked hard to improve the lives of every single citizen in this State, regardless of their political party. Jeb is the kind of fellow who did in office what he said he was going to do, and he’s going to go down as one of the great Governors in your State’s history.

I’m proud to be here with Senator Mel Martinez, one of the fine United States Senators. Tomorrow you get to vote for a new Governor, and I strongly suggest you vote for Charlie Crist to be Governor of the State of Florida. He’s experienced; he’s compassionate; and he’ll work hard on behalf of all the citizens of this important State. And while you’re in there voting for Charlie, vote for Katherine Harris for the United States Senate and Bill McCollum to be the attorney general; Tom Lee to be the chief financial officer. And if you know anything about agriculture, you’re going to want Charlie Bronson to be your secretary of agriculture.

I’m proud to be here in the district of a fine United States Congressman, Congressman Jeff Miller. I want to thank you and Vicki for being here. Miller always talks about the good folks in this district. Every time I see him he’s saying, “Don’t you forget the people in the panhandle.” And I say, “Congressman, how could I forget them; I wouldn’t be President without them.”

We’re 24 hours away from voting. Some of the folks in Washington already think they figured out the results.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. That’s what happened in 2004. [*Laughter*] Some of them up there started listening to the prognosticators and started picking out their offices in the West Wing. [*Laughter*] Then the people in Florida voted, and the people around the country voted, and the movers weren’t needed. The same thing is going to happen tomorrow. Republicans are going to turn out. It’s going to be a great victory on November the 7th.

And I thank you all for coming out today. I thank you for your interest. I thank you for what you have done to help these candidates, and I thank you for what you’re going to do for the next 24 hours. You’re going to pick up the phone; you’re going to make the phone calls; you’re going to turn out your friends and neighbors; and we’re going to win.

We’re also going to win because over the past 5 years, we have accomplished great things. Together, we have taken an economy from recession to strong and lasting growth. Together, we have risen to the test of September the 11th and have taken the fight to the terrorists all across the world. Together, we found a calling for a generation of Americans, a freedom agenda to replace tyranny with liberty, oppression with democracy, and an ideology of hate with an ideology of hope.

History has called upon our generation to lead, and we have led. We’re also going to win this election because Republicans understand the values and the priorities of the American people. We don’t need an opinion poll to tell us what we believe. Our principles are rock solid. We’re going to win because we have a hopeful, optimistic agenda.