

came home, unbelievable devastation and destruction in that war, a war ended by massive bombing—the Prime Minister of that country and the President of the United States were talking about peace. We were talking about North Korea, what we could do together to keep the peace. We were talking about the need to help this young democracy in the heart of the Middle East succeed so it could defeat an ideology of hatred. We were talking about how democracy has got the capacity to defeat the conditions that create resentment and hopelessness that cause young men to decide to become suicide bombers.

It's an amazing lesson of history, isn't it? It strikes me as so ironic, in a way, that my dad fought the Japanese, and his son sits down with the Prime Minister of the same country to keep the peace. What happened was, Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. Liberty has got the unbelievable capacity to convert enemies into allies, to change nations from hopelessness to hope. Someday, an American President will be sitting down talking to duly elected leaders of the Middle East about how to keep the peace, and a generation of American children will be better off for it.

And those are the stakes. We're in the great ideological struggle of the 21st century. It's a struggle playing out now in the Middle East between decent, honorable people who want something better for their children than war and turbulence versus extremists and radicals who use terrorism and murder to create fear. And the United States must lead in this ideological struggle to achieve the peace we all want.

And so I'm proud to stand with a man who sees the world the way it is; a person who understands that this great country has got responsibilities not only to protect ourselves but responsibilities to lay the foundation for peace for generations to come.

It's an exciting time to be representing the greatest nation on the face of the Earth. You'll like it up there, Gus. [*Laughter*] And I hope you all work hard to make sure he gets there. Thanks for coming. May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:36 p.m. at Raymond James Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks on Senate Action on the “Military Commissions Act of 2006” in Orlando, Florida

September 21, 2006

I want to thank the Members of the United States Senate for working with my administration to meet our top legislative priority, and that is a law that will help us crack the terror network and to save American lives.

I had a single test for the pending legislation, and that's this: Would the CIA operators tell me whether they could go forward with the program, that is a program to question detainees to be able to get information to protect the American people? I'm pleased to say that this agreement preserves the most single—most potent tool we have in protecting America and foiling terrorist attacks, and that is the CIA program to question the world's most dangerous terrorists and to get their secrets.

The measure also creates military commissions that will bring these ruthless killers to justice. In short, the agreement clears the way to do what the American people expect us to do, to capture terrorists, to detain terrorists, to question terrorists, and then to try them. I hope the Congress will send me legislation before it wraps up their business next week.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:04 p.m. at the Ritz-Carlton Orlando. In his remarks, he referred to S. 3930. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

**Remarks at a Reception for
Gubernatorial Candidate Charlie
Crist and the Republican Party of
Florida in Orlando**

September 21, 2006

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you all being here. Thanks for your time. From “Chalkboard Charlie” to “Governor Charlie.” Thanks for helping this good man. He’s a good, decent man. He’s had plenty of experience. He knows what he needs to do. He’s been the commissioner of education; he’s been your attorney general; he’s been a State senator. He’s the right guy for the job, and I want to thank you very much for standing strong when you find somebody who is decent and honorable, willing to serve the State of Florida—and that’s Charlie Crist.

And you’re right, Charlie, you’re following a good man. He’s made our family proud. But more importantly, he’s done a fine job for the people of Florida. He’s the kind of guy—[*applause*—and, Charlie, I know you’ll follow this example about you—he doesn’t need a poll or a focus group to tell him what to think.

And that’s what is necessary to make the hard decisions when you’re the chief executive officer of a State, or in my case, the United States. I’m proud to be here with Charlie. I know something about being a Governor; I was one once. It requires a man with vision and a person who knows how to set the right priorities for a State. There’s no doubt in my mind Charlie Crist will make a great Governor for the State of Florida, and I want to thank you for helping him.

And my wife feels the same way. If you were smart, Charlie, you’d get Laura down here to campaign for you. She sends her love; she sends her love to Jeb; and she sends her love to our friends here in Florida. And we’ve got a lot of friends. We’ve been blessed in this great State to have made a lot of friends. And I want to thank all my buddies who were there when nobody thought we could win in 2000, and then came back through in 2004. Now you’re back in 2006, and I’m grateful. It’s for a good cause.

I want to thank Jeff Kottkamp, the next Lieutenant Governor of the State of Florida,

who is with us today. I, too, encourage you to vote for Katherine Harris for the United States Senate. Welcome, Katherine.

One of my long-time friends here in Orange County is a guy whose son made him famous—[*laughter*—a while ago. You might remember the incident. I was up there giving one of my best speeches. [*Laughter*] I was putting 100 percent into it. I thought I had the crowd on their feet, until I looked behind me. And Crotty’s son was sound asleep. [*Laughter*] So, Crotty, you tell him, stay awake the next time he comes to one of these things. It kind of hurts an old guy’s feelings. But I’m glad to be here with Rich Crotty. He’s doing a fine job in Orange County.

I want to thank all the other State and local officials who are here. I want to thank the party activists who are here, starting with Carole Jean Jordan, who is the chairman of the Republican Party of Florida, and my friend Al Austin, who is the finance chairman of the Republican Party of Florida.

And raising money is one thing, and tonight is an extraordinarily successful event, and I thank you. I know it takes a lot to organize one of these events, and you’ve done a marvelous job. But I also want to remind you, in order for Charlie to win, he’s going to need people to put up the signs and make the phone calls and stuff the envelopes—those quiet heroes of grassroots politics. So for those of you who have been involved with grassroots politics here in Florida, thank you for what you have done and thank you for what you’re going to do to help this good man get elected Governor of the State of Florida.

You know, it’s—one of the big issues that faces our country and your State is the issue of taxes. I think you’re taxed too much; so does Charlie. And I think there’s going to be a clear difference in this race, and there’s certainly a clear difference nationally. You know, the—we share a philosophy, and that is, the role of Government is not to try to create wealth, but the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit flourishes and which small businesses can grow to be big businesses. It’s an environment in which people get to keep their own money. And the fundamental question facing this Nation and this