

January 16, 2009

Congressman's Todd Akin's OpEd piece for the Washington Post:

TODD AKIN: Thank you, Mr. President

You have provided outstanding leadership□

OP-ED:

Dear Mr. President, as 2008 has passed and we look to the New Year there is a piece of business which is past-due. America owes you a thank you. During the past campaign seasons Democrats and the media often portrayed your leadership as being wrong at every point. In fact, you have provided outstanding decision-making on a number of essential issues.

Thank you for the primary focus you placed on protecting America following September 11. Your pro-active approach may be criticized, but it worked. Against the impending terrorist threat, you believed that in our free and open society a strong offense provides the greatest protection. You have carried the battle to remote corners of the world, and America has not been re-attacked. You recognize the simple fact that bullies respect strength and resolve.

Thank you for your tenacity in winning the peace and rebuilding Iraq. You went to war to depose a terrible despot whom the world intelligence community believed was linked to terrorism. You were supported almost unanimously by Congress to redress a situation where the toothless threats of the U.N. had failed. Through five frustrating years of waging a very complex and difficult war, you faced a national media which was fixated on every loss. You paid a high political price as did the Republican Party who lost the majority in Congress. In spite of this setback, you changed leadership, and proceeded with the surge despite the strenuous objections of the Democrats and national media who called for us to withdraw and quit. Six months later, the corner was turned and Iraq achieved unparalleled stability. The media moved on. Perhaps one day, in a quiet park in Baghdad, there will be a brass plaque that reads, "Thank you America for investing in our freedom." Mr. President, we needed to win this war. Thank you that our service men and women, including my son, did not fight in vain.

Thank you for appointing Supreme Court justices who resist the urge to turn our High Court into a legislative oligarchy. Some of the most polarizing events in American history can be traced to arrogant justices who decided to create law. Thank you for defending our Constitution by appointing judges who interpret existing law rather than dictate new laws.

Thank you for implementing Ronald Reagan's proposed ballistic missile defense. You ignored the whining of the Europeans, the saber rattling of the Russians and the Democrat skeptics who claimed it wouldn't work, and have made a good start. Some day the residents of some city will owe you thanks that they are not nuclear dust.

As Ronald Reagan laid the political groundwork for missile defense, you laid the ground-work for Social Security reform, Mr. President. You had the courage to grab the "third rail of American politics" - Social Security - and alert Americans that the system is mathematically and economically broken. Public awareness of this problem is an important first step toward reform. Thank you for your courage.

President Bush, thank you for using the successful supply side model for treating the recession you inherited in 2001 and for your insightful warnings on government mismanagement. JFK and Ronald Reagan both used large tax cuts to allow businesses to invest and boost productivity, thus pulling the nation out of recession. Your reduction of capital gains and dividends tax, and reductions to the death tax, provided a strong economy with low unemployment, good GDP growth, and good government revenues. Early on, you also warned of the reckless mismanagement of Freddie and Fannie and of the risk of the government having to bail out loans that should never have been written. Unfortunately, Democrat Congressman Frank and Democrat Senator Dodd ignored your advice (New York Times, Sept. 11, 2003). It is ironic that the Democrats, whose policies facilitated the securities crisis, have now been charged with the task of fixing the trillion dollar mess of their own creation. Thank you for the supply side tax cuts that provided us with a number of years of a strong economy and your warning about run-away loan policies.

Mr. President, thank you for the consistent priority you placed on developing American energy independence. You sought to advance a collection of environmentally responsible technologies while allowing the market place to pick the winners and losers. Unfortunately, Senate Democrats were able to block many of those initiatives, thus maintaining our dependence on foreign oil. As a member of Congress, I was not surprised to find a strong party line divide on the abortion issue, but I still find it odd that there is an equally partisan polarity on the

development of American energy. If the Democrats remain in leadership, they will be forced by political pragmatics to change their anti-energy position.

Lastly, Mr. President, thank you for the character you exhibited while you served. On a personal basis you were timely, professional, upbeat, and people knew where you stood. You set clear goals and worked your plan. You saw the best in America. You had the courage to tackle the tough issues and make decisions. Your foreign policy blended the soft partnership of daring to dream of a better world with the muscular condemnation and opposition of evil. Although I opposed a number of your big government initiatives such as No Child Left Behind, the Medicare Modernization Act and the bailout, I'm still deeply grateful for your leadership. Thank you, Mr. President, God speed.

W. Todd Akin (R.-Mo.) is a member of Congress.

Click on the following link to see the OpEd on the Washington Times' website: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/jan/16/thank-you-mr-president/>