



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on October 6, 2024

Trump Returns to Massive Crowd in Butler, Pa.; Musk: If Harris Wins, No More Elections; Vance Blames Harris, Dems, for Violent Rhetoric

“As I was saying,” former President Donald Trump began his speech in Butler, Pennsylvania, at what might have been one of the largest campaign rallies in American history.

The GOP presidential candidate returned not just to the scene of his attempted assassination, but to the immigration chart to which he was referring when would-be assassin Thomas Matthew Crooks [tried to murder](#) him on July 13.

Yet Trump wasn’t the only star at the event.

Others were running mate Ohio Senator J.D. Vance, X owner and SpaceX founder Elon Musk, and the nurse who helped care for Trump at Butler Memorial Hospital.



AP Images
Donald Trump & Elon Musk

Perfect Timing

“Exactly 12 weeks ago, this evening, on this very ground, a cold-blooded assassin aimed to silence me and to silence the greatest movement, MAGA, in the history of our country,” Trump said:

For 16 harrowing seconds during the gunfire, time stopped as this vicious monster unleashed pure evil from his sniper’s perch, not so far away. But by the hand of providence and the grace of God, that villain did not succeed in his goal. Did not come close. He did not stop our movement. He did not break our spirit.

About 12 minutes into his speech, Trump recalled firefighter Corey Comperatore, the one fatality of the assassination attempt.

Trump said that “every father and husband in America hopes that if the time came we would have what Corey had — tremendous courage, tremendous guts. He wanted to protect his family, and he did protect his family.”

“At this time, it is 6:11,” Trump continued, “12 weeks to the minute that the shooting began. I would like to ask everyone to join me in a moment of silence.”

A bell tolled four times, and tenor [Christopher Macchio](#) sang composer Franz Schubert’s “Ave Maria.”

“I will never quit. I will never bend. I will never break. I will never yield. Not even in the face of death



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itself,” Trump said.

Trump’s speech included his usual talking points about the economy and immigration, but Elon Musk and J.D. Vance delivered the more important remarks.

Both warned that Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris threatens “democracy,” not to describe the American *constitutional Republic*, but rather in the colloquial sense, to say that Harris is a clear and present danger to the American way of life and the fundamental freedoms to which all Americans are entitled. (To understand the importance of differentiating between a *democracy* and a *republic*, see our article [“The Siren Song of Democracy.”](#))

Musk: Trump Must Win

Speaking for about six minutes, Musk warned that a Trump loss in November would mean the end of free speech and elections.

“The true test of someone’s character is how they behave under fire,” Musk said. “And we had one president who couldn’t climb a flight of stairs, and another who was fist pumping after getting shot. Fight, fight, fight! Blood coming down the face.”

“This election, I think it’s the most important election of our lifetime,” he continued:

This is no ordinary election. The other side wants to take away your freedom of speech. They want to take away your right to bear arms. They want to take away your right to vote. ... Fourteen states now don’t require Voter ID. California, where I used to live, just passed a law banning voter ID for voting. I still can’t believe that’s real. So how are you supposed to have a good, a proper election if there’s no ID? It’s meaningless.

And free speech is the bedrock of democracy. And if people don’t know what’s going on, if they don’t know the truth, how can you make an informed vote? You must have free speech in order to have democracy. That’s why it’s the first amendment. And the Second Amendment is there to ensure that we have the First Amendment.

President Trump must win to preserve the Constitution. He must win to preserve democracy in America.

The crowd broke out into shouts of “We want Trump.”

Calling the election a “must-win situation,” Musk said he has one request: “Register to vote, OK, and get everyone you know — and everyone you don’t know — drag them to register to vote. ... And then make sure they actually do vote. If they don’t, this will be the last election.”

“Fight, fight, fight; vote, vote, vote,” Musk concluded.

Vance: Harris the Real Threat to Americans

Vance fingered Vice President Kamala Harris and other Democrats not only for their violent rhetoric leading up to the attempted assassination, but also for the same hate speech afterward.

“I believe as sure as I’m standing here today that what happened was a true miracle,” Vance said of Trump’s surviving the attempt. “And on that day, America felt the truth of Scripture: ‘Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.’”



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"I truly believe that God saved President Trump's life that day," he continued.

Vance indicted Harris and the far-left Democrats [who continually called](#) Trump a "threat to democracy."

"Sadly, our opponents have not heeded Abraham Lincoln's words and listened to the better angels of our nature," Vance said:

Even after that terrible assassination attempt that took one man's life and nearly took many others, they continue to use dangerous, inflammatory rhetoric. The media has continued to call Donald Trump, the guy who actually won his primary, a threat to democracy.

A Democrat senator called Donald Trump an existential threat to our democracy. Kamala Harris said that he was attacking "the foundations of our democracy."

And I think you will all join me in saying to Kamala Harris, "How dare you talk about threats to democracy? Donald Trump took a bullet for democracy. What the hell have *you* done!?"

Vance observed that Harris has "declared war" on the First Amendment and "proudly says she wants to censor the internet. And Tim Walz said there is no guarantee to free speech."

Censorship, he continued, is the "first step" to crushing freedom and political opposition. "Just look at everything they've done to President Trump."

But silencing Trump didn't stop him, Vance said, and neither did jailing him.

"And with all the hatred they have spewed at President Trump, it was only a matter of time before somebody tried to kill him," Vance said:

And that's exactly what happened not just here in Butler, Pennsylvania, but a few weeks later in Florida.

Three weeks ago, while these guys still go out there and attack him as a threat to democracy, another gunman armed with an AK-47-style rifle, tried to finish the job.

In fact, before the gunman in Florida tried to kill Donald Trump, he wrote, "democracy is on the ballot," the exact same words that Kamala Harris wrote after accusing Trump of being a dictator only days before the first attempt on his life.

Husband and Father

Sally Sheri, a paramedic who treated Trump, spoke before the 45th president. She recalled:

The man that we all see on TV with the strong personality, who sometimes doesn't mince for words, or who is seen as a wealthy, powerful businessman, was not the man that I stood beside that evening.

What I saw was a man that in the aftermath of one of the most terrifying experiences of his life, showed resiliency.

He showed strength and courage. He showed that his family was at the forefront. He was a husband, a father, and a grandfather. He was compassionate and grateful. He was kind and humble. Several times, I stood and stared at him with tears rolling down my cheeks. ... I



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held the hand of that man who sends out the mean tweets and I thanked him for loving our country and fighting for our freedoms.

Artist Scott LoBaido unveiled a stunning portrait of Comperatore.

Estimates of the crowd size ranged from 20,000 to more than 100,000.

“Not sure total crowd size but it might be largest I’ve ever seen,” NBC News’ Jake Taylor wrote on X.



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