No Retreat, No Surrender
By Bruce Springsteen
Comments to Kerry Rally
Madison, Wisconsin October 28, 2004

As a songwriter, I've written about America for thirty years. Tryin' to write about who we are, what we stand for, what we fight for. And I believe that these essential ideas of American identity are what's at stake on November 2nd.

I think the human principles of economic justice -- just healing the sick, health care, feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, a living wage so folks don't have to break their backs and still not make ends meet, the protection of our environment, a sane and responsible foreign policy, civil rights and the protection and safeguarding of our precious democracy here at home -- I believe that Senator Kerry honors these ideals. He has lived our history over the past fifty years. He has an informed and adult view of America and its people. He's had the life experience, and I think he understands that we as humans are not infallible. And as Senator Edwards said during the Democratic convention, that struggle and heartbreak will always be with us. And that's why we need each other. That's why "united we stand" -- that's why "one nation indivisible" -- aren't just slogans, but they need to remain guiding principles of our public policy. And he's shown starting as a young man, that by facing America's hard truths, both the good and the bad, that that's where we find a deeper patriotism. That's where we find a more complete view of who we are. That's where we find a more authentic experience as citizens. And that's where we find the power that is embedded only in truth, to make our world a better and a safer place.

Paul Wellstone, the great Minnesota senator -- he said the future is for the passionate, and those that are willing to fight and to work hard for it. Well the future is now, and it's time to let your passions loose.

So let's roll up our sleeves. That's why I'm here today, to stand alongside Senator Kerry and to tell you that the country we carry in our hearts is waiting. And together we can move America towards her deepest ideals. And besides, we had a sax player in the [White] House -- we need a guitar player in the White House.

Alright -- this is for John. This is for you, John.

[Bruce launches into No Retreat, No Surrender]

We busted out of class had to get away from those fools
We learned more from a three-minute record than we ever learned in school
Tonight I heart the neighborhood drummer sound
I can feel my heart begin to pound
You say you're tired and you just want to close your eyes and follow your dreams down

We made a promise we swore we'd always remember
No retreat, believe me, no surrender
Like soldiers in the winter's night with a vow to defend
No retreat, believe me, no surrender

To watch this moving introduction and song go to JohnKerry.com

VOTE for John Kerry on NOV 2nd!