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### Ryan touts Wisconsin roots, criticizes Obama on the economy

12:02 PM

Vice presidential candidate Paul Ryan criticized President Barack Obama's economic record during a town hall meeting this morning at Carroll University in Waukesha.

Ryan said the nation's debt was \$5 trillion lower before Obama took office. Not only is that debt hurting today's economy, it jeopardizes the future, he said.

"We have never knowingly given our children an inferior standard of living," he said.

Wearing a Green Bay Packers necktie and waving a cellphone in a blaze orange and camouflage case, Ryan emphasized his Wisconsin roots to a cheering crowd that also sported numerous items of Packers and Wisconsin Badgers clothing.



Ryan told the crowd that "After this election, I will be sitting in a deer stand with my 10-year-old daughter, her very first deer hunt, after Mitt Romney is elected president."

Ryan said that both Republican and Democratic politicians are to blame for contributing to the failing economy and national debt that faced Obama when he took office four years ago.

But Ryan blamed Obama for "making things worse" as he painted a gloomy picture of the economy under Obama.

"Half of all our recent college graduates are either not working in the field they studied or are not working at all," he said. "Fifteen percent of Americans are living in poverty. This is unacceptable."

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Obama spokesman Danny Kanner criticized Ryan for supporting policies that drove up the debt and deficits, including two wars and a prescription drug program that were not paid for, along with tax cuts "skewed toward millionaires and billionaires." He said Ryan and Romney refuses to provide specifics on how they'd pay for proposed tax cuts.

"Why won't Mitt Romney be straight with the American people about what he'd do as president?" Kanner said. "It's because he knows that once they learn about the devastating impact of his policies they'll be less likely to vote for him."

During a question-and-answer session, a Carroll student told Ryan he was worried about finding work after graduation.

"When I got out of college, I worked three jobs to live and pay my loans," Ryan responded, then blasted Obama for limiting jobs.

"President Obama is shutting down the economy," Ryan said. "To grow the economy: lower tax rates, sound regulations," he said. "You'll get a job when you get out of college if the economy's growing. It's not rocket science."

Ryan said the country has always been in debt. "During World War II, our debt got as high as the size of our economy -- we borrowed a little more than 100 percent of our gross national product," he said.

But he said today's debt will be two and a half times the size of the national economy by the time his kids are his age, in about 30 years. Ryan also said the country has racked up so much foreign debt that "we will lose our independence, lose our sovereignty."

He said 48 percent of today's debt is borrowed from foreign countries, compared with 6 percent in 1970 and 19 percent in 1990. That makes it "pretty hard to stand up to China when they steal our intellectual property," he said.

Gov. Scott Walker appeared at the event in support of Ryan, as did two of Ryan's brothers, Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch, state Sen. Alberta Darling and state Rep. Dale Kooyenga.

Walker received a standing ovation when he appeared, and Ryan referred to Walker at the conclusion of his speech, saying, "Wisconsin, we have shown that if leaders step up and lead, voters have their backs."

Before Ryan took the stage, Kleefisch blasted Vice President Joe Biden for his performance in last week's debate against Ryan. Kleefisch accused Biden of laughing and making fun of threat of nuclear war and joblessness.

"The most unfortunate part of the debate was what Joe Biden did to himself," she said.

Kooyenga, an Iraq War veteran, said the Obama administration is weak on foreign policy. "Israel never felt so isolated," he said.

During the Q-and-A session, an elderly man in the audience asked Ryan, "Why are ballots not going to our veterans?"

Ryan said he blamed the state's Government Accountability Board and state government -- but quickly interjected, "Not Scott" as he looked at Walker.

"If there is anything that counts, it's your right to vote," Ryan said. "If a single soldier is denied his or her right to vote, that's a shame."

Romney's campaign has filed a lawsuit seeking additional time for military and overseas voters to return their absentee ballots after some municipalities failed to mail them before a federal deadline. The GAB said earlier this month 30 municipalities sent 44 absentee ballot requests from military and overseas voters after the required federal deadline.

-- By Kay Nolan  
For WisPolitics.com

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