



John Woolley and Gerhard Peters

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Remarks in Des Moines Following the Iowa Caucuses

January 3, 2012

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We don't know what the final vote tally is going to be, but congratulations to Rick Santorum. This has been a great victory for him and for his effort. He's worked very hard in Iowa. We -- we also feel it's been a great victory for us here. [applause]

Ron Paul as well. Ron Paul has had a great night. This is -- this has been terrific. I think it's great that here in the heartland of America that a campaign begins. All three of us will be campaigning very hard to make sure that we restore the heart and soul of the entire nation.

And thank you, Iowa, for the great send-off you're giving to us and to the others in this campaign. Look, this is -- this is a campaign night where America wins. We're going to change the White House and get America back on track. [applause]

I'm -- I'm proud tonight to have been introduced by my sweetheart of -- well, I was going to say 42 years, but we've been married 42 years. We've been sweethearts for longer than that. And behind her, four of our five sons. One of our sons, Ben, is a resident at a hospital so he can't be here tonight, but this has been a family affair for us and in this room we feel like family with you. You guys have been extraordinary. [applause]

This -- for those that don't know, this -- this volunteer team has done extraordinary work. I mean, I hope you understand. When I ran four years ago, we had 52 members of our full-time staff. This campaign, we've had five. And you guys have done the work under the work of Dave Kochell and Sara Craig. They are just heroic. Thanks, you two, for the work you've done. [applause]

And -- and you were working -- again, I am working and we're all working together because of our passion for this country and our concern that it's being led by a president who may be a nice guy, but just is over his head. And you look at -- I mean, I look -- I look at his campaign. You know, four years ago tonight, he was giving a victory celebration speech here in Des Moines.

And he'd been going across the state making all sorts of promises. The gap between his promises four years ago and his performance is as great as anything I've ever seen in my life. We face an extraordinary challenge in America. You know that. And that is, internationally, Iran is about to have nuclear weaponry just down the road here. And this president, what's he done in that regard? He said he'd have a policy of engagement. How's that worked out?

All right, we -- we...

Yeah, not terribly well. We -- we have no -- no sanctions of a severe nature, crippling sanctions put in place. The president was silent when dissident voices took to the streets in Iran. And of course, he hasn't prepared the military options that would -- would present credibly our ability to -- to take out the threat that would be presented by Iran. He's failed on that.

And then how about with regards to the economy? He went out and borrowed \$787 billion and his administration said they'd hold unemployment below 8 percent. Hasn't been below 8 percent since. You've got 25 million people today out of work or stopped looking for work or unable to get the kind of job that will allow them to meet their -- their needs.

This is -- this is not just a statistic, by the way, these 25 million people; this -- this unemployment of 8.5 percent. These are real people whose lives have been impacted severely, people who -- who lose their jobs over a long period of time. They sometimes lost their marriages, lost their faith, become depressed. This is just a tragedy and didn't need to happen. Almost everything the president has done has made it harder for businesses to grow and to hire and to put people back to work.

And then, of course, there's one more aspect of his track record that's been a failure. He was critical of President Bush for not balancing the budget; for having such large deficits. His deficits have been three times larger or more. He's on track by the end of his first term -- his only term, by the way... [applause]

He's on track -- he's on track to put almost as much public debt in place as all the prior presidents combined. This has been a failed presidency. And I'm absolutely convinced that if we want to get jobs again in this country, it's going to be helpful to have a person who's had a job in the private sector to create jobs in the private sector. [applause]

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You know, he said three years ago that after being inaugurated, he was on the Today Show, and he said, "Look, if I can't get this economy turned around in three years, I'll be looking at one-term proposition." And we are here to collect, let me tell you. [applause]

I will go to work to get America back to work by making America once again the most attractive place in the world for jobs creators and innovators and investors and jobs -- the jobs will begin to flow like they have in the past. I'll keep our tax rates competitive; get regulators and regulations to see their job is to encourage enterprise; make sure we open up new markets for American goods; and finally take advantage of the energy resources we have here in oil and gas and coal and nuclear and renewables. [applause]

And I'll also do the work of finally getting ourselves to cut our federal spending and capping how much we spend and balancing our budget. I -- I think it's immoral for us to continue to spend our kids' future year after year, trillions of dollars passed onto the next generation, knowing we can't possibly pay it back. It's wrong, and under my administration it'll end. [applause]

And I -- and you've heard me say this before. I've been asked, "How are you going to cut programs?"

And I'm going to look at all the programs we have in the federal government and I'm going to ask with regard to each one of them, "Is that program so critical that it's worth borrowing money from China to pay for it?"

And on that basis, we're going to have a lot of programs we can get rid of, and number one on the list is Obamacare. That'll be gone. [applause]

But this election is bigger even than jobs and a strong economy. It's bigger than a budget that's balanced and deficits and debt that begins to be reduced. It's really an election about the soul of America. The question is, are we going to continue to hue to the vision of the founders.

When they crafted this country and wrote the Declaration of Independence they said that the Creator had endowed us with certain inalienable rights, among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And that word -- that phrase, "pursuit of happiness," deals with the opportunity associated with this great nation. We are an opportunity land. People came from all over the world seeking freedom electorally but also freedom personally, able to choose their own course in life, they came to America.

And by virtue of their successes, their passion, their energy, their pioneering, they helped lift the entire nation. They didn't make us poorer by their being successful, they made us as a nation better off.

The president has a different view. Instead of seeing a merit society, an opportunity society, I think he takes his inspiration from the social welfare states of Europe. He wants to make us an entitlement society where government takes from some to give to others. The only people who do well in that setting are the people in the government who do the taking from one to give to the others.

The right course for America is to remain a merit society, an opportunity nation. [applause]

The right course for America economically, personally, morally is for America to restore the principles that made us the shining city on the hill, our conviction that freedom is a gift of God, our recognition that America as a merit society where people, based upon their education, their -- their hard work, their risk-taking, their dreams can lift themselves and lift people around them and lift our entire nation. That's what we need to restore in this country.

I love this country. I love the hymns of America: "America the Beautiful", "O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain" -- corn counts -- doesn't it? -- as an amber wave of grain. [laughter]

Yes.

Another favorite verse, "O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife, the more than self their country loved and mercy more than life."

Do we have any veterans in the room tonight? Please raise your hand to be recognized. [applause]

And one more verse let me just quote: "O beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years."

The patriots, the founders of this country had a dream that was not just for their time, but was an enduring dream. It seized onto our time.

I don't want to do as the president says, to fundamentally transform America into something we might not recognize. I want to restore the principles that made America the hope of the Earth. I love our freedoms. I love our Constitution. I love our land. I love our people. And I love the fact that this is a land of opportunity.

Let us restore the greatness of America and keep this land the hope of the Earth.

Thank you so much for all your help. [applause]

On to New Hampshire. On to New Hampshire. Let's get that job done.

Come visit us there. We've got some work ahead.

Thanks, guys. *[applause]*

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