



John Woolley and Gerhard Peters

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MITT ROMNEY

2008 & 2012 Presidential Candidate: Governor-MA

Remarks in Columbia Following the South Carolina Primary

January 21, 2012

Tweet

You should hear when we win, I tell you, it's really something. Now this race - this race is getting to be even more interesting. I just want to say to you guys thank you so very much for all your help over the last days and months and weeks going across this great state. I appreciate all the calls you made, all the people that you brought into the polls for us. This was an exciting day for us. And I just want to say thanks to all the people that have helped.

Let's begin with your governor, Governor Nikki Haley has been fabulous and I owe her so very much for her help. And treasure Curtis Loftus, who has chaired my campaign, I appreciate his help. There have been a number of state legislators, Nate Valentine has been one of those who has been with me from the very beginning, David Rad and of course the people of South Carolina, who helped this campaign, I owe you so very much. Thank you for this great night tonight.

Tonight I want to congratulate, of course, Speaker Gingrich and my fellow Republicans at a hard-fought campaign here in South Carolina. We're now three contests into a long primary season. This is a hard fight because there's so much worth fighting for. We've - we've still got a long way to go and a lot of work to do and tomorrow we're going to move on to Florida. It's a state what has suffered terribly under the failed policies of President Obama.

Now three years ago we had nothing but promises and slogans by which to judge this president. Today we have a record of deficits, decline and debt. President Obama likes to remind us that elections have consequences.

Well, today the consequences are clear and the stakes have never been higher. I've said this before and I firmly believe that this election is a battle for the soul of America.

It's -- [applause] -- it's a choice -- it's a choice between two very different destinies for America. President Obama wants to fundamentally transform our country. We want to restore to America the founding principles that made this country great and the hope of the earth. [applause]

He is -- he is making the federal government bigger and bloated. I want to make the federal government simpler, smaller and smarter and will do it. [applause]

He has raised the national debt time and time again to astronomical levels. I will cut the budget. I will cap the budget and I will finally balance the United States budget. [applause]

He has -- he has -- he has enacted job-killing regulations. I will eliminate them. He passed ObamaCare. I will repeal it. [applause]

The president -- the president has adopted an appeasement strategy. He believes that America's role as leader of the world is a thing of the past. I believe in a strong America and I believe that America must lead this nation, must lead this world and be the leader of the free world and the free world must lead the entire world. [applause]

In recent weeks, the choice within our party has also come into stark focus. President Obama has no experience running a business and no experience running a state. Our party can't be led to victory by someone who also has never run a business and never run a state. [applause]

Our president has divided the nation, engaged in class warfare and attacked the free enterprise system that has made America the economic envy of the world. We cannot defeat that president with a candidate who has joined in that very assault on free enterprise. [applause]

When my -- when my opponents attack success and free enterprise, they're not only attacking me, they're attacking every person who dreams of a better future, he's attacking you. I will support you. I will help you have a better future. I will make sure that America is a place of opportunity for all. [applause]

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I'm passionate -- I'm passionate about our economic liberty because I have witnessed our free enterprise system as it rewards the hard work of many and creates prosperity for all in this great country. And over the past few weeks we have seen a frontal assault on free enterprise. We expected this from President Obama. We didn't anticipate some Republicans would join him. That's a mistake for our party and for our nation. Ours is the party of free enterprise and free markets and consumer choice. *[applause]*

The Republican Party doesn't demonize prosperity. We celebrate success in our party. That's a -- that's one of the big differences between our party and our president. He leads the party of big government. He believes in ever-expanding entitlement. He's wrong. We're right. And this is a battle we cannot lose. *[applause]*

Those who pick up the weapons of the left today will find them turned against us tomorrow. That's the choice our party gives America, or else we don't offer any choice at all and Americans in my view will demand a real choice in this campaign between those who believe in success and prosperity and opportunity, and those who believe in government. And I think they will choose us. *[applause]*

By the way, by the way, if President Obama think he can compare his record of job losses with my record of job creation, that a battle we're going to win. And -- *[applause]* -- and if he thinks he can compare his record of crony capitalism with my record of free market success, that's a battle we can win. *[applause]*

And let me be clear. If Republican leaders want to join this president in demonizing success and disparaging conservative values, then they're not going to be fit to be our nominee. Now, our campaign has fought very hard here in South Carolina, and in the coming weeks and months I'll keep fighting for every single vote. I will compete in every single state. *[applause]*

We're going to win this nomination and we're going to defeat President Obama in November. *[applause]*

Our campaign will be about the businesses I help start, not the bills I've tried to pass. And above all, our campaign will champion the founding principles of liberty, opportunity and economic freedom. I don't shrink from competition. I embrace it. I believe competition makes us all better. I know it's making our campaign stronger.

And in the coming weeks, the ideals of free enterprise and economic freedom will need a very strong defense, and I intend to make it. *[applause]*

The American people -- the American people -- *[laughter]*

Why, thank you. Ann agrees with you. *[laughter]*

The American people will be looking for a real choice in this campaign, and I will provide it. The plan we're offering protects freedom and opportunity. And our blueprint? It's the Constitution of the United States of America. *[applause]*

If you want to make this election about restoring American greatness, then I hope you'll join us. If you believe the disappointments of the last few years are a detour, not a destiny, then I'm asking for your vote.

We still believe in the America that's a land of opportunity and a beacon of freedom. We believe in the America that challenges each of us to be better and bigger than ourselves. We still believe in that shining city on a hill.

This election I'm asking for your support. We need to you join in the fight. Thank you and God bless the United States of America. You guys are the best. Thank you so much. *[applause]*

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