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NEWT GINGRICH

2012 Presidential Candidate: Former House Speaker

Remarks in Atlanta, Georgia Following the "Super Tuesday" Primaries and Caucuses

March 6, 2012

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GINGRICH: You know, this is amazing. *[laughter]* I hope the analysts in Washington and New York, who spent June and July explaining our campaign was dead...*[laughter]*... will watch this tonight and learn a little bit from this crowd and from this place. *[applause]*

We survived the national elite's effort to kill us in the summer because of you, because people who said, we are not going to allow the elite to decide who we are allowed to nominate. And so, with your help, thousands and thousands of people came to newt.org. And with your help, we survived the two most difficult months of a career which goes back to August of 1958.

And June and July were really hard, and it was precisely because the national elite -- especially in the Republican Party -- had decided that a Gingrich presidency was so frightening that they had to kill it early. But, you, you wouldn't let them do it. *[applause]*

So with your help and the power of large solutions and big ideas and clear communications in the debates, by December, according to Gallup, I was the frontrunner by 15 points, and according to Rasmussen, I was the frontrunner by 21 points, because you believed in the power of ideas, you believed that people can make a difference, that, in fact, Wall Street money can be beaten by Main Street work. *[applause]*

And, of course, at that point, Wall Street money decided that only a relentlessly negative \$5 million campaign in Iowa would work, and they did reduce my support from 36 percent to 14 percent in three weeks of unrelenting negativity.

And, once again, the media said, oh, I guess this is over, finally. But you all said no.

AUDIENCE: No!

GINGRICH: And at the very depths of the establishment rejecting it, thousands of more people came to newt.org and signed up. And the result was, by South Carolina, we won a historic victory, carried 43 out of 46 counties. And it was extraordinary. *[applause]*

And I'm pretty sure that tonight we have a number of the South Carolinians who helped us win who are here who came over to help celebrate this great victory. *[applause]*

And at that point, the forces of Wall Street figured out they were in real trouble. And as the New York Times reported later, they held a meeting on Sunday morning after a Saturday night primary, and they said, "We have to destroy Gingrich." One of them was even quoted in the New York Times as saying, "We have to eviscerate him," which I thought was a fairly strong word in a Republican primary. *[laughter]*

I would expect Obama's people to do that. But I thought it was a tad much, having spent my entire career building the Republican Party.

And so they piled on \$20 million in three weeks of negativity in Florida, and we were still standing. We carried all of north Florida. And, interestingly, everywhere we were, when we won, the vote went up. When Wall Street won, the vote went down, which I think's a pretty bad sign for this fall, if we end up with a Wall Street candidate.

At that point, once again, they began to say, well, maybe he's gone. And then, frankly, Senator Santorum did something very clever. He went to three states nobody else was in, and he won them. *[laughter]*

And the news media, once again desperate to prove Gingrich was gone, suddenly said, ah, now we have the person who's going to be the non-Romney. Now, Callista and I looked at each other, Jackie and Jimmy and Kathy and Paul, my two debate coaches, Maggie and Robert...*[laughter]* *[applause]*

By the way, I would say, for the performance they get out of me, the most underpaid debate coaches in America. *[laughter]*

Although they'll probably talk to me about that later on. I shouldn't have said that. *[laughter]*

But in any event, we looked at each other and we thought, you know, remember when it was Tim Pawlenty who was going to crowd me out? And remember then when it was Michele Bachmann? And then it was our good friend, Herman Cain the first time? And then, for a brief moment, it was Donald Trump almost. *[laughter]*

And then it was our good friend, Rick Perry, then it was Herman Cain the second time, and now it's Santorum. And you just can't quite get across to them: It's all right. There are lots of bunny rabbits that run through. I am the tortoise. I just take one step at a time. *[applause]*

AUDIENCE: Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt!

GINGRICH: And I have always tried to be very candid. Sometimes it gets me in trouble, but on balance I think it's how I want to live and how I want to do things. And so I said -- I said, at the very peak of, you know, the Santorum surge and all this stuff, if I can't carry my home state, where people know me, I would have no credibility. And I knew the basic Wall Street technique, which was to come in and spend lots of -- how many of you have noticed negative ads?

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How many of you have noticed the -- the Reagan negative ad that is a total lie, OK? I mean, that's -- that's what we're up against. It's one thing to have lots of money; it's another thing to lie with the money.

And so I looked around, I thought, you know, let's go home, and let's test it out. I'll go home. Callista and I crisscrossed the state. Kathy and Jackie were a great help. And I have to say, Governor Deal did a tremendous job and worked very hard. *[applause]*

Herman Cain stepped up to the plate and worked very, very hard. *[applause]* Todd Palin made phone calls and really helped communicate that there was a candidate who ought to be helped. The fact is, in Tennessee, Fred Thompson was just tremendously helpful. And in Oklahoma, J.C. Watts was extraordinary. *[applause]*

And so we basically put people power up against money power. And as you saw, the very first race they called tonight about 15 seconds after the polls closed. *[applause]*

And so I'm here, first of all, to say thank you to each and every one of you, because you are the reason we survived every effort of the establishment to stop us. *[applause]*

AUDIENCE: Newt! Newt!

GINGRICH: Now, being here at the Waverly brings back many memories. In 1994, this is where we learned that, for the first time in 40 years, there would be a Republican speaker of the House. *[applause]*

And, you know, for that entire campaign, all of the elites thought we were crazy. First of all, we ran a positive campaign. We had a Contract with America. They just thought that was weird. Why -- why would you go to all that trouble? You have all these ideas. *[laughter]*

We didn't spend our time on lots and lots of negative ads. We spent our time communicating hope to the American people. The result was the largest one-party increase in an off-year in American history, because the American people want a chance to have hope again. *[applause]*

So, as Callista said, tomorrow will bring another chapter in the race for the nomination, but it's more than a chapter in the race for the nomination. It's a chapter in a fight for the soul of the Republican Party. It's a chapter in the fight for the very nature of America. It's a chapter defining who we are as a people.

And let me be very clear. I believe that I am the one candidate who has the ability to debate Barack Obama decisively...*[crosstalk]* *[applause]*

AUDIENCE: Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt!

GINGRICH: And -- and let me be straight. I -- I don't believe the Romney technique of outspending your opponent four- or five-to-one with negative ads will work against Barack Obama, because there is no possibility that any Republican is going to out-raise the incumbent president of the United States. Therefore, you can't follow that strategy.

What you have to have is somebody who knows what they believe, understands how to articulate it so it cuts through all the media, offsets the bias of the elite media who are desperate to re-elect the president and has the guts to take the president head-on every single time he's wrong. *[applause]*

UNKNOWN: No TelePrompTer! *[laughter]*

GINGRICH: Well, we run a very frugal campaign, and we couldn't afford one. *[laughter]* *[applause]*

But I've -- I've already promised that if the president will agree to seven three-hour debates in the Lincoln-Douglas tradition, he can use a TelePrompTer if he wants to. *[applause]*

And I'll get to that in just a second. But I want you to know that, in the morning, we are going on to Alabama. *[applause]*

We're going on to Mississippi. *[applause]*

We're going on to Kansas. *[applause]*

And that's just this week. I was actually in Huntsville this afternoon, starting off our Alabama effort. And I want to say to all of you, any of you who have friends anywhere in the country, if you can e-mail them, if you can post on Facebook something as simple as, "Newt equals \$2.50-a-gallon gasoline," if you can go to Twitter and put in #25ogas, I mean, we run a very inexpensive, very straightforward, reach-every-single-person campaign.

Now, I just want to give you one example of how profoundly different we are both from the other candidates and from the president, one that I would love to debate this president about. And that's the one that a number of you are holding signs for. I want us to have an American energy policy so no president will ever again bow to a Saudi king. *[applause]*

AUDIENCE: Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt! Newt!

GINGRICH: Now, I want you to imagine the debate this fall. The president was right the other day. He's so nervous about gasoline prices and energy that he's done two major speeches. And I thought today, in one of the most shallow and self-serving comments by a president that I've heard in a long time, he was candid in his press conference. He said, "You know, I'm really worried about higher gas prices because it will make it harder for me to get re-elected." *[booing]*

I did not make this up. It was just nice to know that the president once again has managed to take the pain of the American people and turn it into his own personal problem. *[laughter]*

Now, the fact is, I'd love to debate this president, because when you read these speeches, they are so deliciously incoherent. *[laughter]*

They -- they are the perfect case study of liberalism run amok. The president says, the Republicans have three strategies. Strategy number one is drilling; strategy number two is drilling; strategy number three is drilling. *[applause]*

And I want to say to him, Mr. President, this is one of the rare occasions when I can say: You are right. *[applause]*

But the president had an alternative to drilling. And this is why debating him would be just one of those moments where you could almost sell tickets for charity. *[laughter]*

The president said, we have to be practical; drilling won't solve it. And then he offered his practical solution. Anybody here remember what it was?

AUDIENCE: Algae!

GINGRICH: Algae. *[laughter]* Algae. I mean, I think this summer, as gas prices keep going up, one of our campaign techniques should be have people

go to gas stations with a jar of algae...[laughter]... and say to people, would you rather have the Gingrich solution of drilling and having more oil? Or would you like to try to put this in your gas tank? [laughter]

I mean, you can't -- I'm amazed that "Saturday Night Live" hasn't taken that speech and turned it into a skit. I mean, you can't make this stuff up. [laughter]

What made it really intellectually totally incoherent was the president -- literally two pages after he explains that drilling doesn't work -- the president explains that we've had this great breakthrough in natural gas, that we now have, thanks to new technology, over 100 years' supply of natural gas, that, in fact, we're going to create 600,000 new jobs in the next decade out of natural gas.

And I am still waiting for one of the reporters at the White House to come out of their comatose "Re-elect Obama" stance and ask the following question: How does the president think we discovered the natural gas? Because, of course, the answer is...

AUDIENCE: Drilling!

GINGRICH: Right? Now, I -- I came up with a specific proposal to -- to make vivid that there could be a better future in practical terms. So I proposed \$2.50 a gallon as our goal. [applause]

Now, I have to say, my daughter, Jackie, was off campaigning with Herman Cain, and after two days of campaigning with Herman, she came back to me, and she said, you know, maybe we should change that. Maybe it should be \$2.4999. [laughter]

And to his credit, Herman said, no, that will not work as a marketing device. Stick with 2-5-0, which -- which he's very good at. So I picked \$2.50. And I actually picked it by asking the oil experts, what's a price at which you would have continuous exploration? Because my goal is to have energy independence so we are free of the Middle East. [applause]

When the Iranians practice closing the Straits of Hormuz through which one out of every five barrels of oil in the world flow, the short-term answer is the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Air Force. And the ultimatum: that closing the straits would be an act of war and their government would cease to exist. [applause]

But the long-term solution is to create American energy independence so we could say to China, India, and Europe: You have a problem in the Straits of Hormuz. We hope you can solve it, but we're not in charge of it. [applause]

Now, the fact is that \$2.50 is attainable. Governor Romney came to town the other day and said I was pandering by picking it up. And I just want to explain to the governor, no, this is called leading. [applause]

Leaders create large goals. Leaders create a vision of a better future. Leaders arouse the American people to go out and do great things. Leaders believe the American people could easily achieve energy independence if the government got out of the way. [applause]

So if your friends ask you why we are emphasizing \$2.50 and is it practical, first of all, you can tell them to go to newt.org. We have there an entire 30-minute speech which outlines why it is doable and it's practical. I wrote a book called "Drill Here, Drill Now, Pay Less" back in 2008. Callista and I did a movie called "We Have the Power." I mean, this is clearly doable.

But in addition, point out three numbers to them. The price of gasoline when I was speaker was \$1.13. The price of gasoline when Barack Obama became president was \$1.89. All of this gigantic increase came from his policies.

Finally, if you remember the natural gas story the president's so proud of, we have now developed so much natural gas that -- that supply is outrunning demand and the price has fallen from \$7.97 to around \$2.86. Now, translate that as a percentage decline -- and this is, by the way, with an 11 percent increase in production. They haven't -- they haven't doubled it. They haven't gotten even to 25 percent yet. But an 11 percent increase in production suddenly changed the whole equation of supply and demand.

Now, if you had the same experience with oil, you would end up at \$1.13, what it was when I was a speaker. So \$2.50 is a long way from a radical number; \$2.50 is a practical, cautious, doable number. And my goal over the next few weeks is to drive home to every American, we don't have to be trapped in a Department of Anti-Energy. We don't have to be trapped with an EPA which destroys jobs. We don't have to be trapped with a president who refuses to build the Keystone pipeline, refuses to reopen the gulf, refuses to develop Alaska. [applause]

With -- with your help -- with your help, we're going to get enough people to come to newt.org and sign up. We have 173,000 donors already; 95 percent of them give less than \$250. We have a place where you can actually come in and give one Newt gallon. That's \$2.50. [laughter]

If you get excited, you can give 10 Newt gallons. That's \$25.

With your help, we're going to go on to Tampa and win the nomination. [applause] Thank you. Good luck, and God bless you. [applause]

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