



John Woolley and Gerhard Peters

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RICK SANTORUM

2012 Presidential Candidate: U.S. Senator-Pennsylvania

Remarks to the Conservative Political Action Conference

February 10, 2012

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Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. You're eating into my time. Thank you. Thank you.

This is not the Von Trapp family and we're not going to sing.

But it's -- it's great to be here at CPAC. Another thing, I will not be telling any jokes. I think Foster cornered the market on that. But thank you so much for that wonderful reception for -- for not just me, but for most of my family that is here.

First, the folks that are walking in with me today and walking this journey with me are here with me today because this is who I am. And they are -- they are here with me. I want to introduce -- most of you probably have seen them before, but this is my wife, Karen, the rock of which I stand upon. Sarah Maria, Patrick, Daniel, Elizabeth, Peter and John. And -- and of course, the one that we just, that is not here with us, but is home and recuperating just well and doing amazingly well thanks to all of your prayers, our little girl, Bella.

I came here back in -- right after the 2008 election. I come to -- I've been coming to a lot of CPAC conventions over the years and after that election, I made this statement. I said conservatism did not fail our country. Conservatives failed conservatism. And that's what I really believed then and that we in fact lost heart. As conservatives we lost heart.

We listened to the voices who said that we had to abandon our principles and our values to get things done, to win. But we hear those same voices today that we have to learn our lesson. That we should no longer -- that we need to compromise. Do what's politically reasonable and go out and push someone forward who can win.

Well, I think we have learned our lesson and the lesson we've learned is that we will no longer abandon and apologize for the policies and principles that made this country great for a hollow victory in November.

The other thing we should recognize, as conservatives and Tea Party folks that we are not just wings of the Republican Party, we are the Republican Party.

Folks I've been here before. We know each other. We've worked together in the vineyards, we've taken on the tough battles that confront this country. I know you and you know me and that's important because we've worked together.

Some say experience is a bad thing on this election. I don't think so. I think knowing the people who are the conservative leaders, knowing the people who have worked in the vineyards for decades, knowing the people who bring the ideas and the breath and the wellspring of ideas to conservatism is important because as Richard Viguerie often says policies are personnel. Personnel is what makes it, knowing the people to bring and surround yourself with. Those voices that we've listened to in the past were all people that we brought in who told us, "Well no, we can't stand by those principles."

Ladies and gentlemen, as President of the United States, we will surround ourselves in this administration with people who share our values, who are committed to the principles that made this country great -- leaders of the conservative movement.

We know there's a lot of excitement here because this election is about very, very big things. This is not just about jobs although it is about jobs. And we obviously need to do something about jobs in this country and we've put forward an economic plan that "The Wall Street Journal" calls supply side economics for the working man. Why? Because we care to make sure that every American has the opportunity to rise that the ladder goes down, not just to those who might be voting for us. But yes, the very poor.

The people in this country who have been suffering and left behind, we want to create an opportunity for all of them. Blue collar Americans, the working force to rise in society. And we put together a plan that reinvigorates the manufacturing base of our economy that creates opportunities for people to be able to rise again in America. And that's important.

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Rick Santorum for President

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It's important that we tackle this huge monstrous debt that we have in our country. A dead that is crushing America and our children, an immoral debt. I've put forward another plan that says we're going to cut \$5 trillion in five years, balance the budget in five years and in every year, we will spend less money than the year before. Year after year after year until the budget is balanced. No more cuts in the rate of growth.

We know it's about big things though -- really big things. More than just the economy. It's about foundational principles and we've seen that played out here just in the last few weeks. Every speech I've given from the 381 town hall meetings I did in Iowa, I talked about founding principles.

This campaign is going to be about a vision. This campaign's going to be about who we are as Americans because in essence, that's what's at stake.

This is the most important election in your lifetime. It's an election about what kind of country you're going to leave to the next generation. Are we going to be a country that believes as our founders did? That our rights don't come from the government, they come from a much higher authority.

Well, there are those in our country and those in the Oval Office who believe that's not the case. They believe that rights do in fact come from the government and that they have gone around convincing the American public that they can in fact give you rights.

The most important one that they've been able to shove down the throats of the American public was, of course, the right to health care. The right to health care in Obamacare.

And we see what happens when government gives you rights. When government gives you rights, government can take away those rights. When government gives you rights, government can coerce you into doing things in exercising the right that they gave you.

I've been traveling around this country talking about how Obamacare will crush economic freedom. Will make people dependent upon government for the most important things -- their very lives. And as a result, government will own you. Because you will have to pay tribute to Washington in order to get the care you need for your children.

One of the reasons I'm in this race -- in fact, a major reason I'm in this race is because I think Obamacare is a game changer for America. Margaret Thatcher said when she left the prime ministership of England, she was never able to accomplish what Reagan accomplished. She said the reason, the British national health care system. Once people have that dependency, they are never really ever free again.

Ladies and gentlemen, we've seen this play out on the stage in the last few weeks. We've seen the President of the United States not only tell you what insurance coverage you should have, how much you're going to pay, how much you'll be fined if you don't. But he's now telling the Catholic Church that they are forced to pay for things that are against their basic tenets and teachings, against their First Amendment right.

Now, interesting enough, here's what they're forcing them to do. In an insurance policy, they're forcing them to pay for something that costs just a few dollars. Is that what insurance is for? The foundational idea that we have the government telling you that you have to pay for everything as a business. Things that are not really things that you need insurance for. And still forcing on something that is not a critical economic need. When you have an economic distress with which you would need insurance, but forcing them even the more to do it for minor expenses.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the kind of coercion that we can expect. It's not about contraception. It's about economic liberty. It's about freedom of speech. It's about freedom of religion. It's about government control of your lives and it's got to stop.

And this isn't the only place that President Obama's tried to control your lives. Of course, one of the favorite things of the left is to use your sentimentality, your proper understanding and belief that we are stewards of this earth. And that we have responsibility to hand off a beautiful earth to the next generation. And so, they use that and they've used it in the past to try to scare you into supporting radical ideas on the environment.

They tried it with this idea, this politicization of science called man-made global warming and President Obama you may remember, tried to pass cap and trade and tried to get control, not only of the health care system, but of the energy industry, the manufacturing industry -- another two big sectors of this economy. And using this facade of man-made global warming.

I stood up and fought against those things. Why? Because they will destroy the very foundation of prosperity in our country. You look at any country in the world and you look at their energy consumption, the cost of energy and their quality of life, their standard of living. The more energy consumption, the higher the standard of living. That's just the bottom line.

We need an America if we're going to fuel a great and vibrant economy, we need affordable energy. And this administration has gone out and not only has attacked us with cap and trade, and global warming, but now that that has been thrown on the dust bin of history, now, they're going after hydro fracking.

I come from Pennsylvania. We're doing a little bit of that in Pennsylvania, thank God. And -- and guess what? Of course now that we're doing hydro fracking near the population centers, the bogeyman comes out. Look at what it's going to do to you. You know how many wells have been hydro fracked in the United States? Oh, about 700,000 or 800,000. Where's been all the noise?

Ladies and gentlemen, they scare you to intimidate you to trust them and to give them more power. We need someone who's willing to go out on these big issues of the day and draw contrasts.

We're not going to win this election, ladies and gentlemen, because the Republican candidate has the most money to beat up their opponent and win the election. We're not going to win this election with over a lopsided money advantages. We won't have one in the fall. President Obama will have more money whoever our nominee is.

So just think about what it's going to take. It's going to take ideas, vision, contrast, a record of accomplishment that can go up against the failed policies of Barack Obama. That's the winner. Well, let's just take a look at that in the Republican field. Who has the boldest contrasts? Who has the record that they can run on? Who has the bold plans to turn this economy around? And to support the very institutions of our country that provide the foundation of our country, faith and family? Who has that strong track record and that contrast?

Ok. I guess I can quit now since you're all convinced of that, but let's look at it. On the issue of Obamacare, who has a record of supporting health savings accounts and tort reform and bottom up consumer-driven health care for 20 years. And who has supported, in fact the stepchild of Obamacare, the person in Massachusetts who built the largest government-run health care system in the United States. Someone who would simply give that issue away in the fall. Give the issue away of government control of your health.

Who would be the better person to go after the Obama administration on trying to control the energy and the manufacturing sector of our economy trying to dictate to you what lights to turn on and what cars to drive?

Would it be someone that bought into man-made global warming and imposed the first carbon cap in the state of Massachusetts, the first state to do so in the country? Would it be someone who would take on the other big issue of government control of our economy, which is the government control of the financial services sector?

We see a lot of -- we see everybody up on stage at the debates complaining about Dodd-Frank. But two of the three candidates supported the Wall Street bailout, which was the predecessor of which Dodd-Frank was based on.

So who would provide the clear contrast of believing in the conservative vision, of bottom up, free people, free markets. Not government dependency, government control. Ladies and gentlemen, we're not going to win with money; we're going to win with contrasts. We're going to win with ideas. We're going to win by making Barack Obama and his failed policies the issue in this race.

We won in 2010 because conservatives rallied. They were excited about the contrasts. They were excited about the candidates who were put forth in that election. That's why we won.

We always talk about how are we going to get the moderates? Why would an undecided voter vote for a candidate of a party who the party's not excited about? We need conservatives now to rally for a conservative to go into November to excite the conservative base. To pull with that excitement moderate voters and to defeat Barack Obama in the fall.

I close -- I'll just say this. When I restarted our speech, I referred to where our rights came from. And of course, that's in our declaration of independence. I know a lot of folks like to focus on the constitution. The constitution is obviously the operator's manual for America. It is the how of America and it's essential that we return our government to the constraints of that constitution. But, the why of America, who we are, is in the declaration. And these words "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all American are created equal and endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights." That's who we are. A country that was built on the idea that rights come to us from God and that the government's job, the one thing the government's job is to do is to protect those rights so you can form families and churches and community organizations, civic groups, hospitals, schools and build a great and just society from the bottom up.

That's the conservative vision for America. That's who we are. At the end of that declaration, there was a phrase. And these signers signed this declaration with this pledge, they pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor.

No one is asking you today to go out and pledge your life. Although, thank God men and women step forward every single day and put the uniform on of the military and do so.

And I -- and I am not asking for your fortune. Although if you go to ricksantorum.com, a piece of that fortune would be very helpful.

But I am asking for your honor, to put your honor on the line. Honor is a term that's not used very often in America anymore. But it's exactly what's at stake because this is our watch. We are stewards of a great inheritance. And it is our responsibility to shepherd that inheritance and to make it a greater and richer one for the next generation. And if we fail to do that, then we have failed our duty and our honor as Americans.

This is your opportunity. Many generations come and go in America and live in many respects inconsequential times. You are blessed to live in a time when America needs you. You are -- please, walk out of this gathering, choose the candidate that you believe is the right person to lead this country. Not just to victory, but to the changes that are necessary for that victory to be one that you can say I have done my duty. I have kept my honor.

Thank you and God bless.

Citation: Rick Santorum: "Remarks to the Conservative Political Action Conference," February 10, 2012. Online by Gerhard Peters and

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