

Family Research Council

13th Annual Values Voter Summit

Remarks by Representative Mark Meadows

Speaker:

Representative Mark Meadows (R-NC)

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Time: 11:00 a.m. EDT

Date: Saturday, September 22, 2018

(Cheers, applause.)

REPRESENTATIVE MARK MEADOWS (R-NC): Thank you. Thank you.

You know, I have been waiting a long time to get back at Gil. (Laughter.) You know, Gil, come on back out here. (Laughter, applause.) We're not going to let this one go, are we? Are we? (Laughter.)

GIL MERTZ (Family Research Council): Oh, gosh!

REP. MEADOWS: You know, I've known Gil for 20 years. (Cheers, laughter.) He's called me "Jeff" more than a dozen times. (Laughter.) Not enough, not enough. (Laughter, cheers.)

MR. MERTZ: "Jeff," I am so sorry. (Applause.)

REP. MEADOWS: That's OK, "George." (Laughter.)

It is so good to be with you. (Cheers, applause.) It is. So I have to do a proper greeting: Good morning, Deplorables! (Cheers, applause.) You know, that's the gift that keeps on giving. I just – I'm here to tell you, I bet there is a candidate for president that wished she never said that. What do you think? (Laughter.)

You know, I want to share just a little bit behind the scenes. You know, you had Sebastian Gorka come out here, and with his accent he could say the sky is blue and you would think that it was eloquent and wonderful. I know that. (Laughter.) You had Dr. Bennett, that has more Ph.D.s than, well, those at Georgetown or anywhere else, and he comes out and he's gifted and truly a remarkable leader. I'm sandwiched between Dr. Bennett and Todd Starnes, who has this booming voice that you – you think it's the voice of God. (Laughter.) And as he comes in – you know, and I'm just a guy from North Carolina that doesn't need an interpreter, you know. (Laughter.) And so I'm going to talk to you in real terms.

You know, they've got this big clock here in front of us. Now, you can't see that. It's a big clock. Last time I was here, I was the warmup for the president. Now, the president doesn't need a warmup. I can assure you that. He can handle things on his own. And so as I was getting there they said, you know, Mark, you're going to be right before the president. And the great thing about being right before the president, you always get a great crowd. (Laughter.) The bad thing about being right before the president is the crowd is looking at their watch seeing when you're going to get done and he's going to come out. (Laughter.)

Now, this clock that's here in front of us, last time they had a 10-minute clock up there. And they said, Mark, what we want you to do is give a passionate 10-minute speech. They said, but if the president is running late – (laughter) – we're going to add a little bit of time to your clock, and so you just need to keep going until the president gets there. I said I can handle that. I can add in a story or two and, you know, I can be real. And they said, but if the president is

running early – (laughter) – we want you to cut a little time off of that speech. So they wanted me to give a 10-minute speech, plus or minus 10 minutes. (Laughter.) So the only good thing is, is, Todd, I am not going to cut this speech off for you today. We're going to let you worry about the VP here in just a few minutes. (Laughter, applause.)

But last time we were there and I was given this speech, and I have this – you know, I was given this story. And I looked down and it had about six minutes left. I said, great, I'm going to tell this one story, I'll look down and it will be about two minutes left. And so I'm giving the story, I look down expecting to see two minutes on the clock, and it said eight minutes. (Laughter.)

Boy, I started sweating, and I'm trying to figure out what the heck am I going to talk about, and so eventually I finished the speech, I came off, I said, well, was the president running late, and they said, oh, no, the president was on time. He was backstage talking to my wife while I was out here dying! (Laughter.) I mean, I'm just here to tell you, I mean, you know – it's – (laughter) – life is funny, you know.

If you live long enough everything is going to happen to you. We are from North Carolina, and I want to get serious for just a minute because we have had devastating storms, flooding like I have never seen before. I had the opportunity just literally a few days ago to go with Mark Harris, who is running for Congress in the 9th Congressional District outside of Charlotte. We went over to the east, and for me, it's about a seven-hour drive to get over there. And as we went over, it gave me a real understanding of not only the values that you and I hold dear, but the values that most of America holds dear because, before the storm, there was already relief coming from my district, which is a 7-hour drive. Hearts with Hands went over; they were in the storm's place, they had a truck, they were ready with relief supplies. The Baptist men from a number of different Baptist churches left what they were doing, left their jobs. They were over there and providing – and still are today providing relief for some of those folks.

But as I got there on the ground, we went in and we were able to get into this place that truly should have been a 15-minute drive from where we were. It took an hour and fifteen minutes to try to come in the back side. And what I saw that particular day really warmed my heart. There was a pastor – and he doesn't know that I'm going to mention this, but there was a pastor by the name of Pastor Dove. This was the first time I had met him. He was out there; he had a barbecue that was out there. He was serving food to the community.

Now he didn't care whether they were Democrat, unaffiliated, or Republican. He saw a need and he was there. Those are the kind of values that our country has embraced and makes us great. I just want to let you know that. (Applause.)

But I also want to let you know that sometimes you are called to do things that you don't normally want to do. Now I can tell you that we were there, and I was trying to survey the damage. I hate to fly. Now I'm not a Madden kind of kind of guy; I will go ahead and get on an airplane, but I hate to fly. And so we were there, and they said, well, Congressman, we want to make sure that you get to see what is really happening, and so we're going to take you up in a

helicopter. (Laughter.) Yeah. (Laughs.) Well, my staff thought it was funny. (Laughter.) Or I should say my ex-staff thought it was funny. (Laughter.)

And we get there, and so I get in this helicopter, and the problem is it wasn't a big helicopter; it was a small helicopter. The pilot learned to fly in Vietnam. He also did spray – you know, he was one of these guys that sprays all the fields, you know, and so he is used to taking these dives – (laughter) – that go down, and it's just unbelievable.

And so I get in. They strap me in and we take off in this helicopter with no doors. (Laughter.) Well, for a guy that has a fear of flying, this was – (laughter) – this was – well, it was an interesting moment. Let's just put it that way.

And so I'm there, we get up, and we're looking, and the devastation was just heartbreaking. I mean, homes that literally were under water, the water was still rising – homes that had been dry the day before were just now – the water was up to their windows. And as I was looking, you know, the pilot kept saying, will you look down there, and I'd say, yes, it looks awful – (laughter) – but as I look at this, I want to – the reason I'm sharing this story is this. Officer Burlington said, Congressman, I want to let you know I've been doing this for 37 years. He says, I've been at every hurricane. We've gone, and we've gone in to check everything, and I can tell you that this president has given the best response that I have seen in 37 years. We have never seen the kind of federal response. If we ask a question, the answer is always yes, and I want you to take that message back to the president. That's the kind of president we have, that cares about. (Cheers, applause.)

But I'm here to tell you that if we do not continue to stay engaged, the very first thing that a House of Representatives, that if it has a Speaker Nancy Pelosi – (boos) – will do will be impeach this president. So it is important that we show up again on November 6th. It is important that we stay engaged because the progress that this president has made is remarkable.

Now, you've heard about some of the things already, but I can tell you early on I was concerned that some of those campaign promises weren't going to be kept. And the president told me, he says, Mark, I want to tell you, when I was there advocating on behalf of moving the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, not only was he going to do it, he would do it quickly, and indeed he has. And that's the kind of president, a promise-keeping president, we have. (Applause.)

But it's even in the small things. For three years I've been saying the Palestinians haven't been willing to negotiate in a good manner in terms of actually having peace in the Middle East, and I felt like that it was deplorable. (Laughter.) I thought it was deplorable that we would have a PLO office here in Washington, D.C. And it took this president to say enough is enough and let's close it down. And that's how serious he is. (Cheers, applause.)

But perhaps you've seen in recent days – in fact, just yesterday – the headlines come out that Rod Rosenstein talked about actually wearing a wire and going into the Oval Office to secretly record this president. I think the time is now that we need to hold those at DOJ and FBI accountable. The time – it's past time, and it is time that we hold them accountable. (Cheers,

applause.) Yes, without a doubt, it is time. (Cheers, applause.) It is time. (Cheers, applause.) So I think Rod needs to come before Congress this week and explain under oath what exactly he said and what he didn't say. I think it's time. (Cheers, applause.)

Now, we can be concerned about comments about wearing a wire that weren't deployed that they're talking about, but I can tell you I'm more concerned about wires that were deployed that they're not talking about when they're spying on a Trump campaign. It is time that they come clean on that. We need to declassify the documents and make sure the American people can see for themselves. It is time. (Cheers, applause.) It is time. (Applause.)

It is also time that we continue to speak up from our communities each and every day and not let the left silence our willingness to stand up for this great country. (Applause.) We need to make sure we speak up. (Applause.) I can tell you there are few things that unite us other than truly our values. But I can also say this, is that when we look at standing up for our country, it is important that we not make a political statement. I think that it is not appropriate to make a political statement at a wedding. It's not political – OK to make a political statement at a funeral. And it is not OK to make a political statement when we have the flag and when we stand to salute it. We need to honor our veterans and make sure that we stand and let them know that we're united. It is not OK. (Cheers, applause.) It is important. (Cheers, applause.)

So I want you to stay engaged. I want you to once again applaud this president for being proud of who we are. When you have a pastor, Andrew Brunson from my state, my area – from Buncombe County – who has been held hostage over in Turkey, it's gratifying to know that I've got a president that not only will talk the talk, but walk the walk and stand up on behalf of religious freedom. It is key. (Cheers, applause.)

So I'm going to close with this little personal story about what happened last year. Now, they've gone to yellow. They're flashing yellow, just so you all know. They're wanting to make sure that I finish. You can turn off the clock. I'm going to finish on time. (Laughter.) But as we do that, last time the president came off and you gave the president a great, warm welcome. And he came off and he was – he was saying, well, I think that went pretty well. I said, I think it went better than pretty well. (Laughter.) And he actually offered for me to take a ride back to the White House in the beast, his official limo.

Now, I share that not because we got to ride in a limo and it was a once-in-a-lifetime thing for me and my wife. I share that because we got in the car before he did. And you know why that happened? Because he was backstage taking individual pictures with our law enforcement officers, our first responders, and those that are here. You never read about that on the headlines. But because he personally cared, he was backstage doing that. He does that at almost every single place he goes to show our law enforcement the honor that they're due. That's the kind of president we have. That's the kind of president we need to continue to support. (Cheers, applause.)

So here is my promise to you from many members of the Freedom Caucus who believe that we stand for the millions of forgotten men and women who think that this city has forgotten them. My good friend Jim Jordan and I were talking last night. And actually Jim is an

unbelievable patriot, I'm here to tell you, an unbelievable patriot. (Cheers, applause.) We're going to continue to stay engaged until this Russian hoax gets exposed for what it is, and that is a fake news story of gargantuan proposal. (Applause.)

God bless you. Thank you so much. It's great to be here. Thank you. (Cheers, applause.) Thank you.

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