**Marco Rubio’s Speech at the Iowa Caucus**

**01 Feb 16**

So, this is the moment they said would never happen. For months — for months — they told us we had no chance. For months, they told us because we offered too much optimism in a time of anger, we had no chance. For months they told us because we didn’t have the right endorsements or the right political connections, we had no chance. They told me we had no chance because my hair wasn’t gray enough and my boots were too high. They told me I needed to wait my turn, that I needed to wait in line. But tonight — tonight — here in Iowa, the people of this great state sent a very clear message. After seven years of Barack Obama, we are not waiting any longer to take our country back. This is not a time for waiting for everything that makes this nation great now hangs in the balance. This is a time where we need a president that will truly preserve and protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, not one that undermines, attacks, and ignores the Constitution of the United States. This is the time for a president who will defend our Second Amendment rights, not a president who undermines them. This is a time for a president that will rebuild the U.S. military because the world is a safer and better place when the United States has the most powerful military in the world. This is no ordinary election. 2016 is not just a choice between two political parties. 2016 is a referendum. It is a referendum on our identity as a nation and as a people. In America, there are only two ways for us now. We can be either greater than we’ve ever been or we can be a great nation in decline. If Bernie Sanders or Hillary Clinton get elected, if they were to win, we will be a great nation in decline. If they win, Obamacare becomes permanent. If they win, these unconstitutional executive orders from this president become permanent. If they win, our military continues to decline. And if they win, the balance of our Supreme Court will be controlled by liberal justices for over a decade or longer. They cannot win. Hillary Clinton is disqualified from being the president of the United States because she stored classified and sensitive information on her email server because she thinks she’s above the law. And Hillary Clinton can never be commander-in-chief because anyone who lies to the families of the people who have lost their lives in the service of this country can never be commander-in-chief of the United States.

And so tonight I thank you here in Iowa. I thank you because tonight we have taken the first step but an important step towards winning this election. If I am our nominee — and I will be our nominee thanks to what you have done here in this great state — when I am our nominee, we are going to unify this party and we are going to unify the conservative movement. When I’m our nominee, we are going to grow the conservative movement. We are going to take our message to the people who are struggling paycheck to paycheck, to the students living under the burden of student loans, to the families struggling to raise their children with the right values. We will take our message to them and we will bring them to our side. When I am our nominee, we will unite our party. We will grow our party. And we will defeat Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders or whoever they nominate. I want to thank an all powerful and mighty God for the chance that he has given us to be a part of this endeavor here in Iowa. It’s been a phenomenal experience. I want to thank my wife and my family. I want to congratulate my friend, Sen. Ted Cruz. He worked really hard here in Iowa, and he earned his victory tonight. I want to thank another good friend of mine, Gov. Mike Huckabee, for his service to our country, to the state of Arkansas. He has announced tonight that he is suspending his campaign. We have tremendous admiration for Gov. Huckabee and we thank him for all he’s done. Two centuries ago, an extraordinary generation living in one place at one time here in America — colonists of an English colony — declared their independence from the most powerful empire in the world. They did it with a powerful word and principle that our rights come from our Creator; they do not come from our government. And the rest is a two century history of the most extraordinary nation in the history of mankind. I know America is special because I was raised by people that knew what life was like outside of America. I was raised by people who came to this country with nothing. They barely spoke English at the time. They had no money. My father stopped going to school when he was 9-years-old. He had to go work. He would never go back to school. He would work for the next 70 years of his life. When my parents arrived here in this country, they struggled. They were discouraged. But they persevered. Less than a decade after they arrived here with nothing, my father, a bartender on Miami Beach, they owned a home. Not a mansion but a safe and stable home in a safe and stable neighborhood. Decades later, they would retire with dignity and with security. And the most important thing of all for them, they left all four of their children with a life better than their own. This was the purpose of my parents’ life — to give their kids, us, the chance to do all the things they never could. That’s not just my story. That’s our story. That’s America’s story. That’s the story of your parents. You know the stories of your parents who sacrificed and gave up so much so you could be what they could not.

It’s the story of those parents today who are doing the same for their children. It is this that makes America special. And it is this what we fight now to preserve. This is the kind of country that I want to leave for my children. This is the kind of country your children deserve to inherit as well. And this what we must now decide whether we will remain that kind of country or whether we will be the first generation to lose it. It’s an important choice and one that each generation before us has had to make. For America is not a special country by accident. America is a great nation because each generation before us did their part. Each generation before us sacrificed. They confronted their challenges. They embraced their opportunities. And for over two centuries, each generation has left the next better off than themselves. Now the time has come for us to do the same. Now the moment has arrived for this generation of Americans to rise up to the calling of our heritage. Now the time has come for us to take our place and do what we must. And when I’m elected president of these great United States, we will do our part. When I am elected president, when we together achieve this victory, we will embrace all of the principles that make America great and we will apply them to the unique challenges of this new century. And when our work is done, here’s what history will say of this generation. It will say that we lived in the early years of this new century and in an uncertain and difficult time but we remembered who we were. We rose up to the challenge of our time. We confronted our problems and we solved them. And because we did, the American dream didn’t just survive; it reached more people and changed more lives than ever before. Because we did, our children and our grandchildren grew up to be the freest and most prosperous Americans that ever lived. Because we did what needed to be done, the 21st century wasn’t just as good as the 20th century, it was better. It was a new American century. This is the task before us. And I thank my lord and savior Jesus Christ and I thank God for allowing me the opportunity to come this far with each of you. I am grateful to you Iowa. You believed in me when others didn’t think this night would be possible, when perhaps we were lost in the daily narrative, when some suggested that perhaps it was time to step aside. You believed in me. You walked with us. You made the calls and knocked on doors. You made a huge difference tonight. We are going to be back. I will be back in October next year and September of this year because â€“ I said next year. I said next year. I’ll be back next year too. But I’m going to be back in October and September of this year because when I’m our nominee, we are going to win Iowa and we are going to win this election for this country. And so Iowa, thank you so much. We will never forget you. We will see you soon again. And New Hampshire, we will see you in the morning. Thank you! God bless you!

What The Folly. 2016. “Marco Rubio’s Speech at the Iowa Caucus.” Accessed March 18, 2016. http://www.whatthefolly.com/2016/02/02/transcript-marco-rubios-speech-at-the- iowa-caucus-part-1/