

Thank you. It's good to see you all. Good to see you. It's good to be back. I've seen many of you in Iowa. It's good to be here in D.C. I'm gonna kick this off by taking you back to a moment in 1993 when I was in second grade in Southwest Ohio and I heard Martin Luther King's I Have a Dream speech for the first time. That was the speech where he said, I hope my four children grow up in a country where they are judged not on the color of their skin but on the content of their character. I'll tell you something. That dream stuck with me. It meant something to me because it was the dream that allowed me to go in a single generation from being the kid of Indian immigrants who came to this country with almost no money to becoming the founder of a multi-billion dollar company that I led as CEO. We developed some medicines. One is a life-saving therapy in kids, another one is an approved drug for prostate cancer. But I stepped down from my job as a CEO to focus on a different kind of cancer, not a biological cancer but a cultural cancer that threatened to kill that dream that Martin Luther King had 60 years ago, a cancer that threatened to kill the dream that allowed me to achieve everything I have in my life, and that's what we're going to talk about today.

I'm speaking to you this morning as a member of my generation. I'm the first Millennial ever to run for a U.S president as a Republican. I appreciate that, and I'll tell you something about us. I think it's true of all of us, it's definitely true of us millennials. We are hungry for a cause. We are hungry for purpose and meaning and identity at a time in our national history when the things that used to fill that hunger - faith, patriotism, hard work, family - these things have disappeared, and that leaves a moral vacuum in its wake. And when you have a black hole that runs that deep, that is when the poison fills the void: wokism, transgenderism, climatism, covetism, globalism, depression, anxiety, drug usage, suicide. It almost doesn't matter what the poison is; these are symptoms of a deeper void, symptoms of a vacuum of purpose and meaning in our country. And our job in the conservative movement today is to rise up, to level up, to say that we're done playing whack-a-mole. We're not just running from something; we are running to something - to our vision of what it actually means to be an American today.

We're lost in the desert. We are, today, I joke around, we're like a bunch of blind bats actually flying around in some dark cave trying to figure out where we are. You know how a bat figures out where it is? Doesn't have eyes, can't see, sends sonar signals, bounces off the wall, it comes back and says, This is where I am. We do the same thing. I send out a signal, it bounces off something that is true, something that is fixed - my family, the mother and father who brought me into this world, the children who I brought into this world, that is true, that is real, that bounces back, that tells me, This is where I am. Send out a signal that bounces off of my faith in God - that faith is real, it is true, that bounces back, it tells me, This is where I am. Send out a signal that bounces off my belief in this country that I'm a citizen of the United States of America, not some nebulous global citizen somewhere - that is true, that is real, that bounces back, it tells me, This is where I am. I work hard, I create something in the world, that is true, that is real, that bounces back and tells me, This is where I am. What happens when those things disappear? We send out these signals, and then nothing comes back. That's where we are today. We are lost in that wilderness.

It is when the Israelites escaped from the Pharaoh that they're lost in the desert. What do they say? They say, We want to go back and bend the knee to the Pharaoh. You have a hole the size of God in your heart. If God does not fill it, something else will. Instead, the same can be said of belief in a nation.

This is our moment as a movement to rise up to the occasion and say, This is what we actually stand for. This is what it means to be an American. What does it mean to be an American? It means we believe in the ideals that set this nation into motion 250 years ago - ideals like meritocracy and the pursuit of excellence, that you do get ahead in this country not on the color of your skin but on the content of your character and your contributions. That is why I expect the Supreme Court in the coming days to end affirmative action in college admissions, and as the next president, I will end it in every sphere of our lives. That is what it means to be an American.

What does it mean to be an American? It means we believe in the rule of law, that if you're like my parents, you know what you do get to come to this country legally through the front door if you want to follow the rules and pay your taxes and live according to our values. But it also means that your first act of entering this country cannot break the law. And that is why I will use our own military to secure our own Southern border. That is what it means to be an American. Nations have borders.

It means we believe in this radical idea that our founding fathers had, a radical dream that I have as a citizen - that the people who we elect to run the government ought to be the ones who actually run the government, not this bureaucracy that actually runs the show today. This is what it means to be a citizen of this country.

That we won the American Revolution to spawn, above all, America as a country. We are founded on the pursuit of the truth itself. Why do we have free speech? The path to truth runs through free speech. America is a nation founded on the truth, and we should not be apologetic to stand up and speak for the truth. So let's do that today. Let's talk truth. Let's say what's true without fear. God is real. Unborn life is life. There are two genders. Fossil fuels are a requirement for human prosperity. Reverse racism is racism. An open border is not a border. Parents determine the education of their children. The nuclear family is the best-known form of governance to mankind. Capitalism is the best system known to lift people up from poverty. We have three branches of government in this country, not four. And the U.S. Constitution is the strongest guarantor of freedoms in human history. That is the truth. We will not back down from the truth. We will stand up for the truth. We will fight for the truth. That is what won us the American Revolution 250 years ago. That is what will win us the revolution of 2024.

We have celebrated our diversity and our differences so much that we've forgotten all of the ways we are really just the same as Americans - bound by that common set of ideals, bound by the truth that this nation was founded on. Our diversity can be a beautiful thing, but it is meaningless if there's nothing greater that unites us across that diversity. Without that, think about it with me, we're really just a different-looking group of two-legged higher mammals with a bunch of different shades of melanin walking some geographic space we call a country, doing

what our iPhones told us to do on a given day. That's not America. It's America I see sometimes, but that is not the America we know.

The America we know is a vision of what that place can be. E pluribus unum means from many, one. That's the dream that won the American Revolution. That is the dream that reunited us after the Civil War. That is the dream that won us two world wars and the Cold War. That is the dream that still gives hope to the Free World. And if we can revive that dream over group identity and victimhood and grievance, then nobody in the world - not a nation, not a corporation, not a virus - is going to defeat us. That's what American exceptionalism is all about, and that is what we together will revive to save this great nation.

And I will tell you this, in closing this up tonight, we see the real problems in our country. They are real. We have an administrative state that runs the government instead of the real government. I'm going to fix that. We're dependent on our enemy for our modern way of life in a way that was never true in American history. We depend on the CCP. We can rise up to the occasion and fix that. We have a generation of Americans, Gen Z, less than 15 percent of whom say they're proud to be an American, 25 percent recruitment deficit in the U.S. military, 60 percent of whom say they would sooner give up their right to vote than to give up their access to TikTok. We are in a national identity crisis.

But I promise you this, as we leave tonight, leave this afternoon, this morning, when you go back home, wherever you go, remember this: we don't have to be a nation in decline. We do not have to be Rome. We do not have to be Carthage. As a nation, I truly believe it, and take it from me as a young person, I'm 37 years old, I was born in 1985, I truly hope and pray and believe that my best days may still be ahead of me. I think the same is true of our country. I believe it is true that our best days as a country can still be ahead of us.

We don't have to be a nation in decline. We are just a little young, going through our own version of adolescence, figuring out who we are going to be when we grow up. And when you see it that way, it starts to make sense again. When you go through adolescence, you go through that identity crisis, you doubt yourself, you doubt who you are, you forget what you're made of, but we are stronger on the other side of it when we get to our adulthood. As it is for us as individuals, let it be for us as a nation.

I don't think we're a nation in decline. I still believe in my bones that we are a nation in our ascent, in the early stages of our ascent, on our way - we might not even be at base camp - on our way to that mountaintop. I believe we can get there. It's not going to happen automatically. It's going to require each of us to do our part, to be able to tell our kids, for me to be able to tell my two sons and look them in the eye and mean it when I say that we are still the nation where no matter who you are or where your parents came from or what your skin color is, that you still get ahead in America based on your own hard work, your own commitment, your own dedication. That is the American dream. That is what we are running to. That is what it means to be an American. And that is what we will revive to save this great nation. Thank you all. God bless you. God bless your families. And God bless our United States of America. Thank you.