

We're \$18 Trillion in Debt&mdahs;And That's the Good News

Dr. Ben Carson gave the following speech to the Values Voters Summit in Washington, D.C., this weekend. He won the straw poll for vice president. It has been slightly edited for space and continuity –Ed.

Thank you. I love enthusiastic crowds, you know? It makes up for my low energy. You know, I got to tell you something about America. You know, I've visited at least 57 different countries. And I am always so pleased when I get back here because America has been so good to me. You know, I was born in pretty dire circumstances, grew up very poor, had a bad temper. I was a terrible student—all the things that probably would have precluded success in most other places. But here in America, the opportunities were there.

Even if you didn't have a silver spoon in your mouth you could go to the library and it didn't cost you anything to go there, unless you turned your book in late. So you know, those are the kind of opportunities that I want to preserve for other people. And I really get irritated when people complain about America and they say that we are a terrible place and we are the source of all evil in the world.

If we were so bad, why is everybody trying to get in here and nobody's trying to escape? That's craziness.

There is such a thing as the American way. We should be proud of it. Have you noticed that there's no Canadian way? There's no French way? Let's be proud of who we are.

That's really one of the reasons that I, for one, am not interested in giving away all of our values and principles so

that we can be politically correct.

And you know, some people, when you say things like that, they say you're bigoted and you're racist because you don't want other people to import their way of life, and we should be willing to accept the way that other people do things. Anybody is welcome to come to America as far as I'm concerned, as long as they meet all of our criteria. But they don't get to change who we are. You know, that is a very important concept.

I believe deeply in compassion. I think about what's going on in a nation like Cameroon right now, where some major American companies have gone over there and are helping to develop millions of acres of incredibly fertile land and getting record crops. That's the kind of thing that is a win-win situation. It's making friends for us. And we're not borrowing money from China so we can give them billions of dollars in aid.

That's the kind of thing that makes sense. That's the kind of thing we also should be doing in South and Central America, so that they won't feel that they need to come here.

The other thing that we need to be thinking about other thing we need to be thinking about in that regard is sealing our borders. There are no border guards there. The border guards are all 70 miles inland. Why are they called border guards if they're not on the border?

Then when they capture people, ICE tells them to release them. And a lot of those people are not from Honduras and Mexico. They're from Iraq and Somalia and Russia. And many of them are hardened criminals. And it seems like our federal government is actually fighting against the sheriffs and the people who are down there.

I sat with some of the families and they told me the horror stories about what they had to endure and how frightening it was, and they are some incredibly brave Americans to do that.

But we need an administration that will back our people up and not the people who are trying to invade here from someplace else.

I just am so tickled with the media. I mean, these guys, they're like they just don't get it, you know? I went back and forth with one commentator. [He said,] "But you said that somebody who was of the Islamic faith and a Muslim could not be president of the United States." Well, I said, will you go back and read the whole transcript? Before that I said anybody from any faith, from any belief system who comes to America, becomes an American citizen, embraces our American values and principles and is willing to subjugate their beliefs to our Constitution is somebody I have no problem with.

Anybody who doesn't fit in that category, I don't care who they are—they can be a Christian—if they don't fit in that category, I'm not going to advocate that they be president of the United States. It's as simple as that.

Political correctness is ruining our country and we need to stand up for what we actually believe. The big problem with the media is they're always, going off into these tangents because they don't want to talk about the real issues. You know, we have some serious problems in this country. You know, our fiscal irresponsibility is ruining the future for those who come behind us. And as a pediatric neurosurgeon who spent my entire career working on the welfare of children, I cannot quietly sit by and watch us ruining their future.

You know, we have a national debt of greater than \$18 trillion. What a ridiculous amount of money. I mean, a million is a lot. A billion is a thousand million. And a trillion is thousand billion. And we're talking over 18 trillion dollars. To pay that back at a rate of \$10 million a day, 365 days a year, it would take you over 5,000 years. And that's what we're putting on the backs of our young people.

But that's the good news, because it's actually much worse than that.

The fiscal gap – now, this is something that no politician will talk about, but I'm not a politician so I'm going to talk about it– it's the amount of unfunded liabilities that we have as a nation in Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, all the departmental programs.

You know, there are 645 different government agencies and subagencies.

Look at that amount versus the amount of revenue expected to be brought in through taxes and other revenue sources. Those two numbers should be almost identical – if you are responsible. However, when you're not, there's a gap.

And you bring that up to today's dollars and you're talking a fiscal gap which is over \$200 trillion. It is a staggering amount of money.

You know, I mentioned the fiscal gap on my announcement speech in Detroit and the next day the liberal media came out: See, we told you he doesn't know what he's talking about. "Fiscal gap." He doesn't know anything about economics. Who even knows what that is? He's just trying to frighten people. And then the next day Forbes came out with an article that says: Seventeen Nobel Laureates in economics and 1,200 professors of economics agree with Carson.

Well, you know, that kind of took some of the wind out of their sails. But the fact of the matter is, you know, you look at that amount of money; the only reason that we can sustain that level of debt is because we can print money, which we are doing in a very irresponsible way. You know, we stopped coupling the dollar to the gold standard back in 1971. It's our good name, faith and credit since that time—which is not all that good, to be honest with you—and it is a house of cards that is ready to collapse. And what are we doing?

Continuing to increase that level of debt.

In fact, I would say if your representatives—and I don't care whether they're Democrats or Republicans, if they continue to vote to increase our debt and to raise our debt ceiling and raise the amount of money that we're going to spend, you need to find out who they are and you need to throw them out of office. That is absolutely imperative.

Now, I never like to raise a problem without offering a solution, because there actually is a solution to our incredible fiscal problems. We are in possession of the most powerful and dynamic economic engine the world has ever known. It's just that it cannot function, because we have enshrined it with so many regulations.

What people don't know is that every single federal regulation costs us money in terms of goods and services, costs everybody money because it increases the price of everything. And who gets hit most by that? The middle class and poor people. That's one of the things that's driving the income gap.

For years, traditionally, how did average people make money in our society? Joe the Butcher, every Friday, put 5 percent of his paycheck in a savings account and he watched it grow over the next three decades so when he retired he had a nice nest egg. He's not incentivized to do that anymore [with low interest rates]—that hasn't existed for almost a decade now.

The only place to make money is in the stock market, but in order to do that you have to have a risk tolerance. Who has risk tolerance? Rich people. So, again, a driver of the gap.

I'm also concerned about our military readiness—and our veterans. We need to take care of them all the way through their military career. And a year before they're discharged we should have people working on their integration back into society so there is no gap. And they should have a health savings account which is subsidized by the government which

allows them to go to any hospital or any clinic. And we should be happy to take care of them because if they are willing to lay their lives down and their limbs to take care of us, the least we can do is make sure that we take care of them when they come back.

When we're talking about our values—because this is a Values Voter Summit—what are our values? One nation, unity. Let's stop letting the purveyors of division divide us up. They don't even care if you agree with them as long as you shut your mouths and sit down. I think it's time for us to stop shutting our mouths and sitting down.

Also, one nation under God. We have to stop allowing the progressives to drive God out of our land. You know, we must be willing—we must be willing to stand up for it, because as they drive Him out, look at the direction that we're going in. It's a downward spiral. We need to stop it now.

And, you know, it was Thomas Jefferson who said the American people, they would become less vigilant, they would stop paying attention. And as a result, the government would grow and grow and infiltrate every aspect of our lives and it will begin to control and dominate the people.

But he said the people would wake up, and they would once again take control.

I say now is the time to wake up and take control.

Thank you.