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Governor Christie: I'll Never Be Vanilla

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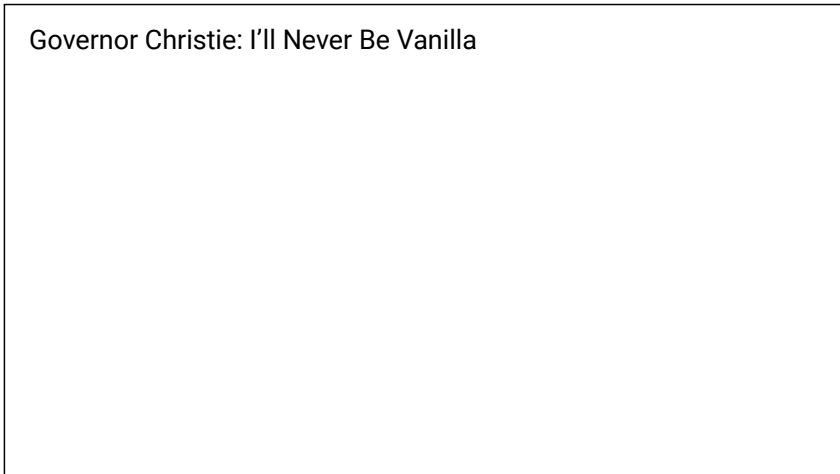


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Transcript:

Cheryl Meyer: I'm very nervous by the way.

Governor Christie: Don't be.

Cheryl Meyer: I usually—I usually don't have—I'm usually not silent, but I'm really nervous. Because I am a teacher of 20 years and wake up every day loving what I do, and I'm not the Governor. I truly feel you are trying to do the best job that you can for what you have, as I do when I get my new class every year. This is not what I want to talk about. If you do become a president, a president of the United States, I'm thinking of more as, and I don't want to put this down, but the press seems to get your worse side all the time. Shut up, sit down, idiot, and my kids at home and my kids at school say why does the Governor do that? Now I could say Jersey, we're Jersey, you know? I was born and bred in Jersey. That's not going to work in the United States, so really what I'm asking to save—I'm sorry? Oh, I'm not talking about what's in the White House right now. I'm looking at today of what could happen, OK? We're looking forward. Thank you. I'm not putting anybody down. I just—I've seen it all and that's—my question to you is how do you defend that? Because being in the public all the time and getting those negative comments all the time, I could explain to my own kids, well, they pushed his buttons, you know? I'm a mother. I know. I go off the deep end, but when you're a Governor and of the highest office in New Jersey and then people—you start screaming at people.

Governor Christie: Really?

Cheryl Meyer: Oh maybe not. I don't know. I'm just looking out—maybe I'm just looking out for you, looking out for all of us. I just want—I want an explanation of—what would be a good explanation? When I ask my class, what would make a great leader? They say smart, you're smart. Passionate, feel what you want to do, you want change. And then they're like be nice, you know, be nice and hug babies and all that hugging stuff. I wrote it all down, there's responsible,

respectable, tolerant of others, difference in accepting their differences. So that's my question, when they do that to you and I know you have a lot of followers here and that's wonderful, I'm just a human and I'm following you cause I'm human and I really feel that you need to tone it down a little bit, if you want to become President of the United States. That's all. And maybe as a teacher, you don't know how I am as a teacher because you don't see me on the news and I'm this nutty teacher --

Governor Christie: I hope not.

Cheryl Meyer : But I am getting evaluated and I am highly effective, just so you know.

Governor Christie: Good

Cheryl Meyer: But really, just I would love to see more of this Governor Christie that I saw today than I'm seeing on the news. And I hope I'm not offending you.

Governor Christie: Do I look offended?

Cheryl Meyer: Take this away from me before --

Governor Christie: First off, let me say this I appreciate your comments. I really do and I can tell that. And listen there are always going to be differences of opinion on people's style, right, and how you approach things. One of the things that I'm sure your students probably said or meant to say in that list as well was honest. And the fact is that for me everything that I've ever said in my public life is not something that I would necessarily say again. I think there's probably, almost every person in this audience who has had interactions in their lives with other human beings would say there have been times when they wish they would have said something differently. Now the difference as you well pointed out is that many of my interactions happen with 10, 12 TV cameras around. And what happens in a lot of people's lives but not everybody's lives is that there are some people who just believe that if you're a public figure that they're allowed to be rude, that they can say or do anything to you and because you're a public figure you have to respond politely because that's the rules as they see it. I don't see it that way. What I would say to your kids in your classroom and I've said to other kids, whether they're coming through tours in the State House and they'll ask me about things that are kind of like the topic you brought up or have gone to classrooms where that has happened is that when I think that I've said something that's over the line -- I'll apologize for that. I'm not out here to be perfect and nobody is but the one thing people never have to wonder about me is what I'm thinking, right? Now there's a lot of political speak that goes on in this business where they sit and think about one of two things either what's the blandest, most vanilla thing that I can possibly say that will not offend anybody or that they won't understand or two they look in your eyes and say I wonder what she wants to hear. And when you've been doing this as long as I've been doing it, you get pretty good at it. You look and think what does she really want to hear? And let me tell her that and then even if I don't mean it, hopefully she will forget that I said it when I do something that's the complete opposite but at least it gets me through the moment. Right? I'm just not like that. So there's any number of times in my life where I go by what my mother taught me. Now my mother used to say to me all the time, "Christopher be yourself because then tomorrow you don't have to try to remember who you pretended to be yesterday." Now with any human being that's going to mean there's good moments and not so good moments. And so what I would say to you is that when I try to reach the balance and believe me, I mean you said I have a lot of followers here but I've probably had from the questions I've taken so far, an even amount of people who agree and who disagree today. And I've tried to follow rule number four which is if you respectfully disagree or whatever I try to respectfully disagree back. But in public life sometimes, people will just as you said in part of your comment, will just try to push your button. I can tell you that in my public life, I have not had my button pushed a hundred times more than they've actually gotten through and pushed it. And the reasons that that happens are a lot of different reasons right? So like sometimes I just want to do it. Right? Sometimes I just say hell with this man, I'm doing it. And I know it's going to wind up in the news and I know I'm going to get criticized for it and I know I'm going to get home and Mary Pat's going to look at me and go, "why, why? Why did you do that today?" But the second piece of it is sometimes you're just having a bad day. Sometimes you didn't sleep well the night before. Sometimes you didn't eat all day. Like all of the things that when you get up in front of a classroom some days over the course of a career like yours or for any of those reasons, you're fighting with your spouse or your own kids are driving you crazy or you know, you've got money problems or you walk into the room that day with a bit of an attitude. And you're working as hard as you can, I know it, I can tell by the look in your eyes, you're working as hard as you can every day when you have those days to get through the attitude, wait for the bell to ring and get out so that I don't do anything that you're going to regret. I try to do that too. But when you put all of it together what I would say to you called it the broader universe, the American people, if I decide to do that is this. I think we've had too much, and this is not Republican or Democrat it's both, I think we've had too much of people in public life pretending to be something. With me you're going to get what you see. Some days that's going to make you go like no, not today Chris. Thank you very much. And other days you're going to say, you know what I'm glad he said that because it needed to be said and it should have been said a long time ago. So I take very seriously your comments because as somebody who is trying to get better every day, I'm trying to get better every day. But what I will guarantee you is that I will never get to the point where I'll sound, and we'll close it talking about a teacher, I will never sound like Charlie Brown's teacher. You remember Charlie Brown's teacher, right? I will never sound that way and so to the extent that people are looking for me to do that to be kind of vanilla, plain, even like that -- it's not going to be me. And if it turns out, whether it was for the people of this state or for the people of the country if I ever chose to do that that wasn't their cup of tea, I'd rather go home. Right? I'd rather go home. Because like my mom said if you pretend to be somebody else you've got to try to remember who you pretended to be. And that can get both tiring and ineffective. So I'm glad you brought it up and I'm glad you said something and if you go home tonight and they say why did you stand up and say something to the governor -- you know what you look at them and say mind your own business. Mind your own business. You stood up and I'm glad you did and I take your comments, which I think also had a bit of advice in them for me and I take them to heart. Sometimes and I will say this about name calling, there are just sometimes when you look at somebody and there's just no other word left. I know. I know. That's why I think maybe you should run for office because you should

just release yourself a little bit. It's really actually very good. It's a lot of fun. Thank you for your comments. I appreciate it.

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