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Excerpts From Governor Christie's Conversation At The Economic Club Of Chicago

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Governor Christie: I'm Focused On Fixing Past Problems, And Moving Ahead

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7_c9L0wUKg

Transcript:

Greg Brown: Does the GW Bridge situation impact your ability to execute on those priorities for the state?

Governor Christie: Actually, I'm shocked you brought that up. *(laughter)* Here's the thing about government or about Motorola Solutions. *(laughter)*

Greg Brown: Stick to government. Stick to government. Stay on government Governor.

Governor Christie: You opened the door buddy. *(laughter)* Large organizations are dynamic and incredibly creative because they're inhabited by human beings. They're also inherently flawed because they're inhabited by human beings. And some people who worked for me made some significant mistakes in judgment, and when you're the leader of that organization and you're confronted with that, the first thing that happens to you—it happened to me, was extraordinary disappointment, extraordinary disappointment that people that I had trusted had made such bad judgments and had not told the truth. But, you only have a few minutes to wallow in that disappointment and then if

you're a leader you have to try to get a handle on the story and then take decisive action, which we did by letting people go and talking to the public about it. We're in the midst of an internal review now, and whatever that internal review discloses we're going to release to the public and if there's more action that needs to be taken I'll take it. But I don't think that it will curtail for the long haul a second-term agenda because I think the public in New Jersey won't tolerate it. The fact is that they expect me and the Legislature to continue to do what we did in the first four years, which is to find solutions to New Jersey's problems and to get things done. And so while, you know, the last six weeks haven't been the most enjoyable of my life I can guarantee you, on the other hand the fact is we need to do our work, and I believe—I had a meeting a week ago today with the Senate President and the new Speaker of the lower house, and they assured me they're committed to moving forward and getting things done, and I believe them. And so the time will tell, but I believe that we're focused on the things we need to be focused on, both in terms of fixing past problems and in terms of moving ahead with a new agenda.

Governor Christie: The Opportunity For Greatness Is What America Is All About <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fz6iuE6V8TM>

Transcript:

Greg Brown: What's your view of the income inequality gap and the way we rectify it?

Governor Christie: I don't think the government rectifies it, I can guarantee you that. *(applause)* You know, income—and I don't think the American people want income equality. What they want is income opportunity. *(applause)* See, if I go to somebody right now and I say to them, I can guarantee you x dollars a year for the rest of your life there may be some in America who would, who would accept that. But I think most people in America would go, how can I get a little more than that? *(laughter)* That's the spirit of this country. How do I get a little more? I think that the problem we have is an opportunity gap, not an income equality gap, and I think that one of the big discussions and conversations over the course of the next two years in national politics is going to be: do you want mediocrity or do you want greatness? You want income equality? That's mediocrity. Everybody can have an equal, mediocre salary. That's what we can afford. Or do you want the opportunity for greatness? And greatness is going to be based upon your intellect, your hard work, your creativity, and government can play a role in helping to create that opportunity. But, not in being the perpetual referee of what sounds like a fight between my 13-year-old son and my 10-year-old daughter. You did this for him? That's not fair. Well that's not fair. I want this to be fair. Like, I grew up in an America that said life isn't fair. But opportunity is. And so I believe that this debate is a debate that is at the moment being articulated in a way that is going to drive America towards mediocrity, not towards greatness. And I think the debate that needs to be had between the two parties has to be: do we want equality of income or greatness of opportunity? And I believe that the spirit of America is a spirit that's going to say, while I understand there will be some unfairness in the greatness of opportunity, and by the way, if the government decides on income equality there will be unfairness there too, you can be guaranteed. But the opportunity for greatness excites the American people much more.

Governor Christie: No One's Asking For Sympathy Cards
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRJHOS1sZHg>

Transcript:

Greg Brown: I've known you almost four years, and I'd like you to talk about your family, and the closeness—I have a chance to know a little bit of your family and I thought you'd have the opportunity to talk about your kids and Mary Pat.

Governor Christie: Damn man. In 50 minutes I finally get a softball, thanks. *(laughter)* I thought we were supposed to do that early, you know?

Greg Brown: I thought I'd leave it hanging later.

Governor Christie: Thank you. I'm exhausted. *(laughter)* No listen, I mean I think that people in the country now are often so cynical about politicians, and you know, people give them reason at times for that to happen, and when a politician talks about their family or I need to consult with my family before I make this decision or I'm not doing this because it's not good for my family or I am doing this because it's good for my family like everybody just goes, yeah, yeah, yeah, right, sure. I can tell you that if you have a good family that that is absolutely true, because this stuff in this life affects them every day. So Mary Pat's here and traveled with me today, and she's got a career of her own that is an outstanding one in the finance business and has been for years and years and years and then all of a sudden she gets

thrust into this nonpaying job of First Lady of New Jersey where people have all kinds of expectations of her and she's hit every mark despite the fact that this wasn't her dream, it was mine. That's a really good spouse, and we have four really great children. Andrew is 20 and he's a sophomore at Princeton and, you know, it's great to have the college life, right? We landed here in Chicago at about 9:00 Chicago time this morning, and my cell phone went back on, and I got a text from Andrew, and it was 10:15 when I got this text East Coast time, and he says hey, sitting here eating breakfast watching you on CNN. And really cool. And I'm like, he's eating breakfast at 10:15. *(laughter)* They're obviously killing him at Princeton. It's amazing. *(laughter)* Great. What I found about college by the way is the more you pay the less they go. *(laughter)* It's like a complete inverse relationship. The more expensive the school, the less they go to class, and it's great. But he's a really good kid, plays—despite eating breakfast at 10:15 this morning somewhere, he's a baseball player at Princeton and plays Division I sports and I'm incredibly proud of him. Our daughter Sarah is 17, a senior in high school, and she is about to become a daughter of the Midwest. She'll be going to the University of Notre Dame in September. *(applause)* So like it or not you're going to see a lot more of me out here walking through Midway and O'Hare on my way to the drive to South Bend. We have a 13-year-old son Patrick who's in the seventh grade and is a hockey player. And a 10-year old daughter Bridget who is a vicious fifth grade girls basketball player, watched her last night playing defense, and almost like a little bit like ashamed, right? *(laughter)* There was this one girl she was guarding who was not very good, and in fifth grade girls basketball you can't press, so you have to wait until they get over the midcourt line to play defense, and three times in a row this poor girl came over the midcourt line and picked up her dribble and, like, didn't know what to do with it, and Bridget just went and grabbed the ball out of her hand, drove down the court and scored a layup three times in a row. And I turned to Mary Pat – we were both at the game, and I'm like, it's almost embarrassing now. She's got to stop. Like chill out a little bit, you know? This poor girl's going to go home crying, you know, so I have a really intense involved family. Mary Pat and I spend most weekends going between hockey games and basketball games and then when the spring comes Andrew's baseball games down at Princeton, and they're all in this together with me, and it's—I'm incredibly fortunate to have that, and I think we should all look at people in public life, when they talk about their families a little less cynically, because when challenges come, and I've certainly been going through one in the last five or six weeks, don't think it just affects the officeholder. You know, it affects their wife; it affects their children. No one's asking for like sympathy cards to be sent. But when we say that, like certain decisions we need to make we have to think about how it will affect our family. It does, and there is a legitimacy to that. So I'm fortunate to have a family that's, you know, totally behind me and really supportive of me and who brings – my wife and my children – great joy to my life outside of what I do professionally and enhances me for what I do professionally.

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