



WTH happened at the State of the Union? Everything you need to know about the president's speech, the Iowa caucuses, and the 2020 election

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Danielle Pletka: Hi, I'm Danielle Pletka.

Marc Thiessen: And I'm Marc Thiessen.

Danielle Pletka: Welcome to our podcast, What the Hell Is Going On? Marc, what the hell is going on?

Marc Thiessen: What the hell is going on is that Donald Trump just delivered his third State of the Union address, the first State of the Union address to be delivered by a president who is about to be acquitted in his impeachment trial. It was a historic night. We don't have any guest today. Just me and Dany. We're going to talk about the State of the Union, we're going to talk about impeachment a little, and we're going to talk about 2020.

Danielle Pletka: Well, there's so much to talk about, my God. This has been such a week for Donald Trump. I got to say, you couldn't have planned it more nicely. First of all, the debacle that was the Iowa caucuses. He rolls in with 97 point something percent of the Republican vote in the Iowa caucuses. We still don't know the Democratic results. It is beyond embarrassing. Then on the heels of that, he comes to the Congress and he delivers, and I don't know what you think, but you know I'm the resident Donald Trump critic here, I thought he gave a pretty good speech.

Danielle Pletka: I know it wasn't all red meat for the kind of people who like to go to his rallies. But he delivered what I thought was a really good State of the Union. I gave him a B+, I'll tell you why when we talk about it. And then he's going to get, unless something changes dramatically, he's going to get acquitted in impeachment. So, hey, Donald Trump, where you going next, Disney World?

Marc Thiessen: Second term, that's where he's going. I think right now we're on that trajectory. Let's talk a little bit about the State of the Union first, then we'll get into Iowa and all the rest of it. Number one, I think that the behavior of the Democrats and particularly Nancy Pelosi during the State of the Union address was just appalling. I mean everybody's focused on the fact that she tore up ... I was the lead writer on two State of the Union addresses so I'm steeped into the history and culture of the State of the Union.

- Marc Thiessen: So the first thing the President does when he comes up is he hands the official copy, which is what goes into the Congressional Archives, the official State of the Union address, one to the vice president, one to the speaker of the house. At the end of the speech she took it and dramatically tore it in front of the cameras. How petty and churlish? Then second, the other thing that was completely overlooked, the decorum and tradition of the State of the Union is that when the President comes in, the house speaker introduces the President.
- Marc Thiessen: She says, "Members of Congress, it is my high privilege and distinct honor to introduce the President of the United States." Then everybody breaks down in applause. In 2007, her first State of the Union as speaker of the house, we left it out of the printed text that she got, but President Bush then turned around and said, "Madam speaker, it is my high honor and distinct privilege to be the first president in American history to say the words 'madam speaker,'" and brought down the house.
- Marc Thiessen: These are more than niceties, this is the civility, and she didn't use "high honor" and "distinct privilege." She just said, "Members of Congress, the President of the United States." I mean that went over most people's heads, but it's just so petty. It's just horrible.
- Danielle Pletka: I mean, I'm sorry, look, I've said this a-
- Marc Thiessen: You're going to defend that?
- Danielle Pletka: No. I've said this a thousand times. The biggest problem with Donald Trump is that everybody says he's unbelievable, he's unique, he's so petty, he's so shallow, he's so immature, he's so vindictive, and yet his opponents have all sunk to his level. I tweeted about this earlier this week. Donald Trump calls Mike Bloomberg short, and Mike Bloomberg has his spokesman respond, "Your fake tan and your fake money and your fake this...." I'm sorry. I hated elementary school. I hated dodge ball. I never got picked for kick ball. I don't want to relive this with my political leaders. I thought he was rude not to have shaken Nancy Pelosi's hand, although-
- Marc Thiessen: It's not clear that was intentional.
- Danielle Pletka: Let's just say if that was the case, it was rude and unnecessary.
- Marc Thiessen: Agreed.
- Danielle Pletka: She was rude and unnecessary. The women of Congress all sitting there like a bunch of stumps are an embarrassment. If you can't bring yourself because of your hatred of Donald Trump to stand up for that adorable little African American kid and his mom, you're just lame and pathetic. I'm sorry. That's the issue here. But let's talk about SOTU itself.
- Marc Thiessen: Before we talk about SOTU itself, staying on this for a second. I agree with you, but I'm sorry. You can't blame Donald Trump for Nancy Pelosi behaving the way she did. You can't say it's Donald Trump's fault. Yes, I know, he's coarsened the rhetoric, and I'm not defending a lot of the things he says. But for crying out loud, everybody who claims that he's coarsening our institutions, they're doing more. Impeachment, seriously?

- Marc Thiessen: The thinnest, stupidest, worst prepared impeachment in history. Talk about taking an institution and lowering it. Yeah, maybe he brings out the worst in people, but they've got it in them.
- Danielle Pletka: They do. I don't think this is the thinnest impeachment. I think it was a reasonable question to be asked. I think my biggest complaint with impeachment, as you know, was not whether what he did was impeachable and whether that was a debatable question, which I actually thought it was. It was that they've been trying to impeach him since before he was elected, and therefore the credibility of the process was demeaned.
- Danielle Pletka: I don't know. I'm not inclined to defend him, but you and I can go back and forth till we're blue in the face on who was the scummiest, who was the most immature, who was the most debasing of their office. It's really a race to the bottom. Let me say something nice about Donald Trump. I thought the State of the Union-
- Marc Thiessen: Hold on. Wait.
- Danielle Pletka: Wait.
- Marc Thiessen: Wait. Let's have the drum roll.
- Danielle Pletka: Wait for it. I thought the State of the Union was presidential. People complained about the fact that he dumped on his predecessors. I'm sorry, every president has dumped on his predecessors except in his second term, when they just go back and talk about how awesome they were.
- Marc Thiessen: All Barack Obama did was talk about the mess he inherited. Every State of the Union address, every speech he gave for six years. Even in his second term he was still complaining about it.
- Danielle Pletka: I remember. Actually I remember that, because I commented on it. I remember that at the time. I thought it was a good speech. I did miss the fact that, as I said about Barack Obama, we remain a nation at war. We've got troops that have deployed. The President has sent more troops to the Middle East, and I thought he gave very short shrift to national security.
- Marc Thiessen: I agree with that. There was not a lot of national security. But what he did was overall pretty good. I thought that, first of all, broadening out a little bit, the use of people in the gallery had become rote for a long time by a lot of presidents. We even talked about it a couple of times in the Bush administration, not even having anybody that we called out.
- Danielle Pletka: If only.
- Marc Thiessen: Donald Trump is such a showman. He has used that tool that Ronald Reagan created with Lenny Skutnik, the guy who jumped into the Potomac River to save the people from the plane that crashed in there. He has taken that tradition and taken it to new extremes. He didn't just introduce an African American girl and her mom who was denied an opportunity scholarship. He turns around like Oprah and says, "And guess what, we've got a surprise for you. You're going to get your scholarship."

- Marc Thiessen: He didn't just announce that he was giving Rush Limbaugh the Presidential Medal of Freedom, he actually awarded it to Rush in the chamber.
- Danielle Pletka: Do you think that's tacky?
- Marc Thiessen: No, it was awesome. He didn't just welcome-
- Danielle Pletka: You're watching Ellen and Oprah and those shows, Marc? Is this your secret?
- Marc Thiessen: No, but I just thought it was-
- Danielle Pletka: You're secretly a Kathie Lee person?
- Marc Thiessen: Exactly. You got me. No, he didn't just talk about the sacrifice of military families. He reunited a family on the stage.
- Danielle Pletka: He's the president. He's the Commander in Chief. He can do whatever he wants.
- Marc Thiessen: It was so awesome in the use of that. The one that, going back to the substance of what you raised, the one that really was, I think, the most effective was introducing the family of Christopher Hake, an American serviceman who was killed by an Iranian IED in Iraq. And then using that to make the point that we killed the man who was directly responsible for his death, Qassem Soleimani, and laying out that case. And watching, so many of the Democrats wouldn't applaud. It's just absolutely horrible.
- Danielle Pletka: Partisanship has gotten to a new low. I want to talk about that in a second actually. We know that, and we keep saying it, and there's only so many times you can say it and people don't care. I'm really glad that he was willing to call out the Soleimani strike. I'm really glad that he was willing to honor a family that lost a father, a son, a brother as a result of Qassem Soleimani. I remain absolutely gobsmacked that there is anybody out there who thinks, as I testified last week...
- Danielle Pletka: Gerry Connolly, Congressman from Virginia, "An assassination of a foreign leader." Dude, really? Are you going to die on this hill? I just don't get it. Needless to say, first of all, hearing on the Hill about something that isn't impeachment, nobody pays attention. Second of all, nobody pays a price for defending the likes of Qassem Soleimani. It's incomprehensible to me. So I was really happy that the President called that out.
- Danielle Pletka: I was really unhappy with the President's repetition of his ridiculous, untrue trope about Afghanistan. What I said at the time on Twitter is we've forgotten. No, wars don't end, Barack Obama, Donald Trump. Wars are won or wars are lost. What you want to do is you want to lose the war and hand off victory to the enemy. Nobody will forget that you did that, Donald Trump. Big mistake.
- Marc Thiessen: Well, let's see if he does it. He announced that the talks have started. I don't think they're going to go anywhere. I hope they don't go anywhere. Look, the one thing he did say in relation to Afghanistan was, which I think is true, is that our soldiers are the best in the world and they either want to fight to win or not fight at all. I think one of the reasons why he was elected is because people thought we weren't winning anymore. They were sick of not winning.

- Marc Thiessen: I think the answer to President Trump on that is, "Let's fight to win." What does winning mean? Winning does not mean transforming Afghanistan from the stone age into a Jeffersonian democracy. It doesn't mean that we rebuild it and make it the most prosperous country in the world with American tax dollars.
- Marc Thiessen: It means that it does not become a sanctuary or a safe haven for terrorists to carry attacks on the American homeland. And by that definition of victory, we're winning because there hasn't been an attack on the homeland out of Afghanistan since the US went in there. And so, we probably do not need to be spending tens of billions of dollars on reconstruction and all the rest of it. At this point, we can do it with a lighter footprint, as Michael O'Hanlon pointed out when he was here on the show recently. We need a light footprint in there to make sure the Taliban doesn't take over, make sure that al Qaeda and ISIS don't come in and build camps to attack us. And we need to keep that footprint there. So I hope we don't come to some agreement that results in the total pullout.
- Danielle Pletka: Well, inshallah as they say, because I worry about this president and I worry about what he thinks he needs to do to get reelected. Not of course, that it's apparently clear that he needs to do anything, because apparently the Democrats will actually reelect him, and he won't need to do anything. So did you think it was weird or that this was just a campaign speech, that basically he didn't talk about any of these foreign policy issues at all? Did he mention North Korea, his beloved baby, Kim Jong Un?
- Marc Thiessen: He did not mention his dear friend Kim Jong Un. But I'll tell you one thing-
- Danielle Pletka: Beautiful letter writer, Kim Jong Un.
- Marc Thiessen: One day the correspondence will come out.
- Danielle Pletka: Just like Winston Churchill and Lady Astor.
- Marc Thiessen: That's actually a really interesting point. It's surprising he did not mention North Korea at all, which I think is interesting. But I'll tell you one part that I know you liked was having Juan Guaidó up in the gallery and the statement he said, and I'm paraphrasing now, was that America is fighting for freedom in our hemisphere.
- Danielle Pletka: I wish we were fighting effectively for freedom. You know, one of our first podcasts with was with Elliott Abrams. He's a very good friend of both yours and mine. I'm a huge fan of his, and he's a great American. But I got to say, I don't think Maduro's days are numbered.
- Marc Thiessen: No, it doesn't look like it, does it?
- Danielle Pletka: I don't feel like our strategy is really working. I don't know whose fault that is. I suspect that the President actually doesn't want a really high profile effort to oust Maduro, but I was really happy to see Guaidó there. I thought it was a great gesture. I thought it was exactly the right kind of thing. I loved the fact that he started with Latin America.
- Marc Thiessen: Yeah, not traditional starting point for American foreign policy over these last couple of decades.

- Danielle Pletka: Right. So you and I have bitched about the fact that there's this bizarre disconnect between the fact that the President and so many are so head up about immigration, and yet they're so completely uninterested in why people are emigrating from Latin American countries.
- Marc Thiessen: Illegal immigration.
- Danielle Pletka: Illegal immigration, of course. We should underscore not legal immigration, which we are both big fans off.
- Marc Thiessen: Yes.
- Danielle Pletka: So one of the things that I thought was great actually, great and kudos to them for the subliminal message as well, is yeah, we actually care a lot about what happens in Latin America and in South America. Good on Donald Trump for going to that directly, for not going to those sweet applause lines about terrorism or even about Qassem Soleimani or about Baghdadi. He went to Latin America, introduced Guaidó. It was great for him. I wonder if Guaidó is ever going to get back into Venezuela now.
- Marc Thiessen: Well, but just going back to what he said. He said, "Maduro is an illegitimate ruler, a tyrant who brutalizes the people. But Maduro's grip on tyranny will be smashed and broken." Those are bold words, and maybe we get Roger Noriega to come in and tell us again, how do we actually smash and break Maduro's grip because we're not doing it.
- Danielle Pletka: How's that smashing and breaking going for you?
- Marc Thiessen: But you know what? The intent is there. And I think also he likes the Venezuela issue because he sees it as a ... I mean the next line he said at the end of it was, "Socialism destroys nations. Freedom unifies the soul." It's a pivot to his domestic fight, because we really-
- Danielle Pletka: Right. I love that line, by the way. I didn't catch that line. This was actually one of the nicer written speeches by the President, I think as well. And so kudos to his speech writer. And it was also very well-delivered. The President was disciplined. He didn't go off message too much.
- Marc Thiessen: Low-key. He wasn't too worked up. It was delivered in a very deliberate way.
- Danielle Pletka: I wonder if these giant rallies that he's been doing every 20 seconds have really given him some practice on that speechmaking, because I thought it was surprisingly and notably well-delivered. And I love that Venezuela line. Read it again. Where is it?
- Marc Thiessen: "Socialism destroys nations, but always remember, freedom unifies the soul." And he used it as a pivot to the domestic challenges we face, which is, right now, if you look at Iowa, Bernie Sanders, if it wasn't for Elizabeth Warren as literally an anchor around Bernie Sanders' neck, he would be running away with the nomination, if she wasn't splitting the democratic socialist vote up with him. And so, we really could be having an election that's a referendum on whether we want to embrace socialism or not.

- Danielle Pletka: Yes. Stalin getting the last laugh. Stalin and Lenin getting the last laugh there. Not to gossip at all, but to come back to that question of who wins Iowa, and what it says about the 2020 election and who the opponent is going to be, did you see that that little squib about John Kerry being caught on a phone call in a hotel in Iowa, where he was talking about jumping into the race because Bernie is such a disaster. I mean, oh my God, is this what they've come to? You know that's what Hillary Clinton is thinking.
- Marc Thiessen: Oh, of course. Absolutely. Well, I mean look, do we want to pivot yet to Iowa? Yeah. What the heck? Let's pivot. Okay, then we'll come back.
- Marc Thiessen: So I just came back from Des Moines. I was there for the Fox News coverage, so I witnessed the debacle. We had to fill four or five hours of air time with no news at all because literally-
- Danielle Pletka: That's okay. That should be easy.
- Marc Thiessen: It was quite a challenge coming up with talking points when nothing was happening. I almost went on air. I was so punchy by about 11:30 or so, that literally they ended up not doing the segment. I was going to go off and say, "Brett, Martha, Generalissimo Francisco Franco is still dead." That's all the news that was there.
- Danielle Pletka: That's a great SNL line.
- Marc Thiessen: But what a debacle, what an absolute debacle. And you know, the thing is, this could only happen in a democratic caucus. And the reason is simple, is because only Democrats could come up with a plan that is so complicated that it's guaranteed to fail. So the system that they set up...
- Danielle Pletka: You're really just saying that Republicans aren't smart enough, aren't you?
- Marc Thiessen: No. A normal election, even a caucus, the way you do it is you have a vote, you tally the results and you announce the winners, right? The Republican caucus, they have one vote. Everybody caucuses, they don't go into the polling booth. They go into their corners and back their candidates. They count them up and say, okay, Donald Trump won with 96%. You know, just like Kim Jong Un, with 96% of the vote.
- Marc Thiessen: The Democrats had the first alignment, which is the popular vote, everybody comes in. And then after that, anyone who didn't get 15% is declared unviable, which included in many precincts, Joe Biden. So wake-up call, hello, Joe Biden is unviable. Yes, we've been telling you that for months. And so then those people, the unviable candidates get to go and caucus with another group. And then they have the final alignment, another vote. And then after the final alignment, they use those results to calculate the number of state delegate equivalents or SDEs, the state convention delegates for each candidate-
- Danielle Pletka: STDs?
- Marc Thiessen: No, SDE.
- Danielle Pletka: Oh thank you. Sorry.

- Marc Thiessen: And then those are not rewarded.
- Danielle Pletka: They're not contagious.
- Marc Thiessen: They're not contagious. You can't get them just by ... You don't have to wear a face mask, unlike the coronavirus. And those are based on proportional basis, based on the turnout levels in the last two general elections. And then those are then used to determine how many delegates you get to the national convention. They thought this was going to work?
- Danielle Pletka: Okay, so Rube Goldberg is running the democratic party apparently in Iowa. Okay, that is a disaster. But I think that honestly, if Iowa had come out okay, and it had sorted the way that people suspected, with Pete Buttigieg maybe up at the top, and Bernie Sanders pulling it away, all of the current narrative being reinforced, it still wouldn't help the fact that Bernie Sanders is really doing well at the top of the lineup at this point, and that the Democrats-
- Marc Thiessen: He claims to have won the first alignment, the popular vote.
- Danielle Pletka: In the next five year plan, he's definitely going to win the first and the second alignment. But what does this say? The Democrats, again, you and I talk about the disconnect-
- Marc Thiessen: Well what it says, by the way, this is the party, the only people who could come up with this system are the same people who came up with the Green New Deal and Medicare for All, something so complicated that it could only fail. So this is their entire way of thinking.
- Danielle Pletka: Well, I appreciate the desire of people to try to be equitable and to try to be fair and to try to find a system. The problem is they have their heads so far up their butts, they can't actually think straight. And that goes for everybody, I would say, who is engaged in the caucus system and in the primary system.
- Danielle Pletka: But none of this addresses the fact that the democratic party is cruising to a candidate that is unelectable. And you and I, I know we agree about this. You want to have people on both sides of the aisle who are electable. You want to have a good race. You do not want the President to not win, but have the other party simply go and lose. You want to have a discussion about what needs to be done in America. We do have real challenges.
- Danielle Pletka: And again, coming back to SOTU for a second, I like the fact that Trump talked about a lot of the issues that do affect his base. I don't think that he's being political or in inappropriate campaign mode when he talks about unemployment rates among blacks or among Hispanics or among women. I think that's awesome. I love that. I couldn't believe the Democrats didn't stand up for the unemployment numbers, which are a credit to him no matter what, no matter what we think of him. But I think that's what this election is going to look like. It's going to look like a combination of the Iowa caucuses and those angry ladies sitting like stumps on one side, not being for good news in America.
- Marc Thiessen: Yeah, I couldn't agree with you more. I actually was very impressed with the effort he made to reach out to African American voters. It wasn't just the African American

unemployment rate, he talked about the opportunities zone then he actually introduced a person who had been a homeless drug addict who, through opportunity zones, got his act together, got a job as a tradesman, and is successful. He announced that he had given the Brigadier General stars on the shoulders of a Tuskegee airman-

Danielle Pletka: That was beautiful.

Marc Thiessen: ... who just celebrated his hundredth birthday.

Danielle Pletka: By the way, did you notice how awesome that man looked?

Marc Thiessen: Oh, my gosh.

Danielle Pletka: I mean together, standing up, not in a wheelchair, uniform spic and span and he looked like he just stepped out of a bandbox. It was such a proud moment.

Marc Thiessen: It was so awesome. But he talked about funding for historically black colleges and universities, he talked about the African American unemployment rate, the African American youth unemployment rate. He mentioned Martin Luther King, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglas. He's going to make a real push for the African American vote. Now, everybody says, "Oh, the African American vote's not going to come around to him." I think he got like 8 percent in the last election of the African American vote, if he can double that, that is a big problem for the Democrats.

Danielle Pletka: Well, but that's what the Republican party should do. It shouldn't pretend to be the party of white people.

Marc Thiessen: Exactly.

Danielle Pletka: And that trope that it has become the party of white people, which started very aggressively when Mitt Romney was the candidate, and Donald Trump got a higher percentage of the African American vote than Mitt Romney, not surprisingly. But I don't understand why anyone objects to the idea that the President of the United States should try to be the p

resident for all Americans, not just for one particular sector. It's what offends us when he in fact casts himself as the president only of, sort of, the downtrodden whites, the aggrieved whites, the people who are suffering from anti-white racism. That is offensive. He didn't do any of that. He was good Donald Trump, he was good Donald Trump on foreign policy for the most part. I think that it will be very interesting to see.

Danielle Pletka: Now, what I wanted to say to you, I just got back from a couple of conferences in Germany, what is incredible is that the derangement that apparently afflicts people like Alexandria Ocasio Cortez who boycotted the State of the Union last night, although sorely missed I'm sure by her compatriots. She's a popular one. But what is amazing is that sort of bizarre derangement overseas. Oh my God, it's everywhere. It's absolutely mainstream. So when you talk to foreign governments, foreign leaders, foreign opinion makers about the United States, they are nuts about Donald Trump. And that bodes so ill for foreign policy, for our ability to do things together. It was really troubling.

- Marc Thiessen: Well, I'll tell you something, one of the points that he made in the foreign policy section of the speech, which I thought that was very important and true, is he's gotten those allies to kick in \$400 billion more to our collective defense as a result of his pressure campaign. Donald Trump is not a creature of Washington. He's an outsider, he's not-
- Danielle Pletka: Just a creature.
- Marc Thiessen: He is unaccustomed to our ways and doesn't pay them much heed. And so he looks at NATO coming in and he says, "I have to say that we'll come to their defense, but they're not paying their 2 percent? No, I'm not going to say that. It doesn't mean I'm not going to come to their defense, it doesn't mean I'm going to pull out of NATO, but I'm not going to say that until they start paying."
- Marc Thiessen: And guess what? Doubled the number of countries meeting their 2 percent commitment to GDP. They're supposed to spend 2 percent of their GDP on defense and it's not paying us, he's wrong about that. It's not paying us for their defense, but they're investing in their military budgets. NATO is stronger because he was unwilling to mouth the words that the establishment wants him to mouth. Same thing with China, the tariff threats and the tariffs that he's imposed, well guess what? He got a phase one deal and it's a start. He's making progress.
- Danielle Pletka: Well, you know we've talked about this, I'm very impressed by his willingness and his courage in taking on the Chinese. I'm not overly impressed by what he's actually achieved and I think that we can credit his trade wars and tariff wars for a lot of the sputtering that we saw in the economy last year. So let's hope that we go from deal to deal rather than we go-
- Marc Thiessen: Agreed.
- Danielle Pletka: ... from ridiculous ultimatum to ridiculous ultimatum. Those are things that I think he got and I agree, he took appropriate credit for some of them last night. His willingness to take on the Chinese is something that has really heartened a lot of our allies in the Pacific. Everybody talks about the fact that we're abandoning them and the answer is no guys, having an empty pivot in the Obama administration, that's being abandoned. Having a president who will stand up to the Chinese, who will stand up to what they're doing in the South China Sea as the Trump administration has, has been all to the good. So here's my exit question for you, Marc.
- Marc Thiessen: Yeah.
- Danielle Pletka: This is his last State of the Union as a president in his first term. We have an election between this and the next State of the Union and so if Donald Trump and the Republican party loses the next election, there will be a different president giving the next SOTU. Stick with Trump for a sec, if you had to make your best prediction and he wins reelection, and I think you and I agree he's on track to do that, what is the next State of the Union? What does the liberated Donald Trump look like, the same?
- Marc Thiessen: Well first of all, I think we are seeing the liberated Donald Trump right now. I don't think we have to wait till the next State of the Union because the reality is for three years they have thrown everything they have at Donald Trump. Two years of the Mueller investigation, which ended up being nothing but chasing a conspiracy

theory. It paralyzed our country. They tried to take him down with that, it didn't work. Then the Ukraine thing, which admittedly stupid mistake on his part, self-created, but they tried to take that slip and turn it into an impeachment and it has backfired on them like you would not believe.

- Marc Thiessen: Gallup Poll just came out yesterday, okay? In October of last year when this impeachment inquiry started in earnest, the hearings, he was at 39 percent approval. Today, 49 percent approval, his highest level since Gallup began taking the poll. 52 percent that think he should be acquitted, 46 percent think he should be convicted. The support for impeachment has gone absolutely down. Democratic approval, the approval of the Democrats has gone down from 48 to 45. Republican approval up from 43 percent to 51 percent today. Trump deserves reelection, 50 percent of the country. Those are the best numbers Donald Trump has had. The impeachment has absolutely backfired on them.
- Danielle Pletka: Yeah, and Nancy Pelosi knew this was going to happen.
- Marc Thiessen: She predicted it. She said-
- Danielle Pletka: She knew this was going to happen, all credit to her, and she got bullied into doing this and as a result had to sit behind that guy knowing yesterday, and you could see it in their face, knowing I've probably helped this man get reelected.
- Marc Thiessen: The number one aider and abettor of the Trump reelection, if it happens. And to be so petulant. Trump, everyone said, "Oh, so political," so, as you pointed out, attacked his predecessors. You know what the word he didn't mention is? Impeachment, not once.
- Danielle Pletka: Well why would he?
- Marc Thiessen: He walked into the chamber that had just tried to carry out a constitutional coup against his presidency and he beat them. He's going to be acquitted today and he didn't say a word about it. The temptation to say when she said, "Members of Congress, the President of the United States," would've been to lean into the mic and say, "And still the President of the United States," and it would have been a huge applause line. He didn't do it, he stayed above the fray and during this whole impeachment. It must've taken an extraordinary discipline because his instincts are telling them to do the opposite. What was he doing while they're having the trial? He's signing a deal with China, signing the USMCA, going to the March for Life, having briefings on the coronavirus and dealing with that. He's governing while they're impeaching and I think that now he's survived it. They took their best shot. As the famous phrase, "If you're going to take out the king, you better kill him." They didn't kill the king. So I think last night was Trump freed from all of this and it was pretty good.
- Danielle Pletka: I think that was Trump at his high point and I worry a lot about what a liberated Donald Trump will do. I very much hope you are right and I am wrong. And with that, thank you all for listening. Hope you all got to sit through ... we didn't even talk about the Democratic response. Who gave it?
- Marc Thiessen: It was the Governor of Michigan. I will tell you, I think both parties should just say, "You know what? Not doing it anymore."

Danielle Pletka: I don't watch it. It doesn't matter what party it is, I never watch the response.

Marc Thiessen: "President, I return the balance of my time," is what the answer should be when it comes to, do you want to give the Republican or Democratic response.

Danielle Pletka: We'll just all go watch reruns of Friends together. And with that folks, thanks so much for listening and being with us. We'll be back with a great guest next week, we're really looking forward to it.

Marc Thiessen: Take care.