

Miles Taylor, Former Homeland Security Chief Of Staff, Talks National Security In Dayton

by Operation Grant | Oct 30, 2020 | WYSO | 0 comments



Originally Published: WYSO | By Chris Welter

Miles Taylor was Chief of Staff to the Director of Homeland Security for two and a half years. In August, he was the first former senior Trump administration staffer to endorse Joe Biden for president. Taylor is affiliated with the Republican Voters Against Trump political initiative. He's also been revealed as the Anonymous author of a critical New York Times op-ed article in 2018 that set off a national political scandal.

Taylor was in Dayton last week for a media event called "An Assessment of U.S. National Security and the Military under the Trump Administration." The event was at Sinclair Community College and was put on by Operation Grant for Ohio. WYSO Reporter Chris Welter spoke with Taylor about national security concerns relevant to the Miami Valley.

NEW HERE? A BIG OHIO "WELCOME!"

MORE ABOUT OPERATION GRANT:

[DONATE](#)

[ABOUT](#)

CHRIS WELTER: Wright-Patterson Air Force Base is a major employer in our region. Wright-Patt is also home to a large segment of the new Space Force. From your perspective, was the creation of the Space Force by President Trump beneficial to United States national security?

MILES TAYLOR: There've been a lot of things that he's done when it comes to the military that I think has been detrimental. But one place where I would give Donald Trump credit is the creation of the Space Force. The organization is going to perform a very important function at a time when our enemies and adversaries are investing heavily in space, in outer space weapons and in technology that potentially could put American economic

competitiveness at risk. It is young, it's developing but Trump does deserve credit for helping get that across the goal line.

CHRIS WELTER: It was announced this month that two more coal plants in Ohio are going to be retired by 2027. According to the Department of Energy, continuing to use coal is a national security issue. The argument is that it reduces our reliance on other countries for energy. Coal plants have been closing largely due to market forces. Do you think the closure of these Ohio coal plants is a national security threat?

MILES TAYLOR: No, I don't. It's important that we focus on jobs in the state of Ohio and we make sure that if we have energy companies closing in the state, that we know how we're gonna take the workforce of Ohio and put them in the most productive industries possible, and there's a role for the federal government to play there in helping to facilitate that transition. Now, in the short run, there may be some strategic benefit to maintaining certain operations of certain coal plants and other fossil fuel sources. But really, the future for us and the future for U.S. national security is to harness the renewables market because it's going to make energy cheaper for Americans, cleaner for Americans, and ultimately will be a competitive advantage for us in virtually every field.

CHRIS WELTER: Shifting to another topic here, the Southern Poverty Law Center designates several groups in this part of Ohio as hate groups, including the Ku Klux Klan, a militant black separatist group and other white nationalist groups. From your view, how threatening is domestic terrorism to national security?

MILES TAYLOR: This president has done far too much to ignore domestic terrorism that the problem has now morphed, matured and metastasized into a very real threat. While I was at the Department of Homeland Security with John Kelly, we warned the White House, and the White House said they didn't want to hear it. In fact, they said they didn't want us talking about it because they were concerned that some of these extremist groups were actually supporters of the president and they didn't want to alienate those supporters. I genuinely believe people in Ohio are in danger because this threat has been allowed to spiral on Donald Trump's watch.

CHRIS WELTER: In your view, are voting systems in this country safe?

MILES TAYLOR: Yes, and I think the good news for voters to know is this: despite the fact that the president of the United States continues to question the integrity of the 2020 vote, I have no doubt that the actual voting infrastructure itself, the counting processes, the ballots are secure. That's because over the past four years, since 2016, we undertook concerted efforts, including directly working with the state of Ohio to make sure that voting systems were better protected. I actually think as a result of those efforts, our election infrastructure is more secure than ever. And that includes in the digital domain, it includes cybersecurity. So in 2016, very few voting districts around the country were protected by the federal government's cybersecurity sensors. We undertook an effort to take that from maybe 10 percent or 15 percent in 2016 to close to 100 percent by the 2020 election. And now I can say with confidence that most of the voting districts in the country in some way, shape or form have protection from federal cybersecurity systems so that if bad guys from Russia or China or Iran try to hack into voting systems or county voter registration Web sites, that almost immediately in real time, the federal government can see those intrusions, alert state and local law enforcement and work together with them to protect those systems.

Environmental reporter Chris Welter is a corps member with Report for America, a national service program that places journalists into local newsrooms.

Email Operation Grant for Ohio rise@operationgrant.org

ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM?

The stress of the pandemic and politics are looming over us all. Sign up for our guide on defusing potentially tense conversations, and even first aid.

I NEED THAT



Follow



Follow



Follow

[HOME](#) [WHY](#) [TEAM](#) [LATEST](#) [CONTACT](#) [CONTRIBUTE](#)

Copyright - 2020 Operation Grant for Ohio - All Rights Reserved | Made with care from Ohio

PAID FOR BY REPUBLICAN VOTERS AGAINST TRUMP, A PROJECT OF DEFENDING DEMOCRACY TOGETHER. NOT AUTHORIZED BY ANY CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATE'S COMMITTEE.

DEFENDINGDEMOCRACYTOGETHER.ORG