The Guy in the Green Tie

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Joe Scarborough poses questions to Cory Booker and George Pataki at the Greenbuild Opening Plenary

Of all those speakers during the opening plenary session, I'm not sure I can pick out one who was clearly more compelling than the others. They all brought some amazing insights to the table.

What's more, I'm writing this as the session is playing out in real time, so someone may still knock my socks off (and Twitter co-founder Biz Stone, clearly a maverick in every sense of the word, currently has me on the edge of my seat, wondering what he's going to say next).

But the speaker who surprised me most this morning has been former New York governor, George Pataki. Mr. Pataki spoke eloquently about the recent election and why his Republican party got its butt handed to it on so many different levels a week ago Tuesday, explaining that the GOP had focused too intently on analyzing voters and creating coalitions and had stopped focusing on ideas.

He talked about how as governor he mandated that New York City systematically phase out its diesel-fueled fleet of busses with a hybrid one, and how he remains one Republican ready and willing to accept the responsibilities inherent with being not just a political leader, but a resident of the planet earth.

But as much as anything, I loved the fact that of all the speakers on the dais this morning, and of all the people I've met so far today, George Pataki, a card-carrying Republican, is the only one wearing a green tie.

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