

[Transcript] Lex Fridman Podcast / #388 - Robert F. Kennedy Jr: CIA, Power, Corruption, War, Freedom, and Meaning

The following is a conversation with Robert F. Kennedy Jr., candidate for the president of the United States, running as a Democrat. Robert is an activist, lawyer, and author who has challenged some of the world's most powerful corporations seeking to hold them accountable for the harm they may cause. I love science and engineering. These two pursuits are, to me, the most beautiful and powerful in the history of human civilization. Science is our journey, our fight for uncovering the laws of nature and leveraging them to understand the universe and to lessen the amount of suffering in the world. Some of the greatest human beings I've ever met, including most of my good friends, are scientists and engineers. Again, I love science. But science cannot flourish without epistemic humility, without debate, both in the pages of academic journals and in the public square, in good faith, long-form conversations. Agree or disagree, I believe Robert's voice should be part of the debate. To call him a conspiracy theorist and arrogantly dismiss everything he says without addressing it diminishes the public's trust in the scientific process. At the same time, dogmatic skepticism of all scientific output on controversial topics like the pandemic is equally, if not more dishonest and destructive. I recommend that people read and listen to Robert F. Kennedy Jr., his arguments and his ideas. But I also recommend, as I say in this conversation, that people read and listen to Vincent Reonyello from This Week in Viralogy, Dan Wilson from Debunk the Funk, and the Twitter and Books of Paul Offit, Eric Topol, and others who are outspoken in their disagreement with Robert. It is disagreement, not conformity, that bends the long arc of humanity toward truth and wisdom. In this process of disagreement, everybody has a lesson to teach you, but we must have the humility to hear it and to learn from it. And now, a quick few second mention of each sponsor. Check them out in the description. It's the best way to support this podcast. We've got House of Academias for snacks, A Sleep for naps, Inside Tracker for biological data, and AG1 for my go-to daily multi-vitamin. Choose wisely, my friends. Also, if you want to work with our amazing team, we're always hiring at electsfreedman.com slash hiring. And now, onto the full ad reads. As always, no ads in the middle. I try to make this interesting, but if you must skip them, please still check out our sponsors. I enjoy their stuff. Maybe you will, too. This show is brought to you by House of Academias, a company that makes delicious, high quality, healthy, macadamia nut based snacks. Every single person I have shared the snack with have deeply enjoyed it. And it's been quite a few people, including guests, and they love it. And they love the variety in each individual snack. I don't think there's been a negative response to any of the snacks because it's whole nuts with all kinds of additions to them, bars with all kinds of additions to them, all kinds of flavors, all of it healthy, all of it is perfectly portioned. It's just a perfect snack. Low in carbs, high in omega seven fats. There's all kinds of super healthy aspects to this stuff. But I just enjoy it because it's an escape from the mundane. Actually, the word mundane makes it seem like it's not deeply fulfilling. But most of my diet is mundane. Most of my diet is in this place of simplicity, where I enjoy the minimalism of it. But sometimes a little detour in a small rural town somewhere, and a long road trip from New York to San Francisco, just take a little detour, and you're going to find a gas station with a weird guy who has one hell of an amazing story to

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tell you. That guy is a macadamia nut snack. And you can meet that guy, just like as I do, by going to house of macadamias.com slash flex to get a free box of their best seller Namibian sea salted macadamia nuts, plus 20% off your entire order. That's house of macadamias.com slash flex. This episode is also brought to you by eight sleep and it's new pod three mattress. It is a source of happiness for me. Naps are a source of happiness for me. You know, I'm kind of torn on this, but I think I might be even a bigger fan of naps than a full night's sleep. Full night's sleep is like an essential foundation to life. But naps for me. Again, speaking of detours and then we go to nowhere. It's a sometimes a stressful day feels like a highway to hell. It's a little reference to AC DC. And one of the most badass songs ever written. But anyway, life sometimes feels like a highway to hell. And this is a little detour. Again, to that gas station where you meet a person that helps you escape from all the madness of this world and realize how beautiful human beings are. That's what a nap is. It's a reminder of how beautiful life is how insatiably delicious every single moment is how full of vigor and sensory extravagance every single moment is. Anyway, for me, the naps do that. I'm sure I'm sure there's drugs for this too. But to me, the healthiest drug is a good nap. And eight sleep makes that nap extra special. Check it out and get special savings when you go to eight sleep.com slash Lex. This show is also brought to you by inside tracker, a service that used to track biological data. Obviously this episode is very much about your health. There's a lot of controversial aspects to this episode. But I think what's not discussed in this episode, and what I think is true about the future of medicine, about the future of health and diet and so on, that the decisions you make about your body should be driven by the data that comes from your body as much raw signal as possible. And that's what inside tracker is paving the way on is getting as much biological data from you as possible to help you make decisions as blood data, DNA data, fitness tracker data, all that shove that into machine learning algorithms to give you recommendations. Get special savings for a limited time when you go to inside tracker.com slash Lex. Get special savings for a limited time when you go to inside tracker.com slash Lex. This show is brought to you by the thing I just drank, athletic greens or what it's now called AG1. The name of the drink and the name of the company AG1. It's an all in one daily drink to support better health and peak performance. I drink it twice a day. I'm traveling and I have travel packs that make me feel like I'm at home for a brief moment. I make myself an athletic greens. I put it in the fridge. I'll let it cool for a while and then I open it up. I drink it and not only do I feel healthier, not only do I feel like I have my life together, even when on the surface it seems like the life is falling apart physically and emotionally. I know at least I got my nutritional bases covered. I think it's really important when you travel or at least when I travel to have little reminders, maybe almost subconscious reminders that make you feel like this hotel or this shady place you find yourself in somewhere in the world has a piece of home in it. It makes you kind of feel like you are at home until you realize you're not but that little break is wonderful and for me AG1 is very much that because AG1 makes me think like I'm at home and I have my life together and so when I travel it's really nice to have it as well. They'll give you a one month supply of fish oil when you sign up at drinkag1.com slash Lex. This is the Lex Friedman podcast to support it. Please check out our

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sponsors in the description and now dear friends here's Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

It's the 4th of July Independence Day so simple question simple big question

what do you love about this country the United States of America?

I would say there's so many things that I love about the country on you know the landscapes and the waterways and the people etc but on the kind of a you know the higher level you know people argue about whether we're an exemplary nation and that term has been given a bad name particularly

by the neocons the actions the neocons in in recent decades who have turned that that phrase into kind of a justification for forcing people to adopt American systems or values at the barrel of a gun but my father and uncle used it in a very different way and they were very proud of it I grew up very proud of this country because we were the exemplary nation in in in the sense that we were an example of democracy all over the world when we when we first launched our democracy in 1780

we were the only democracy on earth and by the civil war by 1865 there were six democracies today there's probably 190 and all of them in one way or another are modeled on on the American experience and it's kind of extraordinary because sort of our first contact with our first serious and sustained contact with the European culture and continent was in 1608 when John Winthrop came

over with his Puritans in the Slupart Bella and Winthrop gave this famous speech where he said this is going to be a city on a hill this is going to be an example for you know all the other nations in the world and he he warned his fellow Puritans they were you know sitting at the at this great expanse of land he said we can't be we can't be seduced by the the lure of real estate or by the carnal opportunities of this land we have to take this country as a gift from God and then turn it into a an example for the rest of the world of of God's love of God's will and and wisdom and and then you know 200 years later 250 years later they a different generation they're mainly deists there are people who had a belief in God but not so much a love of particularly religious cosmologies you know the afframers the constitution believe that we were creating something that would be replicated around the world and that it was an example it would in democracy there would be this kind of wisdom from the collective you know that and the word wisdom means the knowledge of God's will and that somehow God would

speak through the collective in a way that that he or she could not speak through you know through totalitarian regimes and you know I think that that's something that even though

I went through was a white man and a Protestant that every immigrant group

who came after them I kind of adopted that belief and I know my family when you know

after my family came over all of my grandparents came over in 1848 during the potato famine and they saw this country as unique in history as something that that was

uh that was part of kind of a broader spiritual mission and so I'd say that from a 30 000 foot

level that you know that's I grew up so proud of this country and believing that it was the greatest country in the world and for those reasons well I immigrated to this country and one of the things that really embodies America to me is the ideal of freedom Hunter Thompson said freedom is something

that dies unless it's used what does freedom mean to you to me freedom does not mean you know

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chaos

and it does not mean anarchy it means that it it it it has to be accompanied by restraint if it's going to uh live up to its promise um in self restraint what it means the capacity for human beings to um to exercise and to fulfill their their creative energies unrestrained as much as possible by government so this point that Hunter Stonces made is dies unless it's used do you agree with that yeah I do agree with that and I think you know that he he was not unique in saying that you know Thomas Jefferson said that the tree of liberty has to be uh had be watered with the blood of each generation and what he meant by that is that it's it's uh you can't live off we can't live off the laurels of the American Revolution that you know we had a group we had a generation where between 25 000 and 70 000 Americans died they gave their lives they gave their livelihoods they gave their status they gave their property and they put it all on the line to give us our bill of rights and that but those bill of rights the moment that we signed them there were forces within our society um that began trying to chip away at them and that you know happens in every generation and it is the obligation of every generation to safeguard and protect those freedoms the blood of each generation you mentioned your interest your admiration of Albert Camus of Stoicism perhaps your interest in existentialism Camus said I believe in myth of Sisyphus the only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion what do you think he means by that I suppose the way that Camus viewed the world um and the way that the Stoics did and a lot of the existentialists was that it was uh that it was so absurd and that the uh the the problems in the task that were given just to live a life are so insurmountable that the only way that we can kind of get back to the gods for giving us this you know this uh this uh impossible task of living life was to embrace it and to enjoy it and to do our our best at it I mean to me I you know I read Camus and the particularly the myth of Sisyphus as a um as kind of as a parable that uh and it's the same lesson that I think he he writes about in the plague where we're all given these insurmountable tasks in our lives but um that uh by doing our duty by being observance uh there's we can bring meaning to a meaningless chaos and we can bring order to the universe and you know Sisyphus was um was kind of the iconic hero of the Stoics and he was a man because he did uh because he did something good he delivered a gift to humanity he angered the gods and they condemned him to push a rock up the hill every day and then it would roll down even when he got to the top it would roll down and he'd spend the night going back down the hill to collect it and then rolling it back up the hill again and the task was absurd it was insurmountable he can never win but the last line of that book is one of the great lines which is uh which is something to the extent that you know I can picture Sisyphus smiling because Camus's belief was that even though he his task was insurmountable that he was a happy man and he was a happy man because he put his shoulder to the stone he took his duty he embraced the task and you know and the absurdity of life and he pushed the stone up the hill and that if we do that and if you know we find ways of being of service to others that is you know the ultimate that's the key to the lock that's the solution to the puzzle each individual person in that way can rebel against absurdity by discovering meaning to this whole messy thing and we can bring meaning not only to our own lives but we can bring meaning to the universe as well we can bring some kind of order to life um you know that those the embrace of those tasks and they and the commitment to service resonates out from us to the rest of

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humanity in some in some way so you mentioned the plague by Camus there's a lot of different ways to read that book but one of them especially given how it was written is that the plague symbolizes Nazi Germany and the Hitler regime what do you learn about human nature from a figure like Adolf Hitler that he's able to captivate the minds of millions rise to power and take on pulling the whole world into a global war I was born nine years after the end of World War

Two and I grew up in a generation that was you know with my parents who were fixated on that um and you know what happened and my father at that time they you know the kind of the resolution in the minds of most Americans and I think people around the world is that there was there had been something wrong with the German people that you know the Germans had been particularly

susceptible to this kind of demagoguery and to following a powerful leader and and just industrializing

cruelty and and and murder and my father always differed with that my father said this is not a German problem this could happen to all of us we're all just inches away from barbarity and the thing that keeps us safe in this country are the institutions of our democracy our constitution it's not our nature you know our nature has to uh has to be restrained and it and that comes through self-restraint but it also you know the beauty of our country is that we develop we devise these institutions that are designed to allow us to flourish but at the same time not to give us enough freedom to flourish but also create enough order to keep us from collapsing into barbarity so um you know one of the other things and my father talked about from when I was little you know he would ask us this question if you if you were the family and Anne Frank came to your door and asked you to hide her would you be one of the people who hit her at risk your own life or would you be one of the people who turned her in and of course we would all say well of course we would hide Anne Frank and take the risk um but you know that's been something uh kind of a lesson a challenge that has been uh that has always been near the forefront of my mind that if a totalitarian system ever occurs in the united states which my father thought was quite possible he he was conscious

about how fragile democracy actually is um that would I be one of the ones who would resist the totalitarianism or would I be one of the people who went along with it would I be one of the people who was at the train station and you know crack hour or um or you know even Berlin and saw people being shipped off to camps and just put my head down and pretend I didn't see it because talking about it would be uh destructive to my career maybe my freedom and even my life um so you know that has been a challenge that my father gave to me and all of my brothers and sisters and it's something that I've never forgotten a lot of us would like to believe we would uh

resist in that situation but the reality is most of us wouldn't and that's a good thing to think about that uh human nature is such that we're selfish even when there's an atrocity going on all around us and we also you know we have the capacity to deceive ourselves

and all of us tend to kind of judge ourselves by our intentions and our actions

what have you learned about life from your father Robert F. Kennedy

first of all I'll say this about my uncle because you know I I'm gonna apply that question my uncle and my father my uncle was asked when he first met Jackie Bouvier who later became Jackie Kennedy

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she was a reporter for a newspaper and she was doing she she had a kind of column where she'd do these these kind of um uh pithy interviews uh with with both famous people and kind of men in the street interviews and she was interviewing him and she asked um um what she thought what he believed his best quality was his strongest virtue and she thought that he would say courage because he had been a war hero he had he was the only uh president who and this one he was senator by the way who received the purple heart and you know he had a very kind of famous story of him as a hero in World War II and then he had come home and he'd written a book on on moral courage among American politicians and won the Pulitzer Prize that book Profiles and Courage and um which was a series of incidents where um American political leaders made decisions to to embrace principle even though their careers were at stake and in most cases were destroyed by their choice oh she thought he was going to say courage but he didn't he said curiosity and um I think you know looking back at his life that the best that that it was true and that was the quality that allowed him to put himself in the shoes of his adversaries and he always said that if you if the only way that we're going to have peace is if we're able to put ourselves in the shoes of our adversaries understand their behavior and their context that context and that's why he was able to you know during the uh he was able to resist the intelligence apparatus and the military during the pay of pigs when they said he've got it sent in the Essex the aircraft carrier and he said no even though he'd only been in one two months in office he was able to stand up to them because of because he was able to put himself in the shoes of both Castro and Khrushchev and understand there's got to be another solution to this and then during the Cuban Missile Crisis he was able to until when the the narrative was okay Khrushchev acted in a way as an aggressor to put missiles in our hemisphere how dare he do that and Jack and my father were able to say well wait a minute he's doing that because we put missiles in Turkey and Italy that were right on you know the Turkish ones right on the Russian border and they then made a secret deal with Dobran and with Ambassador Dobran and you know with Khrushchev to remove the missiles in Turkey if he moved the Jupiter missiles from Turkey if I so long as Khrushchev removed them from from Cuba every there were 13 men on the executive on the end what they call the NCON Committee which was the group of people who were deciding you know what the action was what what they were going to do to end the Cuban Missile Crisis and virtually I and of those men 11 of them wanted to invade and wanted to bomb and invade and it was Jack and then later on my my father and then Bob Mackinac who were the only people who were with him because he was able to see the world from Khrushchev's point of view of you he believed that there was another solution and then he also had the moral courage so my father you know to get back to your question famously said that moral courage is the most important quality and it's more it's more rare than courage on the football field or courage in battle than physical courage

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it's much more difficult to come by but it's the most important quality in a human being and you think that kind of empathy that you refer to that requires moral courage it certainly requires moral courage to to act on it you know and particularly you know in you know anytime that a nation is a war there's kind of a momentum or an inertia that says okay let's not look at this from the other person's point of view and um that's the time we really need to do that well if we're going to apply that style of empathy style of curiosity to the current war in Ukraine what is your understanding of why Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022 Vladimir Putin could have avoided the war in the Ukraine his invasion was illegal it was unnecessary and it was brutal but I think it's important for us to move beyond these kind of comic book depictions of a you know of this insane avaricious Russian leader who wants to you know restore the the Soviet Empire and that that's why and it was and it made an unprovoked unprovoked um invasion of the Ukraine he was provoked and we were provoking him and we were provoking him for for since 1997 and it's not just me that's saying that I mean when when and before Putin never came in we were provoking Russians in this way unnecessarily and to go back that time in 1992 when the Russians moved out of when the Soviet Union was collapsing the Russians moved out of East Germany and they did that which was a huge concession and they had 400,000 troops in East Germany at that time and they were facing NATO troops on the other side of the wall oh Gorbachev made this huge concession where he said to George Bush I'm going to move all of our troops out and you can then reunify Germany under NATO which was a hostile army to the to the Soviet it was created to you know with hostile intent toward the Soviet Union and he said you can take Germany but I want your promise that you will not move NATO to the east and James Baker who was his secretary of state famously said I will not move NATO we will not move NATO one inch to the east so then five years later in 1997 there's a big new Brzezinski who was kind of the father of the neocons who was a democrat at that time served in the in the Carter administration he said he published a paper a blueprint for moving NATO right up to the Russian border a thousand miles to the east and and taking over 14 nations and at that time George Kennan who was the kind of the deity of American diplomats he was probably arguably arguably the most important diplomat in American history he was the architect of the containment policy during World War II and he said this is insane and it's unnecessary and if you do this it's going to provoke the Soviet the Russians to a violent response and we should be making friends with the Russians they lost the Cold War we should be treating them the way that we treated the our adversaries after World War II like with a Marshall plan to try to help them incorporate into Europe and to be part of the the brotherhood of you know of man and of western nations we shouldn't continue to be treating them as an enemy and particularly surrounding them at their borders William Perry who was then the secretary of defense under Bill Clinton threatened to resign he was so upset by this plan to move NATO to the east and William Burns who was then the US ambassador to the Soviet Union who's now at this moment the head of the CIA said at that time the same thing if you do this it is going to provoke the Russians toward a military response and we moved it we moved all around Russia we moved to 14 nations a thousand miles the east and we put Aegis missile systems in two nations in Romania and Poland so we did what you know what the Russians had done to us in 1962 that would have provoked an invasion of Cuba

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we put those missile systems back there and then we walk away unilaterally walk away from the two um nuclear missile treaties the intermediate nuclear missile treaties that we had with the Soviet Union with Russia and neither of us would put those missile systems on the borders we walk away from that and we put Aegis missile systems which are nuclear capable they can carry the Tomahawk missiles which have nuclear warheads so the last country that they didn't take was the

Ukraine and the Russians said and in fact Bill Perry said this or William Burns said it so now the head of the CIA it is a red line if we go into if we bring NATO into Ukraine that is a red line for the Russians they cannot live with it they cannot live with it Russia has been invaded three times through the Ukraine the last time it was invaded we killed or the Germans killed one out of every seven Russians they destroyed my uncle described what happened to Russia in his famous American University speech in in 1963 60 years ago this month or he said or last month 60 years ago in June June 10th 1963 he told that speech was telling the American people put yourself in the shoes of the Russians we need to do that if we're gonna if we're gonna make peace and he said all of us have been taught you know that we won the war but we didn't win the war the Russians if anybody won the war against Hitler it was the Russians their country was destroyed they they all of their cities and he said imagine if all of the cities on the east coast of Chicago were reduced to rubble and all of the fields burns all the forest burns that's what happened to Russia that's what they gave so that we could get rid of Adolf Hitler and he had them put themselves in their position and you know today there's none of that happening we have refused repeatedly to talk to the Russians we've broken up there's two treaties the Minsk agreements which the Russians

were willing to sign and they said we will stay out the Russians didn't want the Ukraine they showed that when they when the Donbass region voted 90 to 10 to leave and go to Russia Putin said no we want Ukraine to stay intact but we want you to sign a Minsk Accords to you know they the Russians

were were very worried because of the US involvement in the coup in Ukraine in 2014 and then the oppression and the you know and the killing of 14 000 ethnic Russians and Russia hasn't

that the same the same way that if Mexico would ageist missile systems from China or Russia on our border and then killed 14 000 expats american we would go in there oh he does have a national security interest in the Ukraine he has an interest in protecting the Russian speaking people of the Ukraine the ethnic Russians and the Minsk Accords did that it left Ukraine as part of Russia it left them as a semi-autonomous region that could continue to use their own language which is essentially banned by the coup by the government we put in in 2014 and and we wouldn't we sabotage

that agreement and then we now know in April of 2022 Zelensky and Putin had inked a deal already to another peace agreement and that the United States and Boris Johnson the neocons in the White House and Boris Johnson over to the Ukraine to sabotage that agreement so what do I think I think this is a proxy war I think this is a you know this is a war that the neocons in the White House wanted they've said for two decades they wanted this war and that they wanted to use Ukraine

as a pawn in a proxy war between United States and Russia the same as we used Afghanistan

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and in fact they say it this is the model let's use the Afghanistan model that was said again and again and to get the Russians to overextend their troops and then fight them using local fighters and U.S. weapons and when President Biden was asked why are we in the Ukraine he was honest he says to depose Vladimir Putin regime change for Vladimir Putin and when his defense secretary Lloyd Austin in April 2022 was asked you know why are we there he said to degrade the Russians capacity to fight anywhere to exhaust the Russian army and degrade its capacity to elsewhere in the world that's not a humanitarian mission that's not what we were told we were told this was an unprovoked invasion but and that we're there to bring a humanitarian relief to the Ukrainians but that is the opposite that is a war of attrition that is designed to chew up to turn this little nation into an abattoir of death for the flower of Ukrainian youth in order to advance a geopolitical ambition of certain people within the White House and you know I think that's wrong we should be talking to the Russians the way that you know Nixon talked to Brezhnev the way that Bush talked to Gorbachev the way that my uncle talked to Khrushchev we need to be talking with the Russians we should and and and negotiating and we need to be looking about how do we end this and preserve peace in Europe would you as president sit down and have a conversation with Vladimir Putin and Vladimir Zelensky separately and together to negotiate peace absolutely what about Vladimir Putin he's been in power since 2000 so as the old adage goes power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely do you think he has been corrupted by being in power for so long if you think of the man if you look at his mind listen I don't know exactly um I can't say because I just I don't know enough about him or about you know my the evidence that I've seen is that he is homicidal he kills his enemies or poisons them and you know the reaction I've seen to that to hit those accusations from him have not been to deny that but to kind of laugh it off I think he's a dangerous man and that of course you know there's probably corruption in his regime but having said that it's not our business to change the Russian government and anybody who thinks it's a good idea to do regime change in Russia which has more nuclear weapons than we do um is I think irresponsible and you know Vladimir Putin himself has said you know we will not live in a world without Russia and it was clear when he said that that he was talking about himself and uh and he has his hand on a button that could bring you know arm again to the entire planet so why are we messing with this it's not our job to change that regime and and we should be making friends with the Russians we shouldn't be treating him as an enemy now we've pushed them into the camp with China that's not a good thing for our country and by the way you know what we're doing now does not appear to be weakening Putin at all Putin now you know if you believe the the polls that are coming out of Russia they show him you know the most recent polls that I've seen show him with that 89 percent popularity that people in Russia support the war in Ukraine and that uh and they support him as an individual so um and I understand there's problems with polling and you know you don't know what to believe but but the polls consistently show that and um and I you know it's not America's business to be the policeman of the world and to be changing regimes in the world that's illegal we're not we shouldn't be breaking international laws you know we should actually be looking for ways to improve relationships with Russia not to you know not to destroy Russia not to destroy and not to choose its leadership for

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them that's up to the Russian people not us so step one is to sit down and empathize with the leaders of both nations to understand their history their concerns their hopes just to open the door for conversation so they're now back to the corner yeah and I think the US can play a really important role and a US president can play a really important role by reassuring the Russians that we're not going to consider them an enemy anymore that we want to be friends and it doesn't mean that you have to let down your guard completely the way that you do it which was the way President Kennedy did it is you do it one step at a time you take baby steps we do a unilateral move to reduce our you know our our hostility and aggression and see if the Russians reciprocate and um and that's the way that we should be doing it and you know we should be easing our

way into a positive relationship with Russia we have a lot in common with Russia and we should be friends with Russia and with the Russian people and you know apparently there's been 350,000 Ukrainians who have died at least in this war and and there's probably been 60 or 80,000 Russians and that should not give us any joy it should not give us any you know I saw a Lindsey Graham on TV saying you know anything we can something to the extent that anything we can do

to kill Russians is a good use of our money that it is not you know those are those are somebody's children they're you know we should have compassion for them on this war is an unnecessary war we

should settle it through negotiation through diplomacy through statecraft and not through weapons do you think this work can come to an end purely through military operations no I mean I don't think there's any way in the world that the Ukrainians can be the Russians I don't think there's any appetite in Europe I think Europe is now you know in having severe problems in Germany,

Italy, France you're seeing these riots there's internal problems in those countries there is no appetite in Europe for sending men to die in Ukraine and the Ukrainians do not have anybody left the Ukrainians are using press gangs to you know to fill the ranks of their armies men military aged men are trying as hard as they can to get out of the Ukraine right now to avoid going to the front the front you know the Russians apparently have been killing Ukrainians that at 7 to 1 ratio my son fought over there and he told me it's you know artillery he had he had firefights with the Russians mainly at night but he said most of the battles were artillery wars during the day and the Russians now out outgun the NATO forces 10 to 1 in artillery oh they're killing at a horrendous rate now you know my interpretation of what's happened so far is that the Putin that actually went in early on with a small force because he expected to meet somebody on the other end of a negotiating table that once he went in and uh and that when that didn't happen they did not have a large enough force to be able to mount an offensive and so they've been building up that force up till now and they now have that force and even against this small original force the Ukrainians have been uh I hope helpless all of their offenses have died they've now killed you know the head of the Ukrainian special forces which was the probably arguably by many accounts the best elite military unit in all of Europe they the command common dance the commander of the that special forces group had gave a speech about four months ago saying that 86 percent of his men are dead or wounded and will cannot return to the front he cannot rebuild that force um the uh and you know

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the the troops that are now headed that are now filling the gaps of all those 350,000 men who have been lost are are scantily trained and they're arriving green at the front many of them do not want to be there many of them are giving up and going over the russian side we've seen this again and again again including platoon-sized groups that are defecting to the russians and um I don't think it's possible to win and anybody you know I saw I of course I've studied world war two history exhaustively but I saw a um there's a new I think it's a Netflix series of documentaries that I highly recommend to people there it's their colorized versions of the black and white films from the battles of world war two but it's all the battles of world war two so I watched allen grad the other night and uh you know the the willingness of the russians to um to fight on against any kind of outs and to make huge sacrifices of russians the russians themselves who are making the sacrifice with their lives the willingness of them to do that for their motherland is almost inexhaustible it is incomprehensible to think that the uh that Ukraine can can beat russia in a war it would be like Mexico beating the united states it's just it's impossible to think that it can happen and you know russia has has deployed a tiny tiny fraction of its military so far and you know now it has china with its mass production capacity supporting its war effort it's just it's a it's a hopeless situation and we've been lied to you know we're the the press in our country and our government are just are just you know promoting this lie that the Ukrainians are about to win and that everything's going great and that Putin's on the run and there's all this wishful thinking because of the the Wagner group you know the on the progression and the Wagner group that this was an internal coup and it showed dissent and weakness of Putin and none of that is true I was a that insurgency which wasn't even an insurgency only got 4 000 of his of his men to follow him out of 20 000 and they were quickly stopped and nobody in the russian military the oligarchy the political system nobody supported it you know and but we're being told oh yeah it's the beginning at the end for blue Putin he's weakened he's wounded he's on his way out and all of these things are just lies that we are being fed so to push back on a small aspect of this you kind of implied so I've traveled to Ukraine and one thing that I should say similar to the battle of Stalingrad it is just not it is not only the Russians that fight to the end I think the Ukrainians are very lucky to fight to the end and the morale there is quite high I've talked to nobody this was a year ago in august with her son everybody was proud to fight and die for their country and there's some aspect where this war unified the people to get gave them a reason and an understanding that this is what it means to be Ukrainian and I will fight to the death to defend this land you know I would agree with that and I should have said that myself at the beginning but you know that's one of the reason my son went over there to fight because the you know he was inspired by the valor of the Ukrainian people and the you know this extraordinary willingness of them and I think Putin thought it would be much easier to sweep into Ukraine and he found you know a stone wall of of Ukrainians whether ready to put their their lives and their bodies on the line but that to me makes the whole episode even more tragic is that you know I don't believe I you know I I think that the U.S. role in this has been had you know that there were there were many opportunities to settle this war and the Ukrainians wanted to settle it for Vladimir Zelensky when he ran in 2019 here's a guy who's a comedian he's a he's an actor um he had no political experience and yet he won this election with 70 percent of the vote why he won on a peace platform anyone promising to sign the Minsk Accords and

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yet something happened when he got in there that made him suddenly pivot and you know I think it's a good guess what happened I think he was you know he came under threat by ultra-natural and nationalist within his own administration and the insistence of neocons like Victoria Newell and in the White House that you know we don't want peace with Putin we want a war do you worry about nuclear war yeah I worry about it it's uh it seems like a silly question but it's not it's a serious question well the reason it's not you know the reason it might it's not it's just because people seem to be in this kind of dream state about that it'll never happen and yet you know we're uh it can happen very easily and it can happen at any time and you know if we push the Russians too far you know I I don't doubt that Putin if he felt like his regime was in you know or his nation was in danger that the United States was going to be able to place you know a quizzing on you know into the Kremlin that he would use nuclear you know torpedoes and you know these these strategic weapons that they have and that could be the end once you do that nobody controls the trajectory by the way you know I have I have very strong memories of the Cuban missile crisis and those 13 days when we came closer to nuclear war you know and particularly I think it was when the U2 got shut down over Cuba that you know and nobody in this kind there's a lot of people in Washington D.C. who at that point thought that they very may well may wake up dead that the world may end at night 30 million Americans killed 130 million Russians this is what our military brass wanted they saw a war with Russia a nuclear exchange with Russia as not only inevitable but also desirable because they wanted to do it now while we still had a superiority can you actually go through the feelings you've had about the Cuban missile crisis like what what are your memories of it what what are some interests you know in the middle of I was going to school in Washington D.C. to um to sit well far to um our lady of victory which is in Washington D.C. so we were I lived in Virginia across the atomic and we would cross the bridge every day into D.C. and during the crisis U.S. Marshals came to my house to take us I think around day eight my father was spending the night at the White House he wasn't coming home he was staying with the ex-comp committee and sleeping there and they were up you know 24 hours they were debating and trying to figure out what was happening and um but we had U.S. Marshals come to our house to take us down they were going to take us down to um a white sulfur springs and uh in southern Virginia in the in the Blue Ridge Mountains where there was a um there was an underground city essentially a bunker that was like a city and apparently it had McDonald's in it and a lot of other you know it had it was a full city for the U.S. government and their families U.S. Marshals came to our house to take us down there and I was very excited about doing that and this was at a time you know when we were doing the drills we were doing the duck and cover drills um once a week at our school where they would tell you if they you know when the alarms go off um then you you put your head onto the table you take the show you remove the sharps from your desk put them inside your desk you put your head onto the table and you wait and the initial blast will take the windows out of the school and then we all stand up and and file in an orderly fashion into the basement where we're going to be for the next six or eight months or whatever but in the basement where you know we we went occasionally in those corridors we're lined with uh freeze-dried food canisters up to this from Florida's ceiling so people were you know we were all preparing for this and it was you know uh Bob McNamara who is my was a

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friend

of mine and you know it's my father one of my father's closest friend the secretary of defense he later called mass psychosis and my father deeply regretted participating in the bomb shelter program because he said it was part of a you know a psychological psiop trick to treat them to teach Americans that nuclear war was acceptable that it was survivable my father anyway when they when the marshals came to our house take me and my brother Joe away

and with we were the ones who are home at that time um my father called and he talked to us on the phone and he said I don't want you going down there because um because if you disappear from school people are going to panic and I need you to be a good soldier and go to school now and and he said something to me during that period which was that if the nuclear war happened it would be better to be among the dead than the living which I did not believe okay I mean I had already prepared myself for the you know for the for the dystopian future and I knew I could I spent every day in the woods I knew that I could survive by catching crawfish and you know cooking mud puppies and whatever I had to do but I felt like okay I can I can handle this uh and I really wanted to see the setup down and you know this underground city but anyway that was you know part of it for me my father was away and you know the last days of it

my father um got this idea because khrushchev had sent two letters he sent one letter that was conciliatory and then he sent a letter that after his joint chief sent the warmongers around to him to solve that letter and they disapproved of it they sent another letter that was extremely belligerent and my father had the idea let's just pretend we didn't get the second letter and reply to the first one and then he went down to do brennan and who was he met do brennan in the justice department and do brennan was the soviet ambassador and they you know they proposed this settlement which was a secret settlement where khrushchev would withdraw the missiles from cuba khrushchev had put the missiles in cuba because we had put missiles you know nuclear missiles in turkey and italy and my uncle's secret deal was that if he if khrushchev removed the missiles from cuba within six months he would get rid of the jupiter missiles in turkey but if khrushchev told anybody about the deal it was off so if if news got out about that secret deal it was off but that was the actual deal and khrushchev complied with it and then my uncle complied with it how much of that part of human history turned on the decisions of one person i think that's one of the you know because that of course the brennial question right but it is history kind of an automatic pilot and you know human decisions and the decisions of leaders really only have you know a marginal or incremental bearing on what is going to happen anyway but i think that is the and historians argue about that all the time i think that that is a really good example of a play of a place in human history that uh that literally the world could have ended if we had a different leader in the white house and the reason for that is that there were as i recall 64 gun emplacements you know missile missile emplacements each one of those missile emplacements had a crew of about 100 men and they were soviets so um they were and they we didn't know whether that we we had a couple of questions that my uncle

asked ellen or asked the cia and he asked that dallas was already gone but he asked the cia and he asked um his military brass because they all wanted to go in everybody wanted to go in and my uncle said my uncle asked to see the aerial photos and he examined those personally and this

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why it's important to have a leader in the white house who can push back on on their bureaucracies he um and then he asked them you know are those who's manning those missile sites and are they russians and if they're russians and we bomb them uh are they isn't it gonna force crew chef to then go into berlin and that would be the beginning of a cascade of fact that would you know highly likely end a nuclear confrontation and the the uh the military brass said to my uncle oh we don't think you'll have the you know we don't think he'll have the guts to do that so he went my uncle was like that's what you're betting on and uh you know they all wanted him to go in they wanted him to bomb the sites and then invade cuba and he said if we bomb those sites we're going to be killing russians and it's going to force it's going to provoke russia into some response and the obvious response is for them to go into berlin oh but the thing that we didn't know then that we didn't find out until i think uh you know there was a there was like a 30-year anniversary of the cuban missile crisis in havana and what we learned then was that from the russians who came to that event it was like a symposium where everybody on both sides talked about it and we learned a lot of stuff and and never nobody knew before one of the insane things the most insane thing that we learned was that the the weapons were already the the nuclear warheads were already in place they were ready to fire and that the authorization to fire was made was delegated to each of the gun club gun crew commanders so there were 60 people who at all had authorization to fire if they felt themselves under attack so you have to believe them at least one of them would have launched and that would have been the beginning of the end and you know if they if anybody had launched you know we knew what would happen my uncle knew what would happen because he asked again and again what's going to happen and they said 30 million americans will be killed but we will kill 130 million russians so we will win and that was a victory for them and my uncle said later said he told he told Arthur Schlesinger and Kenny O'Donnell he said those guys he called them the salad brass the guys with all of the stuff on their chest and he said he said those guys they don't care because they know that if it happens that they're going to be in the charge of everything they're the ones who are going to be running the world after that so for them you know it was there was an incentive to to kill 130 million russians and 30 million americans by my uncle he had this correspondence with the crew chef they were secretly corresponding with each other and that is what saved the world is that they had that both of them had been men of war you know Eisenhower famously said it will it will not be a man of war it will not be a soldier who starts world war three because a guy who's actually seen it knows how bad it is and my uncle you know had been in the heat of the south pacific his boat had been cut into by a japanese destroyer um his and even three of his crewmen had been killed one of them badly burned he he pulled that guy with a lanyard in his teeth six miles to an island in the middle of the night and then they hid out there for 10 days you know and um and you know he came back like i said he was the only president of the united states that are in the purple heart um meanwhile crew chef had been at Stalingrad which was the worst place to be on the planet you know probably in the 20th century other than you know and how swiss are one of the death camps it was uh you know it was it was the most ferocious horrific war with people starving people you know committed cannibalism uh you know eating the dogs the cats eating their

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shoe leather freezing to death by the thousands etc a crew chef did not want the last thing he wanted was a war and the last thing my uncle wanted was a war and they but the the CIA did not know

anything about crew chef and the reason for that is the there was a mullet Langley so that every time the CIA got a spy in the Kremlin he would immediately be killed so they had no eyes in the Kremlin you know there were literally hundreds of Russia of Russian spies who had who had defected

the united states and were in the Kremlin who were killed during that period they had no idea anything about crew chef about how he saw the world and they saw the Kremlin itself as a monolith you know that this uh this kind of you know the same way that we look at Putin today that you know it's all they they have this ambition of world conquest and that's it's driving them and there's nothing else they think about they're absolutely single-minded about it but actually there was a big division between crew chef and uh and his joint chiefs and his intelligence apparatus and they and they both at one point discovered they were both in the same situation they were surrounded by spies and military personnel who were intent on going to war and they were the two guys resisting it so when my uncle my uncle had this idea of you know being the peace president from the beginning he told ben bradley his one of his best friends who you know was running the publisher of the Washington Post for the editor-in-chief at that time he said um ben bradley asked him

what is what do you want in your gravestone and my uncle said he kept the peace he said the principal

job of the president of the united states is to keep the country out of war and um and so when he first became president he he actually agreed to meet crew chef in geneva to do his summit and by the

way eisenhower had wanted to do the same thing eisenhower wanted peace but his and he was going

to meet in vienna but that peace summit was blown up he was going to try to do um you know he was

going to try to end the cold war eisenhower was in the last year of his in may of 1961 but that was torpedoed by the cia during the u2 crash you know they sent a u2 over the soviet union it got shot down and then they told and then alan told us told eisenhower to deny that we had a program they didn't know that the russians had captured gary francis powers and so one and and that blew up the peace talks between eisenhower and crew chef and so you know the and the uh there was a lot of tension my uncle wanted to break that tension he agreed to meet with um with crew chef in vienna early on in his term he went over there and crew chef snubbed

crew chef lectured him imperiously about the you know the the terror of american imperialism and and rebuff any you know they did agree not to go into laos they made an agreement that kept the united states became my uncle from sending troops to laos but um it had been a disaster vienna so then we had a spy that used to come to our house all the time i cut george bolshekov he was this russian spy my my parents had met at the embassy they had gone to a party or reception that russian embassy and he had approached them and they knew he was he was a gru agent and kgb he

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was both oh he used to come to our house they really liked him he was very attractive he was always laughing and joking he would do rope climbing contests with my father he would do push-up contests with my father he was uh he could do the russian dancing the cossack dancing and he would do that for us and teach us that and he was and we knew he was a spy too and this was at the time of you know the james bond films were first coming out so it was really exciting for us have a actual russian spy in our house the state department was horrified by it but um but anyway when khrushchev after vienna and after um the you know the big pigs on khrushchev had

second thoughts and he sent this long letter to my uncle and he didn't want to go through his his state department or his embassy he wanted to end run them but and he was friends with bolshekoy

so he gave george the the letter and george brought it and handed it to pia salinger folded in the new york times and he gave it to my uncle and it was this beautiful letter at which he said you know um he my uncle had talked to him about the children who were played you know we played

29 grandchildren who were playing in his yard and he's saying what is our moral basis for making a decision that could kill these children so they'll never write a poem they'll never participate in elections they'll never run for office how can we make how can we can we morally make a decision

that is going to eliminate life for these beautiful kids and um he had said that to to khrushchev and khrushchev wrote in this letter back saying that he was now sitting as this dacha on the black and um that he was thinking about what my uncle jack had said to me and he regretted very deeply not having taken the olive leaf that jack had offered him and then he said you know it occurs to me now that we're all on an ark and that there is not another one and that the entire fate of the planet and all of its creatures and all of the children are dependent on the decisions we make and you and i have a moral obligation to go forward with each other's friends and immediately after that this was you know they he sent that right after the berlin crisis in 1962 general curtis lemay um tried to um had tried to provoke a war with a an incident at checkpoint charlie which

was the the the entrance the entrance and exit through the berlin wall in berlin and the russian tanks had come to the wall the u.s tanks had come to the wall and there was a standoff and my uncle had had uh sent a message to khrushchev then through do brennan saying my back is at the wall i cannot i have no place to back to please back off and then we will back off and khrushchev took his word act his tanks off first and then my uncle ordered lemay to back like he had lemay had mounted bulldozer plows on the on the front of the tanks to to plow down the berlin wall and that and the russians had come so it was just you know it was the right it was the his generals trying to provoke a war and um but they started talking to each other and then when he after he wrote that letter they agreed that they would install a hotline so they could talk to each other and they wouldn't have to go through intermediaries and so at jack's house on the cape there was a red phone that we knew if we picked it up khrushchev would answer and there was another one in the white house yeah and but they knew it was important to talk to each

other you know and you just wish that we had that kind of leadership today

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i can i you know that just understands our job look i know you know a lot about ai right and you know how dangerous it is potentially to humanity and what opportunity is it also um you know offers but it could kill us all i mean elon said first it's going to steal our job and it's going to kill us right yeah and it's it's probably not hyperbole it's actually you know if it follows the laws of biological evolution which are just the laws of mathematics that's probably a good endpoint for it you know a potential endpoint so um we we need it's going to happen

but we need to make sure it's regulated and it's regulated properly for safety in every country and and that includes russia and china and iran right now we we should be putting all the weapons of war aside and sitting down with those guys and saying how are we doing how are we going to do this

there's much more important things to do we're going to this stuff is going to kill us if we don't figure out how to regulate it and and leadership needs to look down the road at what is the real risk here and the real risk is that you know AI will will you know enslave us for one thing and you know and and then destroy us and do all this other stuff and how about biological weapons we're now all working on these biological weapons and we're doing biological weapons from

or Ebola and um and you know dengue fever and you know all of these other bad things and we're making ethnic bioweapons bioweapons that can only kill russians bioweapons that the chinese are making

that you know are can kill people who don't who don't have chinese genes so all of this is now within reach we're actively doing it and we need to stop it and we can easily a biological weapons treaty is the easiest thing in the world to do we can verify it we can enforce it and everybody wants to agree to it it only insane people do not want to want to continue this kind of research there's no reason to do it so there are these existential threats to all of humanity now out there like AI and biological biological weapons we need to start stop fighting each other start competing on economic game fields playing fields instead of military playing fields which will be good for all of humanity and that we need to sit down with each other and negotiate reasonable treaties on how we regulate AI and biological weapons and nobody's talking about this in this political race right now nobody's talking about it in a government they get fixated on these little wars and you know and uh these comic book depictions of good versus evil and you know and we all go you know and and go off to and give them the weapons and enrich you know the military and gosh i should have complex but we're we're on the road to perdition if we don't end this and some of this requires to have this kind of phone that connects khrushchev and john afghanity that cuts through all the bureaucracy to have this communication between heads of state and in the case of AI perhaps heads of tech companies where you can just pick up the phone and have a conversation because a lot of it a lot of the existential threats of artificial intelligence perhaps even bio weapons is unintentional it's not even strategic intentional effects so you have to be transparent and honest about especially with AI that people might not know what what's the worst that's going to happen once you release it out into the wild and you have to have an honest kind of communication about how to do it so that companies are not terrified of regulation uh overreach regulation and then uh government is not terrified of tech companies of manipulating them in some directory in direct ways so like there's a trust that builds

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versus a distrust that that seems to so basically that old phone or khrushchev can call john afghanity as needed yeah and you know i don't think there's a listen i don't understand AI okay i do know i i can see from all this technology how it's this kind of turn key totalitarianism that once you put these systems in place you know they can be misused to enslave people and they can be misused in wars and you know to subjugate to kill to do all of these bad things and i don't think there's anybody on capitol hill who understands this you know we need to bring in the tech community and say

tell us what these regulations need to look like you know so that there can be freedom to innovate so that we can milk AI for all of the good things but not you know fall into these traps that are you know that that are these existential threats to that pose existential threats to humanity it seems like john afghanity is a singular figure in that he was able to have the humility to reach out to khrushchev and also the the strength and integrity to resist the what did you call him this the salad salad brass and institutions like the cia so that that makes a particularly tragic that he was killed to what degree was cia involved or the various bureaucracy involved in his death the evidence that the cia was involved in my uncle's murder and that they can that they were subsequently involved in the cover-up and and continue to be involved in the cover-up i mean there's still 5000 documents that they won't release 60 years later is i think so insurmountable and so you know a mountainous and overwhelming that it's beyond any reasonable doubt including you know dozens of confessions that people who were involved in the in the in the assassination but you know all of every kind of document and and you know i mean it came as a surprise recently to most americans i think the release of these documents in which the the the press the american media finally acknowledged that yeah li harvey oswald was the cia asset that he was recruited you know in 1957 he was a marine working at the attitude the air force base and which was the cia air force base in you know with the u2 flights which was a cia program and that he was recruited by james jesus angleton who was the director of counterintelligence and then sent on a fake defection to russia and then brought back you know um to to dalis and people didn't know that even though it's been known

for decades but the it never percolated into the mainstream media because they have such a um you know they're they have such an allergy to anything that that uh that challenges the warren report you know when congress investigated my uncle's murder in the um in the uh in the 1970s

the church committee did and they did you know two and a half year investigation and they had many

many more documents and much more testimony available to them than the warren commission had and this was this was a decade after the warren commission they came to the conclusion that my uncle was killed by a conspiracy and there was a division where essentially one guy on that committee believed it was primarily the mafia but richard schweitzer was the senator who had of the committee um said you know straight out the cia was involved in the murder of the president united states oh and and the if i've talked to most of the staff on that committee and they said yeah um and the cia was stonewalling us the whole way through and the actual people that the cia appointed george shohannadis uh who had who the cia appointed as a liaison to the committee they brought him out of retirement he had been one of the masterminds of the assassination

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oh uh there's no i mean it's impossible to even talk about a tiny the fraction of the evidence here and what i suggest to people there are hundreds of books written about this that you know assemble this evidence and um mobilize the evidence the best book to me for people to read is james douglas's book which is called the unspeakable and he douglas does this extraordinary he's an extraordinary scholar and he does this it's an amazing job of digesting and summarizing and mobilizing all of them you know the probably a million documents and you know the evidence from all these confessions that have come out into a coherent story and it's riveting to read and you know i recommend people who do not take my word for it you know um and don't take uh don't take anybody else's word for go ahead and do the research yourself in one way to do that is probably the most efficient way to read douglas's book because he has all the references there so if it's true that cia had a hand in this assassination how is it possible for them to amass so much power how is it possible for them to become corrupt and is it individuals or is it the entire institution no it's not the entire institution my daughter-in-law who's not helping to run my campaign was a cia you know in the clandestine services for all of her career she was a spy and the weapons of mass destruction program in the mid-east and in china and there's 22 000 people who work for the cia probably 20 000 of those are you know are patriotic americans and really good public servants and they're doing important work for our country but the institution is corrupt and and because the height ranks the institution and in fact mike pompeo said something like this to me the other day was the director of the cia he said when i was there i did not do a good job of cleaning up that agency and he said the entire upper bureaucracy of that agency are people who do not believe in the institutions of of democracy this is what he said to me so i don't know if that's true but i know that you know that's significant he's a smart person and he ran the agency and he was the secretary of state but it's no mystery how that happened and we know the history the cia was originally first of all there was great reluctance in 1947 that we had it for the first time we had a secret spy agency in this country to run a world war two called the os s that was disbanded after the war because congress said having a secret spy agency is incompatible with a democracy the secret spy agencies are things that like the kgb stasi in east germany savak in iran and uh peep and chili and whatever you know all over the world they're all have to do with totalitarian governments they're not something that you can have that um it's it's antithetical to democracy to have that but um in 1947 we created truman signed it in but it was an initially and that's been our agency which means information gathering which is important it's to get to gather and consolidate information many many different sources from all over the world and then put those in reports of the white house so the president can make good decisions based upon valid information evidence-based you know decision making uh but alan dollas who was the you know essentially the first head of the agency made a series of of legislative machinations and political machinations that gave additional powers to the agency and opened up the uh what they called then the the plans division which is the plans division is the dirty tricks it's the black ops fixing elections um murdering what they call executive action which means killing foreign leaders um and you know making small wars and uh and bribing and blackmailing people stealing elections and that kind of thing and the reason at that time you know we were in the middle of the cold war and truman and then eisenhower did not want to go to war they didn't want to commit troops and it seemed to them that you know this was a way of kind of fighting the cold war secretly

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without and doing it at minimal cost by um by uh changing events sort of invisibly and so it was seductive to them but everybody you know congress when they first voted in place congress both political parties said if we create this thing it could turn into a monster and it could undermine our you know our values and today it's so it's so powerful and then nobody knows what its budget is plus it has its own investment fund in cutel which has invested you know made i think 2000 investments in silicon valley oh it has ownership of a lot of these tech companies that you know and the a lot of the ceo's those tech companies f sign state secrecy agreements with the cia which if they even reveal that they have signed that they can go to jail for 20 years and have their assets removed etc oh the influence that the agency has the capacity to influence events at every level in our country uh art is really uh frightening and then for most of its um for most of its life the cia was banned from propagandizing americans but we learned that they were doing it anyway so in 1973 during the church committee hearings we learned that the cia had a program called operation mockingbird where they had at least 400 members leading members of the united states press corps on the new york times the washington post abc cbs nbc etc who were secretly working for the agency and um and steering news coverage uh to support cia priorities and they agreed at that time to disband operation mockingbird in 73 but there's uh there's indications they didn't do that and they still that cia today is the biggest funder of journalism around the world oh the biggest funder is through usa id um the usa the united states funds journalism in almost every country in the world you know it owns newspapers that uh has journalists hundreds of thousands of journalists on its payroll they're not supposed to be doing that in the united states but um you know in 2016 president obama changed the law to make it legal now for the cia to propagandize americans and i think you know we can't look at the ukraine war and how that was you know has been how the narrative has been formed in the in the minds of americans and say that the cia had nothing to do with that what is the mechanism but wish to say influences the narrative do you think it's indirectly through the press indirectly through the press or directly by funding the press directly through i mean there's certain press organs that have been linked you know to the agency that the people who run those organs things like the daily beast now rolling stone you know editor of no rolling stone no ish lachman has deep relationships with the intelligence community uh salon daily coasts um but i wonder why they would do it so from my perspective it just seems like the job of a journalist is to have an integrity where european it cannot be influenced or bought i agree with you but i actually think that the entire field of journalism has uh has uh you know really ashamed itself in recent years because it's become you know the the principal newspapers in this country and the television station the legacy media have abandoned their um their traditional their tradition of of you know which was when i was a kid listen my house was filled with the greatest journalists alive at that time people like ben bradley like anthony lewis mary magrory eat hamel jerry jack newfield jimmy brezlin uh and many many others and after my father after my father died they started the rfk journalism awards to recognize integrity and courage you know journalistic integrity and courage and for that generation of journalism they they thought they believed that the that the function of a journalist was to maintain this posture of fear skepticism toward any aggregation of power and including government authority you always that

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people in authority lie and that we they always have to be questioned and uh and that their job was to speak truth to power and to be guardians of the first amendment right to to uh free expression

but if you look what happened during the pandemic it was the inverse of that kind of journalism where the uh the major press organs in this country um were instead of speaking truth to power they were doing the opposite they were broadcasting propaganda they became propaganda organs for the government agencies and they were actually censoring um the speech of dissent anybody who dissented of the powerless oh and in in fact it was it was an organized conspiracy you know and it was the name of it was the trusted news initiative and you know some of the major press organs in our country signed onto it and they agreed not to print stories or facts that um that departed from government orthodoxy so the washington post was the signature of the upi the ap and then the four media or the four social media groups microsoft twitter facebook and google all signed on to the trusted news initiative it was started by the bbc organized by them and the purpose of it was to make sure nobody could print anything about government that departed

from government orthodoxy the way it worked is the upi the ap and the which are the news services that provide most of the news you know news around the country and the washington post would decide what news was permissible to print and a lot of it was about covert but also hunter buttons laptops were you it was impermissible to suggest that those were real or that you know they had stuff on there that was compromising and um and we you know and by the way i this what i'm

telling you know is all well documented and i'm litigating on it right now so i'm part of a lawsuit against the dni and so i know a lot about what happened and i have all this documented and people can go to our website there's a letter on my substack now to um to michael share of the washington post that outlines all this and gives all my sources um because michael share accused me

of being a conspiracy theorist when he was actually part of a conspiracy a true conspiracy to suppress anybody who is departing from government orthodoxies by either censoring them completely or labeling them conspiracy theorists i mean you can understand the intention and the action the difference between this we talked about you can understand the intention of such a thing being good in a time of a catastrophe in a time of a pandemic uh there's a lot of risk to saying untrue things but that's a slippery slope that leads into a place where the journalistic integrity that we talked about is completely sacrificed and then you can deviate from truth if you read their internal memorandum including the statements of the the the leader of the trusted news initiative i think her name's jessica uh jennifer to see so um and i you know you can go on our website and see her statement and she says she says the purpose of this is that we're now i say she says when people look at us they think we're competitors but we're not the real competitors are coming from all these alternative news sources now all over the network and they're hurting public trust in us and they're hurting our economic model and we have to they have to be choked off and crushed and and the way that we're going to do that is to make an agreement with the social media sites that if we say if we label their information misinformation the social media sites will um will de-platform it or they will throttle it or they will uh shadow ban it which destroys the economic model of those alternative competitive sources

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of information so that that's true but and but the point you make is an important point um that the journalists themselves who probably didn't know about the tni agreement certainly i'm sure they didn't um they believe that they're doing the right thing by suppressing information that may challenge you know government proclamations on covet but i mean there's a danger to that and the danger is that you know once you appoint yourself an arbiter of what's true and what's not true uh then there's really no end to the power that you have now assumed for yourself because now your your job is no longer to inform the public your job now is to manipulate the public and if you end up manipulating the public uh in collusion with powerful entities then you become the instrument of authoritarian rule um rather than the you know the the opponent of it and it becomes the inverse of journalism and a democracy you're running for president as a democrat uh what do you are the strongest values that represent the left-wing politics uh of this country i would say protection of the environment and the the commons you know the air the water wildlife fisheries public lands you know the those assets they cannot be reduced to private property ownership

you know the the landscapes are purple mountain majesty uh the protection of the most vulnerable people in our society people um who um which would include children and minorities uh the the restoration of the middle class you know the and uh and uh protection of labor dignity uh and you know decent pay for labor um uh bodily autonomy a woman's right to choose or an individual's right to endure unwanted medical procedures um peace you know the democrats have always been any war

the refusal to use fear as a governing tool you know of fdr said the the only thing we have to fear is fear itself because he recognized that uh tyrants and dictators could use fear to disable critical thinking and and uh and overwhelm the desire for personal liberty um the uh the the freedom of government from untoward influence by corrupt corporate power that's the end of this corrupt merger of of the state and corporate power that is now i think dominating our democracy split eyes and how are warned about money warned against the emergence of the military industrial complex and then i prefer to talk about kind of the positive for a vision of what we should be doing in our country and globally which is you know i i i see that the corporations are commoditizing us are poisoning our children are um strip mining the wealth from our middle class and uh and treating america if it were business and liquidation converting assets to cash as quickly as possible and you know and and creating or exacerbating this uh this huge disparity in wealth in our country which is eliminating the middle class and creating you know kind of a latin american style feudal model there's a these huge aggregations of wealth above and widespread to spread poverty below and that's a configuration that is too unstable to support democracy sustainably you know and we're supposed to be modeling democracy but we're losing

it um and i you know i think we ought to have a foreign policy that restores our moral authority around the world restores america as the embodiment of moral authority and which it was when my uncle

was president and as a purveyor of peace rather than you know war like nation my uncle said he didn't want people in africa and latin america and asia to think of when they think of america to picture a man with a gun and a bayonet he wanted them to think of a peace corps volunteer and he refused to send combat veterans abroad combat soldiers abroad he never sent a single

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soldier to his death abroad um and uh in you know into combat um he sent 16 000 he resisted in in berlin and 62 he resisted in laos uh in 61 he resisted um in in vietnam you know vietnam they wanted him to put 250 000 troops he only put 16 000 advisors which was fewer few fewer troops and he sent to get james meredith into the uh into the universe to ol miss in oxford mississippi one black man he sent 16 000 and a month before he died he'd ordered them all help me actually i think it was october 2nd of 1963 he heard that a green beret had died and he asked his aid for a combat um for a list of combat fatalities and the aid came back and there were just 75 men had died in vietnam at that point and he said that's too many we're gonna have no more and he ordered he signed a national security order 263 and ordered all of those men all americans home from vietnam by 1965 with the first thousand coming home by december 63 and then uh in november

he of course just before that evacuation began he was killed and a week later president johnson remanded that order and then a year after that the tonkin gulf resolution we sent 250 000 which is what they wanted my uncle to do which he refused and then and it became an american war and then

nixon you know topped it off at 560 000 56 000 americans never came home including my cousin george skakel who died at the ted offensive um and we killed a million vietnamese and we got nothing for

it so america should uh be the symbol of peace and you know today my uncle you know really focused

on putting america on the side of the poor yeah instead of our tradition of you know of of uh fortifying oligarchies that were anti-communism that was our you know our major criteria if you said you were against communists and of course the people were with the rich people our aid was going to the rich people in those countries and they were going to the military hunt us our weapons were going to the hunt us to fight against the poor and my uncle said no you know america should be on the side of the poor and so he launched the alliance for progress and the usa id which were intended to bring aid to the poorest people knows and build middle classes and and take ourselves

away in fact his most his favorite trip his two favorite trips while he was present

his most favorite trip was to ireland this is incredible um emotional homecoming for all of the people of ireland but his second favorite trip was when he went to columbia he went to latin america but columbia was his favorite country and there were i think there were two million people came into bogota to see him this vast crowd and they were just delirious cheering for him and the president of columbia eris carmargo i'm said to him do you know why they love you and my uncle said why and he said because they think you've put america on the side of the poor against the oligarchs and you know when my uncle after he died today there are more avenues and boulevards and hospitals and schools named after and statues named after and commemorating and parks commemorating john canady in africa and latin america than any other president of the united states and probably more than all the other presidents combined and it's because you know he put america on the side of the poor and that's what we ought to be doing we ought to be projecting mille economic power abroad the chinese have essentially stolen his playbook and you know we've spent eight trillion dollars on the iraq war and it's aftermath of wars in syria yemen libya you know afghanistan pakistan and what do we get for that we got nothing

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for that money eight trillion dollars um we got we killed more irakis than san mussein iraq today is is that is a mad worse much worse off than it was when sanham was there and say it's an incoherent violent war between shia and sunni desquads we pushed iraq into the embrace of iran which

now become essentially a proxy for iran which is exactly the outcome that we were trying to prevent for the past you know 20 or 30 years we created isis we sent two million refugees into europe destabilizing all of the nations in europe for generations and we're now seeing these riots in uh in france and that's a direct result from the syrian war that we created and and that our creation of isis brexit is another you know result of that so we for eight trillion dollars we wrecked the world and during that same period that we spent eight point one trillion dollars the bombing bridges ports schools hospitals center the chinese spent eight point one trillion dollars building schools ports hospitals bridges and and uh and universities and now you know the chinese are are out competing us everywhere in the world everybody wants to

deal with the chinese because they you know they come in they they build nice things for you and they

and there's no strengths attached and they're pleasant to deal with and and you know as a result of that brazil is switching the chinese currency um argentina is switching saudi arabia our greatest partner that you know we put trillions of dollars into protecting our oil pipelines there and now they they're saying you know we we don't we don't care what the united states think that's what my mom and ben salam said he said we don't he you know they he dropped oil production in saudi arabia in the middle of the us inflation spiral they've never done that to us before to aggravate the inflation spiral and two weeks later and then they signed a deal a unilateral peace deal with iran which has been the enemy that we've been telling them to you know to be a bullet work against for 20 years and two weeks after that he said we don't care what the united states thinks anymore so that's what we got for spending all those trillions of dollars there we got short term friends and the united states you know policy abroad and we have not made ourselves safer we've made americans we've put americans in more jeopardy all over the world you know you have to

wait in lines to get through the airport um you have to you know the security state is now then costing us 1.3 trillion dollars and america is unsafer and poorer than it's ever been so you know we're not getting we should be doing what president kennedy said we ought to do and what

what china the policy that china has now adopted so that's uh really eloquent and clear and powerful description of the way you see us should be doing geopolitics and the way you see us should be taking care of the poor in this country let me ask you a question from jordan peterson that he asked when i told him that i'm speaking with you given everything you've said when does the left go too far i suppose he's referring to cultural issues identity politics well you know jordan trying to get me to bad mouth the left the whole time i was and i really enjoyed my my uh my talk with him yeah but he seemed to have that agenda where he wanted me to you know say bad things about the left and i just um you know that's not what my campaign is about i want to do the opposite i'm not gonna bad mouth the left they try i you know i was on a show this week with david remnick from the new yorker and he tried to get me to bad mouth donald trump and you know

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and alex jones and a lot of other people just and and baiting me to do it and of course there's a lot of bad things i could say about all those people but it doesn't you know i'm trying to find i'm trying to find values that hold us together and we can share in common rather than to focus constantly on these disputes and these issues then drive us apart so me sitting here bad mouthing the left or bad mouthing the right is not going to advance the ball i i really want to figure out ways that you know what do these groups hold in common that we can all you know have a shared vision of what we want this country to look like well that's music to my ears but in that spirit let me ask you a difficult question then you wrote a book harshly criticizing anthony fauci let me ask you to steal me on the case for the people who support him what is the biggest positive thing you think anthony fauci did for the world what is good that he has done for the world especially during this pandemic you know i don't want to uh sit here and speak uncharitably by saying the guy um didn't do anything but i i don't i can't think of anything i mean if you um if you tell me something that you think he did you know maybe there was a drug that got licensed

while he was in nih that you know benefited people that's certainly possible he was there for 50 years

and i i in terms of his um of his principal programs of the aides programs and his covet programs and i think that the harm that he did vastly outweighed uh you know the the benefits do you think he believes he's doing good for the world i don't know what he believes in fact in that book which is i think 250 000 words i never try to look inside of his head i i deal with facts i deal with science oh and i every every factual assertion in that book is cited in source to government databases or peer reviewed publications and i don't i try not to speculate about things that i don't know about or i can't prove and i do i cannot tell you what his motivations were or i mean all of us he's done a thing a lot of things that i think are really very very bad things for humanity a very uh deceptive but we all have this um this capacity for self-deception as i said at the beginning of this podcast we we judge ourselves on our intentions rather than our actions and we all have an almost infinite capacity to convince ourselves that what we're doing is is right and um you know not everybody kind of lives an examined life and they're examining their motivations in the way that the world might experience

their professions of goodness let me ask about the difficulty of the job he had do you think it's possible to do that kind of job well or is it also a fundamental flaw of the job of being the central centralized figure that's supposed to have scientific policy no i think he was a genuinely a bad human being and that there were many many good people in that department over the

years uh um bernice eddy is a really good example john anthony morris many people whose careers he

destroyed because they were trying to tell the truth one after the other the greatest scientists in the history of nih we're run out of that we're gonna say out of that agency but you know people listening to this you know probably you know will in hearing me say that will think that i'm bitter or that i i'm doctrinaire about him but you know you should really go and read my book and i it's hard to summarize a you know i try to be really methodical to not call names to just say what happened uh you are the bigger picture of this is you're an outspoken critic of uh pharmaceutical companies big pharma what is the biggest problem with big pharma and how can it

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be
fixed well the problem could be fixed with regulation you know the problems but the pharmaceutical industry is um is uh i mean i don't want to say because this is going to seem extreme that a criminal enterprise but if you look at the history that is an applicable um describe or characterization for example the the four biggest vaccine makers is synovie murk feiser and glaxo the four companies that make all of the 72 vaccines that are now mandated for america effectively mandated for american children collectively those companies have paid 35 billion dollars in criminal penalties and damages in the last decade and i think since 2000 about 79 billion so these are the most corrupt companies in the world and the problem is that they're serial felons they you know they do this again and again and again so they did viag you know murk did viax which viax they you know they killed people by falsifying science and they did it they lied to the public they said this is a headache medicine and an arthritis painkiller but they didn't tell people that it also gave you heart attacks and they knew you know we've found when we sue them the you know the memos from their being counters saying we're going to kill this many people but we're still going to make money so they make those calculations and those calculations are made very very regularly and then you know when they when they get caught they they pay a penalty and i think they paid about seven billion dollars for viax but then they went right back that same year that they paid that penalty they went back into the same thing again with Gardasil and with a whole lot of other drugs so the way that the system is set up the way that it's sold to doctors the way that um nobody ever goes to jail so there's really no penalty that uh it all becomes part of the cost of doing business and you know you can see other businesses that if they're not if they don't if there's no penalty if there's no real but i mean these look these are the companies that gave us the opioid epidemic right so they knew what was going to happen and we you know you go and see there's a documentary i forget what the name of it is but it shows exactly what happened and you know they corrupted FDA they knew that this that oxycodone was addictive they got FDA to tell doctors that it wasn't addictive they pressured FDA to lie and they got their way and they so far they led this year you know those they got a whole generation addicted to oxycodone and now you know when they got caught and they made it we made it harder to get oxycodone and now all those addicted kids are going to fentanyl and dying and this year it killed 106 106 000 that's twice as many people who were killed during the vietnam during the 20 year vietnam war but in one year twice many american kids and they knew it was going to happen and they did it to make money so i don't know what you call that other than saying that's you know a criminal enterprise was it possible to have within a capitalist system to produce medication to produce drugs at scale in a way that is not corrupt of course it is how through a you know through a solid regulatory regimen you know where drugs are actually tested you know i i mean the problem is not the capitalist system the the capitalist system i you know i have great admiration for the thing that love the capitalist system is the greatest economic engine ever devised but it has to be harnessed to a social

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purpose otherwise it's going to it leads us you know down the the trail of of oligarchy environmental destruction and you know and commoditizing poisoning and and killing human beings that's what it will do and in the end oh you there you need a regulatory structure that is um that is not uh corrupted by entanglements financial entanglements with the industry and we've set this up the way that this is that the system has set up today has created this system of regulatory capture on steroids so almost 50 percent of fda's budget comes from pharmaceutical companies the people work at fda are you know their money is coming their salaries are coming from

pharma half their salaries so they're you know they know who their bosses are and that means getting those drugs done getting them out the door and approved as quickly as possible it's called fast track approval and they pay 50 50 percent of fda's budget that goes about 45 percent it actually goes to fast track approval do you think money can buy integrity oh yeah of course it can in the regular yeah i mean there's that's not something that is that is controversial of course it will so and then slightly controversial to me i would like to think that science that may not be able to buy your integrity i'm talking about population-wide i'm not talking about the individual but i'd like to believe that scientists i mean in general career of a scientist is not a very high paying job i'd like to believe that people that go into science that work at fda they work at NIH are doing it for a reason that's not even correlated with money really yeah and i think probably that's why they go in there but scientists are corruptible and you know i had the way and the way that i can tell you that is that i've brought over 500 losses and almost all of them involve scientific controversies and there are scientists on both sides in everyone and when i sit when we sit in monsanto there was uh on the monsanto side there was a Yale scientist a stanford scientist and a harvard scientist and on our side there was a Yale stanford and harvard scientists and they were telling exactly the opposite things in fact there's a word for those kind of scientists who take money for their opinion and the word is by institutes and they are very very common and you know and i've been dealing with with them my whole career you know i think it's often Sinclair has said that it's very um difficult to persuade a man of a fact if the existence of that fact will diminish his salary and i think that's true for all of us if they you know we find a way of reconciling ourselves the things that are the two uh the truths that actually and worldviews that actually benefit our our salaries now NIH um NIH has probably the worst

system which is that scientists who work for NIH NIH itself which used to be the premier gold standard scientific agency in the world everybody looked at NIH that today it's just an incubator for pharmaceutical drugs and and you know that is that gravity of economic self-interest because if you're um if NIH itself collects royalties they have margin rights for the patents on all the drugs that they work on so with the Moderna vaccine which they promoted incessantly and aggressively NIH on 50 of that vaccine is making billions and billions of dollars on it and there are four at least four scientists that we know of and probably at least six at NIH who themselves have margin rights for those patents so if you are a scientist who work at NIH you work on a new drug

you then get margin rights and you're entitled to royalties of \$150,000 a year forever from that forever your children your children's children as long as that products on the market you can collect royalties so you have you know the Moderna vaccine is paying for the top people at NIH

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you know some of the top regulators it's paying for their boats it's paying for their mortgages it's paying for their children's education and you know you have to expect that the uh that in those kind of situations the regulatory function would be subsumed beneath the mercantile ambitions

of the agency itself and the individuals who stand to profit enormously from getting a drug to market those guys are paid by us the taxpayer to find problems with those drugs before they get to market but if you know that drug is going to pay for your mortgage you may overlook a little problem and that we're even a very big one and that's the problem you've talked about that the media slanders you by calling you an anti-vaxxer and you've said that you're not anti-vaccine your pro-safe vaccine difficult question can you name any vaccines that you think are good I think some of the live virus vaccines are probably

saw I've hurting more problems than they're causing there's no vaccine that is you know safe and effective the big words what about this whole yet can we talk about the well here's the problem yes look yeah here's the problem the polio vaccine contained a um a virus called semi-virus 40 sv 40 it's it's one of the most carcinogenic materials that is not demand in fact it's used now by scientists around the world to induce tumors and rats and guinea pigs and labs but it was in that vaccine 98 million people who got that vaccine and my generation got it and now you've had this explosion of soft tissue cancers in our generation that kill many many many many more people than polio ever did so if you say to me did the you know polio vaccine was effective against polio I'm gonna say yes if I say if you say to me did it kill more people that it did offer cause more deaths than ever I would say I don't know because we don't have the data on that so but let's talk well you know so we kind of have to narrow in on is it effective against the thing it's supposed to fight well a lot of them are let me give you an example the most popular vaccine in the world is the DTP vaccine dip there at tetanus and pertussis it was used in this kind of introduced in this country around 1980 that vaccine caused so many injuries that liars which was the manufacturer was said to the Reagan administration we are now paying

\$20 in downstream liabilities for every dollar that we're making in profits and we are getting out of the business unless you give us permanent immunity from liability

so the vaccine companies then were given and and by the way Reagan said at that time why don't you

just make the vaccine safe and why is that because vaccines are inherently unsafe they said unavoidably unsafe you cannot make them safe and so when Reagan wrote the bill and passed it the bill says and it's preamble is because vaccines are unavoidably unsafe and the brucewitz case which was a supreme court case that uphold about that bill uses that same language vaccines cannot be made safe they're unavoidably unsafe so this is what the law says now I just want to finish this story because this illustrates very well your your question that the DTP vaccine was discontinued in this country and it was discontinued in Europe because so many kids were being injured

by it however the WHO and Bill Gates gives it to 161 million African children every year and um Bill Gates went to the Danish government and asked them to support this program saying we've saved 30 million kids um from dying from diphtheria tetanus and pertussis the Danish

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government

said can you show us the data and he couldn't so the Danish government paid for a big study with Novo Nordisk which is a Scandinavian vaccine company in west Africa and they went to west Africa and they looked at the DTP vaccine for 30 years of data and they hire they retain the best vaccine scientists in the world these kind of deities of African vaccine program Peter AAB Sigrid Morgan sent in a bunch of others and they looked at 30 years of data for the DTP vaccine and they came back and they were shocked by what they found they found that the vaccine was preventing kids from getting diphtheria tetanus and pertussis but the girls who got that vaccine were 10 times more likely to die over the next six months than children who didn't why is that and they weren't dying from anything anybody ever associated with the vaccine they were dying of anemia, heart seam, malaria, sepsis, um and mainly pulmonary and respiratory disease pneumonia and it turns out this with the um that this is what the researchers found who are all pro vaccine by the way they said that this vaccine is killing more children than diphtheria tetanus and pertussis prior to the introduction of the vaccine and for 30 years nobody ever noticed that the vaccine was providing protection against those target illnesses but it had ruined the children's immune systems and they could not defend themselves against random infections that were harmless to most children but isn't that nearly impossible to prove that link you can't prove the link usually all you can do is for any particular interest you can't illness or death you can't prove the link but you can show statistically that there is that if you get that vaccine you're more likely to die over the next six months than if you don't and those studies unfortunately are not done for any other vaccines so for every other medicine in order to get approval from the FDA you have to do a placebo control trial prior to license where you you look at health outcomes among a value among an exposed group group that gets it and compare those to a similarly situated group that gets a placebo the only medical intervention that does not receive that does not undergo placebo control trials prior to license or vaccines not one of the 72 vaccines that are now mandated for our children have ever gone or gone a placebo control trial prior to licensure so i should say that there's a bunch on that point i've heard from a bunch of folks that disagree with you okay including polio i mean in the test testing is a really important point before licensure placebo control randomized trials polio received just that against the saline placebo control so it seems unclear to me i'm confused why you say that that would they don't go through that process it seemed like a lot a lot of them do here's the thing is that um i was saying that for many years because we couldn't find any yeah and then in 2016 in march i met um president trump ordered dr fowchee to meet with me dr fowchee and frances collins and i said to them during that meeting you have been saying that i'm not telling the truth when i said not one of these has undergone a prior pre-licensure let's see the control and the polio may have had one post licensing most of them haven't the polio may have i don't know but i said the our question was prior to licensure do you ever test these and for safety and i'm and by the way i think the polio vaccine did undergo a saline placebo trial prior to licensure but not for safety only for efficacy so i'm talking about safety trials now i'm fowchee told me that he was he said i can't find one now he had a whole tray of files there he said i can't find now and now but i'll send you one i said just for any vaccines and we won for any of the 72 vaccines he never did so we sued the hhs and after a year of stonewalling us hhs came back

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and they gave us a letter saying we have no pre-licensing safety trial for any of the 72 vaccines and that the letter from hhs which settled our lawsuit against them because we had a foyer lawsuit against them is posted on chd's website so anybody can go look at it so if chd had if if hhs had any study i assume they would have given it to us and they they can't find one well let me zoom out because uh a lot of the details matter here pre-licensure what does placebo control mean i just so this is uh this probably requires a rigorous analysis and actually at this point it would be nice for me just to give a shout out to other people much smarter than me that people should follow along with robert f kennedy jr use their mind learn and think so one really awesome creator i really recommend him is dr dan wilson he hosts the debunk the funk podcast uh vince the recon yellow who hosts this week in virology brilliant guy i've had him on the podcast somebody you've been battling with is paul offit interesting twitter interesting books people should read and understand and read your books as well and uh eric topol has a good twitter and good books and even peter holt has i'll ask you about him and people should because paul offit um uh published a no a sub stack recently debunking i think my um my uh discussion with uh with joe rogan and um and we have published a debunk of his debunking and you know so if you read his stuff you should read both yes you should read uh and i would love to debate any of these guys uh so joe rogan proposed just such a debate which is quite fascinating to see how much attention

and how much funding it garnered uh the debate between you and peter holt has what do you think peter rejected the offer i think it's i you know again i'm not going to look into his head but what i will say is if you're a scientist and you're making public recommendations based upon what you say is evidence-based science you ought to be able to defend that you ought to be able to defend it in a public forum and you ought to be able to defend it against all you know all commerce and you know uh so i you know if you're a scientist science is based on is rooted in logic and reason and if you can't use logic and reason to defend your position and by the way i know almost all the studies i'll be you know i've written books on them and we've made a big effort to assemble all the studies on both sides and so i'm prepared to talk about those studies and i'm prepared to submit them in advance you know and uh for each of the points and by the way i've done that with peter holt has you know i've i've actually because i had this i'm this kind of informal debate with him several years ago with him with a referee at that time and we were debating not only by phone but by email and on those emails every point that he would make i would cite science and he could never come back with science he could never come back with publications he would give publications

that had nothing to do with for example thimeris all vaccines mercury based vaccines he sent me one time 16 studies to to uh to rebut something i'd said about thimeris all and not one of those studies they were all about the m mr vaccine which doesn't contain thimeris also it wasn't like a real debate where you're you know you're you're using reason and isolating points and having a you know a rational discourse i don't think that he i don't blame him for not debating me because i don't think he has the the science are there aspects of all the work you've done on vaccines all the advocacy you've done that you found out that you were not correct on that you were wrong on it that you've changed your mind on yeah there are many times over time that i you know i found that i've made mistakes and we correct those mistakes you know i run a big organization and i do a lot of tweets you know i'm very careful for example my instagram i was taken down from for

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misinformation

but there was no misinformation on my instagram everything that i cited on instagram was cited or sourced to a government database or to peer reviewed science but for example the defender which

was our our organization's newsletter we summarize scientific reports all the time that's one of things the services that we provide but we watch the you know pub med and we watch the peer reviewed

publications and we summarize them when they come out we have made mistakes when we make mistakes we

are rigorous about acknowledging it apologizing for it and changing it that's what we do i think we have one of the most robust fact-checking operations anywhere in journalism today we actually do real

science and you know they're listen i've put up on my twitter account when i there's there numerous times that i've made mistakes on twitter and i apologize for it and people say to me you know oh that's weird i've never seen anybody apologize on twitter and i think it's really important at the only of course human beings make mistakes my book is you know 230 or 40 50 thousand words there's gonna be a mistake in there but you know what i say at the beginning of the book if you see a mistake in here please notify me i give a way that people can notify me and if somebody points out a mistake i'm gonna change it i'm not gonna dig my feet in and say you know i'm not gonna acknowledge this so some of the things we've been talking about you've been uh an outspoken contrarian on some very controversial topics uh this has garnered some fame and recognition in part for being attacked and standing strong against those attacks if i may say for being a martyr do you worry about the this drug of martyrdom that might cloud your judgment first of all yeah i don't consider myself a martyr and i've never considered myself a victim i make choices about my life and i you know and i'm i'm content with those choices and peaceful with them i'm not trying to be a martyr or a hero or anything else i'm doing what i think is right because i want to be peaceful inside of myself um but i the only guard i have is just is you know fact-based reality if you show me a scientific study that shows that i'm wrong for example if you come back and say look bobby here's a polio um here's a safety study on polio that was done pre-licenser and used a real salient solution i'm gonna put that on my twitter and i'm gonna say i was wrong there is one out there so you know but that's all i can do all right i have to ask you are in great shape can you uh go through your diet and exercise routine my um i do intermittent fasting so i eat between noon i start at my first meal at around noon and then i try to stop eating at six or seven and then um i i i hike every day morning evening in the morning i go to a meeting first thing in the morning 12 some meeting and i go hike hurt and i hike uphill for a mile and a half up and i'll have down with my dogs and i do my meditations and then i go to the gym and i go to the gym for 35 minutes i don't i do it short time i've been exercising for 50 years and what i found is it's sustainable if you know if i do just a short periods and i do four different routines at the gym and i never relax at the gym i go in there and i have a very intense exercise so i live you know i mean i i i could tell you what my routine is but i do i do backs one day back just one day legs and then a miscellaneous and i do 12 my first set of everything is is i try to i try to reach failure at 12 reps and then my fourth set of everything is a strip set um i do i take a lot of um

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vitamins i i can't even listen to you here because i you know i i couldn't even remember them all but i take a ton of left vitamins and nutrients i take i'm on an anti-aging protocol from my doctor that includes uh uh um testosterone replacement and uh but i don't take any steroids i don't take any anabolic steroids or anything like that and the d r t i use is uh is bio identical to what my body produced what are your thoughts on hormone therapy in general i talked to a lot of doctors about that stuff you know because i'm interested in health and i you know i've heard really good things about it but i don't know i'm definitely not an expert on it about god you wrote god talks to human beings through many vectors wise people

organize religion the great books of religions through art music and poetry but nowhere with such detail and grace and joy as through creation when we destroy nature we diminish our capacity to sense the divine what is your relationship and what is your understanding of god who's god well i mean god is incomprehensible you know i mean i guess the most philosophers would say we're in you know we're inside the mind of god um and so it would be impossible for us sunders and you know what actually what you know what god's form is but i mean for me i have a um let's say this i had when i was i was raised in a very very deeply religious setting so we went to um church in the summer oftentimes twice a day the morning mass and we went to we definitely went every sunday and we um and i went we prayed in the morning we prayed before and after every meal we prayed at night we set a rosary sometimes three rosaries at night and my father read us the bible um whenever

he was home he would read us you know we'd all get in the bed and he'd read us the bible stories oh i and i went to catholic schools i went to judgewood schools i went to the nuns um and i went to a quaker school at one point um when i i became a drug addict when i was about 15 years old about

a year after my dad died i was addicted to drugs for 14 years during that time when you're an addict you're living against conscience and when you're living again i never you know i was always trying to get off of drugs never able to but i never uh felt good about what i was doing and um and when you're living against conscience you kind of push god to the peripheries of your life oh uh i'll call me he gets recedes and gets smaller um and then when i um when i got sober i knew that i had a couple of experiences one is that i had a friend of my brother it's one of my brothers who died of this disease of addiction um had a good friend who had used to take drugs with us and he became a mooney so he he became a follower of reverend son sun young moon and he's at that point his compulsion he had the same kind of compulsion that i had and yet it was completely removed from him and so and he used to come and hang out with us but he would not want to take drugs even if i was taken right in front of him he was he was immune to it he'd become impervious to that impulse and um i when i was in the when i first got sober i was i knew that i did not want to be the kind of person who was you know waking up every day and white knuckling sobriety and just you know trying to resist resist through willpower and by the way i had um i had iron willpower as a kid i gave up candy for lenn when i was 12 and i didn't need it again till i was in college i gave up um i gave up desserts the next year for lent and i didn't ever eat another dessert till i was in college and i was trying to bulk up for rugby and for sports so um i felt like i could do anything with my willpower but somehow this particular thing you know the addiction was completely impervious to it and it was cunning

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baffling baffling incomprehensible i could not understand well i couldn't just say no and then never do it again like i did with everything else um and um so i was living against conscience and i and i thought about this guy and i you know reflecting my own prejudices at that time in my life i was i said to myself i didn't want to be i didn't want to be like a drug addict who was wanting a drug all the time and just not being able to do it i wanted to completely realign my my myself so that i was somebody who got up every day and just didn't want to take drugs never thought of him you know i kissed the wife and children and went to work and was never thought about drugs the whole day and i knew that people throughout history had done that you know i'd read the lives of the saints i knew st augustine had had a very very disillusioned youth and and you know i had this spiritual realignment transformation i knew the same thing had happened to st paul you know at demasque as the same thing had happened in st france the same frances also had a had a disillusioned and fun loving youth and and had you know had this this deep spiritual realignment and i i knew that that happened to people throughout

history and i thought that's what i needed you know something like that i had the example of this random mind and i used to think about him and i would think this again reflects the bias and that you know probably the meanness of myself at that time but i i said i'd rather be dead than be a mooney but i wish i somehow could distill that power that he got without becoming a religious nuisance and um and at that time i picked up a book um by carl young called synchronicity and young

he was a psychiatrist he was contemporary of freud's he was a um freud was his mentor and and freud wanted him to be his replacement but freud was an avowed atheist and young was a deeply spiritual man he had these very intense and genuine spiritual experiences from when he was a little boy from at least three years old that he remembers his biography is fascinating about him because he

remembers him with such a detail and um he uh he was he had written he was always he was interesting

to me because he was very faithful scientist and i consider myself a science-based person from when i was little and yet he had this spiritual dimension to him which infused all of his thinking and really i think made him you know it is a branded his his form of recovery or of treatment and he thought that he had this experiment experience that he describes in this book where he's sitting up on the third he ran one of the biggest sanitariums in europe in zurek and he was sitting up on the third floor of this building and he's talking to a patient who had a who was talking describing her dream to him and the fulcrum of that dream was a scarab beetle which was an insect that is not is very very uncommon if at all in northern europe but it's a almond figure in the iconography of of egypt and the hieroglyphics on the on the walls of the pyramids etc and um he and he while he was talking to her he heard this bing bing bing on the window behind him and he didn't want to turn around to take his attention off her but finally he does it he's in exasperation he turns around he throws up the window and his scarab beetle flies in and lands in his hand and he shows it to the woman and he says this is what he was thinking of this is what you were dreaming about and he he was struck by that experience experience

which was similar to other experiences he's had like that and that's what synchronicity means to

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say it's a an incident or coincidence you know and like if so if you're if you're talking with somebody about somebody that you haven't thought about in 20 years and that person calls on the phone that's synchronicity oh and he believed it was a way that god intervened in our lives that broke all the all the rules of nature that he had set up the rules of physics the rules of mathematics or you know to reach in and sort of tap us on their shoulder and say i'm here and um and so he tried to reproduce that in a clinical setting and he would put one guy in one room and another guy in another room and have them flip guards and then guess what the other guy

had flipped and he believed that if he could beat the laws of chance laws of mathematics then he would approve the existence of an unnatural law a supernatural law and that was the first step to proving the existence of a god he never succeeds in doing it but he says in the book um even though i can't prove using empirical and scientific tools the existence of a god i can show through anecdotal evidence having seen thousands of patients come through with this institution that people who believe in god get better faster and that the recovery is more enduring than people who don't and for me hearing that was more impactful than if he had claimed that he had proved the existence of a god because i would not believe that but i i was already at a mindset where i would have done anything i could to improve my chances of never having to take drugs again by even one percent and if believing in god was gonna help me whether there's a god up there or not believing in one itself had the power to help me i was going to do that so then the question is how do you start believing in something that you can't see or smell or hear or touch or taste or acquire with your senses and young provides the formula for that and he says he says act as if he fake it to you make it and so that's you know what i started doing i just started pretending there was a god watching me all the time and kind of life was a series of tests and each there was a bunch of moral decisions that i had to make every day and each one you know these were all just little things that i did but each one now for me at a moral dimension like when i um you know when the alarm goes off do i lay in bed for an extra 10 minutes with my handle and thoughts or do i jump right out of bed do i do i make my bed most important decision of the day do i hang up the towels you know do i um do i when i go into the closet and pull out my blue jeans and a bunch of those wire hangers fall on the ground do i shut the door and say i'm too much i'm too important to do that that somebody else job or not and so i do i put the water in the ice tray before i put in the freezer do i put the shopping cart back in the you know place that it's supposed to go in the parking lot of the safeway and if i make a whole bunch of those choices right that um i maintain myself in a posture of surrender which keeps me open to the power of to my higher power like to my god and when i when i do those things right um when i you know so much about addiction is about abuse of power you know abuse of all of us have some power whether it's her you know good looks or whether it's uh you know connections or education or or family or whatever and there's always attempted a temptation to use those to fill fulfill self-will and the challenge is how do you use those always to serve instead god's will and you know the good of our community and that to me is kind of the struggle and when i do that i feel i feel god's power coming through me and that i can do things i'm much more effective as a human being at that gnawing you know uh anxiety that i lived with for so many years and my god that i it's gone and that um i can kind of like

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put down the oars and hoist the sail and you know and the wind takes me and i can i can see the evidence of it in my life and you know the big thing for you know the temptation for me is that um when all these good things start happening in my life and the cash and prizes start flowing in you know how do i maintain that posture of surrender how do i stay surrendered then when on my inclination is to say to god thanks god i got it from here yeah and drive the car off the cliff again and uh so you know i had a spiritual awakening and my desire for drugs and alcohol was lifted miraculously uh and it to me it was as much a miracle as if i had if i'd been able to walk on water because i had tried everything earnestly sincerely and honestly for a decade to try to stop and i could not do it under my own power and then all of a sudden it was lifted effortlessly and um you know so i saw that evidence early evidence of god in my life and i'm out of the power and um and i see it now you know every day of my life so adding that moral dimension to all of your actions is how you're able to win that kamu battle against the absurd exactly with the bold it's all the same thing it's the battle to just to do the right thing now says the fist was able to find somehow happiness yeah uh well bobby thank you for the stroll through some of the most important moments in in recent human history and for running for president and um thank you for talking today thank you lex thanks for listening to this conversation with robert f kennedy junior to support this podcast please check out our sponsors in the description and now let me leave you with some words from john f kennedy let us not seek the republican answer or the democratic answer but the right answer let us not seek to fix the blame for the past instead let us accept our own responsibility for the future thank you for listening and hope to see you next time