

[Transcript] The News Agents / Donald Trump vs. The United States

This is a Global Player Original Podcast.

Good evening. Today an indictment was unsealed.

Charging Donald J. Trump with conspiring

to defraud the United States, conspiring to disenfranchise voters and conspiring and attempting to obstruct an official proceeding.

The attack on our nation's capital

on January 6th, 2021, was an unprecedented assault

on the seat of American democracy. It was fueled by lies.

Lies by the defendant targeted at obstructing a bedrock function of the

U.S. government, the nation's process of collecting,

counting and certifying the results of the presidential election.

That was the voice of Jack Smith. He's a special counsel.

He's a career prosecutor, not a politician, and it is so rare

that you will hear his voice. He has shunned the limelight almost entirely.

But that message that he brought to the American people

last night talked of Donald Trump creating an intense national atmosphere of mistrust and anger and accompanying what he said

was the third indictment of Donald Trump this year,

the second federal indictment, which talks about conspiracy to defraud

the American public. So on today's show, what this indictment means

for Donald Trump, for the United States, and of course for the presidential

election next year, it's the United States of America versus Donald J. Trump.

Welcome to the newsagents.

The newsagents. It's Emily and it's Lewis and later on on the show today we're

going to be talking about a relatively rare thing which is Rishi Sunak

putting himself up for questioning for a prolonged period, in this case for 30

minutes, on Nick Ferrari's show on LBC and

characteristically the prime minister was, well, characteristically awkward.

But we're going to start with the really massive news overnight

breaking late last night and that is about the third indictment

of the former president Donald Trump. And although this relates to that

storming of the Capitol on the 6th of January 2021,

it goes much further back. It's about so much of what led up to that event, that

absolutely heinous event, an attempt to overturn democracy

in which people died and many more are now imprisoned for their role in that.

It talks of three separate conspiracies, conspiracies to defraud the U.S.,

conspiracies to obstruct official proceeding, and perhaps most importantly

of all, a conspiracy against the rights of the American people.

And that right was for them to be able to cast their vote

and to have it counted. And it's about the role

that Donald Trump played in leading up to the events of January the 6th and how

they allege he exploited the events of January the 6th

to make his political point and to refuse to leave office.

Yeah, and of course, as Emily said, this is not the first indictment against Trump,

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it's not even the second, it's the third, but it's by far of the ones we've had so the most serious, because as serious as hush money is or problems around his personal conduct are, or even allegedly jeopardizing national secrets after leaving the White House, these charges are the first in American history to deal with actions taken by a president while in office.

And they are of the most serious and grave order as well.

I mean, bear in mind, again, let's take a step back.

This is about the peaceful transfer of power in a democracy.

It's what Ronald Reagan called nothing less than a miracle.

And it is something that Americans have taken for granted ever since the presidential election of 1800 when John Adams gave way to Thomas Jefferson the first time there was a properly contested election.

And there was a paragraph, obviously, lots and lots of writing about this, good writing about this this morning, there was a paragraph in the New York Times, an excoriating piece of analysis they wrote this morning, which I thought really stood out and really got to the core of what this is about.

And I think it's just worth reading a couple of lines from it.

Said this, at the core of the United States of America versus Donald J. Trump is no less than the viability of the system constructed during that summer in Philadelphia back in the 1790s.

Can a sitting president spread lies about an election and try to employ the authority of the government to overturn the will of the voters without consequence? The question would have been unimaginable just a few years ago, but the Trump case raises the kind of specter more familiar in countries with a history of coups and hunters and dictators.

Right, because the American people never stopped talking about their constitution, they never stopped talking about the founding fathers.

And if you want to understand the importance, the visceral importance of the constitution and the founding fathers to modern America, it's all kind of contained in what we are now trying to imagine, which is somebody in power refusing to give up power.

It's literally everything that goes counter to democracy.

And I just want to take you through some of the charges in this.

I mean, it's kind of a weighty document this. It's 49 pages. I mean, it's totally readable.

But Jack Smith, right in the first paragraph, kind of gets straight to the point.

And he says on page one, despite having lost, the defendant was determined to remain in power.

For more than two months, the defendant spread lies that there'd been outcome determinative fraud in the election that he'd actually won.

And this is the big point. These claims were false, and the defendant knew that they were false.

And I think that is the sentence to take with you if you get a chance to read this whole document, because page after page is Jack Smith laying out not just why these were false, but the way in which Donald Trump and many of his enablers, facilitators, knew that they were false. And he proves time and again through conversations, through snippets of reported

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conversations that Donald Trump was having with those around him, was having with his Vice President, Mike Pence, who he calls in one conversation too honest, it proves, according to Jack Smith, that Donald Trump knew exactly what he was doing. We always look for balance in these kind of discussions. We always look to understand, oh, maybe it was a misunderstanding, or maybe he was legitimate in trying to find the legal means to sort of argue. And Jack Smith includes that and actually entertains it. And he actually says, the defendant had a right like every American to speak publicly about the election, and even to claim falsely, there had been outcome determinative fraud. He was entitled to formally challenge them. So he says all that was within his right as an American, but any attempt he made was uniformly unsuccessful in terms of the legal challenges. He knew what he was doing. And that I think is cool to why this is about conspiracy. And crucially, as Smith says, he had the right to say what he thought about it. He had the right to try and prosecute the legal means to change the election result. What he does not have the right to do is organize a conspiracy to subvert the election result. And that is the key difference. And all of the people that you're going to hear and already have heard coming out to bat for Trump, including much of the kind of Murdoch media empire in the United States, Fox News yesterday just crazily talking about the Department of Justice now being part of the Biden campaign. All of that is nonsense. And most of them, if not all of them know it's nonsense. Here's a clip of someone who is obviously very closely connected to Trump. It's Rudy Giuliani. He was his lawyer outlining exactly what that argument is going to be from the Trump campaign. And he's addressing Jack Smith, the prosecutor, directly. This one will be your legacy violating the right of free speech of an American citizen. Never mind whether he was president or not. It could be anybody. It could be a homeless person. You don't get to violate people's First Amendment rights, Smith, no matter who the hell you are, or no matter how sick you are with Trump derangement syndrome. And this isn't the first time you've acted like an unethical lawyer. It should be the last. So that's Rudy Giuliani, someone very close to Donald Trump directly addressing Jack Smith. And just on this point, this idea that Trump didn't know and that he couldn't have known, and they can't prove what he knew, what was in his head, an argument that, by the way, we were rather familiar with Boris Johnson. That was what he talked about during the Privilegeist Committee inquiry. Just a reminder that Donald Trump was told that his claims about the election were not true, not just by one, but by two of his own attorneys general, multiple other Justice Department officials, the government's own election security chief, all of his appointees, by the way. He was told by his own vice presidents, his own campaign officials, and the investigators that they themselves hires. He was told by a series of Republican governors in the states concerned, a series of secretaries of state, Republican ones, of the states concerned, and multiple state legislators. As one senior campaign advisor put it at the time, which is outlined in the Smith document, it was all just conspiracy garbage being down from the mothership. And as Emily has mentioned already, Pence literally told him, which is outlined in this document, that Trump told Pence that he was just being too honest with regards to the election outcomes. It's all there in black and white, all plain to see. But who wants black and white when you can have Donald Trump's own version of events? Last night, he compared his, in quotation marks, persecution to 1930s Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and other dictatorial regimes. So he and Rudy Giuliani, and I'm sure we will

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hear and encounter more as we go along, are sticking very much to the one line of defense, which is infamy, infamy, they've all got an infamy. And it is quite interesting. I heard this phrase from a commentator last night, talking about the Republicans around Trump, that they've formed the largest law firm in DC, and they represent just one client, which is Donald J. Trump. And it is extraordinary now. If you think about-
Got a lot of work.

Well, they've got a lot of work, but all the oxygen of what should be a presidential campaign for the Republican Party is not focused on healthcare costs or college funding or ethics reform or the cost of living in America. They're just working every day to represent their client, Donald J. Trump, and shut down any attempt to find justice from this. It's a real undermining of the rule of law. You are constantly undermining the judiciary, a special investigator, as I say, a career prosecutor, and independent judiciaries who are actually working to try and uphold what feels like the rule of law as we know it. I just want to play you a clip that takes us right back to the voice of one of those Republicans who was very close to Trump at some stages and then tried to find distance. And that is the Senate Minority Leader, Mitch McConnell. You'll remember two years ago, the House voted to impeach Donald Trump. Nearly all the Republicans

would not support that. And after that attempted impeachment by the Democrats, Mitch McConnell came out and he laid his case very barely. Mitch McConnell was one of the, if you like, the jurors who did not vote to impeach Trump. This is what he said at that time.

There's no question. Done. That President Trump is practically and morally responsible for provoking the events of the day. No question about it. We have a criminal justice system in this country. We have civil litigation. And former presidents are not immune from being accountable by either one. Right. So at that time, two years ago, he was saying, it's not for us. It's not for politicians to convict. It's for a court of law. What is he going to say? Now, we are seeing the judicial system. We are seeing courts of law actually affecting this attempt to find justice. Because what Mitch McConnell did as a juror that day was essentially to allow him to continue to run as a candidate. If they'd all had the chance to impeach Trump at that point, he would not now be running as a candidate. But they didn't. And so you have to take the words that were said two years ago, which is like, well, it's not for us. We're just politicians. Let's leave it to the lawyers. And now it's being left to the lawyers and they're all kind of going, well, you can see what a kangaroo court that is. Well, I mean, the whole Trump presidency was a stress test of the American political system and the Republican Party. Now, you can have an argument about how well the Constitution fared with him. I think in some ways it fared pretty well. The Republican Party totally failed. And Trump has infused a toxin into the political system, which is still with us to this day. That toxin is now spreading is now fusing with the judicial system. And the question is whether the judicial system manages to emerge from this still with credibility and still in a position where it commands the support of most Americans, we can already see that that is already diminishing

because the politics fuses with the judicial system, because we know that three in 10 Americans, Americans overall, do believe that the 2020 election was rigged, that it was stolen from Donald Trump. So that legacy already exists in a sense, the court of a public opinion is probably to some extent determined on this at the moment already. The question of course is, but that's

not the relevant bit for Trump, the thing that matters at the moment, the thing that actually matters is a court. And now that the political process and the judicial process are now effectively in a race to see which culminates first, which comes to its climax first. Is it this trial alongside the other trials? Or is it the political process of the 2024 presidential election? And of course, if he is the candidate and if he were to win, then I mean, God, uncharted territories or phrase, which has been overused in the Trump years, but my God, then we really would be in it. Well, no, then then all the legal cases disappear. Because as president, he pardons himself and he gets rid of them. We have a special treat for you now. I should say that Moody the Whippet has now been banished from the studio for upsetting John Sople yesterday on our US version of the news agents. And John got very disturbed by the idea that actually he was being slightly undermined. And he broke off his holiday with the grandchildren in his wonderful, I'm guessing Tuscan. Sorry, kids. And his unicorn Lylos and his games of Twister. He's done all the games now. He's done it. So he's decided that he is absolutely indispensable to this episode. And we should explain that alongside Donald Trump, the indictment also mentions six co-conspirators, Q John Sople. Greetings news agents or new agents or whatever you're calling yourselves now. I felt I had to get in touch. One, because you were missing me, obviously. And two, I was getting fearful that Makeless's dog Moody was going to usurp my position on the podcast. So the indictment, the conspiracy against the United States of America, of course, to be charged with that, as Donald Trump has been, you need co-conspirators. And oh, boy, what a joy the list of names are that have been unearthed as the co-conspirators. Number one, it seems that Rudy Giuliani is one of them. Remember him? He of the news conference in Pennsylvania, which was held between a sex shop with a big sign in the window saying dildo madness and crematorium. Yeah. And then he did that news conference at the Republican National Committee headquarters, where he had hair dye running down his face. That wasn't even the maddest part of that news conference, Sidney Powell, another co-conspirator. She of the most unfounded, wacky conspiracy theories also seems to have been part of the special investigator's target. So she's been lined up as well. And then we have this kind of rather gray anonymous figure from the Department of Justice Jeff Clark, a middle ranking middle rate brain official who it turns out was prepared to do all of Donald Trump's bidding. And Donald Trump wanted to install him as acting attorney general so that they could have a good shot at overturning the results of the election until virtually every lawyer in the Department of Justice said they would resign on mass if he went ahead with it. And then you've got a guy called John Eastman. And he was the one who came up with the original theory that the electors to the electoral college didn't really have to represent fairly what voters had voted for. And so that they could just vote for Donald Trump anyway. And that idea, of course, was scotched by Mike Pence. It just takes you all back to the madness that unfolded when I was in Washington in November, December 2020. And of course, the events that then followed in early January when there was an attempt to overthrow democracy. And that is why these charges could not be more serious, even if some of the cast of characters could seem at times cartoon like and frivolous. Right, I'm going back to my glass of Nebbiolo now. Goodbye. So one person that wasn't on Soap's cast of characters there was Mark Meadows. And I think it's important to just bring him in at this point, because he was the chief of staff to Donald Trump between 2020 and 2021. And during that extraordinary 24 hours at the January the

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Six riots, there were text messages between Donald Trump and Mark Meadows. So you would assume

that if anyone was right in the middle of that chaos and all the electoral chaos that led up to it, Mark Meadows was the man. The fact that he is not characterized as a co-conspirator is suggesting to some people that Jack Smith, the special counsel, has secured Mark Meadows' cooperation as a government witness. In other words, he's flipped him. And if Mark Meadows is now on the side of those trying to prosecute, then that will put a totally different color on what they find out about the months, the weeks, the days, and the hours that led up to that January the Six moment. In a moment, we'll be speaking to Hogan Gidley. He was the White House deputy press secretary under Donald Trump, and he's going to join us just after the break.

Welcome back. Right now, we can speak to Hogan Gidley, who was a deputy press secretary in the Trump administration, the Trump White House. Hogan, thanks so much for joining us. We should start with your reaction to this extraordinary indictment and set of charges.

Yeah, look, I think the political nature around which these things continue to pop up in complete coordination with every time bad news comes out about Joe Biden or Hunter Biden is unavoidable. I think in large part, the American people are seeing these types of things and wondering, you know, when is this going to end? But regardless of that, it reminds me of that old things that you used to see on t-shirts and on posters about pirates, when they would say the beatings will continue until morale improves. It's like the indictments will continue until my poll numbers improve, because Joe Biden continues to go down in the polls. Donald Trump, a new national poll, had them come out tied.

Well, hang on there, Hogan. Which bit of the indictment do you disagree with? Which bit is wrong?

Well, in large measure, look, I'm no attorney. I'm just looking through it right now. And they're legal arguments, legal proceedings, nothing really about violence in January 6th.

He didn't bring that up till page 35, I believe. It's just a complete rehash of what Congress did already. And they're arguing over legal proceedings over whether Donald Trump knew that he wasn't

going to stay in the White House, whether he knew that he had won or lost the election. And if you think you're going to get Donald Trump arrested and thrown in jail over the thought that he really believed he did not win the election, then I think you got another thing coming. I don't think that's going to be possible. He absolutely believed it. I was with him a couple of days ago.

He still believes it. Everybody told him he was wrong. I mean, as the indictment makes clear, his attorneys general, department of justice, security chief, his vice presidents, the governors involved, everybody told him that he was wrong. And yet he still believed he was right. That's your position. No, no, no. There are plenty of people cited in the indictment that said Donald Trump was wrong and told him he lost the election. But he was still testing a legal theory with attorneys that told him he was right, that he could do these things. So again, we'll have to wait and see how this plays out in court. But Donald Trump absolutely believed he was in the right here. There's no question about it, regardless of how many people told him that he was wrong.

You said you were with him a couple of days ago. What's the mood with Donald Trump right now?

Look, he's in a great mood. What you see out on the campaign trail, what you see in those rallies, what you see behind the scenes as well. We were together on a flight and had some conversations. And look, I think he's upset at where the country is right now,

where it's headed. I think he's angry that the American people have been taking it in the teeth now for the better part of three years. And he wants to get back in there and change the policies back to the America first positions and the America first policies that improve the lives of all Americans. And I think it frustrates him that this administration, for whatever reason, it wasn't that they reversed all of Donald Trump's executive orders and do different things. That's just part of having the White House. It's the fact that the American people are suffering because of it. That's what makes them the most angry.

Can I just check? Are you supporting Donald Trump for the GOP nomination then? You're firmly behind him, are you? I don't work for Donald Trump right now. I work for an organization where we're focused on the policies that he put in place, of course. And I do support what he's trying to do. Absolutely. But I've not thrown my hat behind anyone yet.

So you might not be supporting Donald Trump for the nomination. Is that right?

No, no, no. I didn't say that. No, I didn't say that. Look, I think he's the best person that can be Joe Biden. I think he absolutely has the best policy prescription. He's the only one up on that debate stage or on the campaign trail who can say, I did all of these things. Everyone else is just saying, if you elect me, I promise I'll do them. And they may. But I think we're in a time in this country right now where we can't rely on someone's promises, especially those who aren't proven at this point. Donald Trump was president. He was a good one, the best one in my lifetime. And I think he'd be the best suited to get this country back on track. No question.

How'd you account for the facts, Hogan, when you say that the president or the former president didn't know and they couldn't possibly have known at the time, how'd you account for the part of the indictment which says that Trump, when he was talking to Pence and putting pressure on him to act in a way that Pence thought was improper and unconstitutional, Trump says the problem with you is that you're too honest. Look, again, you're talking about two separate things here. The conversation he had with Mike Pence, notwithstanding, the fact is he had plenty of attorneys, advisors who were telling him, no, there's a path forward here. There's a way to do this. There's a legal theory that should be tested. And let's not forget, if in fact there was no way to do what Donald Trump was suggesting and have the vice president step in the way he did, then why did Congress feel the need to pass a new law which basically stripped the vice president of any of that the way it was written before? There are all types of legal questions here we're going to see play out. I mean, look, obviously on the day of indictment, it's the prosecution's best case because it hasn't, hasn't faced any scrutiny. There's been no defense mounted at this point. So it remains to be seen how this affects Donald Trump in the legal sense, but politically right now, I think the GOP continues to rally around him because, you know, he's not the only one facing scrutiny or indictments or arrests, three letter agencies or a weaponized federal government. A lot of people in this country feel as though they too are under target because they have been. If you like the wrong tweet or you download the wrong podcast or you attend the wrong speech, you're being targeted by a government simply for your own political views. And I think that's a problem most Americans really are waking up to and are furious about. It just happens to be that Donald Trump's the tip of that spear. Yeah, it wasn't a tweet was it? Hogan, I'm going to go out on a limb here and I'm going to suggest because I know that you're a really smart bloke. You don't believe a word of this bullshit. You know exactly what Donald Trump was up to. You know exactly what he was trying to do. Donald Trump knew that he was looking for votes when he called up the Georgia official. He knew that he tried and tested all the legal means

and there were no more votes to be found. And so he called it fraud, not just on January the sixth, but in the months and the weeks after and even before the November election. And you know that. No, I don't. In fact, I know the exact opposite. Let's not forget here because I don't know how old you are. I can't tell because we're not looking at each other. But I'm old enough to remember in 2016 when if you did not question the outcome of Donald Trump's victory that you were somehow in league with Vladimir Putin, you were a Russian stooge. It was your patriotic duty to question the outcome of elections. I don't know who you're talking about there. I'm talking about Hillary Clinton. I don't remember Barack Obama. I'm talking about the White House. I'm talking about Sheila Jackson Lee. Right. Well, let me remind you that Hillary Clinton conceded the day after the election, Hogan. No, no, no. She literally said like a month ago that the election was stolen from her. She conceded the election. Let's not forget the Democrats. Let's not forget. It's been the Democrats, every election since Reagan, who have refused to try and seat electors in Congress. Okay. Every single election a Republican wins. It's the Democrats who question the outcome. So it sounds like you're saying this is playback time. Let me just ask you. No, no, no, no, no. I'm just saying it's just interesting that when Democrats questioned the outcome of the 2000 election and Nancy Pelosi says there's no equal protection under the law, it somehow doesn't matter. No former president has refused to cede power until Trump. It just hasn't happened. It hasn't happened for 150 years. No former president has refused to cede power. That's a fact. What do you mean he didn't refuse to cede power? He left. He left the White House exactly when he was supposed to at the appointed time as outlined by the Constitution. Having failed in his attempts to overturn the election. It's just interesting that the left always tries to say the election was stolen. The election was rigged. There are all these problems. But you guys ignore that. Let me just ask you one more question. This is from former Congressman Joe Walsh's textbook. Do you think that Donald Trump did anything wrong in that lead up to January the 6th? Or do you think he's literally unimpeachable? Well, there are two different questions here. One is a legal one. And I don't think Donald Trump did anything wrong illegally. Asking an official to find 11,000 votes so that you could claim Georgia was yours. That doesn't strike you as legally dubious. Hold on. He didn't ask him to manufacture votes. He asked him to take a look at all the countless examples of fraud, irregularities, illegalities, and anomalies that happen in these presidential elections. You can do that through the courts. You don't have to call. You don't have to have a phone conversation with an election official. But the Secretary of State is in charge of all these elections. And by the way, we also just found out that the Haldeman Report in Georgia was suppressed by the Secretary of State. He refused to release it only to find out his machines have not been doing the required updates of technology. Can I just remind you that Rupert Murdoch had to pay 750 million pounds to Dominion over a lawsuit when they proved that those allegations were false, fake? That's a completely different case. And what we're talking about now is machines. No, no, no. This isn't about the overall validity or efficacy of machines. What I'm saying is the software in that state has not been updated for four years. He knows that. He knows that and hasn't done the requisite. Michigan changed all their software. Georgia didn't. But you also know, as does Trump, as does everybody else, that not a single independent authority who is not allied or paid by Mr. Trump. No judge, no prosecutor, no election agency, no governor has ever validated any substantial fraud that would have even come close to reversing the result in a single state. That is just a fact. But now you're missing the point. Really? Yeah. How much fraud is okay?

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I don't care if it's one vote in America. It should be illegal. Fine. Of course, we can spread this information about fraud. Aren't you embarrassed to be doing that? You're arguing saying it's not wise. No, I'm not. I'm not. We could all agree that any electoral fraud is bad. People have been convicted in every single state in the last several years for election fraud. We could all agree that one single bit of electoral fraud is bad. But the point that pertains here- But that's not what you said. No, it is. What you said was it didn't happen. No, no, no. That's what you said. No, what I'm saying is that it has never happened by nearly enough or anything like enough to change the outcome of the election. So Trump was wrong. He was wrong then, and he continues to be wrong now. Because it's not as if he just said, well, I thought that at the time, but now I see that the results actually were in Biden's favor. He continues to say, with no evidence, that the election was rigged and poisons the democracy of your country as a result. Hold on. No, no, no. To pretend that rogue secretaries of state, rogue governors, election boards didn't change the laws right before an election to make things confusing is incorrect. To pretend as though we didn't upend our entire process because of a global pandemic right before the election is ridiculous. Of course we did. It created all types of problems across this country. Many of these states still finding all types of issues within their ranks, not to mention Wisconsin. Hogan, you're sounding like a man who believes that Donald Trump did win the 2020 election. Can you clarify for us whether that's true? What I'm telling you is that Donald Trump is not in the White House, but to pretend as though- Do you think he won in 2020? Because he does.

I'm telling you right now he's not in the White House, of course, but to continue- So he didn't win.

To continue the line of questioning here, to pretend as though there is no issue in our elections is ridiculous. This happens every single cycle, and the left argues about it when they lose. The right argues about it when they lose.

There's never been an insurrection before, though, has that, Hogan? There was never an insurrection before.

No, but what I'm saying is why can't we come to a conclusion here that these states need to pass good significant election integrity laws that protect legal votes and legal voters?

Not quite what Trump's arguing.

I don't think that's what today is about.

If that's all what Trump was saying, this indictment that I'm holding in my hand would not exist.

Hogan, thanks for joining us. We really appreciate you giving us your thoughts and your perspective on this.

Thank you, Hogan.

Thanks.

So, but, but, but, I mean, what we heard there was the left do it worse.

People get slammed for their tweets and Trump's just a bigger version of that.

There's always a bit of fraud in every election that's ever fought anywhere, and we should have changed the machines and the voting to make it more uniform.

And he's not in the White House, but I can't actually say whether he did or didn't win.

I think it's a very, I think it's going to get increasingly difficult for people like

Hogan Gidley, who, as I say, you know, was an actual de facto deputy press secretary.

He understands how he has to speak and manage the press. He understands how he has to work out

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the narratives. He couldn't actually say that he was four square behind Donald Trump when I asked him, which suggests to me that he still thinks that that is a fairly precarious place to be. And I don't know that they can carry on. I could be wrong, but I don't know that they can carry on on that same theme of it's all just an invention from the left. It's all just part of Joe Biden's woke machinations. I'm not sure how much that will carry into the legal process. Politically, I'm sure it will work. I'm sure that Trump will sail through, get more money from his donors and remain at the top of the pecking order for the Republican nominations. Although it's hard to see how many independents in crucial swing states who decided that Trump was too chaotic back in 2020 are going to conclude in 2024. Oh, yeah, he's our guy. Something pretty bad would have to go wrong between now and then, of course, as a long time. So it could, but it seems vanishingly unlikely. And so the Republican party are still in this position. I mean, look, the Republican party just broken. They're broken. They even at this point, when a guy who has at the last count now got 78 counts, 78 counts across three indictments against him, even at that point, and one as serious as around conspiracy against the United States and attempts to subvert a national general election, something as serious as that. Even then, the bulk of the party, including much of the party elites, do not turn away from him, remain too afraid to turn away from him. One of the principal vehicles and custodians of American democracy is completely bust. I mean, if more of the Republican party was taking the attitude that Pence has done, and you have to say Pence's statement last night, which said, today's indictment serves as an important reminder. Anyone who puts himself over the Constitution should never be president of the United States. Our country is more important than one man. Our Constitution is more important than anyone man's career. You can have an argument about how Pence behaved when he was vice president and getting in behind Trump, etc. But if more of the Republican party took that attitude, then American democracy would be in a healthier place than it is right now. Yeah, I think it's interesting that there are other candidates in the race, clearly Rhonda Santis, who is below Trump by some way, but still as a sort of second rung, has said he hasn't even read the indictment. And Mike Pence actually emerges incredibly well from this as the man who Trump called too honest to be swayed by his will. Pence, we should point out, is sort of languishing at about two or three percent of the Republican primary vote, i.e. nowhere to be seen, which I think tells you heaps right now about the Republican party and where it's heading. Yeah, Pence cares about something more than himself. He cares about at least some of the values of the Republic. Trump doesn't care about anything but himself. Coming up after the break, we'll be talking about Rishi Sunak talking to our colleague Nit Ferrari this morning. This is The News Agents. To take you behind the curtain, as we say on The News Agents, we've been having a bit of a sweepstake about where we thought Rishi Sunak was going to go on holiday. And I would say I put my money on Italy because I thought it was close, safe, not France, but not too far. And we all said, well, he likes California, but he'll never go to California because what happens if there's an emergency? But today we found out he is. Better than Suarez's holiday, Northern France, probably, binoculars on, looking over the channel, getting angry at anger. I just thought he wouldn't go to

California just because it would look bad. I mean, you said rightly about it being far away if there's an emergency, but also like he's really leaning into the kind of, you know, I'm Pasadena Rishi, you know, like that sort of thing. I just didn't think he would do it.

But also it suggests his frame of mind, which is he does not think there will be any news in August. Don't say that. Says a woman about to go on holiday leaving some of us to man the fort for a whole month. I just think actually you wouldn't go to California if you thought that there was any chance that you'd get called back because it's too far and it's the wrong time zone. Anyway, he is. He is. And he decided to kick off his holiday in a way that frankly all of us would like to do by spending half an hour with our great LBC colleague, Nit Ferrari with a phone in. And it's not something he does a lot of. He doesn't do a lot of extended interviews. Nick does. I mean, Nick does them every day. Nick's a connoisseur. Sunak doesn't. And he doesn't do a lot of extended interviews either. And I actually think he did quite well actually. I think he was all right.

But there were lots of the little sort of ticks and awkwardness that I think are, and we've talked about this this week, that I think are going to become more and more prominent, more of a problem when we get into a general election campaign. And one of them is this, this habit he has of basically telling whoever he's talking to that they're wrong and sounding a little bit sort of smart about it. Well, his sort of favorite phrase is, well, actually, which is a sort of phrase that you just never really want to hear because you're basically saying you're wrong. Anyway, this was him speaking to Joe Enrichment, one of his own constituents about small businesses closing in that constituency. My question to you is, what are you going to do about the fact that your Tory policies are causing small businesses to shut up shop? Thanks, Joe. Always, always lovely to hear from you. Joe and I don't, as you can probably tell, share the same politics. We've had healthy debates on Brexit in the past where we have a strong... I don't think there's much point in asking if she votes Conservative in that sense. No, no, no, no. She was very upset that I supported Brexit. But I think that's the right thing to do. And I don't think that's the reason that some businesses are struggling at the moment. I think it has a lot to do with energy bills, actually. It has a lot to do with energy bills. It's interesting how defensive he sounded straight away that even with one of his own constituents, and you can hear that he clearly met Joe as it were before, maybe on similar sounding shows. But the idea that you could only ask a question if you were a sort of Conservative voter or that you can't disagree with your MP when she was actually talking about businesses, you know, businesses closing down and his constituency, which you would have thought was something that he would be really on the front foot over. And it is funny that techiness that's starting to come through. It's sort of, it sounds amenable, but it's brittle. Yeah, exactly right. And actually, I'm not sure that's a great look just for meeting the public, actually. He will come unstuck in the general election campaign if that is how he sort of operates and thinks, because he'll be under much more pressure than he is now. He'll be even more tired than he is now. And as we talked about the other day, he has this slight air of just sounding and feeling a bit smarter than the person he's talking to. Now, most politicians do think that, a lot of people think that, particularly in Westminster, but the key is not to reveal it. And although, as I say, he did pretty well overall, he doesn't like being questioned. He doesn't like it. Yeah, he had a similar sort of interaction with a junior doctor, and he started sort of telling her what she needed. Well, actually. Exactly. And she was pointing out the lack of training that they were going to need. He also sort of pats himself on the back at one point for his small boats asylum policy, which last time we looked wasn't really going according to

plan. No, the only real news he committed in that interview. And so his handlers will no doubt think his success on that score, at least, is when he was asked to comment about Nadine Doris. Still, what day is this now at day 55 or something since she said she was going? Still the Conservative MP for mid-Bentfordshire, despite the fact that she said she would resign. This is what he said.

I think people deserve to have an MP that represents them wherever they are. And, you know, it's just making sure that your MP is engaging with you, representing you, whether that's speaking in Parliament or being present in their constituencies, doing surgeries, answering your letters. That's the job of an MP, and all MPs should be held to that standard.

So she's failing in that, isn't she? Well, at the moment, people aren't being properly represented, right? But that's, you know, we'll have that. We'll have a strong Conservative...

So he cleverly, for him, doesn't mention her by name, but there is no question that he is pretty happy to stick the boot in with Nadine Doris, who we learned at the weekend, hasn't, I think, been in mid-beds for about three years and hasn't been in the House of Parliament for about a year. She hasn't been to the debates there for quite some time. So I suppose that is his concession to those who think that actually they're not getting value for money, they're not getting representation. And of all the people that he doesn't mind sort of throwing under the bus, I think Nadine Doris probably comes out at the top of the list.

Even though it will mean another by-election for him, which will be inevitably difficult.

Anyway, you can, if you want to listen to or watch the full 30-minute phone-in with Sunak, then you can do so via Global Player.

A momentous day then for America, an indictment that will go down in history as the day that a former president faced an allegation that he tried to overturn the will of the very people that he governed.

It is a momentous day, but it's also been a day of memorable phrases.

So anything, Emily? I think that probably for today's episode, we really should leave it on just a couple of words from a great colleague currently in Italy, John Sopel.