

[Transcript] The News Agents / Is Donald Trump going to jail?

This is a global player original podcast late on Thursday night news from New York. We have just gotten word former President Donald Trump has been indicted for years for decades. People have speculated that Donald J. Trump might find himself at some point on the wrong end of the law. It never quite happened on Thursday. That all changed. He was indicted or charged by a New York grand jury on charges in connection with secret payments made to the adult film star Stormy Daniels. It's important to remember he's been indicted, not convicted, innocent, until proven guilty. This investigation has been going on for years and there is a long way to go. But it does mean that the grand jury has found enough evidence to believe that Trump has committed at least one crime. It means that Manhattan District Attorney in charge of the prosecution, Alvin Bragg, can move forward with criminal charges. It means there is now the prospect that candidate Trump running for the presidency a third time will also be defendant Trump awaiting trial. The Trump presidency from start to finish to beyond has been a catalogue, a litany of ignominious firsts. Add this to the list. The first president or former president in US history to be indicted on criminal charges. Right there alongside the first president to be impeached twice. It is another part of the tangled web he's woven in which all of America seems to find itself stuck. On today's news agents we're going to try and unravel it and answer the questions. Why has this happened? What happens now? Will Donald Trump add another

first to his tally? The only American president to do time. It's Lewis here. Welcome to the news agents. The news agents. Now obviously normally at this point on a Friday I keep you informed about

John and Emily's long weekend plans. I'm afraid to tell you that they've had to interrupt their visit to the Basque Patonc Championships in northern Spain this weekend because of this astonishing news about Donald Trump. Not least because the producers tell me that you two did once host a quite obscure podcast about American politics at one point. I can't remember what it was called but it was apparently quite good and I don't know what's happened to it since. No. Look the point is this is obviously a huge story but it's a story that we should just take listeners back into the history of it because it's been going on a long time. This was basically going on even before the Trump presidency when you were in Washington. Yes although we didn't know about it

then. There was a Wall Street Journal story that came out saying that Donald Trump had paid a porn star, Stormy Daniels, \$130,000 just before the presidential election in the final days of the campaign in 2016. Astonishing. Now if you're using that money to buy her silence because it would have

been so embarrassing for it to have come out in the final days of the campaign then technically according to US campaign finance laws it is a campaign contribution. It's not a private matter. The money has been paid out then. The alleged affair which Donald Trump denies happened years earlier so why was he paying out \$130,000 just before the election? He then goes on Air Force One coming back from Mar-a-Lago and denies any knowledge of this payment whatsoever. Then he says well maybe yes I did know about it and I have repaid Michael Cohen who was then my attorney and Rudy Giuliani who has become Donald Trump's attorney says yeah he paid off the money he knew

about it and then there was the most uncharacteristic Donald Trump tweet ever. If you know Donald Trump

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tweets you know they're just a blah. This one a blah and this one goes Mr Cohen comma an attorney comma received a monthly retainer not from the campaign and having nothing to do with the campaign

from which he entered into through reimbursement a private contract between two parties known as a non-disclosure agreement or NDA and this whole thread went on and it was so clearly written by a lawyer because even then it was apparent what the legal jeopardy was for Donald Trump which now

in 2023 has come to pass because a grand jury which in British terms is like the Crown Prosecution Service do you decide there's enough to prosecute or not has decided there is enough to prosecute Donald Trump over these financial irregularities and this is big picture huge it is a historical first it is the first time we will ever see a president or former president put on trial in a criminal trial and don't forget that this is Donald Trump who we know tried to incite an insurrection there's a case looking at that who tried to find fraudulent votes in Georgia there's another case looking at that who has got copies of secret highly confidential documents stored in his own house in Mar-a-Lago and has prevented officials from taking this back and yet this case centres on something really as John was explaining slightly weird slightly arcane it's basically about a fabrication of a business record and so you have to ask because we haven't seen the

charge sheet yet we haven't seen what the district attorney in New York Alvin Bragg has actually got here neither Trump right neither Trump you have to hope that there is something more to it because I think that there will be a slight nervousness at this point amongst Democrats amongst the legal side of things that this is all looking a bit al Capone there are plenty of places that you know there must be malfeasance by Trump and yet you're starting on something that is very very specific which presumably will lead to something much bigger than just the mispending of 130,000 dollars to a model on campaign financing and of course because these allegations have hung around Trump for so long like a bad smell he has had to many times in the past address them so it's just worth he hasn't said anything about it since the indictment came at the time of recording anyway it's just worth hearing what he's had to say in the past about these allegations listen to this when I'm changing any stories all I'm telling you is that this country is right now running so smooth and to be bringing up that kind of crap and to be bringing up witch hunts all the time that's all you want to talk about just want to know if you're worried if he's going to cooperate with federal no I'm not worried because I did nothing wrong did you know about the payments later on I knew so Donald Trump's story as you can tell from that sort of the arc of Donald Trump's explanation kept on shifting I mean he kept on changing his story about what he knew

and when he knew it there's just an important point kind of the legal situation you can be done in America for a misdemeanor we don't have the same things in the vocabulary is really confusing

vocabulary is confusing indictment is confusing even so an indictment is a charge misdemeanor is a minor offense that can be dealt with at a very low level it's a fine kind of community service like a magistrate here or exactly but he is looks like he's going to be charged with a felony offense and a felony offense will carry with it a prison sentence if found guilty so it looks like the district attorney some years later after this happened is going for the highest possible tariff offense against Donald Trump and that has got the republican establishment crying foul I mean

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don't forget there has already been one person sent to prison for this and that was Michael Cohen Trump's lawyer the reason he was sent to prison and it was made very clear at the time that the command center had come from Donald Trump the reason he was sent to prison and Trump wasn't was because Trump was a sitting president so all warrants were immediately ended at that point Bill Barr William Barr who's the attorney general at that point said we're not going to do this to a sitting president now of course he's no longer sitting that's why this is if you like a risen again I think there is an irony isn't there that the woman the one woman who he probably thought he

could shut up you know she's an actress she's a model she's a porn star he probably thought he could pay her off and shut her up for having sex with him is now the road to his potential downfall and imprisonment and I interviewed Stormy Daniels a few years ago when she was talking about how

this case and that extraordinary very short affair had impacted his and her life many of us thought the world couldn't get much crazier yet here we are in 2018 hearing descriptions about the shape of the president's penis was that all part of the truth telling or was the aim there too on one level just humiliate him no of course I would never humiliate someone for no reason you know or for any reason I mean that's body shaming or sex shaming or betrayal and it was that he attacked me first I was called a liar that it never happened and unless he's had a penis transplant then I'm pretty sure that's a checkmate I suppose what we should consider is the extent to which because obviously this has been brief for some time now Trump's team had suggested this was going to happen

like last week and it didn't happen and then there was a lot of conversation about when it would even if it would but there's also been a lot of speculation about a suggestion that Trump has craved this that he's wanted it that he's wanted the sort of political attention he wants to be back in the spotlight what do you think about that that argument I mean actually because I mean ultimately as Emily said obviously it puts him in a limelight but he always he had the limelight and also being the first president running for president again to be indicted not exactly helpful is it like everything to do with Donald Trump the truth is much more complicated because we've seen how thin-skinned he can be and so he will find this an absolute appalling affront that he has been indicted I suspect there will also be a sense of panic about what this could mean and him having to go in handcuffs possibly on the perp walk in New York next week suggestion is we get the photograph of him like like any normal I'm sure that he'll be in at the back door and out at the back door 50 minutes later they will want to do everything they can to make it less of a circus to make it less of a circus to keep crowds away to keep any potential protest down I don't think we will see any single shot of him looking ignominious actually do we think that's what he wants well we don't know because on one level I think he wants it to be as discreet as possible and on the other hand he can see the political advantage of it and Donald Trump has always been that person the thin-skinned person who hated being indicted and yet at the same time saw the potential for it to be a rallying cry for his troops to say the system is stacked against me they're coming after me but they're really going after you I think that will be the language that will be the language and we've already seen it in the statement where he talked about political persecution and the extreme left the radical left and the haters and the witch hunts and all the rest of it don't forget that Trump has actually spent four decades trying to evade any kind of indictment any kind of terrified of it terrified and he's also a control

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freak right he's pretty confident in his ability to control the narrative control the media control publicity suddenly this is out of his control it's down to a jury a judge and then the voters I agree with you I think it will be making him panic because actually he didn't want to walk into this right not really there might be a political gain and we will talk about that in a second but right now I think there's more panic than there is joy but we also know we know what Trump can do when he's backed into a corner we know how toxic the politics that he can preach can become and we know how in sense so many of his supporters are so I mean how worried do you think we should be about the prospect of protests which turn ugly of this being used I mean we already have seen him basically destabilize and toxify the electoral system the election system I mean now he could be about to do the same with the judicial system he could do exactly what he did in the lead up to January the 6th which is to whip up a storm he could easily say to his supporters you've got to come to Mar-a-Lago because I don't want to go and you've got to put a ring of steel around Mar-a-Lago so that they can't get me well he'll say it's an extension of January and then you've got and then you have got potential public disorder yeah but you've I don't think he will because he's been very cautious about saying peaceful peaceful peaceful because he's also got this other case which is the federal case looking into him over January the 6th does he really want to face charges of another potential riot when he's facing a potential charge over the first one but when Donald Trump said a rally he can't help himself and he was at Waco last weekend there was stuff about we've got to you know protect ourselves and we've got to fight against this and the you know so some of the language is insightful of of kind of disorder I just want to add one word about whether this is a politically motivated witch hunt and that look the district attorney in Manhattan yes is a democratic party he stood on the democratic ticket to become da was it politically motivated who knows we haven't seen the indictment unsealed yet as they say but before this becomes an indictment he gets together a grand jury members of the public like a jury you would get in a trial and they have to decide whether there is a case to answer and they have voted that there is a case for Donald Trump to answer they are the ones who've decided to bring the charges not the district attorney I agree with that but I would just say that there will be some people some Democrats some people watching this thinking is this really the hill you want to die on and Alvin Bragg you know as you say politically appointed does he really think that this is a more important thing to be spending millions of than keeping New Yorkers safe does he really think this is the most pressing issue now for New York and you know when you hear that word witch hunt we are now all primed kind of go oh blimey somebody's trying to evade justice but I think there genuinely are questions about how many of the resources of New York you want to go into this particular trial and whether this is somehow a way of just luring in other bits of wrongdoing that's what aboutism of the classic nature isn't it it's well what about the rapists who've gone free what about the murderers who've gone free well yeah you can smoke and walk simultaneously and so I think they say exactly but as always with Trump the Trump presidency right the point is is that typically institutions have not been in this position before so it is a unique set of calibrations that they have to make in the same way exactly like with Merrick Garland and the federal investigation the federal attorney general look I'm sure they don't want to be in a position

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of having to basically decide do you do justice as it normally should take place or do you risk the political backlash and the suggestion from this very bad political actor i.e. Trump that this is all about politics often with Trump and the way that he toxifies political institutions it puts the people who frankly aren't toxic who operate those political institutions in an insidious position again and again yeah I think Michael Cohen's statement last night said it quite well actually and he was the one don't forget who went to prison and he said basically you want justice to be served you want Trump to be innocent until proven guilty at every step of the way nobody wants assumptions to be made but you also don't want him to think he's above the law totally and for the last eight years or so he has behaved like a man who is untouchable irreproachable and this is if you like a coming down to earth not that he is being found guilty not that we think he's guilty but that he can be tried the rule of law either operates or it doesn't right and in a way Trump himself is less important than what he thinks but the signal that it sends to everyone else form a president or not is absolutely crucial otherwise you basically have a justice system which has been corrupted corrupted by the guy who as i say to some extent is already corrupted the political system because you are then saying we don't want to risk another january the sixth yeah by bringing a prosecution we're afraid yeah then the rule of law has lost it's failed and one of the pillars of a democratic institution is the rule of law and due process district attorneys across america are politically elected but they have to be able to on the merits of a case decide whether this should be brought to a trial or not and that is the grand jury process they are the pretrial people who decide whether there has been an infringement of the law that makes it necessary for it to bring a prosecution in terms of the politics beyond the legal stuff question is of course is where this leaves 2024 and the republican nomination because i suppose this leaves the possibility open the absolutely astounding jaw dropping possibility that this trial i mean the wheels of justice move very slowly in america as in the uk and elsewhere but it at least raises the possibility that this trial could be happening concurrently with the presidential primary process if not the run-up to the next presidential election itself i mean that is that's mind-blowing before anyone asks you can campaign from prison yeah you can can i give it to you in a 10 second soundbite which i think is probably glib and needs to be unpacked a bit never stopped us before but it's never stopped us before i think broadly speaking the effect of a prosecution will make donald trump unstoppable for the republican nomination and unelectable to be president let's listen now to just some of the reaction from other republican senior republicans people that you would have thought were challenges to trump who right now seem to be on the it's a witch hunt side of things this is mike pence who was his former vice president i think i think the unprecedented indictment of a former president of the united states on a campaign finance issue is an outrage and and it appears to offer millions of americans i mean nothing more than a political prosecution so that is mike pence he doesn't he doesn't in that interview which was on cnn last night say trump is innocent in fact very few of them have said trump isn't guilty trump is innocent but they have all said the da shouldn't have gone after him in this way and that's where it becomes a political persecution or prosecution that's absolutely right because what has happened here is that now once again even though the republican party would love to be rid of donald trump and not have to talk about him your response now to the charges coming against donald trump will define you as a candidate because if you say yeah charges are fair enough then you are going to lose the maga base there's no chance you're going to pick them up in which case you are unelectable and if you go too close to donald trump and say

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absolutely right he should not be charged he's done nothing wrong then frankly you're saying why not elect donald trump as the nominee for 2022 yeah you can't carry on endorsing somebody without them becoming the better candidate so what you have to do is you have to say god the da in manhattan

what a disgusting human being he is this is absolute political this is a witch hunt it's a politicization of the justice system in america and it can't be put up with but quietly implication but if we get donald trump as president for a second term then it's going to be all this toxic mess all over again and we won't be able to get anything done ronda santis who we've talked about on the news agents before who looked very much like a strong challenger to trump last november when

he did incredibly well in the midterm elections has oddly come out on the side of the witch hunt at a time when he probably doesn't need to do any talking whatsoever and he's gone further than most and saying oh no trump's fine he shouldn't be followed in this way mitch mcconnell majority leader of the senate hasn't said a word we're recording at half past 12 so of course this may change but in terms of all those individuals now think you're running against him think you've trying to get that republican nomination they'll be thinking when do i speak i mean do you remember in the aftermath of the 2020 election when the sort of essay question or one of the essay questions around it was you know is this the end of trump is this the end of trumpism does the republican party move on i mean here we are three years later going on for two and a half years later and despite the fact that he's been impeached twice despite the fact he's now been indicted once who knows with maybe more future potential indictments to come most of the republican party either

stay silent or comes out to support him even ted cruz last night ted cruz the man that you know as we all know he trump lacerated him in his family time and time again straight off the blocks sent him from texas tweeting that this was a witch hunt this was a disgrace you know the republican party is supposed to be one of the custodians of american democracy and democratic values and the rule of law just completely bankrupt look a phrase that is used in america a lot is that this is the first shoe to drop in other words there's more to come and i think emily what you said earlier about the significance of the investigation going on in georgia the confidential documents that donald trump had scrawled away at marilago the dc investigation not the federal investigation the dc investigation into the events of january the sixth there are still other business investigations going on about the trump organization the idea that it's just this thing about a payment to stormy daniels i don't think quite does justice to this scale of the legal jeopardy that trump is up against and the political jeopardy that the democrats also face actually at this point because if they put a foot wrong or if they are seen to be too keen i was listening to some of the networks this morning every single democratic commentator they had on to a person was saying well yeah now is not the time to make judgments now is not the time to rush forward they do not want to be seen as jumping on the grave crowing about this at all because it is so perilous for the other side not least i mean as you say john i mean it augments his sense of persecution i mean we can sit here and say oh yeah well you know there's more to come far more serious to come but in a sense i mean that's exactly the play right you say on every single angle whether it's state or federal or business or whatever it is they're always after me and don't forget always coming for me he can keep talking right so he told us i mean ask the news agency told the world that he was going to be indicted two weeks ago so he's not a psychic he got the date

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wrong and it didn't happen nor the rest of it but when he said that the da and his team of prosecutors couldn't come out and say oh no actually that's not happening they have to remain silent he can talk unless they managed to actually shut him up he will carry on talk about it garland can't talk about it but as always with trump there is always the comedy scene because you always get something that's just hilarious and donald trump two days ago started saying when the prosecution hadn't come how much he liked this grand jury because clearly they weren't going to be bullied by the district attorney and two days later the grand jury votes to indict him so i suspect that in the next postings on truth social from donald trump will be hearing less about how great that grand jury is and talk about comedy offerings this was on truth social donald trump's own network last night it isn't in caps on most of it isn't but he says these thugs and radical left monsters have just indicated the 45th president of the united states he can't even type at a moment of such profound national importance i think the problem is that when you've got such big hands as donald trump as we all know he's got huge hands so big so big that it's very hard to type accurately whilst we've been talking to you trump's lawyer has actually been speaking let's just catch up with what he said we don't know what the the the actual charges are um but we do know it centers around uh you know illegal very common confidentiality agreement that was signed years and years ago this is a historic case a monumental case case that will have wide reaching uh ramifications and it really today i feel very concerned about the rule of law in this country because it endangers the rule of law for all americans the framing of this as an historic non-disclosure agreement relating to an alleged affair yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah between stormy daniels and donald trump just doesn't wash because why was the payment of 130 000 dollars made if this was an from an event a decade earlier why was it made in the final days of the 2016 presidential election campaign there are apparently 30 different charges 30 different areas of investigation and i think it will be fascinating now once that indictment is actually opened once it's unsealed and we can see what the charges are it will presumably take us much further down a road of business fraud and wrongdoing for him to feel confident enough to bring this look have you ever thought about doing an american politics show i think it could work for you well let's see watch this space well look i should let you go now shouldn't i for the rest of the show i know you've got plans i know you've interrupted them for us so we are very grateful thank you very much see you on monday see you right obviously we'll be keeping a very close eye on this story as we go into next week but next we're going to be changing the pace a little bit and have the next in our series of conversations with our senior politicians exploring what brought them into politics what keeps them in politics what politics means to them and we'll be having our next guest right after this this is the news agents welcome back right in case you missed it when we did the first of these a few varieties ago we're doing a series where we talk to some of our leading politicians and explore what brought them into politics what keeps them in politics what sustains them in politics we basically send them a series of questions their political inspiration their aspiration political hero and villain their fantasy cabinet and they come into the studio

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and we just try and have a different sort of conversation than we'd be able to do for the rest of the week basically what explores their political makeup think of it as a sort of desert island discs for politics i spoke to diana abbot a few weeks ago and next up is someone who has been talked about a huge amount since she first entered parliament back in 2010 someone who has run for labour leader someone who if there is a labour government is going to play a really big role in this country's politics the shadow levelling up secretary and mp4 wigan lisa nandy is my next guest

before we get on to the meat of the discussion i mean we should just talk a little bit about the politics of this week because it's been a big week for the labour party with the leader that led you into the last two elections no longer being able to stand as a labour candidate i mean i assume you welcome that or that you are comfortable with that decision at least yeah i mean it was a decision that was made by the national executive committee they're elected they represent a broad range of the party i think there's just a feeling in the labour party that we need to move on if you'd listen to the debate of the last few years you think that all we were interested in is ourselves i can tell you that's not true and it's time to start looking outwards to the country that's what we've been focusing on for the last few years since kia was elected and now we can move forward without having to continue this long-running saga and really be clear that we're a different party we're a change party do you understand though why some people not only on the left but outside might look at kia starma's attitude to jeremy corbin and just be a bit surprised and also it supports the idea that maybe he's a bit duplicitous at times i mean i remember you remember in the 2020 leadership election i mean you sat out of the corbin period you know you weren't on the shadow front bench but you will remember from the 2020

leadership election kia starma described him as a colleague and a friend it's a funny way to treat a friend isn't it well look there was this moment after the EHRC report was published when the full shame of what the labour party had become during that era was laid bare and at that moment kia starma

was in the shadow cabinet during that period well sure lots of people were i mean you know some of us took the decision that it was completely unsustainable and walked away and some of us took the decision that it was better to be there and try to mitigate what was happening and i'm not going to judge anyone for the decisions that they took in that time it was a horrible horrible period for labour and because we're the official opposition for the country frankly but you know there was this moment when the EHRC report was published and to downplay the significance of what had happened

to downplay anti-semitism at that point you know i've got good friends who left the labour party luciano louise and others who stayed like roof smith and just the hurt the compounding of the hurt it was just it was just unconscionable but starma wanted him to be prime minister he was in his shadow cabinet in a way that you made a different decision and i know you say okay you know people

made their own decisions but can you understand why some people might find that at least puzzling i think people can draw their own views but i think it's absolutely clear if you look at what we've done in the last how long has it been now three or four years since kia was elected that we are a completely changed party he said that he would tear anti-semitism out of the labour party by its roots and he's been true to his word he's done it you know worked alongside him every

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stage in that process and i'm proud actually that we can once again go out and look people in the eye do you get on well i mean obviously you were opponents in the 2020 leadership election and obviously we've just seen an example of a leadership election in the smp in scotland which is or has ended up with a little bit of bloodlust it wasn't really like that in 2020 do you get on well now yeah i mean we were competitors but we were never opponents i've known kia actually since

long before he was elected to parliament i first met him when i was working at the children's society and i'd gone to see him as director of public prosecutions because we were finding lots of kids were being picked up traffic to the uk they were made to work in cannabis factories and then they were being picked up and prosecuted and nobody would take it seriously and he agreed to see us a group of us from the charity sector who were working with these kids and he was determined to do something about it they changed the guidance the problem still exists but he did his bit and i was really impressed by that at the time i'm going to move on very very shortly because we're not here to talk about kia starmer but you will understand why a lot of people particularly from the left some of whom voted for kia starmer by the way find the idea of his being consistent quite reasonable because he campaigned in a certain way he campaigned on a set

of pledges which he has pretty much entirely resiled from now that's not consistency is it i don't know actually i won't go that far at all you have to respond to events in politics it's absolutely right to have principles but the country can't afford to have politicians that say no compromise no pragmatism the great leaders that we've seen emerge across the world you know particularly during the pandemic the people who really were praised whether it was jacinda ardern or my sort of wing of politics or angler merkel on another wing of politics these are the leaders that are prepared to accept that compromise isn't cowardice and that you can change your mind so talking about you you've been in parliament now for 13 years i've been in opposition yeah 13 years there's a slog you came in in 2010 at the very start of this period of conservative dominance really in one form or another and what has that been like i mean in some ways it's awful because what you have is a ringside seat to the damage that's being done and i represent a mining town in the northwest that suffered a lot last time the conservatives were in office and watching people have to go through that again it's been really difficult but on the other hand politics is a platform it's a megaphone through which you can shout for some of the most marginalized discriminated against ignored and disrespected people in the country and when i think back on the last 13 years whether it was setting up the centre for towns to put towns back on the map i look back on those moments particularly where we won you know the battle to save my football club as well and i just think you know what i wouldn't have traded that for anything in the world so going even further back from that and going through our list of questions the even younger Lisa and Andy what was your inspiration into politics um was there a moment or an event or person which sort of inspired you to think yeah i need to be in politics i think it was when i was working at centrepoint the youth homelessness charity that i went to work for in my 20s working with some of the most incredible young people i've ever met in my life they'd been

through hell and back but they were just as ambitious for themselves and for their families and their communities and their lives as anybody else and i've gone to see the leader of hammersmith council because we'd done a report on young people who were being housed in bed

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and

breakfast accommodation it sounds nice it isn't they were being shoved essentially into hostels at the age of 16 and so these kids were stuck there for months often for years and i'd met one young woman in particular who was in hammersmith and fulham who had been sexually abused by the owner of this b&b who was being paid by the taxpayer to house an accommodator and she was still there and i went to see him and not only did he respond that day to get that young woman out but he and his officers worked on a plan to lift all young people out of bed and breakfast accommodation for good in the borough and it was such a good plan that event cooper who was then the housing minister took it and legislated and i remember thinking you know for all of the good that we're doing here in the charity sector really the circumstances of a lot of these young people's lives have been set before they were even born and that's about power it's about who has it and only politics can change that and that i think that was the moment when i thought i'm going to do something and was there and has there been a speech political speech that you've heard at some point in your career or before that has stayed with you or shaped you or formed you in some way i read a lot of fiction mostly to try and expand my horizons beyond the grubby world of politics gotta be done but i read a lot of of political stuff as well and particularly bobby kennedy i think the way in which he was able to lift his eyes to the horizon and see the biggest sweep of what was happening in that era you know the humanity that comes through and just the craft with which a great speech happens the sort of poetry that you can inject into politics those great moments of political oratory i think continue to just to explain to you so bobby kennedy was jfk's younger brother who himself was in politics all the kennedys in one for another often end up in politics and he himself was assassinated later in the 60s part of the sort of so-called kennedy curse some people be interested why bobby kennedy rather than jfk it was brave what bobby kennedy was doing he was running towards trouble there was you know huge upheaval in the united states at the time huge social unrest huge social unrest real tensions in race relations and he wouldn't shy away from it him basically being a sort of i guess you could say a kind of career politician who just sort of inherited politics as his birthright and he goes out and sees the condition in which people were forced to exist in the country and he comes back a completely changed guy and he says some men see things that are and ask why i i see things that never were and ask why not and that i think is really what's needed now in modern british politics i think we're living through a big moment of change i think we need to start looking again now that everything is so broken and think well why not i mean talking just about kennedy in the dinosaur i mean you weren't were you from a very political family yeah my granddad was a liberal mp really yeah so he fought in the war and so when we're this a bit so this would have been sort of just after the war so the 20s how old do you think well i don't know some people some people well i was just thinking yes i'm 100 years old i would like to apologize to Lisa nandi officially well i didn't know i saw what i was thinking about because it's been a long 30 years clearly after the second one also in the 40s and 50s yeah yeah so 45 i think he was elected he only did one term he lost his seat after that but he it was that time when i think people of his generation really felt a strong responsibility to cement the freedoms that they'd fought for in the war so he was very involved in the campaign to found israel i suspect if he lived longer because i he died when i was four but i suspect we would have had many disagreements but i suspect a lot of that is because he was in a very different world and a

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very different politics isn't the blood that it was in it was in the blood it was at home so it was yeah i mean more than that actually so my dad is a you know an academic came from india to study

here in the uk and then he ended up going off to write the race relations acts with roy jenkins and setting up the Equal Opportunities Commission my mum is a a labour supporter she was a labour

counsellor my family represents every bit of the political spectrum my dad's an arxist my grandad was

a liberal my uncle was a Tory i mean our family christmas is really quite something yeah there's always a row before the turkey comes out always yeah sort of a post-material post-materialist kind of or you know sort of bit of marxism and conservatism yeah but actually the other thing that's been a really big influence on me is the fact that my dad is an academic and he always used to say to me and my sister when we were younger i'm not really interested in your opinion i'm interested in your reason for holding it you have to meet your opponent at the strongest point of their argument not just the weakest and for him having two daughters was just fantastic yeah the bigger influence actually on me has been my mum and i think particularly growing up you know in the 80s she was running a busy newsroom at granada at a time when women just weren't largely doing that sort of thing and she was always there for me and my sister my parents divorced when i was seven they said that women could have it all but that generation of women i think they just did it all so my next question on this is your political villain political villain they might inspire you in a different way okay well i will i will but this is a bit naughty although i do you know we like naughty do you remember that daft question about Churchill hero or villain i hate these sort of binaries but i tell you somebody who did inspire me but not in a good way was michael gove my opposite number i went to see him in 2009 ahead of the

general election the Tories were sort of riding high and it looked like they were going to win it looked like they were going to win outright and they were in Manchester where i grew up which was a bit of a shock i hadn't seen that many Tories in Manchester for a long time and i went to see him because i was working with child refugees and had gone in to have a chat with him with my chief executive and he said that they were going to abolish the child poverty targets you know there was a discussion about whether poverty was really about income or whether it was about bad parenting which just made me wild i came away from that meeting and thought i you

know what i can't just stand and watch what is about to unfold i'm going to stand for parliament so there you go now you are literally set up as each other in the house of commons week after week yeah if you were prime minister right and if you could have anyone from history in your cabinet yeah who would you just the sort of top jobs okay would you have top jobs i'd have Barbara Castle greatest labour prime minister we never had yep i would have taylor swift you'd have taylor swift i would have taylor swift doing the equality which job equality brief right yeah yeah yeah oh no she would shake things right up i would have who else would i have can i have um jacinda rderm as well can i bring her back up yeah yeah she's had a little great now isn't she i reckon i'd have her on climate have her on climate yeah she was really great on climate do you think she'll take climate she has been prime minister of new zealand lisa i mean she might chafe at just having a sort of france is so gradey former general secretary of tc's once told

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me this story about how i thought you were gonna put her in the cabinet as well no i definitely put her in the cabinet but she told me a story once about how jacinda rderm a very young jacinda rderm had applied a job at the tc yeah and been turned down and how when she met her she couldn't look her in the eye oh she was just hoping she didn't remember who's going to be your foreign secretary let's let's put francis in i'm getting to work together because it'd be funny all right well that'll be a that'll be a nice awkward first cabinet meeting who'll be you were shadow foreign secretary of course yeah well maybe jacinda should be our shadow foreign secretary well she which may have sort of split loyalties with the new zealanders but i suppose we're all one happy commonwealth family well it's about time we started did you enjoy being shadow foreign secretary i loved

it except that it was during the pandemic so when kia rang me and offered it to me i was a little bit surprised i'm more known for sort of the work i've been doing on industrial towns than foreign policy but he said to me well there's a lot of towns out there in the world and uh cheers kia yeah and what the only sort of hesitation i had was the amount of travel i would have to do with a young son komin wigan it turns out i didn't have worried at all i was the only shadow foreign secretary in history never to leave wigan when we had the reshuffle and asked if i would take they just created this leveling up department and he asked it was a perfect fit for me and he asked me if i'd come and do it and a week later all the restrictions lifted and david lammy sailed off to washington and there was a there was an upside to it though because we were zooming with all the world leaders and i have seen the inside of many world leaders houses which is anything particularly salacious justin just got a very nice kitchen pedro sanchez spent the entirety of our meeting making a sandwich because he thought his camera was off that was quite fun antony albanys he interrupted our zoom to go and have a row with his teenage son who was on his xbox or something and ruining the wi-fi yeah it was a proper insight into the family lives of the and what was going on at your gaff oh all sorts of salacious all sorts in your cabinet by the way you've got to have one Tory okay would you have who would i have as a Tory yeah can i just pick someone that i'm quite friendly with yeah that's right you can have anyone i reckon yeah i was going to ruin his career here but i'd have tom togan heart i think oh yeah he and i when he was doing the foreign affairs select committee and i was doing the shadow foreign job he and i obviously had quite a lot to do with one another and i do think there's a sense in which politics stops at the water's edge that you've got to stand up for britain's interests you've got to be a light on the hill at home and overseas what's your one if you could wave a magic wand and get one reform one thing could just happen in politics ninja what would it be i think you know if you go if you made me prime minister for a minute what we've already got the cabinet so that's already sorted out and i could only do one thing i think i would probably restore legal aid you know when i reflect on the last hundred years of hard-won rights that my party has been at the forefront of fighting for and then how at one stroke the coalition government took away the means to enforce them

i think that's been i think that's been devastating for a lot of people in the country access to justice has to be the basis of a decent country and at the moment for too many people it's just not there and i think delivering on whether you call it leveling up or rebuilding britain whatever you want to call it delivering on that so that people young people can grow up and have the choice to stay and contribute to the places that they love and that they call home once we've cracked that then off i go to hang out with taylor swift and you know jacinda and jacinda great

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political i would say barbara castle but this is all getting a bit weird yeah well let's leave it
barbara lisa thank you so much for being on thank you thanks for having me
this is the news agents
right that is it for all of us for this week remember you can catch up on all our shows
from the week on global player thanks to our production team on the news agents gable radus
ellie clipper georgia foxwell will gibson smith alex barnett and rory simon and welcome to our new
producer laura fits patrick god help her our editor is tom hughes our executive producer
is dino sofos it's presented by emily mate list john sope and me lewis goodall we'll see you on
monday have a lovely weekend this has been a global player original podcast and a persifonica
production