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[00:00:03] **Speaker 1** 30s. Good afternoon and welcome back to Milwaukee, host city for the Republican National Convention. This is a special presentation of here announced 2024 election coverage. We're coming to you live from Media Row in Panther Arena in downtown Milwaukee. I am senior political reporter for here and now. My name is Zach and I am joined by Bill Percussion and Scott Ross. Thank you for coming back yet again. It's great to have you back.

[00:01:04] **Speaker 2** Day three. Here we go, here we go.

[00:01:06] **Speaker 1** All right. I want to take us back to comments that were made on day one by WIS GOP Chairman Brian Sherman. He said Milwaukee is the safest place on the planet, but yesterday there was a person that was killed by out of state police, shot and killed just a few blocks to the west of here. What are those statements still true? Is this still the safest place? I mean, it wasn't for that person.

[00:01:25] **Speaker 2** Unfortunately, I think it is. I mean, I've never seen Milwaukee look this good. I think the community has shown, well, nationally, every delegation that I've had an opportunity to interact with has been really impressed with Milwaukee. I think the circumstances yesterday, we need to get all the details, but it appears there was a knife fight that was going on, and an officer from another state told them to drop the knife. You wouldn't drop a knife. And you know, unfortunately, that that man last lost his life. So I still think Milwaukee has done an exceptional job. I think the state of Wisconsin looks great. And, I'm still very glad we're here.

[00:01:58] **Speaker 1** Do you think this would have happened if it was Milwaukee police that have responded instead of out of state officers?

[00:02:02] **Speaker 3** Well, that was one of the things. I mean, I did see where, out of state, where for places outside of the perimeter and this was an incident that happened outside of the perimeter that was supposed to be responded to by Milwaukee police. And unfortunately, you know, the circumstances, again, are what they are. But that fact is, is in is not in dispute. And I think that's why there is, you know, besides the loss of life of a, of an unarmed, you know, knife fight, but unarmed man who was shot to death, who people knew, you know, as a, you know, some, men who lived in, homeless camp, you know, it's it's it's sad. It's unfortunate. I don't think it necessarily says Milwaukee is not safe, you know, but Milwaukee is a city. And, you know, bad things happen in cities.

[00:02:45] **Speaker 1** So there was another issue yesterday with violence, not nearly to this level, but state. Congressman, Derek Van Orden had an issue with a Code Pink protester in line and, their differing opinions on what exactly happened, but there was some bumping between them. The Code Pink protester was arrested. She alleged it was Van Orden who bumped into her. He was very fiery in his response to the breakfast delegation this morning. Using a lot of different language, blaming her for the incident. What what should we take from this happening in line with someone in the wrong here?

[00:03:18] **Speaker 2** I don't know all the details, but I do know this. You shouldn't touch, a politician, right? I mean, you can be opposed to them. We had this conversation on Monday. You can have differences of opinion on policy, but it should never get physical. And it certainly shouldn't get violent where there's weapons that are used, which almost happened on Saturday night. So I don't know the details of that. I do know that Derek Van Orden is a former Navy Seal, and he's a very tough guy, so wouldn't be somebody I would challenge. I'm interested to learn more about those details.

[00:03:46] **Speaker 1** Does he get the benefit of the doubt in this scenario for his version of events?

[00:03:49] **Speaker 3** He doesn't for me, and I don't think the facts give him the benefit of the doubt. Now, I saw the interview or read the interview with the with the woman involved. She, you know, said that there were three of them who were standing at the front of the line. She's Palestinian and two white women. And she said that, you know, she thought that he bumped into her as a sign of his displeasure with her. Now, what do we know about Derek Van Horton's past? And again, it is possible that Derek Van Orden is telling the truth on this thing. But Derek tried to smuggle illegally smuggle a gun through an airport. He attacked a 17 year old LGBTQ librarian because he didn't like that. There were, you know, books for gay people. You know, there's a display of books for gay people. And, so he, checked out all those books. And then, of course, we have the incident where he was intoxicated and went into the US Capitol and attacked a bunch of Senate pages and swore profane, profane things at them before taking a bow and leaving. So I don't think Derek Van Orden gets the, gets the benefit of the doubt on this one at all. In fact, you know, we just saw yesterday's refusing debate, his Democratic opponents now. So this guy's like, gone DC before, you know, Derek's gun DC. And probably the quickest I've ever seen a politician.

[00:04:56] **Speaker 1** Does he have the right temperament for Wisconsin?

[00:04:57] **Speaker 2** I think he does. He represents the district. He won a seat that had been held by a Democrat for more than 20 years. That's a seat that Donald Trump has won twice. Just so the viewers are reminded. The congressional seats did not change when Wisconsin changed maps. So he's running in the same city. Etcd he ran in last time. Van Orden will be the favorite in that. He's a husband. He's a father. He just lost one of his children to cancer not that long ago. He's a good man. I know him pretty well. You know, I think there's as much Derek Van Orden derangement Syndrome as there is Trump Derangement syndrome for a lot of Wisconsin Democrats.

[00:05:28] **Speaker 3** I think because he's so incendiary in his language and things in, you know, let's just say that, you know, like you say, Ron kind held that seat for 26 years. But in 2022, the national Democrats completely in. Bailed. They were supposed to spend a couple of million dollars in TV. It was booked in. Then they pulled it out. And that is why Derek Van Orton is a member of Congress, because the Dems failed him on it. I have been assured that's not happening again. You know, we've got three candidates who are who are who are facing off to to see who's going to fight him again yesterday said like he did with his last opponent, he's going to refuse to debate them. And you know, the thing I'm asking myself is, you know, Derek Van Orton, there's video of Derek Van Orton attacking those students. Are those pages teenage pages in the Capitol? Brian style, you know, a fellow Republican congressman is that chair of the committee that oversees the House operations. Why is he refusing to release that video of it? The video of a of a Democratic member pushing through an, a, storm or. I'm sorry, a fire door was leaked three weeks after. Why is Brian Style indulging in this cover up? And why aren't people demanding the video be released?

[00:06:38] **Speaker 2** All the campaign finance reports were released for Congressman in the last 24, 48 hours, and and Jordan had $2.4 million in the bank. His closest Democratic opponent had about $600,000 in the bank. Again, this is the seat that he won. It hasn't changed a bit. Trump has won the same seat two times. Derek Mann audience the heavy favorite for reelection.

[00:06:57] **Speaker 3** Do it. Just for one thing. If those are the standards by which people are going to win. Kristen Lively, who's running in the open seat in the eighth, the one that Mike Gallagher had before he left for he's driven out of the party. She raised more than all three of the Republicans who are fighting it out in the primary combined, including a Trump endorsed, Republican and the most anti-abortion politician we've had in Wisconsin in Andre Schock, in the entire in the entirety of our union.

[00:07:22] **Speaker 1** But that district is not as competitive at third. Would seem to be my quick. My follow up on on the third is our issues with Van Orden blown up because of the district and the competitiveness. If like if Tom Tiffany's district isn't looked at the same thing, if he was doing similar things, would we be paying attention to issues that he has?

[00:07:40] **Speaker 2** We're talking about this in Milwaukee. We generally talk about this in Madison. They don't talk about this between Eau Claire and Lacrosse. These are not issues back in the third seed. These are more on the statewide level or national level. They're going right over the head of the voters of the third, because they're worried about how they're going to pay their grocery bill, their gas bill and their electric bill and their mortgage.

[00:07:59] **Speaker 3** I'm going to strongly disagree with that. And the reason I'm going to strongly disagree with that is because you pointed out, Claire, and you pointed out lacrosse, Eau Claire and lacrosse are enormous Democratic turnout areas. I always say that if you don't win the French connection out there, you can't win statewide. Tony Evers, Josh Kaul, Tammy Baldwin, all one big in Eau Claire in lacrosse, and they all won statewide elections. Eau Claire in lacrosse. We'll have a lot to say about the future of the state, future of the country. And, you know, I think that they are paying attention to this because, you know, again, you you counter Derek Van Orden, who lost to Ron Kind against a guy like Ron. And they want, you know, they want normalcy. And I would just say for the eighth CD, they see there's always been moderates, whether it's Dems or Republicans, you know, moderate guy I mean, listen this them they're not going to go for someone who's who's you know the MAGA or and they're not going to go for the anti-abortion stuff. You know that's that extreme I think, you know, again, it's a tough district. But I think, you know, in a, in a weird, tough district.

[00:08:57] **Speaker 1** So this isn't related to an election issue, but we're Scott Fitzgerald, our congressman from our neighboring district. I haven't seen him all week or heard anything from him.

[00:09:06] **Speaker 2** He I've seen him. He is here. Yeah, I saw him Sunday night, and, he's got an event, tonight that I'm going to. So, he's definitely here, and we're just outside his district.

[00:09:16] **Speaker 3** There's the fundraiser for future election deniers. Because you mentioned he and Tom. Tiffany. Tom was around earlier. You know, these are two guys who helped who who voted to undo the results of democratically decided elections.

[00:09:28] **Speaker 1** So speaking of other people that I was wondering where they were. We mentioned Mike pence yesterday. I saw a tweet, He's in Montana. Did you happen to see the pictures he posted of him and his wife and out horseback?

[00:09:37] **Speaker 2** I did not know, but I got an opportunity to see the GOP Senate candidate, Tim Sheehy, last night. I was impressed, you know, of the 13 or 14 Senate candidates, they paraded across the stage last night, I laughed. She he was one of the best he did. He did well. And new polling has him leading and, beating, Jon Tester. So that would be a pickup for Republicans.

[00:09:59] **Speaker 3** I just point out that Mike pence, you know, who can't be in another room with another woman was too moderate for this Republican Party. So we have a new vice presidential nominee.

[00:10:10] **Speaker 1** So tonight, we do expect to hear from Mike pence, his replacement on the Trump ticket, JD Vance. What are you looking to hear from him? This is supposed to be more of his biography tonight.

[00:10:19] **Speaker 2** Yeah. So in the last 48 hours since he's been chosen, his novel that he wrote before running for, for the Senate, Hillbilly Elegy, is now number one on Amazon for the second time. It was number one when it first came out. It's now number one again. It went from number 1700 all the way to one hillbilly elegy. The movie is the most streamed movie, on Netflix right now. I. I think tonight JD Vance is going to tell America his story. Let's let's be honest. Not a lot of people know him. They don't know much about him. So he's introducing himself tonight. And we talked about this yesterday, and I think I was pretty honest about it. He's he's he's going to have to hold up his end of the bargain. Right. And be a strong candidate. And tonight's that first opportunity to show a he can he can talk the talking points. He can he can connect with the crowd and he can help Donald Trump ultimately, particularly in the Rust Belt.

[00:11:10] **Speaker 1** Which version of JD Vance do we get the one that doesn't like Trump or the one that's now all four?

[00:11:14] **Speaker 3** I would suggest to all of our viewers right now, if JD Vance withdraws a silver pen, it may be one of those flashy things for Men in Black, and he's going to try and make everybody forget the things that he's had been saying for, you know, since 2016 about Donald Trump referring to him as America's Hitler, making saying that he was responsible for the Nazis marching in Charlottesville where a woman lost her life and, you know, over and over again, he was opposed. But now, you know, he's in the you know, this is a guy who got $15 million for his election to the Senate a year ago from Peter Thiel, you know, billionaire who also wasn't in the Trump camp at the beginning. But now tech is all in form. You saw David Sack speaking from the from the, floor the other night. You saw, you know, Elon Musk is going to put $45 million in a super PAC for Trump every month till the election, about $180 million. So, I mean, those are the things, again, he's going to try and rewrite his record on abortion and rewrite the way he's talked about Trump.

[00:12:09] **Speaker 2** I'm glad you raised that question. I think Vance has already answered that pretty well over the last two days. He won't be very different than some of the speakers we had Monday night or last night who were also Never Trumpers in 2016, or maybe even in 2020. We've had speakers on the stage, in the last couple of nights that weren't with Donald Trump ever. And and now they are. So I think JD Vance has a pretty good story as to how he started, where he's at now, why he's there, and why he's the right guy for the ticket.

[00:12:38] **Speaker 3** This is the thing that confounds me about this. So JD Vance, who has a year of experience in the Senate, is now the.

[00:12:46] **Speaker 2** Voice Barack Obama is.

[00:12:47] **Speaker 3** Now he is now the vice presidential, now the vice presidential nominee for the Republicans. He's there because he wrote a book and we know about it. And I know because I read the thing. My lawyer, if he's watching. Thanks for that. He told me to read it, you know, before JD went all MAGA and I read it. And one of the things I remember in that book is the fact that he talked about how his grandfather is the reason that he was able to survive, and it was because his grandfather was a union employee with benefits. And JD Vance and the Republicans are doing everything they can to hurt unions. Sean O'Brien being at the at the, at the speech notwithstanding. But the thing about it is JD Vance is there because he wrote a book. Okay. He's there because a billionaires financing. He wrote a book, The Republican Agenda is about billionaires financing to ban books, including here in Wisconsin, where 481 books have been banned in libraries, the second most in America.

[00:13:42] **Speaker 1** Well, you're talking about experience. Let's bring us back to 2008, when Sarah Palin. I've already heard her name thrown around a few times as far as lack of experience.

[00:13:48] **Speaker 2** And Barack Obama.

[00:13:49] **Speaker 1** The GOP was super excited about Palin joining McCain's ticket. She was going to seal the deal. And then it didn't take very long before the shine walked off on her. Could we see that on Vance?

[00:13:58] **Speaker 2** Well, the difference of the 2008 ticket. Sarah Palin was a governor. She had managed something Barack Obama had never managed anything. He had been a state senator. He had been a community organizer. And then only in the United States Senate for two years. So people with little experience can do well in politics. Donald Trump has proven that. I think JD Vance has as well.

[00:14:17] **Speaker 1** So let's switch to some state politics. Just announced today that the administration and call are asking to intervene on the constitutional challenge to Wisconsin's abortion ban. How does that change the game for both the lawsuit and the fall? Because there are the two tracks going before the Wisconsin Supreme Court, one challenging the abortion ban that's on the books and the other the constitutional facial challenge to abortion rights.

[00:14:40] **Speaker 2** I'm not sure the average citizen understands where we're at in this ping pong match. On the abortion issue, right after the Dobbs decision, it appeared that the 1848 law was enforced, which banned all abortions. Subsequent court cases have said, no, that isn't in enforce. And we actually have a 20 week ban in the state of Wisconsin, which is more generous than most states who have gone to some kind of a limit. So that's the ban that exists today. You know, if the governor is going to try and undo that, he's got a favorable Supreme Court. I guess anything can happen. But, you know, there's no question the Democrats are trying to use that to motivate their base because their candidate is so weak, so infirm. He can't win on his own. And they're right now in the middle of a civil war within their party about whether or not to flush their candidate in the middle of the summer, which has never happened in the history of this republic, that a major party candidate, let alone the incumbent president, United States, would get knocked off his own ticket.

[00:15:37] **Speaker 1** It hasn't happened yet. That's just to talk at the moment.

[00:15:39] **Speaker 2** Now, Adam Schiff came out today and. You know, he's Nancy Pelosi bag man. He if he's saying it, that's Nancy Pelosi saying it.

[00:15:47] **Speaker 1** We we'll go back to that in just a second because I have a question, but I want to hear from you about the importance of intervening in this lawsuit.

[00:15:54] **Speaker 3** You know, again, I think this wasn't anything unexpected for the for the most part, Tony Evers has in Josh colored. Both said they believe women have the right to control their bodies. And the 1848 laws. Ridiculous. The ban on abortion. So I don't I mean, I think this is just the legal process, you know, but it is definitely political. I mean, it's political as heck because, you know, the fact is, is that they took away the rights of, you know, half the population. And there has been a backlash to that. We have seen at the polls over and over again, I think you combine like what we've seen in Wisconsin, which is like, you know what, 17 of the last 19 statewide elections since Trump was elected, Democrats have won. Then now you combine that with the Dobbs thing. I you know, I understand you know, Biden's got some vulnerabilities for sure. But I think that it's I don't think it's going to you know, I don't think in the end it's going to make a bit of difference because on the issues you go it starting with abortion, you can go run the table. Democrats are on the side of people. Republicans are on the side of Donald Trump, which is tax rates for rich people and his donors.

[00:16:56] **Speaker 1** So I want to go back to 2016 with all throughout that campaign, you just spurred this in my memory. We had Republican after Republican calling for Donald Trump to drop out of the race. He was unelectable. He's a drag on the ticket. He was going to ruin the party forever. Obviously, we know he ended up winning. Different circumstances of why the Democrats may be asking their candidate to drop out, but are there comparables about what that could mean for people's psychology, about down ballot ticket, for whether their support the candidate, whether they're resisting the political elites, the Beltway elites, in their commentary.

[00:17:27] **Speaker 2** On the fact that Democrats refuse to say he is the nominee is all we need to know right at this point.

[00:17:33] **Speaker 1** He's doing something about individual Democrats. Joe Biden is the president he represents. The Democratic Party.

[00:17:38] **Speaker 2** Holds all the cards. If he chooses not to step aside, they cannot force him out other than the 25th amendment. And they're not going to use the nuclear option. They're not going to do that. So he holds all the cards.

[00:17:49] **Speaker 1** But are there comparisons to 2016, what Republicans were dealing with then?

[00:17:53] **Speaker 2** Remember that happened in October? And he was a candidate, the only comparable to a an incumbent backing out in the year of the election would be LBJ on March 31st, 1968. I was three years old. That would be the closest example to this. Here we are. This is the end of July, right? The Democratic convention is in three weeks. And and there's a lot of uncertainty as to whether or not he'll be accepting that nomination. That's unbelievable.

[00:18:20] **Speaker 1** Are you uncertain at all?

[00:18:22] **Speaker 3** I know, I think Joe Biden is the nominee of the Democrats. Joe Biden will be the nominee and Joe Biden will win the presidency, and Donald Trump will say it was rigged again. It's what he did last time, what he'll do this time.

[00:18:32] **Speaker 1** But you you live through that. When in 2016, when Paul Ryan and when appear on the stage with him, they canceled on what you're supposed to be coming to Wisconsin at the last minute. Are Democrats having that same feeling or is it completely is it fair to compare the two experiences? I mean, the rank and file, there's a feeling.

[00:18:49] **Speaker 3** Yes, I absolutely think that there are places where there are people who probably feel the same, Democrats who feel the same way that Republicans felt in 2016. But I don't think in the end it's going to matter because I think the Democrats are going to come together. I think that this convention has been great for Democrats in terms of the extremism we've seen. I think when we see Donald Trump coming out there tomorrow night, it's going to motivate Democrats again because he has been an incredible motivating force for Democrats and independents are unsure of, you know, they don't trust him because they know what he's done. They know the way that he talks. And I don't think that, you know, if we're sitting in a in an economy that's recovered, you got Joe Biden, who, you know, again, is 81 years old, Donald Trump, 78 years old. America lost 3 million jobs under Trump. They gained 16 million under President Biden, 21 million more people got access to health care. Under Joe Biden, 5 million people had their student loans reduced.

[00:19:40] **Speaker 2** If this was just about Joe Biden, I think the Democrats would let him sink or swim on its own. It's not just about him, it's about his impact on ballot. And if he loses, for example, the state of Wisconsin by 3 or 4 points, that means Robin Vos and Devin Lemon, who probably keep or pick up a seat they don't currently have. That's the difference here. This has an impact down ballot. Democrats know it, which is why a lot of them are not so quietly trying to push him out.

[00:20:07] **Speaker 1** I want to talk about the the the ratings for the convention so far. According to the Journal Sentinel, Nielsen put out the first ratings, up 50% from 2020. It was Covid year. Yeah, but 18 million viewers, it's still down from 2016. This morning at the breakfast delegation, there was stern messages from the party chair to members, stay in your seats. The optics look bad when they are empty seats during the televised program. Wisconsin has amazing seats right up next to the stage. What are the optics right now? How important are the number of viewers that are watching Wisconsin and the RNC?

[00:20:40] **Speaker 2** It's not like when we were. Kids. When we were kids, the networks would cover it. Wall to wall from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.. Probably out east. It was 8 to 11. So it doesn't work that way anymore. You got to watch cable if you want to watch wall to wall coverage. There are times when delegates and alternates get up in exchange seats. They walk around. I get those kind of optics. I'm not concerned about that viewership. If you're telling me 18 million, I hadn't seen that number. I think that's pretty good. I'll take that.

[00:21:04] **Speaker 1** Do you think Democrats are going to have 18 million?

[00:21:07] **Speaker 3** I think so, because I think that, you know, I do think that some of. Right. Yeah.

[00:21:10] **Speaker 2** Because there's mystery there. Joe Biden actually takes the nomination again.

[00:21:13] **Speaker 3** Like, you know, our sort of friends in the corporate media have been punishing Biden for months and months and months. They're they want this brokered convention more than anything. They can taste it on their lips and they're not going to continue. They're not going to stop pushing that. That's going to happen. You know, they'll still be pushing it after the election of Joe Biden.

[00:21:30] **Speaker 1** Well, by comparison, 51 million people watch the debate, which is probably could be the likely only debate in this. So we're talking only a fraction of the viewers. Are these the most diehard people that are watching this, or are there swing voters actually watching and trying to get a sense of whether they can support Donald Trump?

[00:21:46] **Speaker 2** I would pay attention to the viewership on Thursday night. When Trump speaks, I think it'll be double the 18 million number. That's the more important number the people we've introduced to America, if they didn't already know him over the last couple of nights, been great speakers, demonstrated unity, a lot of good messaging, particularly from the citizens. The mother who lost her son to violence in New York City, or the one that lost her child to fentanyl. Those were powerful, compelling speeches. But I think America wants to see what Trump has to say, particularly after the assassination attempt. So I would pay attention on Friday morning and what the Nielsen ratings were for Thursday.

[00:22:21] **Speaker 3** Yeah, I think we're going to see huge ratings. I think they'll be enormous, you know, given everything. Absolutely. We'll be right. But I think that's great because I think the more the swing voters watch Trump, whatever he has to say, I don't think he's going to be contrite. I don't think he's going to be unity. We saw that the unity message, you know, was gone by the second speaker yesterday. So I don't think, you know, I don't think that it's going to help them, you know, but at a rally there, you know, rally the people. And I think we will have, you know, a high viewership.

[00:22:47] **Speaker 1** Speaking of unity, Eric Cody got his chance to speak outside of prime time, but he did get his message out. And he said that the problem with unity in America is the media that were to blame for all the division that exists. Is that hypocritical to go up on stage using the media platform and then say it's our fault for division?

[00:23:06] **Speaker 2** I don't know that it's the media. I think all of us as individuals need to do a better job of finding a way to disagree agreeably. Right. It it's not that hard. Scott and I do this all the time on shows. I've done it with other, pundits on other shows and, you know.

[00:23:20] **Speaker 3** Cheated on.

[00:23:21] **Speaker 2** Me. It's actually not that hard to disagree with someone agreeably. Sometimes you walk away, right? And that's fine. You know, passion in politics is a good thing, in my opinion. I wish more people were passionate about it because it impacts all of us. I think everyone should be involved in politics in some way, at a minimum, by voting. If you don't vote, it's a little tough to complain about the outcome. So, you know, I don't know that the media has an outsized role in this. Could they help bring it together? You know, maybe. But we all have our mediums that we choose to watch now, and they're an echo chamber. When I all watching the same facts anymore, where you're he's watching a certain set of facts. I may be watching alternative facts, as we call them, on the right. You know, and I think that's disruptive to the, to the body politic, too.

[00:24:09] **Speaker 1** Well, you've been here all week. You see all the different outlets that surround us here on Media Row. And there's Steve Bannon's network in one America now, and some that have been sued for, falsely claiming the election results in 2020. Are they part of the problem, they part of the solution or are they just part of the the ecosystem that surrounds politics?

[00:24:29] **Speaker 3** They just simply simply exist. But I did I come into friends of mine after after day one. Like this is a different universe than I sit in, because I don't know a lot of these people, and I see people sitting in chairs being interviewed and stuff, you know, and I, I fought the politics. I mean, I did it for 25 years. So like, I think I'm supposed to be up on it, but I just don't. And that's part of the problem. And there is a part of the problem in that because one, if you're just having your opinions reinforced, you know, and you and you and you and they have a benefit to doing that financially, it's going to keep happening. So you can't understand other people's positions and it gets more fiery. And I do you know, it's the perfect it's the this environment has been the perfect, atmosphere for what happened. I think on January 6th, you know, people just being bombarded with, with, you know, things that just simply weren't there, the weren't may not.

[00:25:20] **Speaker 2** Be accurate.

[00:25:21] **Speaker 3** You know, and again, like you said, like, you know, we know that Fox News was, you know, settled for $800 million because they didn't want to go through public discovery, you know, and they didn't want to have a trial. These other networks that happened, you know, and I think that's the problem is that we're denigrating the systems which used to exist, that we could, whether it's media or Congress. Or the presidency or the U.S. Supreme Court, for God sakes. We just heard that, you know, Clarence Thomas was on a private yacht to Russia and then flew in a private helicopter to Putin's favorite hotel. I mean, you know, we have lost all faith in these things.

[00:25:56] **Speaker 1** So some of the people that I just happened to see, Rudy Giuliani, Mike Lindell, Roger Stone, apparently Peter Navarro supposed to be back fresh out of jail. Steve Bannon is currently in prison. Otherwise he would be here. There's an image of him saying free Steve. Just around the corner from us. Those are all people that came from Trump's orbit his first time through. Are they feeding off of Trump now or are they still influencing Trump? Is that something that people should think about when they're going to the ballot? Who's the people around Donald Trump giving him the advice on how to handle these issues?

[00:26:29] **Speaker 2** I think they may want people to believe they're influencing him. And there's a lot of that in politics, sort of the Wizard of Oz effect. Who's the man behind the curtain? I don't believe any of them have any real influence on the former president. He may give them some voice by giving them a platform. You know, sadly, I would not have had Matt Gates or Nancy may speak tonight. I don't think they're a good representation of the Republican Party. I wished Nancy would have lost her primary. She didn't write. They were the ones who took out Kevin McCarthy, along with six others. And left Republicans in disarray for six months. You know, so, there were arsonists within our own party, and sadly, some of them are close to Trump in some way, shape or form. And I think that's unfortunate.

[00:27:12] **Speaker 1** When you walk around, are you seeing the signs of decay in the political ecosystem, or is it just mild amusement for someone like you to see all these people around?

[00:27:20] **Speaker 3** Well, it's not amusement because you know that a lot of these people have a lot of followers. And, you know, I said this yesterday, you know, but it's politics, right? Campaigns are about they are in a sense of I know you say, you know, the addition campaigns are about addition or winning's about addition. I agree with that. But it also is about dividing people so that you get 50% plus one. And governance is supposed to be about bringing people back together, and that is not where we're at anymore. You know, we're not at the point where we can, you know, again, and I think it start and I do think it started in 2009 when the Republicans, Paul Ryan, etc., After Barack Obama won the historic election, they said, we are going to say no to literally everything. It doesn't matter what it is. That culminated in the atrocious decision that Antonin Scalia died in February of 2016. And Democrats were not you know, the president of the United States was not allowed to fill that seat because in the past, seats had been filled like that. And again, I think that's part of why we have this disconnect with some of the major institutions like the Supreme Court. And as a Democrat, I'll just say this. We've had, you know, presidents for years who are Democratic. The Supreme Court since June 9th, 1970, has been controlled by justices appointed by Republicans 54 years. The last time Democrats, were had a majority of them was when I was, a month from being born in March or I'm sorry, in May of 1969. I mean, that's insane. The fact that 54 years, one party has controlled one branch of government with its appointees doesn't always get the results you want. But that's what's happened now. And now we have the situation where, you know, we have, six justices who gave Trump, you know, who said the president is immune from laws, that everybody in the country has one set of laws, and the person in the presidency has a different set of laws.

[00:29:07] **Speaker 2** They're above that. Enjoy. Scott. Selective memory. He forgets that January 20th, 2017 Democrats theme was resist. That was their theme against Donald Trump the day he was inaugurated. And it literally started before that with, with, the intelligence agency spying on him during the transition, which has now been proven. So, yeah. What I like us to work together and find a way to get things done, particularly in the off year. I mean, that's one of we should get our work done. That's what happens in the Wisconsin legislature. And it's a good model, an election year. It's going to be more political, I get that. But when you say resist on day one, you're not there for the right reason.

[00:29:43] **Speaker 1** But that's not.

[00:29:44] **Speaker 3** Inhumane. It didn't stop anything. It didn't stop. You know, Mitch McConnell changed some of the rules, you know, to to get the Supreme Court justices put in there. But nothing changed. I mean, they passed a 2 trillion. The the Republicans were in charge of things. They passed a $2 trillion tax cut for rich people and corporations. They want to pass another $5 trillion extension of that. That would give the top 1% of taxpayers $97 million, more than the bottom 60% combined. That's what you get when you get Republicans control.

[00:30:13] **Speaker 2** That's a pretty good deal in the actual facts is if it expires, it's a tax increase for 70% of Americans. 70% of Americans will get a tax increase. If that expires, it's not a new tax cut.

[00:30:25] **Speaker 1** All right. We will hopefully be able to address some of that tomorrow and have some reaction from last night's speech. So we'll leave it there. Bill Scott, thank you very much.

[00:30:33] **Speaker 2** Thank you.

[00:30:33] **Speaker 3** Thanks a lot.

[00:30:34] **Speaker 1** All right. And thank you for watching this special presentation of Here Now's 2024 election coverage. Be sure to come back tomorrow. You'll find us here each day this week. Tune into PBS as evening coverage of the convention. We're here and now. We'll have another update on the day's events. Finally, join us Friday to wrap up the week with a special one hour presentation of Here and Now, starting at 7 p.m. I am Zach Schultz. Thank you so much for joining us. We'll see you back here tomorrow.