



Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on July 14, 2023

## Senator Ron Johnson Unscripted

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This special episode features *The New American TV*'s exclusive interview with Wisconsin U.S. Senator Ron Johnson. The senator has been a lightning rod for media attacks, so we invited him over for a chat.



Johnson discusses the difference between leftists and conservatives who serve in office, the troublesome reports of treasonous Biden family corruption, his being a voice for people who've been injured by the Covid injection, our nation's tenuous fiscal condition, the real reason for the Second Amendment, how he came to know about the global elites seeking to rule over the people, and more.

The full transcript of the interview follows.

*The New American:* Welcome, everyone. Paul Dragu here, host of The New American TV. And we are in our Freedom Project Academy Studios in Appleton, Wisconsin. And joining me is U.S. Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin. Senator Johnson has served in the Senate since 2011. He's been elected three times. And we are very glad to have you by.

*Senator Ron Johnson:* Thank you.

TNA

So one of my colleagues recently showed me a video of a stump speech you gave before you were ever elected to the Senate.

And in that stump speech, you discuss the difference between liberals (Democrats) who run for office, and conservatives. And the contrast you made was that the Left, as you saw it, does it for power. They seek power, whereas the right (conservatives) do it out of a sense of duty. So I guess I want to start off with what concerns you most about what is happening in our nation that drives the sense of duty?

Obviously, you've run a third time, so you must feel that sense of duty; what, off the top of your head, you know, what's concerning you the most?

Senator Johnson

Just to, you know, reinforce the point I was trying to make, you know, liberals are the, you know, the Democrats, are the party of big government, right? They want government. They want experts to rule. They want the power to rule. You know, conservatives, you know, we value freedom. And, you know, as conservatives, we recognize that humans are not perfect. And if we don't want to live in anarchy and chaos, we need some form of government. But our founders were geniuses and they realized it needed to be limited, because they came from tyrannical regimes. And they realized as government grew, our freedoms necessary receded. So the call to duty that I certainly felt is government had grown to a point where our freedoms were noticeably receding,



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You know, take a look at tax rates. You know, to me, it's in direct proportion. The higher percentage tax you pay, that's, you know, a measure of how much less freedom you have. The government is extracting your hard-earned labor. Now, those of us who agree that we need some government, government needs some money to operate on. So we're happy to be taxed at a certain level, but not at confiscatory rates.

You take a look what happened during the pandemic. I mean, it is shocking.

TNA  
Right.

Senator Johnson

How many of our fellow citizens willingly gave up their freedoms for a very false sense of security? But that has happened. That's been happening over the decades. You know, starting, I would say, with the New Deal, more and more Americans are signing up for the benefits they receive from government, not necessarily recognizing how much freedom they're giving up in that bargain.

TNA

Yeah. How would we change that? Because I agree with that. And we see that. And part of our job at The New American and the John Birch Society is, we we try to help people understand that. Like you said, the bigger the government, even though with its security and all the perks that it brings, that's the control that it wields over you. So we just need more limited government. Is that is that the--?

Senator Johnson

Yes. So, I've got one amendment stenciled on my Senate office wall. It's the 10th Amendment. I don't even bother to try and memorize it because it's, you know, 18th century prose, right?

TNA  
Yeah.

Senator Johnson

But maybe you want to put that up on a chyron or whatever. But what it basically says is that the federal government will do only what the federal government is enumerated to do in the Constitution. All other governing authority resides in the States. And of course, the power resides with the people. The ultimate power is with the people. That's the constitutional— the foundation of our constitutional republic. That government ought to be close to the governed, you know, local government first, then state, and the last resort is the federal government doing only those things like national defense, security of our border, you know, the basic rules of engagement for interstate commerce. That's what the federal— you know, we need the federal government to do some of those things.

TNA  
A limited government.

Senator Johnson

But very limited. But what's happened and you know, one of the charts I used to show in my town halls was, you know, back over 100 years ago when the federal government was 2% of our economy, state and local governments were 5%. So total take of government is 7% of our economy. That's pretty much within the Founders' vision there, right? But we've flipped that. I mean, last year the federal government consumed about 25% of our economy, state and local governments, maybe another 15%.

So total government take is somewhere around 40%. So, there's been such a massive increase in spending, it's kind of hard to keep track exactly of those percentages. But we've gone from 7% a little



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more than a century ago to about 40% total take of government. And one thing we know throughout history is, you know, big government doesn't work.

TNA

Right. Well, I come from a country that was communist. And, you know, my dad risked a lot to come here because, you know, the government controlled everything. You had mentioned the Constitution. How much disrespect and respect, being in Congress, is there among those in Congress for the Constitution? You know, because we highlight that a lot. We push that, you know, it's like, read the Constitution, because then you can hold your legislators accountable. Are there those in Congress who just kind of see it more like a barrier, or are there many who respect the Constitution?

Senator Johnson

Let me start by saying I don't like being partisan. I wish you didn't have to be partisan. But the truth is, and the fact of the matter is, you have one side of the political spectrum, the left, and one party, the Democrats, who don't have much respect for the Constitution. The judges that they nominate and confirm for all the courts, including Supreme Court, are activist jurists. They believe that there's a living constitution, that we ought to look outside of the United States in terms of what international law is saying about certain issues and apply that to the US, as opposed to— and then just ignore the Constitution. So there are a lot more Republicans — conservatives — that adhere to the Constitution and revere it. One of our disadvantages in the political realm is, you know, I will vote to confirm judges that will apply the law and will alter it, knowing that there's a lot of law that I don't like.

And as a result, I'm going to, you know, not like a lot of their decisions because they're adhering to the law. The left never has to worry about that. It's just, set the law, the Constitution aside, and they will rule based on the result that they want, the policy result. And again, it's one of the unfair aspects of politics today.

TNA

Yeah. Speaking of this two-tiered justice system, as you know, and this Hunter Biden or the whole Biden, as they're being called, the crime family, there's a lot of reports coming out, a lot of them a result of House investigations. We have whistleblowers coming out and it's changing by the minute, as I'm sure you know. How serious do you take these allegations that, you know, the president himself was involved as well, obviously, as his son, his uncle or their brother. They're involved in these influence peddling schemes with foreign nationals that have connections to even adversarial nations such as China. This sounds really serious. Yet you watch mainstream media, you don't really see a whole lot. If it was Trump, we would think we'd see a whole lot more.

But how serious do you take this? I mean, we've been reporting on it, and it sounds really serious. What do you make of it?

Senator Johnson

I mean, you mentioned the House investigations, really, Senator Grassley and I, starting in 2019, we really delved into and revealed— we got the suspicious activity reports from the Treasury. We showed the vast web of foreign financial entanglements. And, you know, not just Burisma out of Ukraine, but, you know, with the wife of the former mayor of Moscow. We showed all the foreign transactions in China and other countries. So there was— we laid out more than enough evidence in September of 2020 that certainly convinced me that Americans should not take a chance on Joe Biden as president because of being highly compromised. You compare that to the completely false story. Now, we know that was ginned up by the Hillary Clinton campaign. We know the Obama administration knew it because they



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got it through intelligence sources and President Obama and Vice President Biden at the time were briefed on the Hillary Clinton campaign, saying they're going to make up a connection between Russia in the Trump campaign and the FBI knew it. They knew the Steele dossier was— I mean, I could go on. So, yeah, I've been investigating this for, you know, many, many years. I've seen the grotesque level of corruption inside the FBI, inside the Department of Justice, inside our intelligence agencies. And it's not a fair system. It's not a level playing field. We have, I would say, a multi-tiered system of justice. You know, one of the tiers literally targets individuals, you know, like President Trump. They target them. And that's certainly what, you know, so much of our Bill of Rights was about is to prevent the federal government from targeting individuals. You know, you can't be surveilling people. You can't be looking for people to commit crimes. You have to have like hard evidence of it. Yeah, but anyway, so that's one of the tiers. The other tier would be probably what most of us operate under that, you know, if we commit a crime, we're held accountable, and the senses are, you know, they vary, but they're kind of within the law.

TNA

The law applies equally, somewhat.

Senator Johnson

You know, close, let's say, equivalently, okay. And then you've got the system that protects the powerful and primarily the left and particularly in D.C. it's pretty easy to get a conviction on a Republican, but it's done, you know, in the political realm, that's done wrongdoing. But to get a conviction of a Democrat or somebody connected to a powerful Democrat, almost impossible.

TNA

Yeah. So what's the answer? You talked about the intelligence agencies and the FBI, of course. What's the answer? Is reform possible? Or is it, you know, JFK is reputed to have said that "smash it into a thousand pieces." Like, what do we do about a system that is so corrupt? And every day we learn it's more corrupt than perhaps we thought?

Senator Johnson

Well, it starts with that exposure of the truth. And you know, those individuals who are corrupt and partisan within government, they also are in a great deal of control. I mean, for example, how do you investigate the top law enforcement department? How do you investigate the top the top investigatory, you know, department? You know, it's very difficult to do. I mean, they are the law. And so, when I subpoenaed Christopher Wray, for example, to get the information on the corrupt Russian collusion investigation, you know, we just get blown off saying, well, we can't give you those documents because we have an active investigation of the John Durham investigation. And so we can't corrupt that investigation. So Congress — which means the American people, you know — you don't have the right to know. We control all the information. They know what they've done. They know where to hide the ball and they know how to hide it very effectively.

TNA

And they're doing it. So you say you start with exposure, you let people know and then that brings pressure about. I mean, you guys are doing good work. The House Oversight Committee has uncovered, I think, more than — me and my colleagues talk all the time. It's like, well, this is more than we thought we were going to get. So that's the hope, right? That's what we're at.

Senator Johnson

Yeah. Thankfully for whistleblowers. You know, I think we laid down enough foundation and then, you



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know, with each new revelation, I think the outrage just grows inside people with integrity, inside these agencies where they just can't remain silent anymore.

TNA

Yeah. Does it prompt others to come forward?

Senator Johnson

But the problem is each whistleblower only has, you know, they're further down the agency. They just have their piece of the puzzle. And we need a lot more whistleblowers with integrity that want to restore integrity, their agencies to come forward so we can assemble the full puzzle to really understand what the picture is. Yeah, Unfortunately, you know, we lost the majority, so I lost my chairmanship of the Senate Oversight Committee, which is the Senate Homeland Security Governmental Affairs Committee.

If we do regain the majority, I'll be chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee investigation, which has stronger subpoena power than I had as chairman of the full committee. So if we get the majority, if I become chairman, we can focus on this, we can hold hearings, I can subpoena records. And then when, you know, again, when they don't provide the documents, we can threaten contempt charges against them.

And so it's one of the things Congress is going to have to do, a better job of using every enforcement tool has. As weak as they are, we are — we ought to use them, you know, hold them in contempt. If they don't comply after the contempt charge has been made and voted on, send the Sergeant-at-Arms. I mean, we need to start getting serious about this because the executive branch from both sides realizes we have weak enforcement capabilities and they just hide the ball then.

TNA

Right. Right. It's kind of strange. The FBI is supposed to answer to Congress, but they've gone rogue. They don't seem to do it. So that's why it seems like it's going to be a tough nut to crack here.

All right, let's move on to China. It now seems to be widely acknowledged that China is the top national adversarial threat. How serious should we take China as a threat? There are certain states, Montana, Florida, they've restricted land ownership to Chinese nationals, or at least Chinese persons connected to the government, things like that. Do you support restrictions like that? What should we do to restrict China's influence and power over our nation?

Senator Johnson

So China's a real problem. You go back a couple of decades and I think the world was, you know, because there were reforms occurring in China, I think the world was hoping that if we opened up our economies to, you know, Chinese manufacturing, that type of thing, that would help lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. And again, globally we're pretty compassionate people. We want people — we want a very low level of poverty rate throughout the world.

TNA

And that did happen.

Senator Johnson

So we did open up. The problem is, you know, China cheats, and their cheating has some very detrimental impacts on the rest of our economies. You know, when they decide to get in the steel business, they create great overcapacity in the steel business and they start putting steel companies out of business throughout the world. So at the same time, I think you have to recognize that China, at least



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in the last century, has not been a particularly warlike country. They've been invaded. Yeah, you know, they've had to fight wars, but they generally don't initiate wars. So I think you need to keep that fact in mind.

TNA

Do you see that that right now?

Senator Johnson

Well, what I'm trying to — I guess what I'm trying to say is I think Americans need to stop looking at the world in such black and white terms.

TNA

So China's complicated.

Senator Johnson

It is complicated. And I would much rather try and develop better and better relationships with our adversaries, turn them back into friendly rivals. As to unfriendly adversaries, quit poking a stick in the eye of the bear and the tiger. Recognize who they are, what they represent. Try and understand their perspective of things. I mean, you can shift over to Russia and Ukraine.

You know, listen, I was chairman of the European Subcommittee in Foreign Relations. I've been to Ukraine a number of times. You know, I have a lot of respect for the Ukrainian people who want what we have. They want freedom. They want prosperity. They want opportunity. They wanted to lean toward the West and Putin didn't want to let them go.

But at the same time, I don't know to what extent, I really don't, you know, did we help foment the revolution? [inaudible] Which you have to take a look. The result of that hasn't been good for Ukraine.

TNA

Right.

Senator Johnson

We are all for people, you know, fighting for freedom. But the result of that was Putin was concerned about the loss of his naval base. So he invaded Crimea. And a lot of folks in Crimea are more Russian leaning than they are Ukrainian. [He] invaded eastern Ukraine, which is also more Russian leaning. And then finally invaded all of Ukraine. And the result has been massive destruction of Ukraine and the loss of tens of thousands of both Ukrainian and Russian lives. Yeah, that's not a successful result. And we need to start understanding that. So, you know, first of all, we need to stop saber rattling, stop beating the drums of war, do everything we can. I mean, I think it's interesting listening to RFK, Jr., right now talking about his uncle and how his uncle's — his uncle said the top priority of any president was to keep America out of war.

I think that's a pretty good priority for any president. Keep us out of war. And I will — One other point. If your listeners haven't listened to General Eisenhower's — President Eisenhower's farewell address, they really should, because he covered not only the — he not only warned of the rise of the military industrial complex and how that could impact us.

And you take a look at what's happened since he left office in 1960, we've been in war after war after war after war, okay. And the only people that really benefited is the military industrial complex, right? But that wasn't the only thing he warned us about. He warned us about the fact that, you know, scientists are no longer tinkering on their lab bench. Now more science is being funded by government,



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and how that could lead to kind of a tyranny of the scientific and technological elite, you know, public policy driven by that group. And I think we saw that, I would say the corruption of science, whether it's on climate change, on COVID, a total corruption of science in terms of medicine, to take over these agencies by Big Pharma.

His third warning was about not living for today. Considering the future, don't plunder the future. Don't mortgage your children's future. And the last one is, he warned all society globally: Don't allow yourself to fall into a dreadful state of fear and hate. So all four of the things that Eisenhower warned us about [are] coming to pass.

TNA

Well, you talk about saber rattling. Do you feel like this administration, do you believe this administration is trying to suck us into war? Because I'm sure lots of people are watching, millions of Americans, and it's like, man, it almost seems like they're doing this intentionally. You know, they keep poking the bear, as you said.

Senator Johnson

It's looking more and more like they almost goaded Ukraine into proxy war. Listen, I was at Zelensky's inauguration. You know, I met him a number of times. I personally think he was absolutely sincere at making peace with Russia in terms of eastern Ukraine and Crimea. Just making peace. That's how I — that's what I felt his attitude was. Something changed in his attitude.

TNA

Not the same, huh?

Senator Johnson

You know, and now you hear members of the administration talking about the war goal in Ukraine is to degrade the Russian military.

TNA

Yeah, openly.

Senator Johnson

They've got 7000 nuclear weapons. You know, one of the reasons I say we've got to bring this war to an end — again, as much as I sympathize with the Ukrainians and their courage and their bravery of defending their, you know — again, I'm not defending Putin. I mean, he didn't have to invade. Ukraine was not representing a threat to him, okay. But I guess he's perceiving the threat. We should have taken that perception seriously. But we need to recognize that it's not a fair fight. Ukraine can't start lobbing in — lobbing bombs and missiles into Russia to start impacting the Russian support for the war. They've got to leave Russia alone. We just got so —and Putin can just keep lobbing in missiles to kill citizens, destroy more of the infrastructure.

And losing in Ukraine is an existential threat to Russia. He will not lose that war. If he's got to bring out nukes, I fear he'll bring them out. So we need to recognize that reality and bring this thing to a close, as opposed to ramping it up. Give him even, you know, weapons with greater power and I don't think we ought to be pursuing the goal of degrading the Russian military. That just, I mean, that brings us to the to the brink of some kind of nuclear Armageddon.

TNA

But what do you make of Putin? Have you met him? Do you think he's crazy or is he just calculated enough? I mean, we're talking [inaudible]



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Senator Johnson

I've never met him. The highest I've ever met is Lavrov, who's a really slick character. You know, Putin is a Russian and he's a patriotic Russian, as so many Russians are. They're proud of their country. They recognize the enormous sacrifice they've made in these wars.

TNA

You know, that's going to get you labeled as a Putin sympathizer.

Senator Johnson

I'm not a Putin sympathizer. I've called him a war criminal because he's a war criminal, okay? But you have to — we have to, in the West, we have to start recognizing the perspective of our adversaries. And we need to do everything we can to avoid war. I mean, these wars just aren't working out. Now, I was just recently in Hanoi. We went on a trade mission to Singapore, Thailand and to Vietnam. And we went to there, you know, I mean, they call it the Citadel. This is where they had their underground bunkers and stuff. And they showed us videos of the bombing. They showed us what, you know, what the Vietnamese did to avoid getting killed. They dug these, I don't know, about three or four foot deep pits, probably about three feet across with the iron cover on top. And that's what, you know, sirens go off. They'd go in there, it would protect them, unless it was a direct hit, basically. Okay. Should we have ever been bombing Hanoi? Should we have introduced how many hundreds of thousands of American troops? Should we have lost more than 50,000 Americans in Vietnam?

TNA

Yeah, we haven't [inaudible]

Senator Johnson

I'm sorry. You just have to take a look at what has happened and what the result was. And if you do that, honestly, you kind of realize maybe we ought to try something different here.

TNA

And speaking of that, so we've been sending aid to Ukraine to finish this stuff off, and you vote at least once to send aid to Ukraine. I think there were three other appropriations bills I believe that you voted against. Where do you stand on that? How long should we keep sending aid to them?

Senator Johnson

Well, so you're right. I voted for the first aid package for Ukraine for a couple of reasons. You know, first of all, I think we could have done something to prevent Putin from invading. You know, first of all, very visibly giving them all kinds of lethal defensive weaponry. So this is not going to go good for you.

The other thing would have been to publicly declare we will never offer NATO membership to Ukraine. I told my colleagues this and once the briefings we had, knowing full well that we would never take those actions to prevent the war and we didn't, and the war ensued. There might have been a moment in time when he didn't. I think Putin was probably misled by his generals thinking that they invade, they take over Ukraine.

You know, that's easy. And they were going to let's face it, Biden offered Zelensky a ride out, which would have, I think, produced the collapse of Ukraine. But Zelensky didn't go and that rallied Ukrainians, and they fought back fiercely. There was a moment in time, that was about time we were voting on that package, where maybe a public show of support from the US Congress might have — might have — convinced Putin that this was going to work out well, and he might have withdrawn.

Okay. That was one of the reasons I voted yes. The other one was, we have no control over what the



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commander in chief does when it comes to these types of conditional wars. Right? So he was depleting our stockpile of weapons and at least \$10 million. That \$40 million was to replenish our own stockpile. So that was the other reason I voted for it, but I haven't voted for one since.

TNA

So where do you stand now? Another package comes up for a vote.

Senator Johnson

They will. I'll vote no. Again, I'm trying to not make a big public deal of it because, again, I support the people of Ukraine. I mean, it's what Putin has done, it's a war crime. I mean, it's reprehensible.

TNA

They're defending their homeland.

Senator Johnson

Yeah. So you want to support Ukraine, but in some way, shape or form, this has to end because we're not going to have a result that's good, acceptable to us. I mean, it won't. But every day that goes by, the end result will be less and less acceptable because more and more of Ukraine is going to be destroyed, more and more people are going to die.

And I would say the same thing is true for Putin. He's not going to get a better result than if we end this thing now. So at some point, at some point in time, you have to recognize the reality of the situation and act on that reality. We don't do a very good job of that in government.

TNA

So let's discuss this debt ceiling bill. You were one of the 36 senators who voted against it. We have — you're also one of the few who has an accounting background. So you probably understand fiscal matters a little better. Why did you vote against it?

Senator Johnson

Well, first of all, it wasn't an increase in the debt ceiling. It was a suspension of it. I laid out the day after I got reelected, in an article in The Wall Street Journal, what I would do in exchange for increasing the debt ceiling. And I laid out four pieces of fiscal control that we could attach to an increased debt ceiling.

One would be preventing Government Shutdown Act to take government shutdowns off the table forever, because it's very economically inefficient. A full faith and credit to guarantee we would never default on our debt. And by the way, we never will. It's kind of a phony crisis. The other one would be the REINS Act. You'll put some constraint over the growing regulatory state. And the final one was the Reduce the Size of the Federal Government Through Attrition Act.

You don't have to fire anybody, but you can really reduce the size of the federal government very quickly by, don't hire more people. So those would have been the four things I would have attached to the debt ceiling. Now the House chose a little bit different route. We were dealing with House conservatives, and I give them a lot of credit because they're the ones that actually came up with a bill. Then they worked inside the conference to pass it with Republican votes.

And I would have supported that, not necessarily the way I would have done it, but I would have supported that package, increased the debt ceiling by \$1.5 trillion, way more than I'd want to see an increase. But they got some things for it, right? McCarthy took that bill. He had leverage with it. And without telling anybody, he just suspended the debt ceiling.



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So now the debt ceiling has probably been raised because of that suspension by about \$4 trillion. It's unlimited. I mean, they can spend as much as they can between now and early 2025. So, I personally could not support that. I understand why the House had to pass something. Okay. And this was the only thing on the table.

The Senate Democrats going to vote for this. So I let them. I let the people who voted for the grotesque levels of spending increase the debt ceiling. I haven't been voting for this stuff, so I didn't feel like I had any responsibility for increasing the debt ceiling as a result.

TNA

In that speech I mentioned at the very beginning, one of the issues that you had mentioned is our financial or fiscal matters as a nation. What is going to have to happen in order for the federal debt to be brought under control? What does a fiscally responsible House and Senate look like?

Senator Johnson

Well, first of all, you start going through a process where you budget. You put everything on budget, so you're looking at the totality during the omnibus spending fight, okay, the end of December. I asked my Republican colleagues, anybody know how much the federal government spent last year in total? Nobody knew. So then I went out to the press and I asked the same thing. I mean, you guys, you know, you're the experts. You cover this stuff. Anybody know how much the federal government spent? And I got a couple of over \$1 trillion. No, that's discretionary spending. That's less than 30% of our budget. What's the total amount? I grant them immediately, absolutely. I said I wouldn't expect you to know, because we never talk about it.

And here we're the largest financial entity in the world and nobody knows how much we spend. The answer is \$6.3 trillion. And let me put it in perspective. In 2002, we passed the \$2 trillion spending Rubicon. 2 trillion. 17 years later, we'd more than doubled that to 4.4 trillion, part of the pandemic. The pandemic, unfortunately, gave the uniparty the capability of doing bipartisanship, and spent like drunken sailors.

As McCain said, that insults drunken sailors. Okay. And so we spent we went from 4.4 to 6.5 to 6.8 and then 6.3 trillion. And pretty well we locked in with the debt ceiling increase — well, the suspension — is 6.3 trillion. Now, a reasonable baseline to return to would have been take the 4.4, grow it by population growth and even Biden's inflation, which is a 40-year high. That would have given us \$5.1 trillion in spending. That would have been a more reasonable baseline. That's what I would have argued in debt ceiling increase. It went to \$6.3 trillion. So again, this is a bipartisan problem. There are far more fiscal conservatives that worry about this on the Republican side. They're virtually nobody — there's virtually no one in the Democrat side that really worries about spending.

TNA

Where do you see this going if it continues at this at this rate?

Senator Johnson

A debt crisis.

TNA

Debt crisis?

Senator Johnson

Yeah, I mean, so you're getting into somewhat different subject. The real danger for the US is if we cease to be the world's reserve currency, so that we can't print these dollars. Now, printing the dollars



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does cause inflation, but we can at least avoid, you know, unbelievably high interest rates because we can kind of control that process, okay? If we're no longer the world's reserve currency, we're going to be paying world, global interest rates. And to put that in perspective, the last three decades of the last century, our average borrowing costs for the federal government was 5.3%. It's a pretty reasonable interest rate, right? You know, if you've got money you want to loan to the federal government, you want to get a reasonable, decent return. If inflation is core inflation, 2%, you want a return on your money. Well, because of all this massive printing of dollars, we've been keeping interest rates artificially low, under 2%. If we were to return to that three-decade average, that would add \$1.2 trillion per year just in interest expense, and to put that in perspective, that's what we spent last year on Social Security. Now it's going up because inflation is going up. So that's how massive an impact this would have. So a debt crisis would be devastating on us.

TNA

What we're seeing is a lot of [de-]dollarization with BRICS countries and others. And so if this continues, I'd imagine then we can't offload or deport our debt, right? So that would, really, we could possibly see a Venezuela, Argentina-type situation. Is that possible? Like a collapse, you said?

Senator Johnson

It is. But we're probably going to continue to avoid that day of reckoning because we're still the most stable — financially stable — country in the world. So, you know, I talked to global experts. They kind of downplay the fact that somebody's going to replace us as the world's reserve currency. But now I keep pointing out to people that Venezuelans voted themselves into poverty, that there's nothing guaranteed about our liberty, our freedom, our prosperity. There's nothing guaranteed here. We can fritter it all away. And I would argue right now, we basically are.

TNA

Wow. So in the past, in past interviews, and I actually saw an interview you did with EpochTimes, you said the world is run by elite globalists. Here at The New American, we've actually been telling people this is the case for quite some time. Our parent organization, our founders, that's actually the reason he started the organization. He realized there was a deliberate attempt to erode and to essentially destroy the sovereignty and the prosperity of this nation.

How and when did you come to this conclusion? Did you know this when you were first running for office, did you know this was as corrupt and conspiratorial as —

Senator Johnson

So I don't know my exact quote. If I said that, I probably refined it to say that they have undue influence, okay? I'm not saying they definitely run the world, but they've got an enormous amount of influence. I think I probably always suspected it. But as you come into office, you just see what happens. When I do investigations, I see the power of these federal agencies and you see the video montages of everybody that's gone to the World Economic Forum coming back and saying, we're going to build back better.

TNA

Yeah.

Senator Johnson

That just doesn't —

TNA



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Just parrots all the time —

Senator Johnson

It's just it's amazing what, you know, video evidence, what it can provide in terms of information. Now

TNA

Thank goodness for it.

Senator Johnson

But, you know, there's a couple of good books. I've gotten to know Bobby Kennedy pretty well, because we fought the same fight. So he's recommended a couple of books to me, you know. The first two are written by very liberal authors, so I had to kind of get by that reading these books, but very well sourced and researched. The first one is JFK and the Unspeakable and I'm just — tell your listeners, read it, okay? We'll see much more about that. Read it. The next one would be The Devil's Chessboard. Talking about, you know, Allen Dulles was CIA. When you finish with those, go ahead and read The Creature from Jekyll Island.

TNA

Now you know.

Senator Johnson

Yeah, that that kind of completes your eye opening combined with three years of COVID. As I've witnessed the censoring, as I've seen the truth being, you know, not only just buried but destroyed.

TNA

But the collaboration.

Senator Johnson

With the collaboration, the, you know, the trusted news network or whatever, you know, it is frightening. I, you know, I was very early on, you know, writing in the USA Today that we shouldn't be shutting down the economy. My column in the USA Today ran on March 30th, 2020, arguing against the shutdowns. Of course, I was accused of wanting to kill people, all that kind of thing. But I remember back on, I held the hearing. You know, why wasn't the health, the HELP committee, the health education, why weren't they holding hearings on early treatment? Why weren't they holding hearings on vaccine injuries? You know, why weren't they holding the government to account? So here I am, chairman of Homeland Security, Governmental Affairs, and I'm the guy holding hearings trying to put the pandemic in perspective. It's not Ebola, it's not SARS, not MERS. It's going to be probably no worse than double the flu season. In the end it's probably less. And the reason a lot of people died is because of the way our hospitals —

TNA

Delayed treatment.

Senator Johnson

Well, delayed treatment, and then the way our hospitals ventilated people, and then they died from ventilation-caused pneumonia or remdesivir. Again, I'm not a doctor, I'm not a medical researcher. But, you know, I've been connected to a global network of eminently qualified doctors and medical researchers that had a completely different outlook on this, which is why I held my panel in in January of 20 — I guess it was 2022. COVID 19 Second Opinion.



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TNA

Yeah. I want to get back to that, because you've been very outspoken about that. But going back to this idea that there is this group, a network of people working together, how much do others in Congress know that this is the case? And are these people working against the interest of the United States government and United States citizens?

Senator Johnson

I don't know. But, you know, I think my colleagues kind of look at me as they see the way they treat — the press and savaged me. So they just, you know, they don't want any part of that. But then again, you take a look at going back to Creature from Jekyll Island. You had six men in 1910, boarded a train down to Jekyll Island off of Georgia. They represented the wealth of 25% of the wealth of the world. Six individuals, okay? And, you know, the Rothschild wealth. And others. I would still ask the question, whatever happened to the Rothschild wealth? You know, we see BlackRock and State Street and Vanguard, I mean, these, you know, I guess called mutual funds, that control the vast majority of all corporate stock.

And you know, they're pushing things like ESG. Now, they do it very quietly behind the scenes. I think one of the interesting things of the example of how they can operate is in getting the Federal Reserve Act passed when, from 1910 to 1913 and Taft, the current president, didn't want to give the central bank that much control; he wanted more government control over it. They didn't like that, so they didn't support Taft. So Wilson was more than happy to give the central bank that level of control. So this cabal, this group who controlled not only the banks but also controlled the media, they owned it, they made sure that Teddy Roosevelt ran his third party so that Wilson would get elected.

I never knew that, you know. I just thought, well, you know, Teddy Roosevelt's, you know, a Trust Buster or popular guy and, you know, there's a groundswell for him to — now, this was all set up behind the scenes. And nobody knew it.

TNA

Is this knowledge becoming more commonplace in Congress? And people —

Senator Johnson

Oh, no, I'm Maybe one of the few people read those books. Yeah, I recommend them to people.

TNA

Yeah, well, you know, we publish Creature from Jekyll Island, the John Birch Society.

Senator Johnson

Oh, God bless you.

TNA

Yeah, we were the original publishers. So go back to these COVID vaccines again. You were skewered in the media for your support of giving a voice to those especially who incurred vaccine injuries. I take it you've heard quite a few. What — Do you have maybe an example or two? You don't have to name names. What are people going through, and, as far as these vaccine injuries, and at what point do we start to recognize them?

Senator Johnson

Well, first of all, I think the evidence is overwhelming that these vaccines have caused, for example, death. I mean, we — on the VAERS report, and I know the CDC is, you know, denigrates that, but they were touting it in October. Oh, we're going to be you know, we've got this famous system. We're going



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to be, you know, if you miss a couple of days sick, we're going to see [inaudible] around the phone and figure out what's pulling off here, right? Total B.S. So on the VAERS report, I don't have the exact numbers on the top of my head now, because I do this report weekly, but there are over 35,000 deaths worldwide reported on VAERS associated with the vaccine. 25% of those are occurring on the day of the vaccine or within two days. So on days zero, one, or two, 25% of reported deaths are occurring that soon after the vaccine. Okay, it doesn't prove causation, but wow, that's a correlation.

TNA

That's a strong correlation, huh?

Senator Johnson

One half million adverse, more than one half million adverse events reported on there.

TNA

And that's a small percentage of deaths.

Senator Johnson

That's the other point. VAERS generally captures, they're different studies, 1 to 10% of the actual adverse events. And one thing we found during COVID: doctors have been very strongly encouraged not to report. I mean, disincentivized from reporting. I mean, they're going to get in trouble. I mean, take a look at the doctors that I've been, you know, having testify and stuff.

They've been vilified, they've been attacked, they've been fired, they've been sued, you know, and they've been made an example of, so that other people don't come forward. So, no, I mean, the first people I had in my June 2021 event were basically women who were suffering all the neurological problems. But, you know, the myocarditis, now, I mean, that is pretty well known. But again, it's just across the board. I mean, it's just tragic. And what's even to add to the travesty is the fact that because our CDC, our NIH, FDA, aren't acknowledging it, the medical establishment's not acknowledging it, they're just, you know, it's all in your head. Yeah, they're just blowing it off and these people can't get treatment.

We're not doing research on it. We have independent people looking into this and doing different treatments and stuff. And there are some, you know, combinations of drugs that seem to be helpful that, you know, degrade the spike protein. But I mean, there's so much information out right now that just yes, these vaccine injuries, they're real.

They're severe. They include death. Have you — when do you ever hear the word SADS, Sudden Adult Death Syndrome? We've all heard of SIDS —

TNA

Yeah.

Senator Johnson

— which of course, they immediately dismiss. Well, that, you know, childhood vaccines have nothing to do with SIDS, okay? So, you know, so obviously the COVID vaccine has nothing to do with SADS, although we've never heard of SADS, Sudden Adult Death Syndrome, until 2021. And I just ask your listeners, think of all the famous people that are dropping like flies in the prime of their life.

TNA

Yeah, yeah, I see it on my niece's homepage. Every it seems like every day there's another someone who drops dead and cause unknown.



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Senator Johnson

There's a website, [goodsciencing.org](#), I think it is [editor's note: [goodsciencing.com](#)] and they're just keeping track of all the collapsing and deaths of athletes and, you know, on the field or in practice sessions and stuff. And, you know, the International Olympic Committee's done studies. They figure somewhere between 26 and 60 collapsed in deaths per year. That, I mean, happens it does happen. We're up to over 1600 since the vaccine came about, you know, which is —

TNA

There's been some pretty good documenting of that. Edward Dowd, of course, I forget what the name of his book is, but I mean, he's got an entire section of young people just dropping dead out of nowhere.

Senator Johnson

I mean, he's looking at the disabilities in the working age population. I mean, he's mining other actuarial data, that kind of stuff to kind of prove the case. So again, I think that evidence is overwhelming. But what's overwhelming — the overwhelming evidence — is the fact that the body count is so high that all these people that have been pushing this, they can't afford to admit they're wrong. They can't afford to be proven wrong. And they've got the power to make it almost impossible to prove them wrong. That's, you know, again, like I call them the COBRA cartel, right? It was the Biden administration. It was the health agencies who've been captured by Big Pharma, who've also captured the media and big tech social media giants. I mean, that's the COBRA cartel. They all were pushing the vaccines. They were all censoring the early treatment with things like ivermectin, hydroxychloroquine, the multi-drug protocol. They're all complicit in this. They're never going to admit they're wrong.

TNA

Are there any plans if, for instance, if Republicans were to take back the Senate and keep the House and somehow maybe win the presidency, to investigate. You know, Fauci's out on the beach somewhere —?

Senator Johnson

You know, I would be chairman of the subcommittee investigations. I'd have stronger subpoena power than I had as chairman of the floor committee. I've written more than 50 oversight letters that have laid the foundation for these investigations. I'd be hauling these people in left and right. But right now, the current chairman, we're going to be holding a hearing on the PGA-LIV merger on Tuesday. And look, I've got a great deal of interest in that. I love the game of golf, but it's not what we ought to be focusing on. We ought to be focusing on our miserably failed response to COVID. And anybody who defends how we respond to COVID, I'd like to sit down and talk to them because there's no defense of how we handle this.

TNA

Have you talked to people who have incurred injuries? Is there any — do you lose sleep over it from hearing from some these people?

Senator Johnson

Oh, yeah. I've said I've hugged the vaccine-injured, the people who've lost, I mean, you know, a father who lost his only sixteen year old son.

TNA

Yeah.

Senator Johnson



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I mean, you can't not be affected by that.

TNA

Right. Yeah. You mentioned miserable failures before. So let's go to immigration here. We've got chaos at the border. The metrics show from Border Patrol that, I believe, there's been a threefold increase in encounters at the border.

Senator Johnson

Way more than that.

TNA

Is it more than three [inaudible]

Senator Johnson

Well, I would think so. I mean, well, I mean, we'd pretty well stopped unaccompanied children and family units, and we did that partly because of an Operation Safe return that I worked, with Kyrsten Sinema, with DHS, that actually morphed into Return to Mexico. It was a consequence. It worked. So we stopped the flow of unaccompanied children, family units, and we'd actually reduced the number of single adults crossing the border because we were serious about securing the border. We were getting this close to completing the fence, which would be helpful. And then Biden took office. Well, first, even during the presidential campaign, you had all the Democrat candidates saying they were going to offer free health care. So single adult illegal immigration started up ticking even during the campaign. Biden enters office, and remember, Obama said 2000 apprehensions was a humanitarian crisis. His DHS secretary said a thousand apprehensions a day is a, you know, is a really bad day for DHS. Under Biden, we've been over 8000 to 10000.

TNA

I think 10,000 was our high mark, yeah.

Senator Johnson

So this is a massive problem that, once again, the complicit and corrupt media, they're not covering. And so you don't have the public outrage that we should have in terms of the sex trafficking, the human trafficking, the drug trafficking with fentanyl. We've got a wide open border and we don't even call apprehensions anymore. It's just encounter, because CBP is, their goal is within 8 hours of encountering somebody, they've got to process and disperse.

TNA

Is this administration intentionally creating chaos?

Senator Johnson

Yes.

TNA

Why?

Senator Johnson

Well, the only — and of course, I'll get criticized for talking about replacement theory — but what other goal do they have? And you know, these people coming up with T-shirts, you know, thanking Biden. They want to create a, you know, millions of people that are going to, you know, reliably vote for Democrats, which is why they want mail in voting. And they want everybody registered and they want to release, reduce all controls or relax all controls on elections. Well, Democrats are serious about



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acquiring absolute power.

TNA

Yeah, yeah. You're a known Donald Trump supporter. What do you make of this latest indictment? Do you think they'll get him? I mean, they got five or six waiting in line.

Senator Johnson

So again, I've got just a great deal of sympathy with what he's gone through. I mean, within two weeks of office, you had two phone calls with world leaders leaked to the media. Who could he as president of the United States, who could he trust in his administration? You know, we obviously know the disloyalty of Colonel Vindman, which led to his impeachment. You know, the Hillary Clinton campaign made up the whole Russian collusion hoax. I mean, he enters office and what's pulling off?

TNA

Well, you've got people from his administration writing to The New York Times, saying we're here to stop his agenda, right?

Senator Johnson

So it's just continued. So, again, I've got a great deal of sympathy for the position the media — and let's face it, the media, they dropped all pretense of trying to be unbiased. They literally said what we can't afford. I mean, this guy is such a danger to democracy. We've got to do everything we can to destroy his presidency. And they went about and they had help by the James Comeys of the world and other actors inside the agencies, the FBI, and I would say the Department of Justice, part of the intelligence community. I mean, we found that out with the 51 intelligence officials who signed the letter saying that the Hunter laptop was, you know, had all the earmarks of Russian information operation. I mean, that was an information operation, now, we know generated by Anthony Blinken of the Biden campaign, who lied to my investigators, saying he never emailed Hunter Biden. We've got the emails now. I mean, I could go on and on. There's so much detail. There's so much evidence of corruption in Democrat campaigns, their cooperation with partisans inside these agencies. And again, it's all biased to the left, whether it's the media, whether it's the agencies. A Republican president has got many, many barriers. They're going to really be up against it because they've got the Deep State working against them, whereas a Democrat pretty well has the Deep State working for them.

TNA

What do you think of Trump's claim that the election was stolen?

Senator Johnson

I have always said there were definite irregularities, that we've just never gotten to the bottom of. I mean, courts, by and large, I mean, it drives me nuts to say, well, courts, look, they just rejected it. No, courts rejected so many of the lawsuits based on, you know, the issue is moot, you know, [inaudible], I mean, they never even looked at the evidence.

But I don't make any claims because I just I don't have the hard evidence of it. I held the only hearing we held examining the irregularities, the 2020 election. I've looked into these things. I think there are legitimate concerns we have. But I think the main problem is during COVID, you had the Baker Carter Commission, right? Totally bipartisan, warning us that absentee balloting is the area of greatest concern. It comes through election fraud, right? So what did we do during COVID? And of course, the Democrats push this. We relaxed all the controls and we doubled absentee balloting. Gee, what could go wrong? And they've done nothing to restore confidence in the system. That's all I've ever asked for is,



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we need to restore confidence in our election system. Now, in Wisconsin, we got more than 1800 election clerks. The vast majority are, you know, people of great integrity. They take election integrity very seriously. I don't really question their integrity. But we've got a couple jurisdictions where we've got to watch them like hawks. And so during the 2022 election, what Republicans did is, we made sure we had election workers filling all the shifts. They're keeping eyes on the process, and we filled up all the election observer shifts, too. And so Milwaukee literally got their election results in by ten, 11:00 at night. They didn't wait till — we didn't give them an opportunity to wait. We didn't give them any excuse to wait till three, 4:00 in the morning and do a big old data dump, which whether there's anything wrong with that or not, it just looks suspicious.

TNA

What does a secure election look like? Are we talking about voter I.D.? Do we do a —

Senator Johnson

Oh, yeah, voter ID is on the table. So there's nothing race. I mean, it's just table stakes, you know. And by the way, 80% of Americans agree with that. They don't want their legitimate vote canceled out by an illegitimate. I think these are basic things we do. We should all go back to paper ballots. We shouldn't have any electronic voting, just paper ballots, you know, scan slowly.

And then what you should do is you should do your statistically significant audits after the fact. You don't warn the election clerks, you're gonna do their precinct. But after the fact, you go in and you do a real hand recount. You count the ballots and you look at the machine results, and you determine whether they have integrity.

It's a control. It's like what you do with petty cash. You audit petty cash in business to let people know, hey, listen, I'm concerned enough about the little stuff. Don't even think about, you know, defrauding me. And on a more massive scale, we've got our eyes on the process. Well, it's really all about a good audit trail, and the goal is to restore confidence in our election system, because it's not good. It's an unsustainable state of affairs in our country. We've got, you know, in 2016, half the country didn't view that as legitimate election. Four years later, the other half doesn't. And so, I mean, it's not good for democracy. No, because Democrats don't want to change. Democrats do want to make it easy to cheat. Go figure, okay? We want to make it easy to vote, but very difficult or impossible to cheat.

TNA

Yeah. Who's your —Do you want Trump or would you like DeSantis?

Senator Johnson

I want somebody that can unify this country and heal it. You know, if you'd asked me three or four years ago, what is the greatest threat to our country, I'd, you know, mimicked Admiral Mike Mullen, who back in 2010, 2011, was saying, it's our debt and deficit. I mean, that's a massive problem we're not coming to grips with. Right now, I would say it's the division. We need somebody unlike Biden, who in his inaugural speech said eight times that his number one goal is unifying, healing this nation. He has done the exact opposite, okay?

TNA

Is he even running things?

[Cross talk]

Senator Johnson

Yeah, yeah, I don't know. You see him, he seems reasonably lucid many times, but he seems —but that's



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kind of the, that's sort of the progression of dementia, too, is, you know, lucid times and kind of out of it, other times.

TNA

Does he have a bunch of radicals kind of making his decisions?

Senator Johnson

Oh, you mean his nominees? I mean, you could just ,you don't have enough time, but you go through the list: eco terrorists, people that spike trees, you know, confirmed for important positions. I mean, it's, you know, he is filling these agencies with radical leftists. And the problem is then they burrow in. They get appointed as a political appointee, and then before the end of the administration, they burrow in as somebody that's almost impossible to fire. So we need complete civil service reform. We need to get the president — we need to shrink the size of government so that we so we can shrink its influence in our lives. And we've got to reform our system so that we can weed out the bad actors, the partisans.

TNA

Yeah. So moving on to gun rights, you've got a pretty good track record. One of the topics that always comes up when gun rights are discussed is banning that very menacing looking weapon of war, the AR15. Should we ban the AR15?

Senator Johnson

No. So first of all, the reason I'm a big Second Amendment supporter is that I realize the Second Amendment isn't about hunting. It's about preventing tyranny, by and large. I mean, that's the number one goal, preventing tyranny. And we need to be concerned about tyranny right now. It's also about personal protection. You know, who am I to tell a young woman who maybe lives in a pretty dangerous part of town that, no, you're only going to be limited to, you know, three bullets in a clip, as opposed to, you know —

TNA

30?

Senator Johnson

Whatever, you know, who am I to say that, okay? You want to kill people, there are other ways of killing it. And we've seen there's other ways of killing than just guns. So it's not guns that kill people. It's people that kill people. And that's a much bigger problem that we're also not addressing. I mean, we've — I would argue through our welfare state, we've done a great harm to the nuclear family. I mean, I used to show a chart that shows poverty rates from the fifties, successful economy, baby boom generation dropping precipitously. Then you have the war on poverty pretty well flatlined at 15%. It's gone up and down, but it's pretty well flatlined, okay? We spend about 20 plus trillion dollars on the war on poverty. Haven't made a dent.

TNA

So the Great Society hasn't been so good.

Senator Johnson

No. But what's the other thing I put on that is out-of-wedlock birth rates from the early fifties, about 4% up to about 8% in the mid sixties. Now societally 40%, over 50% in the Hispanic community, over 70% in the African-American community. That's not good for those communities. That's not good for our nation.

TNA



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Oh, I'm sure it's telling that, what is it, over 80% of prisoners come from single home families. So that's clearly something there. How —?

Senator Johnson

You know, a dad is kind of a good thing, you know, but moms are essential. Dads are kind of good thing when it comes particularly to disciplining young men.

TNA

Yeah, absolutely. I have a son and there's things that I can do that my wife can't show me. Like, I'm not your father, you know? So I totally understand. How these legislators, what strikes me, I remember seeing once Sheila Jackson of Texas, and she said something is — it's some absurd things like, you know, an AR is as heavy as, I don't know, like ten boxes of cardboard, whatever.

Do — are they acting like they're this ignorant, or are they this ignorant about firearms?

Senator Johnson

You know, I can't get into the mind of a liberal. I mean, I don't know why they want to control everybody else's lives. I don't know why they want to grow government. I don't know why they don't see that all these things they've done, I mean, the war on poverty has utterly failed. It's utterly failed. Look at Democrat-controlled big cities. They are failing. And yet the news media just, I mean, well, "it just happened." No, no. It was caused by Democrat — stupid Democrat policies.

TNA

They want to keep funneling more money. The same with education. The answer is always more money, right?

Senator Johnson

Across the board in Washington, D.C. I've never seen a problem where the answer wasn't more spending.

TNA

Yeah, yeah.

Senator Johnson

And that's not the answer.

TNA

No, no. But we continue to do it.

Senator Johnson

And on a bipartisan basis, I have heard, you know, one comment from one leader saying that show me a member of Congress who ever lost the election because they spent too much money. And unfortunately, that's probably a pretty prevalent attitude. But it's probably also the truth. You know, in the end, Americans bear the responsibility. They keep electing people that promised them benefits. And everybody likes the benefits. Everybody loves the free money, and very few people are actually looking at the true cost. For example, inflation, a dollar you held the start of the Biden administration is worth \$0.86 today. That hurts everybody. Inflation is a tax on everybody.

TNA

Some would call it —

Senator Johnson

It's devastating. It is theft. It's taxation without representation for sure.



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TNA

So we're going to finish up. Some time ago you attended an event here at Freedom Project, and you got a question about a constitutional convention. What you probably don't get a whole lot outside of here and whatnot. And you said I would support a convention of states. But the way it was structured is that we've already got the constitutional meeting agreed on.

We gavel it, agree to it, we gavel it out. Gavin Newsom, speaking of, has now come out for a constitutional convention to restrict gun rights. Are you still for a constitutional convention?

Senator Johnson

Well, that's why I wouldn't want to do it, okay. So no, you'd want to have it structured so this is what we're going to do to have a constitutional amendment, for example, to limit spending to a percent of GDP. That's what I'd like —

[Cross talk]

Senator Johnson

This is — and then you get to the, what is it, the 37 states you need to agree to do this?

TNA

Is it 34?

Senator Johnson

Whatever. You get the number of states that agree with that amendment to do a constitutional convention. Or of the states.

TNA

Yeah. Now we would argue, and we have, that none of that is, say, if you were convinced that you can't control the amendment until the convention is called, would you still be for a convention?

Senator Johnson

Again, first of all, I don't think the convention is going to happen. I mean, we can keep talking about it, but I would want to make sure that we could control it, okay?

TNA

All right. So we spent a great deal of time discussing what seems to be a pretty dismal state of the union. Leave us, if you would, with final thoughts or maybe what's going right. Why should Americans be hopeful? Because Americans are a hopeful people. We're optimists. Give us your last thoughts as far as that goes.

Senator Johnson

America's a great country, because Americans are good people. We're good people. You know, we share the same goal. We want to save prosperous, secure America. Unfortunately, we've got elements, primarily from the left, although there is certainly part of the right, that are purposely dividing us. That's why I say the number one goal for my standpoint for the next president should be to heal and unify this nation and keep us out of wars, okay? Because I think most Americans also want to stay out of war. They don't want to see their sons and daughters, you know, killed in some overseas action. So we're a good people. We know what works. Capitalism works. And the essential ingredient to that is freedom, right? It's what we used to dream, aspire, build and create this marvel we call America. So we know what works. We've got good people. Let's get elected officials and leaders pointing out what we agree on, acknowledging that Americans are good and that we're unified behind those goals. And then



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let's try and achieve those goals.

TNA

You travel a bit. Do you see — is the population changing? Are they getting wiser about what's going on?

Senator Johnson

I think more people's eyes are opened up. I think the pandemic has certainly done that. But you know, corporate media, big tech, social media giants, they're of the left and they control the narrative. And we're fighting powerful forces here as conservatives. We just are.

TNA

Yeah. Well, I guess that wasn't my last question, because you mentioned the media a lot and that's true. And we're all considered alternative media here. Is there any hope — do you see rising alternative media that perhaps can at least balance out the power, the influence of mainstream media?

Senator Johnson

No, listen, I think so many Americans have lost faith in these institutions, whether it's the FBI whether it's the Department of Justice, whether it's you know, it, you know, as well as media. And so they're seeking out alternate sources. And I think that's a good thing, as long as it's not censored. I mean, I really appreciate what Elon Musk has done in terms of Twitter, opening up the files, showing the corruption, you know, the government complicity and violating free speech. So, again, we just need more people opening up their eyes. It's getting more and more difficult to discern the truth. A little bit easier when they had three networks and they actually adhered to journalistic standards, by and large, and they tried to provide balanced coverage. But that's many, many decades in the past. We don't have that anymore. We've got a highly biased mainstream media. And so people have to look for alternatives. But there's a lot of good alternatives. I mean, things like Substacks, I mean, all these podcasts going on and, you know —

TNA

And people are going to them.

Senator Johnson

Yeah, I think it's an interesting one. You know, Joe Rogan had Bobby Kennedy on and then you have the Peter Hotez that, you know, is very pro-vaccine, but won't go on the show and discuss it. So in the end that's like, I'm more willing to believe somebody who's willing to go out, be questioned, be challenged, provide the research, than somebody who hides behind, you know, just using pejoratives against somebody saying, "Oh, that guy's just crazy. I don't want to give that crazy man a platform." I mean, so I think people, more and more people see that, and they go, when it's difficult to discern the truth, I guess I'll be biased toward the person who's willing to discuss it, be challenged —

TNA

Wants to be open about it.

Senator Johnson

Engage in debate. And that's how we're going to have to start discerning the truth. We need those open forums and people need to, you know, open themselves up to hard questions.

TNA

Senator Johnson, thank you so much for joining us, and good luck and keep up the good work.



Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on July 14, 2023

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Senator Johnson  
Thank you for having me.

TNA  
Yes, sir.

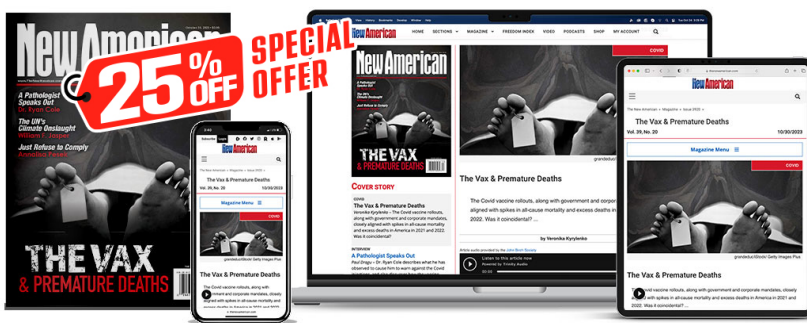


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