

## LAURA FLANDERS & FRIENDS

### FULL, UNCUT CONVERSATION: THE PEOPLE V. DOGE: JAMIE RASKIN'S STRATEGY TO COMBAT THE MUSK & TRUMP POWER GRAB

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NARRATOR: One, two, three. While our weekly shows are edited to time for broadcast on public TV and community radio, we offer to our supporting members and podcast subscribers the full, uncut conversation. The following is from our episode featuring a one-on-one interview with the ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee, Maryland Congressman Jamie Raskin. He lays out his plans for exerting oversight of the executive branch and describes the constitutional limits Trump and Musk are running up against, and more. These audio exclusives are made possible thanks to our member supporters.

LAURA FLANDERS: An administration elected for a second term has a chance to do what it couldn't before and time to refine its tactics. Donald Trump has had plenty of help coming up with a plan and his best tactic has always been shock and awe. And so that is just what we have seen since November's election. Even before Trump took office, important shapers of public opinion obeyed in advance. I'm thinking of ABC, the Washington Post, the LA Times, Jeff Bezos, Mark Zuckerberg, Google, even Bill Gates. And when opinion shapers like these settle and concede, they create the impression that everyone is bowing down. Then comes the hail of executive orders, 65 in less than a month, resulting in mass firings, funding freezes, academic and arts chills, and that a non-governmental office headed by an unelected billionaire, the invasion of a hoard of personal data snatchers. Shocking, annoying, and sucking up all the coverage, it is easy to think that the executive's power is in fact absolute. And then, something like this happens.

- (JAMIE RASKIN) Mr. Speaker, I begin with an urgent constitutional public service announcement based on millions of calls and messages that have been flooding Congress. There is a serial constitutional violator at large, right now in the District of Columbia. Whose overall project to dismantle our constitution and rule of law, is now the target or subject of at least a dozen different federal court temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions across the land, and also faces emergency civil actions in dozens of other courts and jurisdictions. The suspect has been described as a very evil individual by Steve Bannon and has been operating in clandestine fashion with a night crew of computer-hacking juvenile associates, one of whom goes by the alias of "Big Balls", and another one they call "The Kid", who has been known to post racist and anti-semitic

provocations online. The accelerating spree of constitutional offenses alarming the nation involves dozens of episodes of computer fraud and data theft, affecting potentially 300 million Americans and escalating threats against congressionally created federal agencies serving the people. From NIH, to the National Weather Service, to NOAA, to the Department of Justice.

LAURA FLANDERS: So that was [Jamie Raskin](#), fourth term Maryland congressman, constitutional law professor, and now ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee, offering a public service announcement on the floor of the House, February 13th. And even in these first weeks, he has not been alone. Pushing back against the Trump-Musk power snatch, we've seen the courts, people in Congress, and yes, even on the streets, cracks appearing in that perception of absolute power. And so today, because Trump's only as unaccountable as he's permitted to be, we're gonna talk with Congressman Raskin about what we are in fact witnessing. Is it absolute power corrupting absolutely or resolute public pushback that's got every reason to get stronger by the minute? Representative Raskin, as you will remember, was the [lead impeachment manager](#) in the second impeachment trial of former, now current president Donald Trump, and served on the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol. Welcome back to "Laura Flanders & Friends", Congressman. It is always my pleasure and honor to have you.

JAMIE RASKIN: I'm thrilled to be with you, Laura, and thanks for hanging tough.

LAURA FLANDERS: Well, you bet, you're setting a standard. I wonder, given your experience, and everything you already knew about shock and awe and Trump's tactics, whether you were in fact shocked and awed by anything that you've seen thus far?

JAMIE RASKIN: Well, the Elon Musk factor is something I think that I had probably underestimated the extent to which he would be the co-president or the de-facto president of the country. But, otherwise, it was all in Project 2025. I mean, I never took Donald Trump seriously when he continually disavowed Project 2025 saying he didn't know anything about it. He'd never read it. They really are enacting this Right-wing authoritarian playbook.

LAURA FLANDERS: And what's your role now there, as House ranking member on the judiciary committee?

JAMIE RASKIN: Well, I see it in terms of short, medium, and long term. Short term, we've gotta do everything in our power to stop the onslaught, the violation of the data privacy rights of the people, the attempt to usurp congressional lawmaking power, simply to extinguish federal departments and agencies that we created and only we have the power to nullify. You know, we've gotta defend the civil service rights of tens of thousands of federal workers that are under

attack. We've gotta defend the rights of immigrants, the LGBTQ community, and we are winning in court. We have more than a dozen preliminary injunctions and temporary restraining orders that have been instituted against everything from the outrageous birthright citizenship nullification executive order, which tried to turn 8 or 9 million US citizens into undocumented immigrants to the ripoff of people's data, to the attempt to round up FBI agents who had the temerity simply to do their jobs by working on the January 6th insurrection. So right now, the rule of law is holding, the federal district courts are doing their job. I know that Trump and Vance and the gang are just waiting to get everything into the Supreme Court because there they believe that the Right-wing majority, which Donald Trump stacked and packed and gerrymandered the court for, will hold for him, but we'll see. But I think it is important to remember that we are acting not just in the legal juridical domain, but also in the streets, in political organizing, and, of course, in the legislature where we have the filibuster on the Senate side as a backstop, and they have only a two-vote majority in the House. So if we can put enough pressure on moderate Republicans or Republicans in Biden-Harris districts, we can if we can pull over even just one or two members, we're able to stop a lot of stuff. So, people should reject, and not fall for any of the rhetoric about some kind of landslide mandate. Not at all. We're not gonna go there.

LAURA FLANDERS: I am gonna have you talk a bit more about Musk. As you said, he in a way has become the kind of wild card. He gave a very strange press conference with the President or the President with him, where he argued that they, or at least Trump, had a mandate to, as he put it, root out fraud, waste, and abuse.

- (REPORTER) Your detractors, Mr. Musk.

- (ELON MUSK) I have to what?

- (REPORTER) Including a lot of Democrats.

- (ELON MUSK) I have detractors?

- (REPORTER) You do, sir.

- (ELON MUSK) I don't believe it.

- (REPORTER) They say that you're orchestrating a hostile takeover of government and doing it in a non-transparent way. What's your response to that criticism?

- (ELON MUSK) Well, first of all, you couldn't ask for a stronger mandate from the public. The public voted, you know, they have a majority of the public voting for

President Trump. Won the House or won the Senate. The people voted for major government reform. There should be no doubt about that. That was on the campaign. The president spoke about that at every rally. The people voted for major government reform. And that's what people are gonna get.

LAURA FLANDERS: There are many people, Congressman, who say, "Well, there is a lot of fraud, waste, and abuse," to which you respond how?

Well, there's a ton of fraud, waste, and abuse and Donald Trump is behind most of it. In fact, they're not the opponents of corruption. They are the instruments and the agents of corruption here. The first thing they did when they got in on Friday of inauguration week was to sack 17 inspectors general. These are the people who are actually the corruption, waste, fraud, abuse fighters in the federal government. They got rid of them immediately, violating the law and the process because they're required to come to Congress 30 days before they would sack any of these people. And they need to set forth specifically the rationale for getting rid of them. They didn't do that in any case. And the rationale is actually a very large one, because Elon Musk himself is facing hundreds of complaints in federal departments and agencies, including the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, where there are tons of complaints against Tesla's consumer predatory practices to the Agency for International Development, which was literally investigating Elon Musk when he took over their department and shut it all down. He was being investigated for his company's ties to the Chinese government and his complicity with Vladimir Putin's fascist assault on the people of Ukraine. But you go across the federal government, and in seven or eight different cases, he was literally the subject of ongoing investigations and complaints. They got rid of that. But, of course, it goes beyond him because corruption is the whole MO of Donald Trump Enterprises. They said in the first two weeks that they were no longer going to enforce the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. They were gonna disband the unit in the Department of Justice, which is investigating foreign Russian, Chinese, North Korean firms primarily for evading US sanctions. And, of course, they're taking down any entity which is acting on the side of the people against the rip off artists like the CFPB. For example, the Consumer Financial Production Bureau cut down to \$5, the overdraft fees that banks could charge you. They were charging \$35, \$40, \$50. The CFPB cut it down to \$5. Like, credit card late fees were hovering around \$40. They cut it down to \$8. So anything that we would, something like \$21,000,000,000 back to the American people, for a very small budgeted agency.

LAURA FLANDERS: There is something else going on there that I do want you to talk about though, Congressman, and that is this question of access to personal private information, that the head official at the Social Security Administration quit when Musk's folks asked for access to all this data. She said there's no way to overstate how serious this is. What's at stake? What is so dangerous about what is happening there with respect to our data?

JAMIE RASKIN: Well, the real experts are saying this is the greatest security data breach in American history because what you've got is a guy who is himself a businessman, now masquerading as a special government employee. He's refused to fill out or publicize his ethics statement. He's got no conflict of interest waiver despite the fact that he's got all of these conflicts of interest, not just in terms of cases and investigations against him, but he is a multi-billion dollar defense contractor. So he is got access to all of the financial data relating to the government's work with him, all of his rivals and anybody else in the business.

LAURA FLANDERS: And he also wants to launch a payment platform, right? X Money?

JAMIE RASKIN: He's in the middle of launching this new payment platform with Visa and he of course started his career with PayPal. Now he's taking over all the financial payment systems of the US government with all of our data on them. That's people's names, addresses, family members, social security numbers, financial data history; in some cases, medical history if you're talking about a medical platform like NIH or Medicare or Medicaid. Basically, this might be the most valuable trove of personal data that exists anywhere in the world today or in history and he wants to go in business doing this. Now, of course, he's just following Donald Trump who now rejects any idea that there's a conflict between his being in business, making as much money as possible, and him being the president of the United States.

LAURA FLANDERS: All right, so what can we do about an unelected guy like Musk? I mean, how does the Constitution handle an unelected official operating in this kind of capacity?

JAMIE RASKIN: Yeah, well, there's some ambiguities to whether or not he's a principal officer or an inferior officer, or not even that. But high ranking officers can be impeached and it would be nice to impeach him as the de facto president of the United States. I don't know if that's possible. Of course, he's not qualified constitutionally to be president because he was born in South Africa. He also is raking in billions of dollars of foreign government emoluments while he's acting as the de facto president. And he has violated Congress's lawmaking power under Article I by irrigating himself the authority simply to extinguish entire federal departments and agencies that we created. We are the lawmaking branch. The job of the president or the fake president under Article II is to take care that the laws are faithfully executed, not that the laws are extinguished and overrun.

LAURA FLANDERS: So I hear you have a bill in the works?

JAMIE RASKIN: Well, I don't know. I mean, we're gonna look at that whole question of what is his constitutional status. You know, it is the executive branch, which is presumably pursuing all of these policies. Most of the lawsuits are fashioned as against the new Department of State or

the new CFPB or, against president Trump. Some are against DOGE, which is irrigating all these powers to itself. But people have to remember that he can't do it because he's been delegated powers by Donald Trump because Donald Trump couldn't do this. The president of The United States does not have the power to snap his fingers and disappear a federal agency and department created by Congress. A congressional appropriation act is a federal law just like a law saying you can't beat up a federal officer. So it's not a budgetary recommendation or negotiation with the executive branch. The president's job is to take care that the laws are faithfully executed. That means the president has gotta implement our will even if he disagrees with the policy or how much money we're spending or in what way we're spending it.

LAURA FLANDERS: Well then, that brings us to Congress. In the last few days, I've heard a lot of people saying, "Where's the hue and cry?" Ezra Klein in the "New York Times" described Congress as "supine". A conservative columnist in the "Wall Street Journal" said, "Isn't it great there is a lowered temperature in Washington D.C.?" Hakeem Jeffries got into trouble for this comment.

- HAKEEM JEFFRIES: I'm trying to figure out what leverage we actually have. What leverage do we have? They control the House, the Senate, and the presidency. It's their government. What leverage do we have?

LAURA FLANDERS: It sounds to me as if you do think Congress has leverage.

JAMIE RASKIN: Of course we do. The people have leverage and we're part of the people. You know, there's no mandate here. Trump got less than 50% of the vote. He won with around 2 million votes. Joe Biden beat him by 7 million votes the last time out there. So we've gotta act with real courage and defiance at the same time that we're organizing for a landslide repudiation of this nightmare in the 2026 elections.

LAURA FLANDERS: All right, so let's talk about the next chance where there really could be a showdown and that's around the budget. You've got trillions more, \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts. It does make things pretty clear what all this has been about. What possibilities do the Democrats have, your caucus have to really fight here? And what does the GOP really have to bargain with given that there's no guarantees that the appropriations will actually be allowed to stand?

JAMIE RASKIN: It occurs to me as you speak, Laura, that if they wanna lift the debt ceiling for \$4 or \$5 trillion in order to, you know, in order to pay for a massive tax cut for the richest people in the country again, why don't they just use all of the money that Elon Musk has saved through all of his very efficient attacks on waste, fraud, and abuse? Everybody knows that's a joke. So look. Here's my perspective on the whole budget thing. The Republicans control very narrowly,

but they control nonetheless the House, the Senate, and the White House. Okay? They have not consulted us on anything, and they don't need to. If they can maintain their unity and their majorities, then they don't need us, and they've shown that's their preference. But if they can't do that because there are 40 or 50 Republican members who have never voted to lift the debt ceiling and they won't do that, and there are others who are mad about certain things, then they've gotta come to us and they've gotta negotiate. They've gotta engage in that old fashioned political art of a legislative compromise in a negotiation. And that's what they'll have to do, but I can guarantee you, I don't know any Democrats who are saying that we should keep the government of the United States open, so they can dismantle the government of the United States. And it really is a real question. I mean, it's about appropriations. It is also an opportunity to hash out this question of whether congressional appropriations can be just impounded as you said. That's right. We wanna maintain the integrity of all federal enactments, whether it's the creation of agencies and bureaus, the National Weather Service, the Food and Drug Administration, the NIH, you name it. We wanna make sure that they're gonna be obeying the law and not sacking our prosecutors and FBI agents because they prosecuted violent insurrectionists who smashed our police in the face with Confederate battle flags and Trump flags. And we wanna make sure that the money of the people of the United States, which we have the exclusive power to appropriate and spend under Article I in the constitution, is going exactly to the places where we said it could go.

NARRATOR: Hi, lovely listeners. Laura Flanders and Friends is, as we say, the place where the people who say it can't be done take a back seat to the people who are doing it. Our guests are doing it. Now we just want to thank you, our member supporters, for doing your part. All of you who have yet to become members, please do it. Join our community today by making a one time donation or make it monthly at [lauraflanders.org/donate](https://lauraflanders.org/donate). That's [lauraflanders.org/donate](https://lauraflanders.org/donate). Thank you. And a reminder to hit that subscribe button wherever you get your podcasts, and thank you. Now back to our full, uncut conversation.

LAURA FLANDERS: What gives what sort of sense do you have from your colleagues or I think you call them your colleagues, the Republicans, they're in the House, of why they are so, to them, I would apply the word supine. Is there a physical fear? Is there a political fear? Like, what is it that is causing them to just give up in front of their overlords?

JAMIE RASKIN: Well, there's certainly, you know, a surplus-age of fear over courage, that is for the ones who are not thinking just robotically like members of a religious cult. But remember, we had 10 Republicans on the House side who voted to impeach Trump in the second impeachment. We had seven in the senate who voted to convict him, and the vast majority of those people are gone, the Liz Cheneys, the Adam Kinzinger, the Mitt Romneys. And Donald Trump has tightened his stranglehold over the Republican Party either through political threats being made by Elon Musk or financial threats that, when the people leave Congress, they won't be able to get a job or by actual physical threats by, you know, the whole lunatic world that he has pardoned

and put back into motion as his private militia is, you know, stormtroopers for the Right wing. So, yeah, there's a lot of fear there on the Republican side, but, I don't, you know, this is not Abraham Lincoln's party, which was a party of liberty and union. It was a pro-reason, pro-science party. It was opposed to, you know, the know nothings and opposed to conspiracy theories. And this party is just drowning in conspiracy theory and propaganda, disinformation, and authoritarianism. So it would be great to think that two or three people could emerge in the House, which would radically change the balance of power there, but I'm still very much in search of those people.

LAURA FLANDERS: Didn't you think there'd be more than one vote against the Health and Human Services secretary becoming RFK?

JAMIE RASKIN: I mean, the whole thing is just astonishing that we are where we are with Robert F. Kennedy and HHS and, you know, that all of the Republicans would go for that. I mean, it's dumbfounding, really, to think of how far we've come. I mean, he is somebody who has advocated that people not take vaccines. He has contradicted the greatest scientific authorities in the country based on nothing, based on no evidence. He spreads conspiracy theories and propaganda and disinformation. And I know that, you know, so many wonderful people in the Kennedy family are just beside themselves by this turn of events. I mean, it's a disgrace to his father's name.

LAURA FLANDERS: This must be a little personal for you given that you went, gone through your own health crisis over the last few years.

JAMIE RASKIN: I mean, look. The doctors in (inaudible) in America with COVID 19, and they're on the frontlines. And as you know, our health care system has been a mess in a lot of ways. And, it's just so wrong to put somebody in as secretary of HHS who fundamentally doesn't believe in the mission of medicine and the mission of science.

LAURA FLANDERS: Well, I'm glad that the mission worked for you, and to see you doing this work. One of the moments that will really test you and the Constitution that we cherish is this question of what happens if the executive branch just decides not to obey the judicial branch? If there's a judicial decision that comes down where we can see that there is an intent to disobey, there've been some examples of not implementing decisions, but we aren't quite there yet, I don't think. If we do get there, you correct me if I'm wrong, but if we do get there, what happens then?

JAMIE RASKIN: So, and there's a lot of anxiety about that. People ask me all the time, what happens when they start disobeying all of these injunctions and they just, you know, quote that apocryphal story from Andrew Jackson, you know, "The Supreme Court's made its decision, let them enforce it." But at the district court level and at the appeals court level and at the state court



level, it's really not that much of a problem because a court that is intent on actually enforcing the rule of law has a full panoply of sanctions that can be used against a recalcitrant or disobedient executive branch. That's what criminal contempt is about. That's what civil contempt is about. Criminal contempt means you say, we're gonna put you in prison until you agree to comply with the law. That could become difficult because that relies on the US marshal service under the DOJ. But civil contempt is wholly within the power of the court. Civil contempt says, we will compel you to do this, and we're gonna, for example, slap a \$10,000,000 fine every day on you until you start complying. And we will slap a lien on your bank account, and we'll confiscate your properties. And so the courts are not without, a full range of sanctions that they can use, and they use it every single day to go after people who refuse to pay their taxes and so on. Now, when it gets to the Supreme Court, you know, if the Supreme Court, you know, the main damage the Supreme Court can do is to decide for Trump, as we saw they did in that outrageous presidential immunity case, where they said the president can commit felony crimes under the auspices of his office, and he is presumptively immune to prosecution, categorically and presumptively immune to prosecution in that category of cases. But let's say the Supreme Court upholds what the lower courts are doing and says the president has gotta comply and the President refuses that. Well, at that point, he's going up against a court that he stacked in his own interest for himself. And I think we would see a huge political turn against him. And that's what ultimately impeachment and trial and conviction are all about.

LAURA FLANDERS: But aren't you putting a lot of hope then in Trump's Supreme Court there? What if, to the contrary, they go along and permit him to fire whoever he likes and do whatever he wants, then we've got precedent, how do we unravel that?

JAMIE RASKIN: Well, that's the tough question. It's like this rancid presidential immunity decision that was rendered by the court. But look, the fact is that for most of American history, the Supreme Court has been a profoundly conservative and reactionary institution. I mean, think of it. The Supreme Court did nothing for enslaved people in America for the entire history before the Civil War, other than to cement that system into place in the Dred Scott decision. And then even after the Civil War and the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Americans and the reconstruction amendments, they went back to the same basic idea in 1896 in Plessy v. Ferguson. So the court has never been on the side of the people and the people are just going to have to rise to the occasion in this case, like people have risen the occasion even with all of the civilizing movements of American history, the Civil Rights Movement, Abolition, the Women's Movement, the LGBTQ Movement, the peace movement, the environmental movement, it's going to be up to the people. It is never going to be the political elites who save us.

LAURA FLANDERS: Well, that takes me to history and that takes me to your very own precious father, Marcus Raskin. I mean, we have had constitutional crises before and he was right in the middle of one of them during the Vietnam War. He issued a "call to resist illegitimate

authority", and I'm wondering if you're gonna issue something similar. Then, the danger was kind of Military Industrial Complex. Biden has called today's danger the "Digital Industrial Complex". Tell us a bit about your father's tactics and whether you think they would apply today or what are yours on that level?

JAMIE RASKIN: Well, my dad's case is a really interesting one that Boston Five, the famous Dr. Spock case with Marcus Raskin and Dr. Benjamin Spock, William Sloane Coffin, Michael Ferber, Mitchell Goodman was the fifth. They were indicted for conspiracy to aid and abet draft resistance. And my father had written that statement that made him famous, "A Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority," which was published in a bunch of the newspapers, them not having the internet back in the day. And he was prosecuted for what was essentially free speech. He was the only one of the five who was actually acquitted at the trial level, which led to an interview in the "New York Times" where they asked him how he felt about being acquitted. And he said he felt like demanding a retrial. Because for them, unlike all the Right wingers who go off and get their own lawyers and point fingers at each other, it was about solidarity and sticking together. Eventually, all of those convictions were reversed on First Amendment grounds that people have a right to speak out against a war, certainly an unjust and illegal war as that one was. But my dad was convinced that people had to stick with the law and the Constitution and he said the Vietnam War was a war that was contrary to international law. There were war crimes taking place. It was a violation of the Geneva Conventions and the Nuremberg accord. But he felt like domestically, that we had to act in the spirit of nonviolent protest as citizens. And he didn't really adopt that kind of Gandhian, Thoreauvian idea that, you know, we are civil disobedience. He was saying that the movements, the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, were movements to get the country to conform to the law, to the Constitution.

LAURA FLANDERS: And this was somebody who had served in the White House, had worked inside government, moved outside government, became an advocate for years, one of the co-founders of the Institute for Policy Studies, was involved in the Pentagon Papers, and the great whistleblower action of that time. He then went on to talk about a social reconstruction. And I guess that's where I want to end our conversation, is you talked about the upcoming midterms. And it does seem to me that the Democrats will not win by defending what to many people seems like indefensible status quo institutions, whether you're talking about the FBI or higher ed or healthcare, even [USAID](#), they were all deeply problematic before Trump and Musk came along. So how do you think the Democrats need to retool? I mean, you can't rail against oligarchs without dismissing your own oligarchs. You know, will they take on what Bernie Sanders calls the billionaire class? Big questions, but?

JAMIE RASKIN: Yes. Indeed. And democracy is not a static framework of institutions and practices that we defend. It's not only that anyway. It is a work in progress. It is an unfinished draft always, and we've got, to take one example, millions of disenfranchised people in the

country. You know, Trump keeps talking about how he's gonna seize control of Greenland and Panama. How about we pass statehood for people in Washington DC and in Puerto Rico so we can start getting everybody represented and we can have legitimate democratic elections? And we've gotta move forward in terms of democratic institutions that people need in order to be vibrant, healthy citizens, like national health care for everybody. So, my dad taught me that revolution, if you think about it in cosmological terms, is something that just brings you back to where you started. And the American Revolution, of course, a great positive radical break from British tyranny over the colonists nonetheless brought us back to where we started in terms of enslavement of human beings and the disenfranchisement of women and so and so on. Revolution is not the goal, and reform doesn't quite do it. For him, reconstruction and the kind of reconstruction that America had after the civil war. That's the American test. You take the elements that are out there that can be used, that are positive. You build upon them for the future, and you get rid of what is no longer working for society. And, obviously, this tech-bro logic from Silicon Valley is not working for the American people. Their vigor, vim, and determination to get things done, though, is sobering. When you think of how difficult it actually was for even a well-intentioned president like Joe Biden to get things done. Things like forgiving student loans. I mean, he couldn't get that done. They're not destroying the entire Department of Education.

LAURA FLANDERS: Where do you stand in terms of how procedural Democrats do or or don't need to be standing up for the institutions that you just talked about and not just defending them, but building new ones, reconstructing them with the kind of fervor that the MAGA mob are are putting into taking them down?

JAMIE RASKIN: I mean, that's not just a political principle. It's a scientific principle, the entropy. It's a lot easier to destroy things than it is to build things. Things fall apart. It's scientific. Right? And so if you come in with the idea that you're gonna destroy the Agency for International Development and Food for Peace and Food for Progress and all the institutions that have been built up there or the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which was the brainchild of Senator Elizabeth Warren from Massachusetts, so you're gonna destroy the progress we've made on education, you can do that a lot easier than it is to build or rebuild those kinds of institutions. But, you know, that's another conversation I'd love to invite myself back to talk about what it might mean to have some utopian dreams and also some practical pragmatic plans to build stronger for the future so that when we get through this nightmare, we're in a stronger place than we were before it all started.

LAURA FLANDERS: So I will draw it to a close by asking you whether a new progressive alliance is in the works or where your projects on that level stand, and then, you know, where you think we will be when we talk even, I don't know, two months from now, three months from now.

JAMIE RASKIN: Well, we're gonna draw on the strength and the example of the great civilizing movements of our time, which have opened America up. And we are seeing that full-blown backlash to it right now in MAGA in the attempt to dismantle all of the changes that have been made to make America a more perfect union and a more open society. But we're gonna build on that to move forward in terms of social institutions that are gonna be far more responsive to everybody, whether we're talking about farmers in the countryside who have been losing billions of dollars now in government contracts for food that was being sent to starving people in other countries, to workers whose rights are being decimated in National Labor Relations Board in the Department of Labor under this process, to all citizens who want to have good healthcare, good schools, a relationship to the truth, a relationship to science that benefits everybody and to meaningful political participation. So there has been an undertow of fascism and authoritarianism in human history from the beginning. In fact, democracy, free democracy has been very much an exception. Most people for most of history and even in the world today, live under autocrats, theocrats, plutocrats, dictators and despots like Vladimir Putin, and like President Xi, and like Kim Jong Un, and Donald Trump and Elon Musk. The exception is democratic self-government with freedom. So we get back to that, but we obviously need to use all of the technologies of the new century, including artificial intelligence, to make communities of democratic empowerment stronger and more vibrant and better connected to each other. The fascists are doing it all over the world. JD Vance and the Elon Musk are totally in bed with the neofascist parties in Germany and Austria and France and so on. We need to build strong, transnational democratic alliances to get us through this nightmare so that human rights can be preserved.

LAURA FLANDERS: So how do you do that as a Democratic Party congressman, when so many have just watched a Democratic administration abide a genocide? How do we now say, what about international law? What about the Geneva Conventions? How do we do that when Democratic voters have heard similar talk, with all due respect, from generation after generation of Democrats and have seen Clinton shrink welfare and undermine, you know, employment through NAFTA, and Obama bail out the banks. And frustration was a big part of this election. And you can say, yeah, it was only at, you know, what is it? 1.6 percentage points, 2 million votes. It wasn't the landslide they claim. But Democrats did lose an election that many of us thought was not really losable given what we all knew about the alternative. So yeah, I mean, it's a big question, obviously, and you're on the good side of this. But how do we do this differently? Does the Democratic party need to say, you know, we apologize?

JAMIE RASKIN: Well, you know, it's interesting. When we Democrats win, then everybody says we won. We won. When Democrats lose, the Democrats better do this. The Democrats better do that. I mean, I don't place any of my faith in democratic institutional hierarchy to the extent that exists. Like, that's not where I place my faith. I place my faith in organizing, and my campaign dispenses no money on pollsters, TV, radio, none of that stuff. It's a school for young

people called Democracy summer. We've got an obligation to younger generations today and future generations to transmit the best values that we know of, that were fought for by prior generations of democratic freedom loving patriots in America. And we can't give up on that at the same time that we adapt our tactics to the new media and social media and technological environment that we're in. And that's where I think we've been left in the dust in some ways by the Right wing mega movement, which seized upon social media early. And, you know, you get gotta read this, book called, it's called (Mindf\*ck) by this young man who worked for Steve Bannon, been basically Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump in the 2016 election, who explains exactly what they were doing and how they use social media and the other, you know, other tech new technological instruments to bypass the mainstream media. The mainstream media is no longer the mainstream media. It has been overtaken. And so I think that's where, you know, my party, the Democratic Party, which I'm proud to be part of, fell down on the job. It did not keep up with the means of communication to the point where now we've got Elon Musk who controls X, Twitter, which is the major mechanism of social communication. He's seizing control over the financial payment systems, and he has lots of control in the military, because of his satellite technology. So, you know, we are up against a new Right wing foe, which is looking to the future, which wants to disavow and disown constitutional democracy and move us into a techno monarchy. That's our challenge to defeat those people. And we have a Washington Post that won't even run an ad calling for Elon Musk to be forced out. The establishment institutions are just running, totally afraid and terrified, and I wish people would turn more of their attention to them than to Democrats. All I know I can just speak for myself, but I'm working seven days a week, doing town hall meetings and rallies wherever I can. I say, yeah, rally a day keeps the fascists away. We are winning in court. We're gonna turn this thing around, but we've gotta stick together and show solidarity to make it through.

LAURA FLANDERS: I hear you, and I appreciate all that you are doing. And I'm sorry to put you on the spot for the behavior of a Democratic party that you wouldn't have supported probably. Let me ask you our closing question, the question we ask all our guests, which is what do you think the story will be that the future tells of now? I have an inkling of what you'll say, but I'd love to hear it from you.

JAMIE RASKIN: I mean, look. I, everybody accuses me of being a rose colored glasses guy. And, you know, my heroes are the rebels and the revolutionaries who have always stood up for freedom and democracy against fascism and authoritarianism. And, the word fascism can now be used in a non-hyperbolic way today given all of these events. I mean, you got JD Vance who goes over to a security conference in Munich, which is essentially about the filthy imperialist Russian invasion of Ukraine. And he says the problem is not Russia. It's not China or Taiwan or Hong Kong or with the Tibetans or anyone else. The problem is you in Europe that you are being too mean to the ultra Right fascist party today, the alternative for Deutschland, the AfD party. And then he meets with the AfD, totally violating a taboo within German politics, which is none

of the pro-democracy parties will meet with the extreme Right, invalidate them, and use them as an element in a parliamentary coalition. And JD Vance just goes right over there and purports to lecture our democratic allies about free speech right after he's called for the firing of a Wall Street Journal reporter for her objective factual reporting on one of these juvenile night crew fascists that Elon Musk has out there rifling through all of the computers. And she reported that he'd made all kinds of racist statements, like he was racist before it was cool and validated Indian hate, and 'I'd like to see both Gaza and Israel sink into the sea.' So she just reported on it. Now you got the vice president of The United States calling on The Wall Street Journal to fire her, and then he goes over to lecture our allies about freedom of speech. At the same time, Donald Trump is banning the Associated Press from different press functions because they insist upon calling the Gulf Of Mexico the Gulf Of Mexico. So we have free speech, and then we have their free speech.

LAURA FLANDERS: Jamie Raskin, thank you so much for being with us. It's really been a pleasure, and I appreciate you taking the time.

JAMIE RASKIN: My pleasure, Laura. Keep it up and hang tough, alright?

LAURA FLANDERS: I know I will, and I know you will. That was great. Thank you so much.

JAMIE RASKIN: Thank you so much.

NARRATOR: Thanks for taking the time to listen to the full conversation from our episode featuring a one on one interview with the ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee, Maryland congressman Jamie Raskin. These audio exclusives are made possible thanks to our member supporters. Please join our members now by making a one time donation or make it monthly. All the details are at [lauraflanders.org/donate](https://lauraflanders.org/donate). And thanks again to all our member supporters.