

Anthony Scaramucci

Former Director of Communications, President Donald Trump

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Welcome to Media Masters, a series of one to one interviews with people at the top of the media game. Today, I'm here in New York City and joined by Anthony Scaramucci, financier, entrepreneur and former White House communications director to President Donald Trump. Anthony spent much of his career in investment banking, leaving Goldman Sachs in 1996 to start his own ventures, and in 2005 founded the global investment firm SkyBridge Capital. A consistent and vocal support of the President since well before the election, Anthony began his role in the Trump administration in July last year, but just under a fortnight later, and very memorably, he was out. Among his other activities, he's currently writing a book, which is set to come out this September.

Anthony, thank you for joining me.

It's a pleasure to be here. Thank you so much, Paul.

So what are you up to now, then? Because I keep seeing you pop up on Fox News defending the President. I know that you've got the Scaramucci Post, and various other ventures. Paint a picture of what you're actually up to at the moment.

I'm back at SkyBridge, actually. So I'm back with my partners at SkyBridge. As you mentioned, we started that firm in 2005, and so the senior management there has a 13-year track record of working together. Business is in great shape, we had great performance last year, which is a sign of my total dispensability, and I'm very excited about the future. We're doing quite well; we could potentially make an acquisition in the asset management space here over the next 18 months.

And has the increased notability, should I say, the fact that you're much more of a recognised figure now, has that helped your business, or has it harmed it? Because you've actually made a lot of sacrifices for your aspiring public service.

I'm an accidental entry into the political system. Basically, if Jeb Bush or somebody more establishment in their orientation would have won the nomination and actually gotten to the American presidency, there would have been several thousand Republican operatives and establishment people that would have been in the game, and I would have just been the typical Wall Street donor that helped out the President on the periphery. But what ended up happening is, Donald J Trump started his aspiration and won the nomination, a lot of these establishment guys freaked out, they pulled out, they signed Never Trump petitions, or whatever these things were...

That didn't do any good.

That didn't do any good. He wins. There's a vacuum at the top. I get sucked up into the vacuum. So that's how it happened, I was very accidental into the thing. What the president originally wanted me to do was be his OPL director, which is the Office of Public Liaison, which is to help him network with businesses large and small throughout the United States, and also do some intergovernmental affairs. I got that job offer January 12, 2017, accepted the job offer and then put my company up for sale in order to serve the President. And then I didn't fully understand... I mean, somebody said to me... I did a Playboy magazine interview. The guy said to me, "People think you're very smart, but you're a little politically naïve." I said, "That's not true, I'm not politically naïve, I'm politically naïve to the 20th power." Okay, at the end of the day, I didn't realise what these operatives were like, I didn't realise the level of ruthlessness. You watch something like Scandal or House of Cards and you think it's an exaggerated thing, but then when you really get involved with these people you realise that they're the most ruthless, most amoral douches on the planet. And so, they started running opposition research, negative about me, negative about my firm, and then they concocted a story and then they tried to use the legal system inside the White House counsel's office to slow down my arrival at the White House in the OPL job. And they figured that would be enough to make me go away, but they mis-sized my persistence, and they mis-sized my relationship with the President. So, by July, when it became clear that these sorts of lunatics were herding him and there was all of this inter-mess and fighting and leaking and all this other stuff, then he asked me to come in and help him clean it out. So I made a ton of mistakes, but my main mistake is I handled it more like a business entrepreneur and less like a political operative. Had I handled it more like a political operative, I would have done all the slick stuff that they were doing, but then I'd have all of that swamp taint on me. So, at the end of the day, when I reflect upon it eight or nine months later, I'm very happy with the way the whole thing came out.

We first met a couple of years ago actually, and I remember that you were on a panel, and the conventional wisdom in the audience was that no one would ever elect Donald Trump, and you were the only person on the panel to say, "This guy is going to be President," and you were basically laughed at. It must have given you a bit of a boost to say, well, actually you had an insight there that these so-called clever people didn't have.

Only because I've travelled around the country with him, I grew up in a blue-collar neighbourhood, and so I got the switch from the aspirational middle class into the desperational middle class, and I sort of understood what the President was saying

to those people. The great irony here is that there's a group of intellectual smarty-pants elites that think they're better than other people, and they are on the side of the Republicans and the side of the Democrats. And so, they sniff at the President, and they sniff at his Twitter account, and they sniff at some of his bellicosity of rhetoric, because he doesn't fit in. He's not part of them. That's been the truth for him for 45 years; there are certain country clubs they wouldn't let him into, there are certain social eating clubs that they wouldn't let a guy like him into, even though he's a super-rich, super-successful guy. But the common person sees that detachment, if you will, from the intellectual elites, and likes that about the President. So, the great irony now is we're observing – and he just had a state visit with the French president, Macron – what we're observing is that he has great bandwidth. He can play in the intellectual elite category and he can interact with all of these people, but he still has that common touch and he still has that ability to relate to ordinary Americans, and he also understands their values, which are very different from the ruthless people that live in Washington. So we're in this fascinating moment in time. One of the reasons why I take so much incoming is, I went to some fancy-pants schools, I am supposed to know better. I am supposed to be with electoral elites, and if I'm a Democrat I'm supposed to be part of the resistance, and if I'm a Republican I'm supposed to sit in the Mitt Romney aisle, the Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell aisle of Republicanism. But I don't. I look at the situation and say, "What's right for the country?" as opposed to, "What's left or right in terms of ideology? Let's look at this thing as what's right or wrong." And so he's got the right ideas. He's got the right policies for America right now. He's doing a great job. He's likely going to get this North Korean peace treaty resolved. I'll say something very outrageous, which I predict, and it's very similar to when we met in October of 2016 when I said the guy was going to win, everybody in that room looked at me like I had three heads.

Including me, I admit.

The two guys on the panel were like, "Oh, this guy's a loser, dummy, doesn't know what he's talking about, vacuous." That's what they do. They try to dehumanise your intellectual capability, and they try to box you. Sometimes in my case, as I'm Italian, they'll racially profile it on me. It's fine. I'm a big boy, I can deal with it. But he'll cut a deal with the Iranians. Once he solves this situation in North Korea, he'll bring the hammer down on the Iranians. That regime, that theocratic regime at the top of Iran, is very unstable. And it will break under the strong will of President Trump. And so, hopefully you will invite me back on a podcast, we'll be here a year or two from now, you'll say, "Okay, how did you see that?" I saw that because I understand the nature of him, and I have a pretty good idea of what's going on in those parts of the world.

What interests me, though, as mature Western societies, we seem to be more divided than ever. Back in my native Britain we have Brexit, where families are divided along whether they want to stay in or out. America, particularly, the Democrats and a lot of people just don't seem to get Donald Trump, and his supporters as well don't seem to get the other side. There seems to be a lack of communication and a wider divide than ever.

Well, I mean, that's the operating model. Okay, so the operating model is "let's divide and conquer". We have to have the politics of division. We have to have heated,

polemical rhetoric. That's how we'll raise money. And again, I'm not picking on, Congresswoman Pelosi, Nancy Pelosi, but she sent out an email and, you know, one of those blasts, hard snail mail letters, that said, "Mueller Fired!" That was the subject matter. Then three paragraphs in, "Of course, if Mueller gets fired..." The point is they know that this is like a dog whistle for fundraising. They know this can galvanise their base.

It's a bit clickbaity.

Exactly. And there's a group of people that are emotionally charged, that are going to get into the situation, and write them cheques and keep them in power. By the way, not to be critical of the Democrats, the Republicans do the exact same thing. They figure out what dog whistle, second amendment is dead, and everyone's like, "Oh my God," and they start writing checks into the NRA, and the second amendment. And so... it's a real shame because the average person doesn't like this. The way the political system works in our country right at this moment is, "Let's keep the people from voting." Because if they don't vote, these certain blocks that are energised that vote will keep us perpetually in power. We'll have this perpetual organised scandal system, so we'll hit the president on Russian collusion, we'll hit Secretary Clinton on her deleted emails, we'll hit the president on obstruction of justice, we'll hit Secretary Clinton on Uranium One. So we have this sort of scandals manufacturing business that's taking place, layered on top of the bellicosity of rhetoric, layered on top of gerrymandering where the districts are finagled to keep people in power. They literally slice and dice the districts now down to the houses. They say, okay, they can tell from your mail, they can tell from the cookies that are being dropped on your server inside your house, inside of one standard deviation, whether you're a Democrat or a Republican. And God forbid that you're an Independent because then they'll flood you with all types of information from both sides. So once they figure out who you are, then they try to figure out which district they're going to put you in so they can maintain this perpetual power machine. So it's absolutely and totally, completely disgusting actually. When you step back from it as an American citizen and you say, "Okay guys, let's look at what you guys have done over the last 35 years, has that been good for America?" And it turns out it really hasn't been good for America. You've got 13, 14 trillion dollars of debt that's been added in the last 16 years, since the 911 catastrophe, you've killed 8,000-9,000 service men in the Middle East, you've spent \$7 trillion in the Middle East; you've got 60,000 service men and women that have been wounded, countless others that are hurting from PTSD, you killed a million people in the Middle East. How is that working for America? The bridges, tunnels are crumbling, the airports look terrible, like third world countries.

Doesn't seem to be working for anyone.

The educational footprint, the K through 12 public educational footprint in the United States, is very uneven. Somebody like me that grew up in a blue-collar family, we were lucky to live in a relatively affluent neighbourhood where people on the coast had high marginal tax rates and they were paying the public school budget. So I was a direct beneficiary of that, but what if I lived in an area of the country where the working class people couldn't afford the public school system, and now I'm at a

disadvantage? So you tell me the zip code of the child, I can give you a pretty clear indication of whether or not they're going to get a good public school education. It's the richest country in the world, it's the greatest governmental experiment that's existed in the 5,500 years of recorded history, it's a polyglot society. Lincoln called it 'the last best hope for mankind'. We are not doing the predecessors of our country any service by the way we're handling ourselves. In fact, I would argue that the baby boomer generation in general, the political class of the baby boomer generation, has actually failed America. The baton got passed by the greatest generation and they put America in a position where it was benevolent, strong, and powerful, well organised. And these guys basically, they spent the treasure of America. They overpromised people, they overspent, and it's not clear that we're getting the value. So the President, again, he signed that omnibus bill, which again shows you how swamp-like the area is. He made a statement that he would never do it again, and he had to sign it if he wanted to repair what's been going on in the American military over the last 15 years. So it's just a ridiculous situation. Anybody looking at it from a business perspective, that actually would shine light on the situation, would look at it and say, "Okay, this is completely flawed, it has to be fixed." They hate President Trump so much because he's not one of them. They have this Malcolm Gladwell Blink in their personalities. They'll look at you and say, "Okay, can this guy, man or woman, be bought and buy into this swamp like system, or is this person can't be controlled by us and can't be bought into the system?" So when they see President Trump, Blink, it can't be bought. See a guy like me, Blink, can't be bought. I don't care about their lobbying, special interest, currying favour system. The American people, some of them are aware of this, but most are not. These guys have insider trading rights in the Congress. They can buy and sell securities based on information that they're getting, and based on the laws that they're about to pass. When Peter Switzer pointed that out to people, and it was a 60 Minutes documentary, they immediately voted it out. They waited six weeks and then by voice vote, so it didn't show up on C-SPAN, they voted it back in. So this was a really disgusting group of people, to be honest. And so, we have to figure that out. We're either going to change it, we're going to expose it to the American people, and we say, "Hey, we've got to stop this nonsense." You've got an unbelievable country, you have 23.5% of the world's GDP, you've got a great legal system, you've got a great constitution, you've got unbelievable personal freedoms in the country, but your arc and your potential could be made so much better by better governmental policy. And this is something that President Trump is exposing, and these people don't like it.

I think you're right though to point out that when you said Trump was going to win when we first met that couple of years ago, and people sneered at you. In a sense, you get in the net now because the conventional wisdom is that you ought to be a Democrat, and you ought to be opposed to Donald Trump, because that's what everyone is, in a sense, from our side of the pond. Do you often feel like you're his representative on earth, as it were, that you're engaging with people that just sneer at you?

Yes, that's all good. I mean, there's stuff about the President that I'm not super in love with too. I'm not trying to just be the President's apologist, or anything like that. I've told the President candidly to be more strategic in the tweeting. There's certain tweets that he's putting out there that I think are unnecessary, that's just creating an unnecessary hassle for him. I'm a huge believer in the First Amendment. I'm going to

speak at the National Press Club about the First Amendment. I only did a couple of things in my eleven days in the White House, but one of the more significant things was I turned the lights and cameras back on in the press room. And I sent a message to the press that we're open for business, and that if you really understand the original documents that formed the country, you have to have a free and open press. You have to have a fourth estate that's sitting there on watch for the other three branches of government, and they have to hold these people accountable. Because what we have found is that people that get power, it creates a certain level of lunacy in their brains. They start to get very self-important, they start to inflate their egos. Lord Atkin said that power corrupts but absolute power corrupts absolutely. We've seen that time and time again throughout history, but what Hamilton and Madison said in the Federalist Papers, they said, listen, make the press free. The press will be rigorous in the debate, and it will force an openness, and it will force a humbleness of our leaders. That's been by and large effective, but what's happened now because the press's business model has changed so dramatically since the introduction of the smart phone, you're in this really difficult situation where the press is just really trying to get eyeballs. There are certain great journalistic companies that have high journalistic standards, but there are now lowbrow journalism out there of bloggers and internet sites that have no standards whatsoever. They'll write anything in order to attract hits and eyeballs, and then they sell those eyeballs as a form of advertising. So the thing has gotten so fractured, it's so split, that it's creating a lot of heat. So when the President talks about fake news, if you're a journalist, boy you're wickedly mad about that, because you're trying to hold yourself to an objective standard, particularly if you're a good journalist. I could be on a show, I use the word fake news, the anchor goes crazy, "Please don't call us fake news." I'm like, what do you want me to call it? Real lies? I mean, what do you want me to call it? When the CNN guys wrote the story about me last June, totally unfair story, totally untrue story, I told the three guys, hey guys, don't write that. You're saying that I'm under federal investigation, which I am frankly not. You can verify that very simply. Here are the people at the Treasury you could call, here at the people in Mitch McConnell's office you could call. They said, "No, no, we're good, we've got one really good source and we're writing it." I said, "Well, it's untrue." "Well, we're going to write it anyway." What ends up happening is that one really good, anonymous source is trying to hit me and trying to hurt me. They're feeding that to the journalists. There's probably a favour bank between the operative and the journalist and they're going to write it anyway, and then that lie is out there. What we know about lies is they travel around the world very quickly, and the truth can't even get out of bed, and the lie is whipping around. So once it's out there, people start to believe it. Thankfully I have a deep enough pocket, I went after those guys. They had to BleachBit the story. It's like I said to Jeff Zucker, who runs CNN, the story came out of CNN, I said, "Until you are a victim of this sort of nonsense, you don't fully understand it." So the press is at a juncture now where they have to make a decision. My recommendation to them is, they have to try to figure out a way to lift their operating standards. If they lift their operating standards, contemporaneous to that the White House and the President has to end the war declaration on the press, because it's just bad for America.

I think the press don't know how to handle Donald Trump. They seem to be utterly blindsided by his election. As you pointed out, the conventional wisdom is that he didn't stand a chance in hell. Even Hillary said that she was

already picking the curtains and so on at the White House. Now, because he's so aggressively taking on the media, they don't know how to handle that. It's a challenge for them.

Well, I mean, again, we've got these preconceived biases about what is presidential, what isn't presidential. He's an outsider. He speaks differently. They don't like that. They want things, you know... listen, whatever you think of President Obama, that's like the perfect president for the press for most of the people in the press. He's African American, the first African American, the Jackie Robinson of American politics, he had a beautiful family, he speaks eloquently.

I'm a big fan of President Obama.

Listen, I liked the President a great deal personally. I went to law school with President Obama, I've known him for 30 years. I think he's a great human being. I have just disagreed on policies. If you've ever seen me on television, or on a radio, don't...

I turn my television on so I always see you.

... so I don't ever criticise anybody personally. Someone asks me about Secretary Clinton, I talk about policies, I don't talk about her personally. I've always had a lot of respect for her. She did a great job as a US Senator from the state that I live in, in New York. I really try to be objective about these things. President Obama did a lot of good things. I think he did a lot of things that were unnecessary to American business. He slowed down the growth of American business. He was an avatar of progress in our society, and I have an enormous amount of respect for him. But, he saw the world, in my mind, a little bit too rigidly. As an example, this sort of strategic patience on North Korea, obviously not working. It's not working for the North Korean citizens. It didn't really work for the United States.

I would agree.

So the fact that President Trump is shattering that totem, if you will, is very, very good for the world frankly. I think that's going to be...

Anyone who can bring peace to North Korea and free those people is going to be welcome. It will be interesting if President Trump does succeed there. That will be the litmus test of whether... if he secures what even I would consider to be a genuine win. If we're still so churlish that we can't congratulate him on it, then there really is something wrong.

Yes. Well, let's see what happens. I mean, I predict that he'll get there. But I will take you back to Ronald Reagan. I'm old enough to remember the 1981 Persian missiles in then West Germany and the fight there with the Russians, and then Reagan's team came out with the Zero Option. If you remember that, he said, "Okay, no missiles on our side if you don't put any missiles." That confounded everybody. I'm old enough to remember them saying that he was going to have a nuclear war, and yet he was really the guy that pushed super hard for more peace negotiations with

Russia, and more of a de-escalation of the Cold War, but at the same time leaving the ante up militarily because he knew he would break the back of their economy. I'm also old enough to remember Ronald Reagan, when he got to Moscow, stopping at the Jewish Halfway House where the State Department asked him not to do that, but he said he was doing it anyway because he needed to send a message to these freedom fighters and these Jewish dissidents that wanted to find sanctuary in Israel or the United States, that he was there for them. He was a beacon of freedom and a beacon of hope. So what ends up happening is if we stay in this collective wisdom box, we don't see Hitler for who he is. If we stay in this collective wisdom box, we may miss opportunities like what could take place with the North Korean dictator and what will eventually take place with the Iranian dictatorship. So, to me, you need disruptive, out-of-the-box thinking that's fresh, and you need to also be honest with the American people. I think the American people are very smart. The elites sometimes think that they're smarter than the American people, but I'm going to tell you something. The people I grew up with in my neighbourhood, they may not be rich, a lot of them are working blue collar jobs, but they're as smart as the people that sitting in these big salons. Some of it's luck. You know, if you get born into a family that's very, very wealthy, you're sitting in one of these salons. If you get born into a family of clamours, you've got to hustle and scrape your way into one of those salons. You see what I'm saying? It doesn't mean you're any dumber than the people that are sitting in the salons.

Do you think those people felt ignored almost for generations, and that's one of the reasons why President Trump has got elected? He's actually a symptom of a deeper problem in society.

No question. Well, not only that. There's evidence of that. Secretary Clinton didn't go to Wisconsin. She... I own Wisconsin. Her team said no need to go to Wisconsin, bluer than blue state, you'll win Wisconsin. But, let me submit this to you rhetorically, if you've got a red governor by the name of Scott Walker, won three elections in five years in the State of Wisconsin, and you have the Speaker of the House, Paul Ryan, who is arguably the most powerful person in the American Congress on the side of the House of Representatives at least, they're both Republicans, and the President and the candidates are travelling there countless number of times, you're not going to go once? I mean, it's sort of odd that you would take that approach when you know you need to win that state. She needed to win two of those four states that President Trump won, you know, Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Florida. Of those four states, Secretary Clinton needed to win at least two of them, or North Carolina. And he strategically understood what he needed to do. And by the way, the big argument that he didn't win the popular vote is a bunch of nonsense because he would have changed his entire investment in the campaign, and his mobility around the country. He would have been spending more times on the coasts and more densely populated cities, and he would have won the popular vote. People are missing the nature of this political beast. They're missing the nature of the duality to the guy's personality. He's rough and tough, but he's also gregarious. When he's campaigning, he's relating to people. He's very relatable. The people that they put up, they don't like people like that. You know, you can tell when somebody likes people. The camera on TV knows if you're somebody that likes people or you don't like people. The camera knows if you like yourself or you don't like yourself. It can just tell by the way you're talking, the way you're looking at the guests, the way

you're acknowledging the camera. They recognise the way you can smile and make a joke about yourself. Someone says that I was at the White House for 10 days. It hurts my feelings, man. I was there for 11. Let's not talk about 10, right?

Yes, it's 10% more.

Yes, exactly. I also say I was there 954,000 seconds. I got it down to that with my therapist. It makes me feel better, right? My point is, I don't care. I'll make a joke. I was at an event the other night and they were asking me something. I said, "Well, that happened on Tuesday, and I know it was a Tuesday because I was only there for one Tuesday," and everyone laughs. My point is, what are you going to do? You're going to sit there and get all defensive about it? You've got to roll into who you are, what you are, and what happens to you in your life. And so... I believe this, and maybe I'm going to be wrong about this, but I believe this, that we can fix all of these problems, but we have to start acknowledging them and we have to start calling people out before it. What happens to me, these guys are, "Whoa, man." I don't know if you saw my first press conference. I'm at the podium for 42 minutes in front of 40 or 50 million people globally. That was really the start of my demise, because people in Washington were, "Hold on, he's saying the truth from the White House podium? We can't have him tell all the people the American truth from the White House podium! Americans really hear the truth from the White House podium? No, we've got to get rid of this guy. Let's find out something about him, let's see if we can snag him somehow, let's create some opposition research." There were 160 negative articles written about me in 11 days, and they were ramping exponentially. And then after I got fired, there was countless more.

You're not a serial killer, for goodness sake.

No, it's all good. It's no problem, man. It's all good.

I know you, your intentions are noble, even if I don't necessarily agree with you on a few policy issues.

You may not agree with my policies, but here is the other thing, is I don't fit in any one of these boxes, so if you're sitting and you say, "Well how do I feel about the gay marriage movement?" Well, I think gays should have the right to marry. I have been an activist in that area, and have written cheques and spoken out for it, and been a verbal advocate for 15 years. I beat President Obama and Vice President Biden to that. I have gay family members, so they're no different than me. I didn't choose my sexuality, I mean, maybe some people choose it, but my attitude is if you have a sexual preference that's different than mine, you shouldn't be allowed to pursue life, liberty, and happiness alongside of me?

I don't care what anyone's sexuality is, and I mean that in a positive way; it's none of my business.

So my point is, the republicans, some of them really care about that. And I laugh at these guys, I'm like, "You're for a smaller government everywhere in my life except in my bedroom, you want a really larger government, then you guys a bunch of jokers,

it's hypocritical." So for me – and by the way, the Catholic Church is at odds with me at that – I'm a Roman Catholic and they can be at odds at me. Although, I do respect the Pope saying about the gay community, "Who I'm I to judge?" God bless him for saying that.

I'm an atheist, and I respect the Pope. I think he's a good guy, he used to be a bouncer for goodness sake, he's thrown people out of clubs.

He's a good guy. He has a different ideological point of view than me, but I do have an enormous amount of respect for him and his kind-heartedness and who he is as a person.

But that's what fascinating.

My point is I'm all over the place politically, so I couldn't even... someone said, "Well would you ever run for office?" How could I run for office? These guys have a duopoly, they have a protected market. The President is railing on Amazon; he should rail on these two parties. They have created a moat and a protected market for these two parties. And if you want to run as a third party person, you got to get 15,000 signatures in 50 states, and there's all this convoluted filing things.

No chance.

They'll do everything that they can to protect their market, but I don't fit in either box. You asked me about gun control; I get both sides upset with me on gun control. I think we should have a second amendment, but I think we should keep crazy people from getting access to guns.

Which is quite reasonable.

Does that sound unreasonable?

I don't know.

People get crazy.

But without something kind of overly sycophantic, that's what makes you fascinating is that you're unable to be kind of compartmentalised and you would expect with a lot of that thinking that you would be an opponent to President Trump, and yet you were loyal before the election, loyal during, and even now after he's fired you.

Of course, he's a friend of mine.

I know, and that's what interests me, what is it that you see in President Trump that we don't or that his detractors don't, I should say?

He's a good guy. That's what I see. And people get mad at me for saying that.

But if you read the New York Times, he isn't a good guy.

Of course not, because he's against a lot of the things that they're for. So apparently... go on the internet, Google my last name, I'm a horrific human being for what I can tell when I read. You have to do that in our society now. We demonise people, we disfigure them, we two-dimensionalise them. If I'm speaking to you with intellectual reason, then you have to refer to me as a Jersey Shore cast member, you have to refer to me as Tony Goomba. See this will disfigure me, and it will compress me into a racially biased, racially stereotyped, anchored person, and therefore anything coming out of my mouth has to be discredited. One of the first things you learn in trial advocacy is if you're wrong on the facts, hit and hammer the person. Attack the prosecutor or defence attorney, attack the other side, the plaintiff or the defendant, and dehumanise them, and discredit them to the point of view where the jury will still vote your way. Negative campaigning has worked for millennials.

It's depressing though, isn't it?

Well it is, but it works. So Thomas Jefferson called John Adams a hermaphrodite, how would that go on Twitter? He said he had a man's head and a woman's body, and that was one of his epithets when he was hitting him during the election of 1800s, so we've been doing this forever.

Literally from the second president.

Exactly. So for me, first of all, I'm accidentally in politics. Secondly, I have learned a lot about myself. I mean, you can roll my, you know what, in broken glass, and I can stand up. It looks like I'm clotting pretty quickly, there is no problem. I don't care what people say about me. I know what I'm trying to do, and I know where I think the truth is. And by the way, when I'm wrong, I'm also that person can say, "You know I got that wrong. I didn't see it for what it was."

And here is something that also happens, like you're looking at a situation from outside, but if you're in the White House situation room and now you have... let me put it to you this way metaphorically, you see the tip of the iceberg, that's the mainstream media and what's going on about a subject matter in the world, and then, as we know about icebergs, three quarters of it is underneath the water. And so you're now in the White House situation room and you're reading something that's very different is actually going on than is actually being reported in the media. And so all of a sudden now you have to make the decision. I'll give you an example. President Kennedy campaigned in 1960, he said there was a missile gap, and he said that we're well behind the Soviets. And Eisenhower was mad at him because he knew that was not the truth. And when he got the job, he realised that it wasn't the truth. President Trump, he campaigned that he wanted to take people out of Afghanistan, and that he wanted to end these wars, that he doesn't like American men and servicemen being in harm's way. He gets the job, he gets the military intelligence, the CIA intelligence, he adds 4,500 troops. You see what's happening? So it's very hard for me to sit here, I don't want to be the Monday morning

quarterback criticising political figures specifically, but I want to step back in a macro way and say, “Hey, come on guys, this is not working. You can’t do this to the American people, you can’t run up a couple of trillion dollars of deficit spending every year. Let’s tell the people the truth, deficit spending is unfunded tax liability.” And by the way, the bad news of deficit spending it never gets paid back. We still haven’t paid back the deficit spending that we accumulated in the 40s from the war. The only thing that can happen in a society like ours is that we can outgrow the debt so that the percentage of debt is being reduced by the growth in the GDP. And by the way, if we can’t grow, and you continue to deficit spend, you’ll topple the economy. It just will happen. It will happen at a time when you least expect it. Now we have the reserve currency, we’ve got great taxing power, we have a very vibrant economy. We’re not there yet, but boy I’ll tell you, your grandchildren or your great-grandchildren could be in a situation with a 200-300% deficit to the GDP, and then all of a sudden, boom, it flips. And now living standards get wiped out, or you start monetising the debt. When you monetise the debt, that’s okay for people that hold assets because the inflation will the assets rise in value, but if you’re a working class person, you own no assets, they’re monetising the debt, you have 15,000 or 20,000 of savings, it becomes almost worthless. And what you’ve seen in South American countries, or other countries that have gone through this process, the rich do very, very well and the poor and middle class get annihilated. Do we want that in our society? I don’t want that, I want to take care... the best neighbours are the ones that will take care of the people around them. I don’t want to live in a barbed wire compound with a McMansion in the centre with security everywhere for me and my family, because I’m wealthy, and I’m a have, and there are people outside the compound that are have-nots. Who wants to do that? We’ve got to fix the problems, guys.

A couple of my friends who live in in South Africa live in gated communities like that.

They have to live like that because they’ve made decisions through policy that they’re not going to create some level of evenness. They do not live like that in Singapore, they do not live like that in places like Dubai.

They don’t live like that in Milton Keynes, where I’m from.

Okay, exactly. And so what you have to do is you have to create some level of fairness in these policies. By the way – some of your listeners are not going to like me saying this and they’ll say, “Oh, that’s Conservative pabulum that he’s saying.” But it’s not, it’s an axiomatic fact.

We’ve already had a load of grief just for having you on.

Yes, taking incoming. You’re taking, “Who is this loser? His 15 minutes of fame are...” I’ve heard every robotic Twitter account...

Why are you giving this a platform for?

Yes, why are you giving him a platform, his 15 minutes of fame are up, blah, blah, blah. I mean, every Twitter, robotic troll I've heard everything. But listen to me on this: there are no equal outcomes. There just aren't. And you can go through 5,500 years of history, you can study every political system, you can study every political ideology, and there's just not going to be equal outcomes. And whether you're an atheist or not an atheist, something that's very axiomatic about the bible in the Old Testament, what was said in the bible that the rich and poor will always be among us. And when you stop and think about it, there is an unfortunate truth to that, and it's been on display for the last 5,500 years. Let's not kid ourselves, if we in-vote communism in the United States tonight and we said everyone is going to have an equal outcome, there still wouldn't have equal outcomes. There would be black markets, there would be people angling to get closer to the government that's making these decisions. I was in Cuba a couple of years ago. Where do the Castro's live, where do you think they live? They live in a beach villa compound surrounded by security, where the average person is obviously not doing as well as the Castro's. No equal outcomes. So to me, what the government should be trying to do is create equal opportunity. What the government should probably do is try to create an equal start. I didn't pick my family of birth, I don't think you did; maybe we did cosmically and were not aware of it. But I'm just saying from what I can, I didn't pick the body that I'm in, I didn't pick the people I came from. And by the way, if I grew up in a richer family, that's not as fair, it's more fair than growing up in a poor family, all this sort of nonsense. So life is therefore unfair, but the government can make it slightly more fair, they can make it slightly more equal, but they'll never make it completely equal. It doesn't work that way. It just hasn't, and it won't. So we have to think about it from that point of view, if they're socially reverse engineered from that point of view.

What's going to happen after Trump, whether Muller gets him, whether he gets re-elected, and he has to stand down after eight years, it'll come a point when he's at the inauguration of another president. Do you see that society is moving in a direction where we'll have another maverick, there might be a Democrat, or do you think it will return to almost business as usual?

Good question. I don't know the answer to that, but I'm hoping that it doesn't return to business as usual. I think the big fear for the swamp monsters is that Trump represents the barbarian at the gate that knocks the gate down, and has now opened the door way for successful entrepreneurs and business CEOs to seek the American presidency, so they don't like that. Imagine Jeff Bezos as the American president, the guy is worth 100 plus billion dollars, he doesn't care about the lobbying system, he doesn't care about the business self-dealing and all that back-scratching, he'd probably would just want to serve the American people. Now, I may not have his ideology, he maybe too left-leaning for me, but I'm just saying, if you look at him as a guy objectively, he's one of those guys in that blank area that can't be bought, and he's not going to be controlled by them. And so, they're super fearful. Their goal right now, on both sides frankly, is to demolish the president. Let me hit this guy so hard that he will think twice about entering this arena again. And so that means they tried to do that to me. Here is what the media does and those political operatives, they'll smash you so hard, they want you to sit in that corner over there, they build a shame box for you, "Hey Anthony, here is the dunce cap, go sit in the shame box, put the dunce cap on and stare in the corner, we don't want to hear from

you again.” Okay, you’ve got to grow up though. That’s not me, that’s not the President. But that’s what they’re trying to do, because you’re asking a really good question. If another guy comes in, it could be a left-leaning billionaire, it could be it doesn’t matter, but he’s a maverick like Trump, he’s going to be more disruptive to that system. So the great irony of the whole thing is they thought they were going to get him down there, they were going to corral him, do all the slow roll things that they do to homogenise you into their swamp, and they have found themselves being co-opted by him as opposed to him being co-opted by them. So it just shows you the strength of his personality. And by the way, you asked me what he’s like as a person, I think he’s a very well-intended person, I’ve seen in private meetings, I see the way his kids love him, and his grandkids love him. But he’s one tough S.O.B.. I mean, this guy is probably one of the toughest people that I have met, in terms of he doesn’t care about anything, he’s a steamroller. He won’t care what you think of him. Trust me.

Why do you think he’s doing it then? It fascinates me.

Why is he president?

Yes.

I don’t know. He toyed with it for 30 plus years. When he told me he was running for president, I laughed. I was in his office the day after the apprentice finale, I’m sitting there across the table from him, he says he’s running for president. I was like, “You’re not going to run for president.” He said, “I don’t know, I’m running for president.” I said, “I’m watching FOX news last night, you’re 2% in the polls.” He goes, “Yes, yes, yes that’s because people are like you, they think I’m not running, they think it’s a publicity stunt. When I announce that I’m running for president, I’m going to shoot right to the top of the polls, and I’m going to stay there until I win the presidency.” Well, you know what, he was right, I was wrong. Because look at what happened, he kept his lead in the Republican Party nomination process the whole way. He had a couple of losses, obviously, nobody wins every single states primary, and certainly with the Governor in Ohio, John Kasich, he won that primary, but he really demolished these guys. I mean, he took them right off the field. And so, why is he doing it, I think he looked at his life and said, okay, I’ve excelled as a business leader, a real estate developer, I’ve excelled as a media personality, remember he had a radio show, he used to call it to FOX and Friends...

He used to call in to Howard Stern all the time.

He used to have great funny conversations with Howard, and then he had The Apprentice for 15 years. And so people who are questioning this guys intelligence, you guys should snap out of it. This guy has excelled at everything that he’s done, he went from zero as a business executive, zero political experience, as an elected official at least, to the American presidency in 17 months.

Out of thin air.

Yes. If you don't want to give him credit, don't give him credit, then you're not acknowledging what's he's doing. When he cuts the deal with the North Koreans and they agree to denuclearise the peninsula, which will help us reduce our troop force activity on the DMZ, and there's actually not just a truce between the South Koreans but a peace treaty, and who knows even a possible unification down the road. There are still families that are split by that DMZ. What are people going to say? I'm old enough to remember them railing on Ronald Reagan, and now 30 years later they reflect back on Ronald Reagan and say, "Okay, the guy was trying to keep the peace. He was trying to do the right thing."

It seems to me that the institutions of the political parties seem to have been blind-sided by President Trump's election, the conventional wisdom that he was never going to get elected, so they didn't take him seriously. That brings me to the point I wanted to make is that even now his opponents don't seem to take him seriously. Someone once said to me there's an adage that his opponents take him literally but not seriously, and his supporters take him seriously but not literally. And that fascinates me, because I don't know anyone in my entire life of any side that's changed their mind about Donald Trump, ever. You either think he's great, and you largely support him, don't agree with him on everything but you think he's a good guy, or you think he's an asshole that might have got a few things right, but he's an asshole and he needs to go.

Yes.

I don't think... it seems to be so polarised.

He could be a great guy and an asshole! Am I right? Am I wrong?

I don't know the guy.

Well, that's because you're not a New Yorker! We've got a lot of New Yorkers that have both of those qualities. And I'm probably also speaking for myself. I mean, I can sometimes be tough. Listen, at the end of the day, you're 100% right about that, he's polarising, and they're entrenched, and they're making that mistake of taking him for granted. But I predict by 2020 they will not make the mistake of taking him for granted. But where they will make the mistake, is that they'll probably go with a very left-leaning person who won't win.

Like a Bernie Sanders type person?

Somebody like that. Because the parties have gotten so cuckoo that the people that are voting in these primaries are very left leaning. We're living out of the story that Secretary Clinton, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, and Donna Brazile rigged the system against Bernie Sanders; he would've gotten way more votes and he would have gotten much closer to the nomination – I'm not necessarily saying he would have won the nomination – but it would have been a lot closer and a lot tougher of a fight for her.

I was involved in elective politics in my hometown of York, and they were stitch-ups within the Labour party there for a local council seat with 9,000 voters in a ward. So, it does happen.

Yes. So they rigged the Democratic Party's nomination system, and that actually cost Hillary the election. Let me explain to your listeners why. Because if you looked at the crossover vote in 2008 of then Senator Clinton's votes for then candidate Barack Obama, he picked up 67% of her voters, and that led him to the presidency. And so, even though there were Hillary supporters that were disappointed that Barack Obama won the nomination, two thirds of them went with Barack Obama. Most of the others didn't vote, they just created voter apathy. In her case with Bernard Sanders, only about 27% crossed over, so a lot of these young people said, "Okay, the system is rigged, I'm disaffecting." And so, in a weird way, had those people participated congruent to then Senator Clinton to Barack Obama, then Candidate Obama, she would have won. And so the great irony is now...

The only thing I knew for certain on election night is that it was obvious Hillary Clinton was going to win.

Yes. A lot of people thought that. I got to tell you, our team thought that. I left the FOX news decision desk meeting, I was anchoring Wall Street Week for them at the time, and they said that they were going to the race early for her. And so I was getting ready for a loss, but by 10:30 it became clear that we were going to win. But listen, thank God we won, because he's deregulating the economy. I tell my liberal friends that get very upset with me, "You're 16 months into his presidency, really point out the one thing that he's done that's so horrific," and they want to go to the EPA and they want to go to the greenhouse gas emissions and the Paris Accord. But then when you really study the Paris Accord, it's more about political symbolism than it is actually affecting the climate. And so I think he's going to be very clever there as well. I think he's going to try to structure something. He knows that he needs clean air and clean water. And we can debate whether or not there's global warming. I can give you my opinion. I'm not a scientist but I think humans are causing global warming. I'm one of the Conservatives that believes that. I can't look you straight in the face and say we're causing 100% of it. Maybe 20% of it is caused by where we are in position of the sun at this point in our movement in history, and maybe there's some solar activity that's affecting it as well. I don't know. But if you said to me, "Who's causing it," I'd say we're probably two-thirds to 80%, and so we should fix it.

That'll do it for me.

Okay.

The scientific consensus is there.

Okay, so but even if we're not causing it, let's say that we're all wrong just like people thought the world was flat, and we're all wrong and none of us are causing it, you still got to have clear air and you still have to have clean water.

I don't want to put all my trash into landfill, I'd rather recycle.

That's my point, what I'm trying to say. Okay, so let's say you're a die-hard climate denier or whatever you want to call it, you still have to go for a situation of carbon-free emission and carbon-free energy. I believe that you have to do that. You want to breathe the air in Beijing? Or how about the air in London? Did you read that article this week about the air London? It's disgusting. So is that what we want to do to our kids?

It's not bad. I work during the day in London and it is breathable. But I did move out of London a few years ago.

Okay, but whatever, I'm just saying it's cleaner probably on the farm that you have than it is in the city. Let's make it cleaner. I'm going to tell you this quick story. I know it's a little bit of a segue, but I want you to see my thinking. I'm at Washington and Lee University. That's Robert E Lee and George Washington, one of the oldest universities in our country, which is a baby in your country, but it's an old university here. The funny part of it is, there were 26 students on the speakers committee. They wanted somebody to keynote the parent-teacher weekend. And the kids wanted me and the administration didn't. Okay, but I went down there and I spoke, and I think I did reasonably well. But I'm standing at the altar in this church and behind me is a portrait of Robert E Lee and George Washington. And the kid raises his hand and says, "We're named after Washington and Lee. They were slaveholders, and slavery is obviously a very, very bad thing. Should we bring those two portraits and bring them down, burn the portraits and change the name of the university?"

All the founding fathers had slaves, did they not?

I don't know if all of them did. Maybe some of the northern ones didn't, I'm not sure. But let me put it to you this way, the Virginians did, whether it was Washington, Madison, Jefferson, they all did. But back on this point, I looked at the kid and I said, "Listen, we're now going to take the prism of our morality and our society and we're going to look back through that prism and we're going to judge these people and their morals." I said, "Well shame on us when in three or four hundred years they do that to us. Because let me tell you something, you sir, young student, you're a horrific person. I'm going to tell you why. Because in 500 years, people are going to look at the period of time that we're living in as the very dirty, grimy period of time where we had a huge frat party with the Earth's atmosphere, we blew up with all these emissions, you're driving around in a car, you're flying around in a plane, as am I, and they're going to want to take a statue down of you. Because they're going to say, 'Why did this person do so much destruction to the Earth during that period of time, when these people have figured out through great technology how to create this energy without the emissions and the refuse that has been created?'" And my point is, and again I'm not an apologist for slavery, God forbid, and certainly my family wasn't even in the country when it was going on. But I'm just saying to you that there was 5,000 plus years of bondage somewhere in the world. It doesn't excuse it at all.

Of course.

But to rip up our history or try to sanitise our history or remove statues and portraits, it doesn't reflect honesty and objectivity, and some day somebody's going to do it to us.

And I think the process of that reframing is actually quickening because you only have to look at movies from 20 years ago where high jinks, sexual high jinks, were happening. People were being filmed surreptitiously.

That's why he's President. You've just explained in three sentences why Donald J Trump is President. Because the natural order of things, the thought police and the sanitation of our language and the sanitation of our interactions sexually and what's appropriate and what isn't, and who's judging all this stuff, the average person is saying, "Hey, this is a bunch of nonsense." Okay, this political correctness and the syntax and verbiage of political correctness, doesn't make people politically correct. Okay, it may make you feel safe for the two minutes that you're with the person, but it's not really how people interact or operate with each other.

It's so-called virtue signalling, as they call it.

Yes, yes. It's stupid. So you can have your safe zones and you can have, "Geez, he micro-aggressed me," and that's fine. But now what's going to end up happening, you're going to lose a large part of the intellectual conversation. I went to a school called Tufts University up in Boston. They've decided, because they're super liberal up there, they want nothing to do with me. Okay, totally fine. I don't mind. You guys are saving me a lot of money and my state a lot of money. I'll make the donations to other places and other schools. But if that's what you want to do, you're going to narrow down your skillset of your people and you're going to narrow down the way people think. And one point I'm going to make about the First Amendment that I think is very important, forget about the freedom of the press and the rigorous debate that you need to have to protect the society from people in power. What First Amendment does in that freedom is it empowers our youth, it makes them more creative, it makes them more innovative, it makes them stronger as people to battle out the ideas. You tell a first grader that they have free press and they can rail on the President, they're going to grow up and invent Facebook, they're going to grow up and invent Apple computer. All of these amazing companies get invented here. They don't get invented in autocratic nations where you have no freedom of press. In fact, those nations have to steal our intellectual property because they've so narrowly banded down their people in terms of what's appropriate to do and what isn't, that you lose that mischievousness, you lose that disruptive quality.

Wanting to hustle.

Yes, that energises and creates innovation. And so, the free press in our society has so many different ancillary benefits. And so, if you want to be politically correct and you want to tame everybody and you want to tell... you know, you have to talk to women in a certain way and women have to talk to men in a certain way and I'm saying to you, and by the way you don't agree with me on this issue. Well, let's take

an example. I don't agree with people that are against gay marriage. But I'm like, "Okay, you have your point of view." You know what I mean?

Obama said, "We can disagree without being disagreeable."

Yes, exactly. Yes. So my point is let's have the rigorous debate. I laugh at this guys on the left. They don't want to debate me. Why not? Let's have the debate. I'm open to hearing your point of view. And, by the way, you may change my mind. One of the coolest things about me going to law school, and John Kennedy once said this, I really want to study the opposition. There are super smart people that oppose me. Let's hear what they have to say. Maybe I'll change my mind or maybe they'll make my argument stronger.

And what advice would you give opponents of Donald Trump in terms of if they're going to stop this complacency, get their act together and oppose him properly? There's the old saying from The Godfather, "Never hate your enemies, it clouds your judgement." And I do sense that the people that don't like the President, they're so consumed with hatred.

Yes, I know.

I'm not a fan of the President, I admit that, but I can see that we're undermining our ability to oppose him properly in some ways.

Well, I'm Italian and I've read The Godfather three times. I think you got to have a little tiny bit of hate for your enemies. Trust me, sometimes I'm tired in the morning and I'm like, "Oh God," and then I think about some of these guys that hate me, I pop right out of bed. You know what I mean? So to have a little tiny bit of hatred doesn't hurt too much. And I say that with my tongue in my cheek. But what I would say to the President's adversaries, the main thing I would say is that you're probably not going to beat him, but if you want to beat him you're going about it the wrong way. You got to do what they did in PA 18. I can't remember the kid's name. Connor Lamb, I think the kid's name was. I'm not saying you put him up, but you have to put up someone older that's like a Connor Lamb. He's a gun-toting Democrat that is in touch with blue-collar people and is in touch with the survivorship of the blue-collar people. See, the problem is the left, they moved away from their traditional base of labour, they moved away from the traditional base of blue-collar people. They were focused on transgender bathrooms and equalisation in the military and all of this sort of social engineering. And just like I said, there are no equal outcomes, social engineering doesn't work. We're going to do what we do. Read Lord of the Flies, you end up doing what you do. So I would go after the President with somebody that's a little bit more conservative, and they're probably going to go after the President with somebody that's very liberal. And he's going to annihilate them and win by a landslide.

Would you ever go back into politics? I wouldn't vote for Donald Trump in a million years, but I would vote for you. I like you.

Yes. Well, you wouldn't. You actually wouldn't vote for me because...

I would.

No, they would put so much opposition research up and they would

Kill those guys!

They'd roll me in glass, blah, blah. But here's the problem, the reason why you like me, we're having a very open, honest conversation, is the reason why I couldn't be in politics, okay? Because when I came off the podium after the press conference, one of my buddies that does opposition party research of Republicans said, "You're dead." I said, "I'm dead?" He goes, "Yes, you're totally dead." He says, "You can't say that much truth from the podium. You got to be on spin." You like me because I'm on rinse cycle. Washington is on spin cycle. See the difference? Okay, so I'm on rinse cycle, so yes, I relate to this guy. They will annihilate me in a situation. The only way I could ever run – first of all I'm trying to stay married, so I hope to God I can stay married – okay, but the only way I could ever run is if the society moved, and they said, "Wait a minute, we've really got to fix the problems, and we're not tolerating this sanitised language any more, we're not tolerating this political consultant speak, and we really need people to turn the lights on in the kitchen, stamp out the cockroaches, build roach traps and fix the problems." If they had a situation like that, then somebody like me could run. But I don't see that happening, you know? But I'll tell you what, if I end up running you can be my campaign manager, because with that accent, in my country, you can go anywhere. Okay, you know what I mean?

Right.

You can't run for President because you weren't born here, but with that accent, boy, if I had that accent I'd be worth like multiple billions of dollars.

Could I be Vice President?

No, I don't think you can because you secede to the President. But, I'm just telling you, that accent, I'm giving you five stars for that accent.

Thank you very much! Last couple of questions then because this has been hugely enjoyable but we've recorded quite a lot already. Let's go back to those 11 days then.

Yes.

Give us the kind of précis of when you went in, 11 days, when you went out.

The President called me on Thursday, he said, "You're going to come in and you're going to help me fire these people. These guys are leaking on me and I need somebody to help me do that. I'm distracted by this other stuff." And I said, "It's okay, no problem." He says, "But you got to get me some evidence." So by Monday I was showing him a Carrie Mathison evidence of what these guys were doing to him. And

then once we figured out what they were doing to him, then I had the permission to make a move on them, which I did. And, like I said, I handled it like a business executive.

I applaud that.

So that's why I created a lot of smoke and fire. And then you have to remember the guy that I was talking to that wrote that article in The New Yorker...

I think a lot of people felt sorry for you when he did that.

Yes, but did he really need to do that as a journalist? He knew that I was talking to him off the record. No one should ever feel sorry for me, by the way, I've had a great life. But, I'm just saying, did he need to do that? His father, Frank Lizza, worked with my dad for 50 years in construction on Long Island. He was an Italian-American from a neighbourhood next to my neighbourhood. Did he need to do that to me? I said to him, "Why do we have to be so transactional? Why can't we have a longer-term relationship?" But I would've been fired anyway. That's the thing that people are missing, okay? I was not going to be able to cohabitate in the President's staff with John Kelly. That was not going to happen. He wasn't going to let somebody like me, I'm too iconoclastic and too much of an entrepreneur, I'm not a military guy. I'd have no problem working for him and working under him, but you can see by the way he's running the White House that there was no way he was going to allow a guy like me to be there. So I would've been fired anyway. But my point is, I made the mistake, I owned up to the mistake, I got fired so it cost me my job so I'm obviously very accountable for it. You don't see me ever walking away from it or excusing it. I always own it. And it happened, it is what it is.

I think the journalist who did that, not to condemn him because clearly I don't know the details of it, but I think the one thing that I would say is he's clearly, although that was a huge scoop and he got a scalp, he'd have been better off, selfishly, I think, and practically, not saying the contents of that conversation. Because he then would've had a friend as White House communications director for many years feeding him stories.

No, he made a choice to be more transactional than to build the long-term relationship with me. That was his prerogative. He could do that. I didn't say in the recording, "This is off the record, this is off the record," and so, he said, "I got you. You didn't say it was off the record." And so he thought that was the appropriate behaviour.

It feels a bit unsportsmanlike, a bit technical.

Yes, of course, please. Howie Kurtz has been in Washington for 40 years and he'd never seen anybody do that to a White House official. Okay, so he did it. I own it, got fired, moving on. It's like the famous press release when Barry Diller lost Paramount. They won, we lost. Next. That was the press release, okay? I love that. At the end of the day it is what it is, and I'm not going to sit here and opine about it. I don't need much therapy over it. It's done. But here's the thing I would say, it cost him.

I don't know the guy and I don't know the ins and outs of it.

Yes, well, whatever, I'm giving you my opinion.

Yes, of course.

Yes.

What was it like stood at the podium? I know that sounds kind of a bit of an inane question but there's a mock-up of the White House press briefing room at Madame Tussaud's and I stood at that and gave a fake briefing five, 10 ten years ago and I got a bit nervous even in a fake situation. What was that like? It's the dream job.

Some people get nervous and some people don't get nervous in a situation like that. That's not me. I don't get nervous in a situation like that. My attitude is, do the best I can to answer the questions. The questions I don't know the answer to I'll say, "I don't know." And the questions that I don't want to answer, that are hypotheticals, I'll say, "They're hypotheticals." But I had no problem. I didn't get briefed beforehand. I stood at the podium and answered, tried to answer, everybody's questions. My attitude is, 15 years ago I probably would've been more nervous, but after all the television time that I've had and all of the rigorous debate that I've gone through in my life I didn't really think it was that big of a deal. But, having said that, it's a hard job. Sarah, I think, does a great job but it is a very hard job and I can see...

She reminds me of a kind of stern school matron, like, not take any crap.

Yes, truth of the matter is, I think that's the hardest job in Washington, if not the world. You're in a fishbowl all day and you're taking incoming. And I'm very, very... I don't want to say that I'm proud of her. That sounds like I'm talking down to her. I'm very happy with how well she's done in that job.

What's the litmus test in terms of you're quite recognisable now, you're walking down the street, do half of the people say jerk and the other half say legend?

Well, people are generally pretty polite. The ones that think I'm a jerk, they usually ask for a selfie, okay? So I'm cool with it. It's fine.

I'd ask for a selfie today but I need my hair cutting and I couldn't put it out for me. I'd have to ...

No, but that hair makes me think that you're worth a billion dollars because that's how they wear their hair in Silicon Valley.

Very briefly then, what's next? And I know there was talk of the Scaramucci Post and you popping up as a pundit?

So I was going to start a news organisation called the Scaramucci Post. But the problem is my deal to sell SkyBridge Capital never fully materialised. So, from a compliance point of view, I couldn't really do that. And so I've got that on hold right now. We're just focusing on the opioid crisis on that website. And we probably will do something charitable there to raise awareness, but also build some treatment centres and do some things there where I think it's a huge problem in our country, and we have to figure out a way to save these people from this disease. And, by the way, I think unfortunately, I come from a family that has drug addiction issues, and it's a disease, and we have to help these people. So I'm going to be working on that. I'm back at SkyBridge Capital running the business with my team. I expect us to have great growth there. I've been invited to do some television and radio, and so I'm doing that. Could I end up having my own show at some point? That's possible. I'm open to it, but it'd have to be the right show with the right format.

Come and do this podcast with me.

Yes, come do your podcast! The other thing is, would I run for office? I would say absolutely not. I'm not a politician, so I'm not saying it the way these jerk-off politicians do. They say they're not running, like Elizabeth Warren is obviously running but she's saying she's not running, but she's got \$18 million that she built into her war chest. I'm not a politician. You know what I mean? But, having said that, 10 years from now who knows? Who knows what the world will bring.

Anthony, there's tons more questions for you, but unfortunately we're out of metaphorical tape. Thank you ever so much for your time.

Hey, great being here.

Good to talk to you.

Great to be on here, Paul. Thank you.