

# [***Impeachment Hearing Turns Into Sparring Match; Chairman Comer On GOP's Biden Impeachment Evidence; Interview With Rep. James Comer (R-KY); Former President Trump Faces Massive Bond Deadline On Monday; Trump Just Hours Away From Potential Asset Seizure; SCOTUS Sets Trump Immunity Argument For April 25th; Some Republicans Campaigning Against Fellow GOP; America Uneasy As Global Conflict Worsens; Doubt Lingers On Economy Heading Into November; Global Survey Reveals America Unhappier Than Ever***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BMR-P6H1-F072-X0KW-00000-00&context=1516831)

Fox News SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA 9:00 PM EST

March 24, 2024 Sunday

Copyright 2024 Fox News Network LLC All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Domestic

**Length:** 6471 words

**Byline:** Trey Gowdy, Jennifer Griffin, Ashley Strohmier

**Guests:** James Comer, Andrew Cherkasky, John Yoo, Olivia Beavers, Stephen Moore, Anita Phillips

**Body**

MARK LEVIN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: What exactly are you trying to do to the middle class in this country?

Man up and explain yourself in plain English without garbling your words.

I'll see you next time on "Life, Liberty & Levin."

TREY GOWDY, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Good evening and thank you for joining us. I'm Trey Gowdy and it is SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

Are we in the era of dueling impeachments? The era wherein whichever party controls the House seeks to remove a president from the other party. And is there a double standard when it comes to congressional investigations?

Eric Swalwell is now a coroner if you will, a medical examiner displaying his version of a death certificate from the Biden impeachment probe. It is the same Eric Swalwell, who for years performed CPR on the Russia's collusion investigation on a daily basis. The same Eric Swalwell who badgered witnesses and leaked to the press and usurped the duly elected president, and the media never challenged him.

The media never challenged Adam Schiff, when he invented a whole new category of evidence and then never produced it.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. ADAM SCHIFF (D-CA): There is more than circumstantial evidence now. So again, I think --

CHUCK TODD, MSNBC: You have seen direct evidence of collusion?

SCHIFF: I don't want to go into the specifics, but I will say that there is evidence that is not circumstantial, and is very much worthy of investigation.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: Schiff was wrong about Russia. He was wrong about FISA. He was wrong about the Steele dossier and he pursued two failed impeachments and his punishment for those failures was the undying adoration of the DC media coupled with the Democratic nomination for US Senate.

So much for consequences.

Impeachment is tantamount to the political death penalty, but the investigation and trial more often resemble a chaotic carnival.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. JAMES COMER (R-KY): The chair has ruled. The chair has ruled.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What are you -- what are you afraid of, Mr. Chairman?

REP. JASMINE CROCKETT (D-TX): So far in this hearing, it has felt like the worst episode of "The Apprentice." I'm sure you're familiar with that show.

It seems like my colleagues and maybe you and some others are trying to become the next vice president.

REP. CORI BUSH (D-MO): . wasting all of our time, our hours and hours and hours going down fake rabbit holes and amplifying baseless conspiracies.

REP. JARED MOSKOWITZ (D-FL): This is a show. It's all fake.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: Make no mistake, the chaos is intentional and it is coordinated between House Democrats and their defenders in the fourth estate. House Democrats disrupt while the DC media minimizes GOP investigations.

Democrat investigations, on the other hand, are treated like the College of Cardinals. They demand to know when the GOP will move forward with impeachment.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MOSKOWITZ: I mean, let's just do the impeachment. I mean, why continue to waste millions of dollars of the taxpayers money if we're going to impeach because you believe you've shown he's committed a high crime and misdemeanor. What are you waiting on?

Let's just do it. I mean, by the way, we've got Chairman Jordan here also, it is the double chairmen. Why aren't you guys calling for the vote in your committee? When is it going to happen?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: But they didn't seem to mind when Nancy Pelosi took weeks to simply transmit Articles of Impeachment from the House to the Senate. It took her weeks to walk a couple hundred steps from one side of the Capitol to the other.

So we're left to wonder whether impeachment has become Washington's version of Dueling Banjos, and if the reason Americans have such a dim view of the media is because the media never met a Republican investigation that should begin or a Democrat investigation that should end.

Joining us now is House Oversight Chairman James Comer.

Welcome, Mr. Chairman. Where does the impeachment inquiry stand?

What witnesses are left for you to examine?

REP. JAMES COMER (R-KY): Well, right now we want to hear from Joe Biden, because what we've heard is three former business associates who have all testified under oath that Joe Biden was a central figure in the family's influence peddling schemes.

Trey, what we have proven and the Democrats will not dispute nor will the media dispute is the fact that the Biden family was influence peddling. The Biden family did not have a single legitimate business. The Biden family did not provide one single hour of work for the tens of millions of dollars they received from our enemies around the world. That is Influence Peddling 101.

I will go further, the Biden family didn't pay a penny of taxes on the $28 million they received from our adversaries around the world, but the problem that Joe Biden has is three business associates have testified that Joe Biden was the central figure in their influence peddling schemes.

Now what the Democrats were saying in that hearing, oh, we'll go ahead and impeach, go and impeach, they want an impeachment, Trey, because they know the Senate is not going to do anything.

I want to hold to account -- hold the Biden family accountable, and I believe the best way to hold the Biden family accountable is through criminal referrals. We've proven many crimes were committed, the Democrats aren't disputing that the president's son and brother committed crimes. What they're disputing is that Joe Biden was involved in the schemes, that's why we given Joe Biden an opportunity to come before the committee to explain himself.

GOWDY: President Biden sat down for an interview with Special Counsel Rob Hur that did not turn out all that well for him. Do you plan on inviting him to sit down for a transcribed interview? Do you want to send questions to him? Do you want to send questions to his lawyer? How do you propose to get answers from him?

COMER: Well, we're going to send him some questions. We're definitely going to do that, but we're going to give him an opportunity. If he wants to come in front of the House Oversight Committee, he has an open invitation, but he better be doing it quickly.

If he wants to come sit down for a transcribed interview, I will bring the Oversight staff to the White House, and we will conduct that transcribed interview. It's his choice.

But if he does not come forward and answer for himself, then we're going to have to believe the testimony of Bobulinski, Galanis, and Archer, who all testified that Joe Biden was a central figure. Joe Biden met with all of these people.

Joe Biden has lied dozens of times about his knowledge of, participation in, and benefit from his family's influence peddling schemes, and that's not going to play well for Joe Biden moving forward, when we enter the real accountability phase of this investigation.

GOWDY: Chairman, you mentioned criminal referrals. Those referrals would be to a DOJ that is run by Merrick Garland put in place by Joe Biden. Do you expect those criminal referrals to be in addition to impeachment articles or in lieu of impeachment articles?

COMER: Well, that's a decision that leadership is going to have to make. But again, you know, the fact that the Senate isn't it going to take impeachment seriously at all, just like they've not taken the Merrick Garland impeachment seriously, I think is evidence that if we want to hold him accountable, we're going to have to focus on the Department of Justice.

And if the Merrick Garland Department of Justice will not hold this family accountable, then maybe if Trump wins president, then a Trey Gowdy Department of Justice can hold this family accountable for the wrongdoing. That's one of my hopes there, Trey.

GOWDY: Chairman, my wife cannot live on the salary that the attorney general makes, but thank you. Thank you for saying that.

I love being a prosecutor, but I also love working for Fox because I get to talk to you. Thank you for spending some time with us on a Sunday night all the best to you and your beloved state of Kentucky.

COMER: Thank you, Trey.

GOWDY: Former President Trump has until tomorrow to find nearly half a billion dollars for an appeal bond in a New York civil fraud case; otherwise, he runs the risk the state of New York will start seizing assets.

Joining us to survey the legal landscape are former federal prosecutor Andrew Cherkasky and former Deputy Assistant Attorney General John Yoo.

Andrew, the justice system is different, should be different. It used to be different and that even opponents are entitled to due process and fundamental fairness. Half a billion dollar judgment and a case with no financial loss and no real victim to some of us seems personal and punitive.

Are we missing something? Is there something that justifies that amount, which is really tantamount to the business death penalty for Donald Trump?

ANDREW CHERKASKY, FORMER FEDERAL PROSECUTOR: There is not, and the Appellate Division's credibility ultimately depends on how they act on the stay that Trump's team has filed with it, right now looking for some sort of stay or relief from this astronomical judgment and the requirement to pay it by Monday.

The defense team has actually gone forward and given the appellate court all the rationale they need. First of all, the state allows for exceptions to be made. The courts have made those exceptions in the past and they've made it in cases of far less gravity or amounts than we have in this case.

They talk about the likelihood of success on appeal. They go through all sorts of issues with the calculations and accounting that Judge Engoron did and then finally they hit on the Eighth Amendment, and the fact that this amount of fine, this amount of penalty from a state is so astronomically higher than any sort of calculation that you can put forward to show actual damages here where there are actually no actual damages.

So I think that there are very solid grounds for the appellate court to give relief and I think that they have to do it, and I hope that they don't do that right down to the wire.

GOWDY: Professor, the news was a little better for the former president in Georgia. Nathan Wade is off the case. The judge is allowing the defense to appeal his decision to leave Fani Willis on the case.

What do you think will happen on appeal? And is the timing of this trial indefinitely pushed beyond November because of this?

JOHN YOO, FORMER DEPUTY ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL: It's hard to see how this case gets to a verdict before November given that we haven't even started any real proceedings in front of a jury. But the more important thing is where all Justice Department former employees, and we all know that the department prosecutors have to have the highest integrity, and they've got to have even higher integrity if they're going to go after a president for the first time in history and bring massive RICO charges against a presidential re-election campaign, which is an exercise of First Amendment rights, because ultimately, prosecutors and the legal system can't succeed, can't maintain law and order unless they have the confidence and the cooperation of the public.

If the public sees prosecutors engaging in hanky-panky and money business, and sometimes seem to be lying to the court on TV in front of everybody, then we have to be worried whether the prosecutors have the integrity necessary.

GOWDY: All right, this is for both of you.

We'll start with you, Professor and then Andrew. The presidential immunity case is pending before the Supreme Court. I mean, he won the Colorado case. He did the impossible, it was nine to nothing. What do you think is going to happen with the presidential immunity case? Because I doubt that it's going to be nine to zip.

We'll start with you, Professor and then you, Andrew.

YOO: Actually, Trey, I wouldn't bet against you. You have a good track record.

I actually think it might be nine to zip, but it might be nine to zip against President Trump, and the reason I say that is all the precedents, all the past decisions seem to run against Trump. I don't think the court is likely to say presidents have immunity from federal criminal prosecution, but people should keep in mind, immunity just means Trump doesn't even have to show up and appear. He still has a lot of arguments he can make against the charges themselves about whether this is really fraud. I don't think it is. Whether this is really interfering with a congressional process, I'm not sure it is.

Whether Trump took away everyone's voting rights in the whole country, that I definitely don't think. He will still be able to make those important constitutional legal arguments even if when he loses immunity.

GOWDY: Andrew, what do you think? I mean, look, the line between an official act and a personal act. I mean, I didn't think the oral argument went well for Trump's lawyers in the DC Court of Appeals, but what do you think?

CHERKASKY: Well, I'm going to disagree with John on this one. I actually think that there is a good case for the Supreme Court to grant at least some degree of immunity here.

This is a case of first impression. No president has ever been prosecuted criminally before. We do have some precedent that talks about the outer perimeter of the presidency, and that being a guideline for the idea of immunity.

Now, the DC Circuit Court totally ignored that and just straight said that the president doesn't enjoy immunity. That seems to suggest the opposite of what we see all the time that government actors have a certain degree of immunity.

So if the court gives the outer perimeter standard to Donald Trump, then how do you define what that looks like? That's going to be the difficulty for the Supreme Court because this decision is going to go forward for hundreds of years as precedent on how to prosecute presidents.

And so how that line is drawn? I think it's very tricky to say that the engagement of a president in the legitimacy or the sanctity of voting doesn't have to do with foreign interactions or foreign policies, which is an Article I function of the presidency, it is very difficult to say.

So I actually think the Supreme Court is going to set up a guideline for what the immunity looks like, and I think it's going to be relatively far down the line and they're not going to get into the ***politics*** of deciding what is and is not a presidential act versus a personal act.

GOWDY: Members of Congress should listen to both of you, two highly esteemed lawyers drawing different conclusions, but doing so with such civility and grace.

Thank you for doing that on a Sunday night. Thank you for loaning us your expertise. I have a feeling we'll be talking again real soon.

YOO: Thanks, Trey.

CHERKASKY: Thanks, Trey.

GOWDY: Up next, the Speaker of the House has children which is a good thing, probably prepared him to deal with the GOP conference as they began to fight with one another.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

Do you remember the old days when we might be fighting with our siblings in the back of the car and our parents would turn around and tell us to knock it off. Speaker Mike Johnson is waging that same battle, but the people in the back of his car aren't listening. They're trying to throw one another out of the car.

The GOP conference looks like the waiting room for a marriage and family counselor, since a small group of Republicans made then candidate for Speaker Kevin McCarthy's life miserable in exchange for well, nothing.

And then in October, a gang of eight joined arms with Democrats to oust McCarthy and replace him with Mike Johnson, and not much has changed except more bitterness and acrimony within the conference.

Members are actively campaigning against fellow Republicans, members criticize one another publicly, which may be why members skipped a GOP retreat designed to discuss how to govern, to instead go campaign against current colleagues.

Speaker Mike Johnson told the GOP members to knock it off and quit attacking one another, but they ain't listening.

Joining us now, POLITICO congressional correspondent, Olivia Beavers. Hello, Olivia.

So Speaker Mike Johnson threw a party or a retreat, and no one showed up or very few. I guess they were -- I mean, they were too busy going out trying to kill one another politically speaking, right? I mean, it was very, very poorly attended, and meanwhile they're out campaigning against one another.

OLIVIA BEAVERS, CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENT, POLITICO: Well, Trey, you sort of touched on it, but some of the irony of the Speaker, you know, coming out swinging and you know, blasting some of his Republican members for going out and campaigning against their own colleagues and incumbents was that the people that should be receiving this message weren't there.

If you narrow it down, I think the biggest name that comes to mind is Matt Gaetz and he was down in Texas, trying to campaign against Tony Gonzales, who is an incumbent who is in a runoff against a sort of social media pro- gun influencer.

But he has also been involved in other races, like Congressman Mike Bost's race against Darren Bailey, which he was not so successful as Mike Bost was able to pull ahead in that one. So, it is sort of already mixed results. But it goes to show that there's a broader fight for control of what the House GOP conference is going to look like, and Gaetz and Johnson are on two different sides, much like I think Kevin McCarthy and Gaetz were previously.

GOWDY: Well, it is beginning to look like -- it may start looking like a minority if they keep doing this. I mean, they have apparently more energy for fighting with one another than they do fighting anything else.

You mentioned Illinois. You mentioned Texas, Virginia -- there are current members actively campaigning against the head of the Freedom Caucus. Correct?

BEAVERS: Correct. And this race is very interesting. One is my hometown where you have Chairman Bob Good, who first decided to endorse Ron DeSantis over Donald Trump. So there's an element of like this question of will Donald Trump get involved? And at the moment, he has had some of his campaign officials taking shots at Bob Good.

He has since endorsed Trump after DeSantis dropped out, quite quickly. But another element is Kevin McCarthy might be looking to put money into that race, or at least some of his allies.

But one thing that also struck me is a member told me recently, he said he hasn't seen this, many of his Republican colleagues line up against a sitting member like Bob Good as they have Liz Cheney. So there's definitely some sort of irony here.

Bob Good is facing John McGuire. He's a Navy SEAL and is a state senator, and he's looking to really run on a pro-Trump platform.

GOWDY: You mentioned the former speaker, Kevin McCarthy, he was canned it looked like for using Democrats to pass certain bills, which is exactly what Speaker Mike Johnson has done. So are any members like wondering what has changed? And what if anything has gotten better since they got rid of McCarthy? And if not what, if anything will happen to Speaker Johnson?

BEAVERS: I think what the sort of the realization that's been with Mike Johnson is that the party doesn't really change that much no matter who is in leadership. There is always sort of this tension internally of, you know, the people who go against leadership and the people who are going to be part of the team, and with such a thin minority, it is just a really tough time for anyone in the speakership position to get things through especially, you know, when you have some of the conservatives tanking procedural votes for bills to come to the floor and in the minds of most rank and file Republicans blocking their Republican agenda.

So in that sort of regard it seems like a lot of the things stayed the same and Mike Johnson has faced his own threats for a Motion to Vacate --

GOWDY: Well, it sounds from where I sit down in South Carolina, that GOP House conference is beginning to resemble "Game of Thrones," except I think the members of Congress may actually wear more makeup than the actors and actresses on 'Game of Thrones."

So all the best to you. I told you, you can to go to law school --

BEAVERS: Winters is coming, Trey.

GOWDY: And you didn't do it. You decided to stay. Yes, winter is coming and it may be coming this November.

Olivia Beavers, thank you for joining us on a Sunday night.

BEAVERS: Thanks, Trey.

GOWDY: Coming up, a leading Democrat thinks he should pick the leader of Israel and then refused to let the current leader of Israel even speak to his conference.

National security correspondent, Jennifer Griffin joins us with her take right after the break.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

ASHLEY STROHMIER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Welcome to "Fox News Live." I'm Ashley Strohmier in New York.

Large crowds continue to gather in Moscow to mourn the victims of the tragic terrorist attack at a concert hall. It is being considered the deadliest attack on Russian soil in years killing more than 130 people and then leaving hundreds of others hurt.

Meantime, three of the four suspects charged with carrying out the attack pleaded guilty in a Russian court today. They could face life in prison.

And the debate over abortion rights is expected to heat up this week when the US Supreme Court considers whether to restrict access to a common abortion pill.

Justices will hear arguments on Tuesday about whether the FDA overlooked serious safety problems when it made the drug easier to get. Some medical professionals call it the safest medication the FDA has ever approved.

I'm Ashley Strohmier. Now back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

For all of your headlines log on to FoxNews.com.

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

War and rumors of war and conflict continue to dominate the news. Vladimir Putin was re-elected, if that's the right word in Russia; aid to Ukraine remains stalled in Congress; Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer called for regime change in Israel with the ouster of Benjamin Netanyahu. Schumer even initially refused to allow Netanyahu to speak to Senate Democrats.

Meanwhile, there remains a fear that Putin's plans for expansion include more than just Ukraine. Our own Jennifer Griffin sat down with a leader of Estonia, a country which shares a border with Russia, and therefore has a vested interest in what Russia plans do next and she joins us now.

Welcome to you, Jennifer. I thought the interview was fascinating between you and the prime minister. She laid out the case for why Russia's invasion of Ukraine most assuredly impacts the US and all of Europe. What did you learn?

JENNIFER GRIFFIN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL NATIONAL SECURITY CORRESPONDENT: Well, Trey, what's really interesting about Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas, she is 46 years old. She's the first female leader of Estonia. Her family was sent to the Gulag by Joseph Stalin, so she knows what Russia is capable of.

And more recently, the Interior Ministry of Russia put out a warrant for her arrest because Putin feels so threatened by what she is trying to do in terms of rallying Europe, as well as the United States to come to Ukraine's defense.

What's interesting about Estonia is, unlike many European countries, Estonia is spending more than three percent of its GDP on defense, and 1.35 percent of its GDP has been simply for weapons to Ukraine. That would be the equivalent in the United States of $378 billion in military weapons to Ukraine.

So you can see how concerned Estonia and the Baltic States, Finland and Poland are. They know that if Ukraine fails, that Putin will be eyeing them next.

GOWDY: Let's listen to part of that interview, and then I want to go back to this issue of Europe's contribution to the war effort.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KAJA KALLAS, ESTONIAN PRIME MINISTER: If aggression pays off in Ukraine, so Russia wins, Ukraine loses, then the security architecture of Europe, but also wider world is at stake because what we have learned from 1930s is that if aggression pays off somewhere, it serves as an invitation to use it elsewhere.

We know the tensions in South China Sea. We know, you know, Iran, North Korea, so we're going to have more conflicts around the world because the aggressors, the would-be aggressive in the world are carefully taking notes.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: She seems to be arguing this is a precursor to other bad things happening around the world. You also mentioned -- I mean, American politicians claim that Europe is not contributing to the war effort. Estonia certainly is, so how do you reconcile what they're spending with the American argument against Ukraine aid that they're not doing enough?

GRIFFIN: Well, the facts just don't support that. The European countries, if you take them as a whole of the EU or NATO countries, they are actually spending more on Ukraine than the United States is.

Now the US has certain unique capabilities and certain unique weapon systems that Ukraine needs, and that's why the supplemental package which has stalled on Capitol Hill is so very important.

In fact, Marc Thiessen who was a former speechwriter for George W. Bush has made an incredible -- wrote an incredible opinion piece, in essence, saying that if Republicans do not fund the war on Ukraine with this new supplemental package, they will be blamed for Ukraine falling and Russia winning in Ukraine, the way that President Biden has been blamed for pulling out of Afghanistan and the debacle that followed there, so that is a very interesting opinion piece to take a look at.

I think if you look at the numbers, certain European countries are batting way above their weight. It's not the same old NATO, if you will, where the it was, you're having -- the US was having to push what President Obama and President Trump called free riders into spending on their defense.

Europe has woken up and right now, Ukraine needs what the US uniquely has, and those are some of the weapons and the ammunition that the US can provide with this supplemental.

GOWDY: Before I let you go, Putin was re-elected, if that is the right word in Russia, while Chuck Schumer made the news for what could be described as calling for regime change in Israel.

How did that come and go over in Israel? Do they care what Chuck Schumer thinks? Or are they a little bit not happy with US meddling in their democratic affairs?

GRIFFIN: Well, it depends who you're referring to. If you're referring to Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu, he was extremely angry by those comments. But most Israelis know that Chuck Schumer is not only the most senior Jewish member of the US government, but also has been a longtime steady friend to Israel.

What you have to see his comments in context in terms of the overall administration's policy, Secretary Blinken was in Israel this week, delivering a message that you cannot have famine in Gaza and continue with this -- sending your military into Rafah and essentially, Israel will lose the PR campaign overseas, support from around the world.

But I think let's go back to an important point that Prime Minister Kallas made about how other countries are watching the enemies of the United States, other autocracies are watching.

China and Russia teamed up against the US at the UN Security Council. The US brought forward an immediate ceasefire plan that would get the hostages home that would also stop the fighting in Gaza, and both China and Russia voted against it because they know that the longer the conflict in Gaza goes that the US is hurt by this.

So other countries are watching and this is all interconnected and it is very, very dangerous right now.

GOWDY: Jennifer Griffin with her pulse on the connectivity of the world. As always, thank you for joining us on a Sunday night.

GRIFFIN: Thank you, Trey.

GOWDY: Up next, the stock market is up, but optimism about the US economy is not. Will President Biden himself pay a high price come November?

Economist and Trump's senior adviser, Stephen Moore breaks it down only on SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

The stock market is up, but your purchasing power is down because of inflation. Both Democrats and Republicans think the economy is a winning issue for them heading into November, but they can't both be right.

The real question is what do you think? What grade do you give our economy?

Joining us now is Stephen Moore who served as senior economic adviser to former President Trump.

Welcome to you, Mr. Moore. Thank you for joining us.

So the stock market is up, which is good, but that seems long term to many voters, while inflation is something we experience daily. So how do those two get reconciled?

STEPHEN MOORE, DISTINGUISHED FELLOW OF ECONOMICS HERITAGE FOUNDATION: Well, I hope that this election is about the issue of whether Americans are better off today than they were four years ago, Trey, because every poll for the last two years has shown that Americans by wide margins believe that they are worse off and the reason for that is what you just mentioned, Trey, it is that the inflation has not subsided. Prices across the board today are about 20 percent higher than they were when Biden came into office.

And the average family is still about $2,000.00 poorer today than they were when Biden came into office and Trump left office. Whereas by the way, under Trump, the average family gained about $6,000.00 in purchasing power.

So people are angry. People are feeling financially stressed out. And I think that's the reason that Biden -- look, Biden can point to a strong stock market, no question about it, but what people really care about is the money in their pocket.

GOWDY: I'm going to ask you a question that may seem somewhat ethereal, but you're an economist, so I know you can handle it. Do presidents take too much credit for a good economy and therefore get too much blame for a bad one? I mean, do presidents really actually impact the economy that much? And if so how?

MOORE: Oh, they sure do.

I mean, look at what happened with Reagan when he took over from Jimmy Carter. Within a year to 18 months, he completely turned around the direction of the American economy, we had the biggest boom in American history.

Look what happened when Trump took over from Obama. People kind of forget how bad the economy had been under Obama, and I remember by the beginning of 2020, right before COVID hit, thinking gosh, we've got the best economy ever. There is no way Trump can lose. Who would have ever thought you'd have something like a pandemic that would change everything.

So when you have an event like that, Trey, like a pandemic, you know, that's something -- or a terrorist attack, that obviously is going to change the direction of the economy. Policy matters. That's why I'm in this business, that's why you were in this business when you were in Congress, because the policies you make have an incredible impact on the living standards of Americans.

GOWDY: I want to ask you about a policy that's a little bit dicey political, but it is important.

Deficit spending, does it have an impact on the economy? And if so, I mean, mandatory spending seems to be the driver of our debt and deficit, does that have to be addressed before you can ever fully get a handle on the deficit?

MOORE: Well, certainly, you know, our debt is exploding. Every single viewer of the show knows that. When I first came to Washington in the mid- 1980s, you're not going to believe this, Trey, the entire national debt was $1 trillion. And here we are, you know, 40 years later, and the debt is closing in on $40 trillion. And everyone knows that this is wrong. Everyone knows it is harmful, and I've got to say, the debt has gone up under Republicans and Democrats.

And let's face it, I mean, you were in Congress, you know this. Politicians love to play Santa Claus. They love to pass out goodies, but they don't like to cut spending. I think when you were Congress, we did see some improvement.

But the most important thing is, let me just give you one example. Joe Biden has a $350 billion -- not million -- $350 billion green energy slush fund in the budget and he is using that to just pass out that money to all his favored friends, just like he announced again this week that he's going to pass out more taxpayer dollars for student loan bailouts. That's inappropriate, that should be cut.

We could, in my opinion, and you were in Congress, we could easily cut every program 10 or 15 or 20 percent across the board and Americans wouldn't even feel it. And then we've got to get the economy growing. We've got to get back to the booming economy we had under Reagan and Trump, and you're going to see revenues come in, and that will bring down the deficit.

GOWDY: Stephen Moore, a past adviser and perhaps a future adviser to a Republican president of the United States.

MOORE: Oh, I've worked with him. We've got a great plan. I mean, I asked President Trump I just said, you know, how long will it take to fix this economy? He said, give me two or three months and we're going to get the economy right back on track.

GOWDY: Well, then my grammar teachers would be happy if I said past, present and future adviser to Republican a president. Stephen Moore, thank you for joining us on a Sunday night.

MOORE: Great to be with you.

GOWDY: Coming up, polling indicates Americans are unhappy despite prosperity, relative peace, and all that technology other generations could not dream off. So why?

We ask an expert next on SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT AMERICA.

If you listen to the American people and take them at their word, there is unease, disquiet, and unhappiness in the air. People believe the country is on the wrong track, but maybe that's a metaphor for believing it is really us that are on the wrong track.

So how do we captain the ship of our own happiness? How do we control our emotions or should we even try? How can we reclaim our lives and find more joy?

Dr. Anita Phillips lives and works at the intersection of faith and culture and mental health and she's the author of a book titled "The Garden Within."

Welcome, Doctor, it is wonderful to see you again.

Americans say they're unhappy. Why is that when we seem to live in times of prosperity and abundance?

DR. ANITA PHILLIPS, TRAUMA THERAPIST: Hi, Trey.

It really is a significant finding the Happiness Report saying that levels are dropping, especially among young people. The key is to recognize what the central question is in this survey.

The central question is not how happy are you? The central question centers on what you think your life is like, compared to how good you believe it could be.

It is a comparative question about life satisfaction.

GOWDY: All right, so what affirmative steps can we take to sort of captain our own ships, to sort of claim ownership over our own happiness?

PHILLIPS: Well, this report lets us know that social support is one of the most important things that contribute to how satisfied we are with our life. And as a result, how happy we may feel.

And so building social support networks that are healthy, engaging with the relationships that we do have in our lives in person versus texting versus social media, but actually spending time with other people is one of the ways that we can boost the experience that we're having.

And this is super significant, because we know that America drops from number 15 to number 23 in happiest countries in the world, largely because there has been a huge decline in happiness among young people. And so social support networks are critical to addressing that. ' GOWDY: All right, you and I had a chance to visit not long ago, and I was struck by how upbeat you are, even though in in talking with you about some things that happened while you were growing up, you had every reason in the world to maybe not be upbeat. Fear sells and division sells and anger sells, so how can we avoid becoming consumers when it seems like that's what we're being sold -- it is fear and anger and division?

PHILLIPS: Well, it is up to us to view our life through the lens that we choose, but our surroundings are real, and so one of the ways that we can improve the experience that we're having is to maintain the fact that we can connect with people that we care about, that we do have the freedom to make certain choices and lean into that and to find communities that support the choices that we're making.

But it is important for us to recognize that people are impacted by the environments in which they live. And so while we would love to believe that we can just individually take charge of this, this statistics from the Happiness Report are showing that we do need to work together to change the places that we live so that people are not suffering like this, especially young people.

GOWDY: All right, young people to me seem more connected in terms of social media, they have more access to one another and information and yet the happiness numbers are going down. So there has to be a difference between connectivity as I use the word and connectivity from a positive standpoint.

PHILLIPS: Absolutely. So a 2019 report looking at the impact of social media in the United States showed that it has been extremely detrimental for the mental health of young people. They are not having the same social connection experiences, even though they are connected to a lot of information.

The fact that social media pushes a comparison standard is one of the things that is undermining the mental health of young people. So when they answer a question like on a scale of zero to 10, where 10 is the best life that I could be living, rank yourself: Social media certainly artificially inflates what they believe a 10 would be, what they believe their best life could be and that type of comparison is undermining their wellness.

We also see it causing young people as young as twelve, thirteen years old to experience heightened experience -- have heightened experiences with negative emotions because of this comparison standard. And by 12 or 13, we see a gap between young women and young men, so girls are struggling even more as a result of this comparison standard.

So I really encourage parents to help manage how their children are engaging with social media, because these types of painful emotional experiences undermine mental health in ways that could last a lifetime.

GOWDY: Dr. Anita Phillips, a trauma and mental health expert. The book is "The Garden Within." Thank you for joining us on a Sunday night. I look forward to talking to you again, soon I hope.

PHILLIPS: Thanks, Trey. See you soon.

GOWDY: Yes, ma'am.

Thank you for spending part of your Sunday with us. I hope you have a great week ahead. Until next week, you can find us online at Gowdy America or on "The Trey Gowdy Podcast."

Goodnight from South Carolina.

**Load-Date:** March 25, 2024

**End of Document**