Unity Campfire #1\_ Bret and Eric Weinstein 08\_05\_20 (192kbit...

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**SPEAKERS**

Moderator, Bret, Eric Weinstein

**Bret** 01:12

Hey folks, Brett Weinstein here, welcome to the first unity 2020 campfire, I apologize for the late start, we had a technical problem that had to be traced down in order to make this work. But it looks like everything is good to go. I am here with Dr. Eric Weinstein PhD in mathematics to talk about unity 2020. Before we get to the discussion, though, I just want to say a brief word about why we have chosen campfire as a metaphor, and what it means to you and to us. So the idea here is that our ancestors have faced different kinds of times, they faced times when things were good, and they knew what to do and around the campfire, they would have celebrated, they would have joked they would have danced. And then in other times, when they were unable to figure out what needed to be done, because something had changed, or they had entered a new landscape with different rules, they had to figure out what to do. And what they would have done is partnered around the campfire, and they would have talked about the problem, they would have parallel process that processed it by plugging their minds into each other by talking just as we are doing here, and we'll do going forward. So what we have here is a setup, where Eric and I are going to kick off the conversation for something like an hour, we're going to talk about the questions surrounding unity 2020 get his perspective on what we might be doing differently and how we should go forward. We also have a technical back end that is going to allow, I believe the first 1000 people who came through the door this evening, to give us feedback, they will be able to pose questions, most of which will be in the second part of this discussion. And we will be able to pose questions to them. And we have Noah who you won't be able to see but will be able to hear and he will be able to convey your answers to us so that we can use them as fodder for further discussion. So without further ado, Eric, welcome to the first unity 2020 campfire.

**Eric Weinstein** 03:08

It's it's an amazing honor to be here. I brought my guitar and I am disappointed that there are no smores so for campfire number two, I know we need to do now.

**Bret** 03:17

Yes, i i agree with you that smores would be delightful, although they would have to be gluten free. Alright, so Eric, you have been watching and participating in discussions surrounding unity 2020 since the beginning, obviously you and I are of like mind, anybody who follows either you or me will know that we perceive desperate times ahead for the republic if we do not figure out how to rescue ourselves from the predicament that the duopoly has placed us in. I guess there are also differences in the way we see things and hopefully they will emerge in this conversation. But do you want to say something about where you think we might be in history and what the various paths forward might look like?

**Eric Weinstein** 04:07

Well, I can try, I can say that we are suffering from something that doesn't make a lot of sense that an a priori level, whatever is going on is super subtle, because people are apparently so angry and so mad about so many things that they're willing to destroy the republic without going through the courtesy process of trying to save it in the meantime. And I don't quite know how people expect the republic to operate when we're speaking about the US and this is a US based conversation. because it requires a culture and the culture that goes with the documents is an essential part of running the American culture. So if you repudiate everything that is American, just decide that we are some sort of outgrowth of colonialism, oppression, and every terrible thing under the sun from the left of center perspective or you decide that in some sense that the country needs to go backwards into some imagined era when it was great and everything was working fine, which has never been the case. Both of those perspectives are not really American perspective, we are a country that has built up a, an advantage for our people militarily, the world depends on our protection. And it has to do with a cumulative process of trying to be right, more than more wrong, because every nation is wrong plenty. And when you're dealing with anything like the United States, everything that we do is amplified, the good that we do is amplified, the bad that we do is amplified. And the most important thing is that most of America still remembers what it means to be American, whether on the left or the right, but they cannot figure out how to ground that and their political parties, their universities, their newspapers, and news desks. And so we're very confused as to why every institution is failing us when so many of us remember what it is that we're supposed to be doing, which is getting back to, you know, kicking ass and providing for the planet and trying to do a better job of figuring out what a vibrant multicultural superpower is supposed to be in terms of being more decent, humane and good stewards. And for whatever reason, too many people have lost the plot of the American story. So those of us who remember that plot and want to see it through for many more chapters are very frustrated. So that's sort of where we begin, I think both you and I perceived that the necessity of doing something is very high. Because even though it doesn't make full sense as to why we're in such desperate straits, something has clearly gone wrong, or you wouldn't have the kind of bizarre discussion and dialogue, as you see, in the pages of the New York Times. And the Washington Post Fox, the two political parties, it's just we're watching garbage and nonsense traded around by a group of insiders. While most of us sit around wondering what we're doing stuck in the backseat, while mommy and daddy run the car completely off the road on some sort of drunken weekend that never ends.

**Bret** 07:12

So I want to unpack a little bit what some of the different failure modes that are combining into this catastrophe look like, at least to me. So you have talked extensively and you've been laser focused for a long time on the failure of institutions, right, you basically see a failure across all of the important institutions that would either help us make sense or help us navigate. And I agree possible

**Eric Weinstein** 07:36

exception of Trader Joe's, which is fighting back.

**Bret** 07:40

Yes, Trader Joe's does does show signs of life and trader Jose is I wouldn't be

**Eric Weinstein** 07:45

buying all of the trader Jose products, in part because I know that my Hispanic American friends do not think that this is something worth getting upset about, right.

**Bret** 07:54

I mean, frankly, I'm upset about those yellow taco shells that we were led to believe had something to do with Mexican cuisine. But that's a story for another time. So institutions aside from possibly Trader Joe's seem to be in some kind of delusional phase where things are clearly collapsing within and around them. And they're not acknowledging it, and they're pretending everything is normal. And maybe that's the most normal failure I see. The second one, though, is I see a lot of people who you alluded to who are enamored of the idea that something is so wrong, that the only choice we have is to tear this all down and start over or tear it down such that something will naturally flourish in its place. And I find this a shocking kind of failure of understanding because we see the things that don't work pretty easily. But we don't see the things that do work precisely because they do. And so if you compare the question of whether we should take the experiment, and we should finally finish it. In other words, if you look at the civil rights era, for example, and then you imagine that we might complete the job. That's one choice, or we could reverse course, and we could go back to things like segregation and a race first view of humanity. And to me, it's obvious that there is no comparison between these obviously completing the job is vastly more plausible and stands a chance of leaving a decent world in its wake.

**Eric Weinstein** 09:33

I think we've we've failed to understand exactly why so few people want to see this thing through and I think it has to do with the hollowing out of what would have been called the center. Because of the, the problem with language here we have a kleptocratic group that used to be the establishment that we would count upon to, you know, hand power back and forth when we were up against a cold War enemy in the Soviet Union, for example. And a lot of the people who would have been the adults in the room became kleptocrats. And so there's no way to point to what it is that we think about when we say, we want to see the project through because what do you mean by that? Do you mean, I would have wanted to see this Southern Poverty Law Center get more powerful in its old incarnation, I do not want to see the Southern Poverty Law Center get more powerful in its witch hunting incarnation, I would want to see, you know, the university. Well, my university of University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, Princeton, get more powerful, I'm now very worried that they no longer hold liberal values. And I don't mean lefty values, I mean, you know, tolerant values, I, I would have wanted to see a strong conservative movement, even though I'm not a conservative, because they are in charge of making sure we don't go too fast, too quickly into nonsense. I don't see the party that's capable of retarding that so all of these structures, I think we've lost faith in the institutional instantiation of the American project. And that's, that's the key problem, which is, when people will, will then point and they'll say, Well, are you saying we should go back to the Clintons and the bushes? And, you know, I can join with the farthest of the far left and the far right and saying, hell no, right. That's the only thing I may join with the farthest of the far left and the far right. But yeah, I'm equally opposed to the Clintons and the bushes and all that crap. That's clogging the arteries of the American project. Now, the issue of whether we are going to retain a culture one of the great things about living in a country which is founded by an actual patriarchy, like there's very little in which the word patriarchy actually makes sense, actually, the US was actually founded as a patriarchy. And the brilliance of it is, is that those guys figured out how to get rid of their own badness in a weird way. So, you know, we have over after a long period of time and nauseating history with slavery abolished a nauseating history with women not having the vote, you know, started in places like Wyoming that got sorted out, we've made great strides in the civil rights era. Are we done? Not by a longshot? Are we have we done like an enormous amount of the work? You bet. And this idea that we are so much worse off today? I think is it's an illusion, in part because a lot of people are afraid that we've made enough progress that a lot of people are going to lose interest in the various projects that we have to complete. And so they're amping things up and saying that things are worse than they've ever been. And I think you know, where we have to go is that we have to lead the charge against the center, not because we're against centrism or moderation or, you know, grown up this, but because those people aren't grownups. They are kleptocrats, and the kleptocrats have hollowed this thing out. And so we have no thing to point to, to say institutionally, what is the American project? I think that's where we are. What do you think?

**Bret** 13:15

Well, a couple things. One, I'm going to take exception to your portrayal of the founders as patriarchal, I think it's more patrilineal. But we'll save that for a podcast sometime it's worth unpacking the key,

**Eric Weinstein** 13:30

just wanted to make the point that a bunch of a bunch of dudes who are relatively similar, laid the groundwork for a society of dudes and non dudes of all colors of the rainbow. And it may have taken too long to get there. But the fact that they didn't bake in a bunch of stuff that made that impossible, shows you what a genius project this is, and to try to tie everything back to 1619 or 1776 or 1860. I mean, I just don't even know what we're doing.

**Bret** 13:58

Yeah, it was a genius prototype is the way I see it. And it's no shock. It's actually amazing how long it lasted, given how much change the period of time ever, which is one hell of a startup. Yeah, nicely said. So here's the thing that I'm running into very frequently now, which I think is probably closer to where we should focus. I run into people who very clearly see one of two catastrophes. There's a catastrophe that involves the ascendancy of Joe Biden, who will have partnered with the BLM movement, and that this will actually cause the undoing of all of the structures on which we depend. I know many people who see that clearly, and I see an equal number of people who are very clear on the threat of having Trump remain in office, and my senses. Both of these are very dangerous scenarios. That much is clear. If you're able to track what will happen in either case. But because people tend to see one, at the exclusion of the other, we're having a very odd conversation about the election, which is, if you realize that the system that is made up of these two parties has delivered us, basically, a pair of catastrophic modes, where the the catastrophic risks are just all too apparent, then the question is, well, if ever, there was a moment that we need to challenge that structure and step outside of it, this would be that moment. It's absolutely clear. So the question, though, is in a world of people who more often than not see one of two failures, but have a blind spot that covers the other? What do those of us who see both failures, do you in order to bring people into the, unfortunately, frightening discovery of where we actually seem to be?

**Eric Weinstein** 15:59

It's a good question. I think in large measure, we've lost track of where everyone's mind is, because our minds are increasingly not subject to any particular input in general or in common. And one thing that we learned, for example, is that a lot of people inside the news industry who hired fairly radical journalists, were very late to see the problem because they somehow had an immunity. And when they lost that immunity, and they started seeing their own kind fire, we got the Harper's letter, right. So in fact, the issue is what is proximate to you try to imagine two separate nightmares, one nightmare of, you know, a return to some sort of ethno nationalism, where America's for the Americans go home, if you don't like it, blah, blah, blah. That's a pretty ugly country, I wouldn't want to live in it. On the other hand, I wouldn't want to live in a country that can't stand up to people saying abolish the police. And I'm not going to live in a country in which one particular you know, identity classification is told that it has rights over everyone else, whatever that is, doesn't get can be any particular thing could be on the left, you know, trans female, black, the even the way in which these things are now interfering with each other. So this abandonment of the Martin Luther King kind of project is something that's particularly distressing to some some of our black friends. Like, wait a minute, I bought into that whole thing about getting beyond this. And now I'm hearing that we can't. So I think, in part, people are very guilty. And because they're feeling extremely guilty about all of the things that they know that they've done wrong in their lives, they're weirdly both defensive and overly eager to placate. So you see this sort of madness, where people are both self righteously, you know, exempting themselves, and they're also falling over backwards. I bet that they're even some people who are called Karen's, who were insisting on, you know, the whitest of their white privilege. At the same time, as they're falling over to say, Black Lives Matter, you know, and I think we just heard about, possibly somebody being injured or killed, who said, All lives matter, you know, so we're getting into some thing where many people are amped up, we're seeing Portland and Seattle, and it doesn't make any sense. We're seeing the cruelty of Trump's very calculated tweets and utterances, which are intended to sound like dog whistles to get lots of people to bite. And then, you know, the right will will laugh at them and say, haha, he didn't say that. You know, it's ugly stuff. And it's not where Obama's substance was pointed in terms of sorry, were Obama's optics were pointed in terms of substance was a pretty terrific place. And if his substance had gone along with his optics, that would have been an amazing presidency. But what we're looking for clearly is a very mature leader who grasps our current moment and by listening, becomes the speaker, but you have to listen to the American people first and we're upset, we're upset because our Gini coefficient is through the roof. Our inequality is obnoxious. And as a guy who has been tracking all of the power moves we've been making since the Reagan administration to screw over our own people. That's a very disconcerting place to be for me, which is that I've been looking at all the ways that we've been led to the slaughter. And we went along with these people, and now we're angry because we don't know who picked our pocket. We can't hire an accountant or a lawyer to go get, you know, our future. Back and To your point, Brett, I don't understand why people are only angry at one side or the other. I very much with Mercutio here a plague on both your houses. I mean, who the hell Who the hell elected either one of these parties willingly? I get rid of both of them if I could. But again, it's it's not the parties that are the problem. It's the inhabitants. It's the current sort of thought tribe that inhabits both of them that's focused on extracting from the US rather than growing the US pie.

**Bret** 20:35

Well, I think it goes to a point that you've been making for years that this is effectively something that is taken over the shell of another creature. It's a hermit crab that the DNC is, in no way, part of the democratic party that was once dedicated to the interests of working people. It's something that is

**Eric Weinstein** 20:52

used that you will previously known as, you know, working class now known as the deplorable and the concept of a deplorable as a democratic apostate. And the idea that we're turning our back on people who don't eat the same finger sandwiches that we do on the coasts in the middle of the country is ugly and preposterous, and it's in the worst traditions of American elitism.

**Bret** 21:16

So we need to get to some brass tacks here. But let me just say that in the last couple of days, I think we've seen some indications that the Democratic Party has played a hand that it cannot finish, that there are indications, The New York Times floated a trial balloon about killing off presidential debates on the basis that they're pugilistic and not productive. And while I think all of us who would care to see some honest disagreement between candidates, you know, sort of Lincoln Douglas style or something, a lot of us are tired of these mind numbing debates. But the idea that maybe we should cancel these debates at a time when one of the candidates very much looks like he might be revealed as incapable of inhabiting the office. That's an ominous sign. And then to here today, I

**Eric Weinstein** 22:17

think I think you're I know which one?

**Bret** 22:20

Well, I think, frankly, they both show signs, but one of them shows them a lot more regularly. Well,

**Eric Weinstein** 22:26

one of them has showed those signs through almost a full term in office. And they may have gotten a little bit worse and a bit more troubling. But I think that the absence of Joe Biden from the campaign trail is terrifying. And the idea that the New York Times just happens to find the debate format vacuous at a time that we haven't seen Biden, I mean, Good God, which cognitively impaired child, is this intended to fool I just don't understand,

**Bret** 22:59

right? I mean, even in the best of circumstances, even if we were talking about, you know, Bernie Sanders, who I think doesn't show any signs of such decline, he's still old enough that they could creep in very rapidly. And so you would have to worry about

**Eric Weinstein** 23:13

that. But you're talking about a full decade older than the oldest president ever to take an initial oath of office in Bernie Sanders, the entire concept that our final five candidates, who is what Biden, Bloomberg, Trump, Warren, who am I missing? You didn't get Sanders. Everyone was born in the 1940s. I mean, cut it out. For God's sakes, you have you have a country full of vibrant people. We've spent 20 years exploring presidents who were born in the summer of 1946, at the very beginning of the baby, boom, it's effing enough and these people are all old by presidential standards, and they're not. Okay, I mean, these are people who don't code. These are people who don't Intuit the modern landscape. Joe Biden was first elected to the Senate at the age of 29. In 1972, Donald Trump has no real standard business experience that we know of everything he does is bizarre and non standard. We are in a situation where we've got a very dire problem with China, which we're supposed to be focused on, we've got to restart our economic situation so that we can have a growth pattern that can support all of the obligations we've taken on, we should be using this time to make the world a safer place. Both from the point of view of climate and nuclear weapons, the COVID thing, we don't even know where this thing came from, because everyone's lying about it. nobody trusts any institution. I think we need to get Brett to why I'm agreeing to do this call, and why I am coming around, which is very rare in our relationship. I noticed coming around to see your perspective a lot more as a lot more forward thinking than I was. And so if I'm going to suffer through some indignity here, I'd like to get it over with.

**Bret** 25:31

Alright, let's get right to that. Okay. So so I thought you were going to launch into the indignity. What do we need to struggle session? Is that what it is?

**Eric Weinstein** 25:44

Do that offline? Right, I think I think what we need to do is we need to discuss my changing attitudes towards unity 2020. In part, what i what i see you guys is doing and why it is not the crazy move that I probably initially viewed it as being I don't know, I'm

**Bret** 26:06

open to it. And so I think what I remember you saying previously, at the beginning, at the beginning of unity 2020, what you said was that you regarded it as crazy, which didn't mean that it was wrong, which I found an interesting formulation. But anyway, you've you've moved from there. And I think the the parties have helped, they've revealed a little bit more of just how shallow their plan for us all is. So all right. As I see it, there is no chance that we should allow this opportunity to pass without at least trying to disrupt the the paired failure modes that the major parties have delivered us because the dangerous too great, in fact, while I think one would have to regard the likelihood that the republic survives to 2024, I don't think in this circumstance, it would be fair to call that safe. The date, the things are moving too rapidly, in a direction in a particularly dire direction, where the far right and the far left, both have too much power. And they seem to agree on a race first mode of interaction, which is unfortunately, probably the default mode in humans. And so in some sense, dragging us back to that isn't so hard. And resisting that urge and completing the experiment in which the founders set something in motion, where we might collaborate on some basis other than race is the obvious direction, the trajectory that we should remain on. So all right, what has changed your perspective of the wisdom of attempting such a thing this time?

**Eric Weinstein** 27:54

Well, okay, so if I'm going to admit, I'm a permanent admit that I've changed my mind a bit. I want to be self kind of doing. Here's what I'm really feeling right? I keep asking this question, what the hell is wrong with everybody? Why is no one doing anything? This is learned helplessness. Marty Seligman, it's theory from years ago, it says that if you've been treated, to a situation in which you can't actually do anything to save yourself, once those constraints that kept you from acting in a self beneficial way, are removed, you may not try to save yourself, because you've learned, in fact, how to be helpless and how not to move. And so I've been, I don't usually suffer from learned helplessness, particularly I'd like to be a gigantic, but I was wandering around talking to smart people who were powerful, who, you know, probably have their fingers closer to the levers of power than either one of us. And none of them are doing anything. None of them are doing anything, they are standing back and saying, Wow, it's really terrible. And those with money are trying to figure out where they can move. Where can we go, as opposed to how do we deploy capital in order to try to fix this. And those in a political such situation where they can actually get something to happen have this idea of Look, there's gridlock, nothing can work. You guys are children, you don't understand why the system can't work, which is probably right. They probably do know that, in fact, nothing can work. And then when you look at, you know, the universities and the academicians and the writers and the commentariat, they're saying, you know, you have to understand that people are simple minded, they can only perturb around what they know we can't really take any flights away from this duopoly. And then I started thinking about it, okay. The one person who isn't afflicted by learned helplessness in this situation is Brett, and that was tough. It was a tough recognition that the guy was calling me up and saying what Take now I've answered that issue three calls ago, what is it that you're really upset about? It took me a while to sort of recognize that, in fact, my complaints about your charging off into Unity 2020, which is you don't realize how much capital that can chew up, you don't understand exactly what being in meshed in the political process does to expose you to harm from deeply entrenched interests. All of those issues have to do with my worry that I don't want to spend our capital. It's not I'm not trying to be a pissy about it, I'm trying to say, I'm very concerned that when we have the right opportunity, I want to make sure we have the dry powder and needed to use it. And I think that that has not gone away, I still feel that way. What we have is an absolute necessity to do something. And we have the fact that it probably is going to require this is a bitter pill that you and I have talked about, it is probably going to require the arrival of some kind of good luck for us to be able to do something to get out of here, something exotic has happened. You know it can you imagine, for example, if you had a terrible cognitive performance of both Trump and Biden in a debate, and it became clear that neither of these people should be anywhere close to the Oval Office.

**Eric Weinstein** 31:27

That's the situation that people who were anticipating a collapse in the stock market in the 1920s, we're in where they were writing up things, and everyone is saying this is stupid, the stock market is doing great. And then when the crash finally happened, the only people that you could turn to were the people who actually hadn't had learned helplessness during the 20s. So this is a crazy proposal to my earlier point. And the typical way of saying it comes from physics, which is we are all in agreement that your theory is crazy what divides us as whether it is crazy enough. And that's, you know, a beautifully stated couplet, that's not my issue. You're crazy enough, the issue is you need luck. And it's clearly what we need. And so my view of what unity 2020 is, is quite honestly, that the people who recognize how serious the situation is, and who are tired of fighting with each other, are waiting for some thing to break that is not foreseen. And that thing is going to look for a home and there's going to be no home for it. Because the Republican Party, the Democratic Party, are hostile to anything that isn't kleptocratic. And that means that you have to build something like an ark before it starts raining. Okay, now, that wasn't where you, that wasn't where we were divided, either. What I'm starting to realize is that I can afford to do something different. I can afford to point to this. And when somebody says, oh, Brett said it was gonna be unity 2020, I'm gonna say no, listen to me, Brett wasn't suffering from learned helplessness. And it's one of these things where, if you don't use it, you're gonna lose it. If you don't use your sense of agency. You know, I make fun of Ilan for building rockets to go to Mars, because there's nothing up there and it's not going to happen, we're not going to terraform and he's not going to colonize Mars and all that stuff. But you know what, for whatever reason, the guy is still building rockets. And he's still ferrying people to space. And you know, something, if somebody else breaks the laws of physics, and they need something to some engineer to create something so we can do it. You know, in interstellar travel. I bet the guy is building rockets now is going to drop rockets like a hot potato. Okay? I think Brett, what you're doing is, is that you're saying, you know what, I'm gonna get out here and I'm going to build an effing Ark. And I'm going to try to do something that doesn't exhibit learned helplessness. And if you want to make fun of me, and you want to say that I was unrealistic, and I was idealistic, and all of that stupid stuff, and then you're gonna go home and listen, to imagine by john lennon and cry, a few tears not putting together and back that we've got to do idealistic things, because we're an idealistic nation. This place runs on idealism, even though we know better even though we know all the horrible things the US has done that it pretends that it didn't, okay, it did do a lot of stuff. But you know what, not only were the the nation of me lie, we were also the nation that uncovered me lie and publicize Mila. And we did the same thing with Abu Ghraib. And we did the same thing with the church and pipe committees. And you know, Brett, they came after our family in particular. And we're the same country that in fact, repudiated McCarthyism repudiated, and just as you and I are repudiating what I've called left car theism, so what is it that you're doing, what you're actually doing is saying, you know what, you guys It's like putting on a mask in a culture where nobody wears a face mask. Some Gotta do something that looks weird. And it's agentive. And it's actually what unity 2020 is. It's the cult of people who refuse to subscribe and succumb to learned helplessness, which is now being doled out with, with, with the mother's milk for our new crop of people coming up. And so that's what I'm I've changed my mind about, which is that I realized that you were actually exhibiting a fight against learned helplessness in your actions. And I'm 100% supportive of that. So is this my fight? I don't think I would have chosen this particular battle. But I think that the point is, is that all you are is one crazy piece of luck away from this really being something and I don't know that you can script it. But boy, would it be great thing to have a boat when the when you start to see more rain than anybody's ever seen? And I think that's where we are.

**Bret** 35:58

Well, thank you for that. And I agree with you about block. This has been on my mind from the beginning is that 2020 is such a an unpredictable year that the unexpected has to be expected in some sense. And I think we're, we're seeing it. Now, the question is, when I hear people feeling clever, for finding reasons not to listen to something like unity, 2020, you know, finding reasons to go back to sleep effectively. I'm not sure, I have a hard time understanding their mindset. In fact, I was talking to john wood, Jr. This morning. And I was making the point that the Republic is in jeopardy, and that is exactly the kind of thing that people used to have to put their life on the line to prevent, right. And people frequently talk about the kind of patriotism that would cause you to lay down your life for something bigger than yourself. And what he said was, yes, that people who once might have laid down their lives, our won't even do it, when the risk is being disliked. And I really do feel that that's where we are that in some sense, we are lucky that the, you know, the, the out of left field plan to do something doesn't involve risk to life and limb, it involves risk to reputation. But I guess the question I have for you is, how can we get people who are feeling clever for seeing reasons not to think outside the box? How can we get them to understand that the reality is actually flipped on its head? That in some sense, you are foolish, that learned helplessness is going to get you killed? And thinking outside the box is really where where hope resides?

**Eric Weinstein** 37:58

Well, I think the first thing you do is that you stop trying to fight them. You confirm what they're trying to say, yeah, you might look foolish. I mean, look, there's no major party here. And what was the last time anything like this worked? Right? So absolutely, if your major goal in life is never to look like you've been taken in, never to feel like oh my god, I got bamboozled or I got suckered in or I started to believe in something, congratulations, because that's what they'll put on your tombstone. Never fell in love. never believed in a cause never got seduced, never lost themselves in a film and allowed themselves to believe and to be transported. Okay, you got bigger problems at this moment? Because if what you're trying to do is to die with never got fooled on your tombstone. I don't even know you. I just don't even know you. Now the question is, we don't want to be seduced by everyone or everything. And you don't want to be seduced by a movement. That's not serious. Key Point is, this is exactly how the US came to be. There were a bunch of crazy people. The Cuban Revolution was launched level. The paper of Cuba was the name the grandma because Fidel Castro sailed on a boat called the grandma and is a bunch of ragtag people. I mean, you can be pretty unenthusiastic about Fidel Castro, and still say, yeah, it was a bad idea to bet against the scraggly you know, dead beats out playing war out the bushes. It revolutions need be neither good nor bad. So the first question is, do you believe we are in revolutionary times? Do you believe that a single death like George Floyd's could cause millions of people to go out in the street, completely unsure of exactly what that video meant, because it optically looked like a lynching To be blunt about it. That's the kind of a place that we are in we are in a place where people are filled with fear. They're filled with uncertainty. Are you the sort of person who ever thought you would see mayors stepping away from policing duties? I mean, that's terrifying. What happened with Chaz? completely, completely understandable. All of those weird things let you know that we are in incredible times, and neither party has the answers, none of the universities everybody's running scared. So in some sense, the most American thing to do is to man or woman up or other doesn't matter. Just, you know, I use the word huevos. Because it works both for both genders. It requires courage. This is a moment that requires webOS. And if you don't have them, then don't bad mouth, the people who do because they're the people who built your country, everything about this place came from the middle finger came from the inguinal regions, and that's part of the American project. And if all you're here to do is to you know, pick up your cheque and cash out and enjoy your barbecues in your backyard, you're not part of the mainstream of the project, it's a much more dangerous and daring thing to do. The other thing about reputation is, don't kid yourself, this can get you killed just fine. This is actually dangerous. And if you're if you're going to risk your life for a GoPro video while you're snowboarding, you know or or you're going to jump off some rock while you're on vacation. At least risk your life for something. The key issue though, is is anyone in the future going to appreciate this. And that's kind of the thing I look at Albert Einstein, for example, during the McCarthy era, he was hated. Martin Luther King was hated by many people during his life. The key point is the people who are going to appreciate you now are going to be few in number. What we're doing this for as our as our own grandchildren. And I think this is one of the biggest problems with the silent generation and the boomer generations is that they are bizarrely unconcerned with their own, with their own children and grandchildren. And quite honestly, you and I better Gen X. And I love their children more than they love their children. And I love their grandchildren more than they love their their grandchildren. I don't know what that's about. But I'll tell you one thing. We You and I have for Gen Z kids. There's no effing way I'm stepping aside and letting these two generations that do not know how to govern or lead. Have at my kids generation. It's enough those kids you know, my daughter is just signing up to vote because she's going to turn 18 this month.

**Eric Weinstein** 42:49

We've got to recognize that the the thank yous are going to come privately because everyone's too scared. So they're going to be tons of thank yous for people to sign on to these things. And they're going to come after we get some real wins. And sooner or later, we're going to get a shot across the bow, which is going to be the weird piece of luck. And the key question is does it hit the bow on the ship sinks? Or does it get over the bow? And then we're going to look around like is there anybody has been telling us that this is a disaster. One thing you and I bread have seen, for example, with the Harper's letter, is that we had a bunch of people coming from the commentariat say, Oh my god, you guys were right about everything. And that was a very weird thing. We said, Well, why? Why didn't you understand at the time, they said, Oh, we thought it was just about university campuses. And that's what Fox News and Tucker Carlson always talks about with campus craziness. But now that we see that it's everywhere, and it's not going to stop and it's in your politics, and it's in your science, my God, this this stuff is in your science, your all your science is gonna be screwed up. This is a romantic thing to do. And I want to say that when I saw your situation at evergreen, where you were doing what you've always done, which is to stand against racism, and even when it comes from people who have historically had racism focused on them, black Americans, right. When you stood up for that, I had this really big question, which is what what was my place in that? And what I said was it standing shoulder to shoulder with you was a thrill. And it's a thrill to be part of something that is fighting on behalf of something larger, there's clearly no economic incentive in this because mostly, it's just gonna get you laughed off the face of the map, which is one way of knowing that everybody here is ultra serious about the democratic process. We want to return to to normal so I think what you need to do is you need to level with them. Yep. It's probably not going to work. It is dangerous. You'll get laughed at for sure. But you're also going to meet people you'd never meet otherwise. And if anything works, because we get a piece of luck and we're actually able to make this thing sing. People are going to Thank you, and they're gonna want to know where why was the group of people so small? And the answer is it was always the smallest groups of people because they're the ones who are not tracking garbage reality and that the most of what you have fed into your brain from the moment you wake up to the moment you go to bed at night is garbage reality, it's not real reality. It's just garbage that people are filling your head with. So you don't act.

**Bret** 45:23

Yeah, well, I agree with a lot of that, and I resonate with it. You know, I think for me, one of the things that I fear is that you listen to those voices, and then the storm comes, and you don't have the damn boat, right? And so I feared that much more than being laughed out for for doing something.

**Eric Weinstein** 45:42

So maybe maybe this is an exercise, Brett, maybe somebody on your team should go to all of the silly people who were talking about the financial crash before the financial crash, and all of the voices like record all of the voices that said, Donald Trump is not your next president, or COVID, please, the flu is a much bigger deal. You know,

**Bret** 46:07

well, actually, whatever, we have that artifact, I would just say, if you want homework, watch The Big Short, and the people who made that film, did a fairly

**Eric Weinstein** 46:17

unity 2020 needs to make its own film, there's some filmmaker out there who wants to help. And that person needs to put together a pastiche of all of the smart, sophisticated people in Oregon, like somebody did this called something like in the hall of the trumpian King, which was all of the liberal Talking Heads, saying Donald Trump will never be President of the United States, you can take that to the bank, and everybody from you know, I don't know, who was it, Stephen Cole bear, or any of the standard talking heads? They all look ridiculous. Obama, you know, made the point that he'll never be President of the United States. Now, the key point is do you want to go down with that with that clown car, because the clown car is going to tell you that this is ridiculous. So start making fun of the clown car. Because the clown car didn't guess the 2016 election? It didn't guess the 2008 financial crisis? It gets nothing, right?

**Bret** 47:14

Yep. Okay, so I agree with that there is this, people have the wrong reaction to being laughed at. And the point is, there's a gate towards that. That gets you to the position of being regarded as far sighted and it involves a period of being regarded as foolish. And if people understood that, yeah, you're gonna you're gonna lose people, but that the people you meet by doing it will be a very high quality, which I guarantee you is true. I can't tell you how many really interesting patriots unity 2020 has just brought out of the woodwork, right. So I could spend all day every day on calls with really dynamic, interesting patriots, because they exist. It's not a high percentage, but it's a large number. So I

**Eric Weinstein** 48:02

think there are a lot of latent patriots, I think that we represent a majority of Americans who do not know where to turn to get back to being Americans. I don't think that's a small group. I think that the group of the gigantic people are like, what's the next step? Brett? That's very tough for me, because I'm your older brother. And quite honestly, I'll never take a backseat to you acceptive. If it weren't that and in this situation, I think that you are more right than I am, in a certain way, which is that I don't think the fact that this is unlikely to work, in my estimation is the most important thing. I think the most important thing is that we get back to agency, and that we swing at pitches, rather than trying to figure out how to walk to first base, which is what we usually do, it's time to actually start swinging at pitches and trying to remember what a homerun feels like. Well, and the end the answer is if you strike out, but you're trying to connect with the ball, I understand why it was I came to the game nobody goes to a baseball game. I'm hoping to watch everybody walk.

**Bret** 49:05

Yeah. So I would say best case, we get lucky we swing we knock it out of the park, but the fallback position, I would say is that unity is if we fail here, unity becomes a concept and basically it exists meaningfully until we succeed. I want to

**Eric Weinstein** 49:26

talk about two words that are important to me if we're going to talk about this is unit unity. 2024. And unity 2028. Right yeah, and the the issue is, is that every time we come up with an election, it's always make or break it's always dire The court is on the line we cannot afford right? Every time so I can set my clock to the fact that in 2024 I mean have the same set of pressures. You can't do that. Eric, you don't understand what this is about. 2028 same thing 2032 if we get to Those numbers will never be the right time to break out of the kleptocracy agreement between the two parties. I call the Democratic Party and the republican party together the looting party, the looting party, until we actually restore both of these parties, and we get patriotic conservatives and patriotic Democrats. I mean, basically what we're talking about is something like occupied France. And I don't want to pretend that I'm not French. If I'm Charles de Gaulle, and I'm sitting in London, I just want to get these Vichy guys get the hell out of there, because that's not my country. It's the right shell, same language, the food is good. The key point we're not behaving like French. And while we're not behaving like Democrats, and they're not behaving like Republicans, and so whatever this thing is, unity 2024 and unity 2028. need to be thought through now, this needs to be the problem that will not go away. No, we won't shut up. No, we won't go sit in our corner. No, we won't let the adults sorted out, because frankly, you're not adults.

**Bret** 51:04

Well, let's look at the other way to do it is to remember who the prior greater evils were that we were told we couldn't possibly risk confronting the duopoly because we would empower the worst of them. You know, I mean, Mitt Romney was the great evil, we couldn't risk. That's hilarious now, but Okay, so let's try to bring people in a little bit, we are still learning to use the tools at our disposal. Now you, you're gonna have to help us figure out how to do this. But I'm wondering how people actually feel about the question of whether or not this is a moment of revolutionary magnitude. In other words, is this a moment as serious as all of those events that we could put on that list? Or is it not? And I guess I would like a second question. If it were such a moment, do you believe that if this required valor on a battlefield, that you could find it in yourself? Or do you believe that something about as change that would make that impossible that the things that people once laid down their lives for that that's somehow a passe concept? Eric, is there anything you want to add to the list of questions that we might solicit answers to?

**Eric Weinstein** 52:24

It's an interesting puzzle, I guess the key thing that I would be thinking about is, what is your threshold? Like at the moment, I'm still holding back a bit, because I don't see that we have the missing catalyst in place. But I'm very happy that you're not holding back. What is it that you will give a fantasy about what what could happen that would allow you to go whole hog full throated volunteer for unity? 2020. Because I think one of the points is, I don't want to do this funeral, really. The idea of fighting for my life appeals to me, if I was on one of those planes that was flown into the ground or into a building, I would like the privilege of fighting back. I would like the privilege of trying to break into the cockpit whether or not we succeed, I don't like the idea of going to my deaths strapped in with my seatbelt, knowing that the fasten seatbelt sign has been turned on by terrorists in the cockpit. You know, it's like if the terrorist in the cockpit. Let's talk about the exciting fun part about taking back to political parties or universities or press so that we don't have to be embarrassed or irritated every four seconds that people are feeding total garbage into our cerebral cortex. I mean, it's just I want, I want my mind back, I want my country back. I want my children to have a future. This is exciting. It's fun to fight evil. Fighting evil is a good time. And so I don't want us to get so down in the dumps. Assume that the Republic is in the line if as soon as as an existential crisis with China, and you want to sleepwalk through it?

**Bret** 54:11

Well, even worse, I mean, your point about the being in your seat is exactly the right one, right? I think if you look at the question correctly, there's, you know, if if the plane goes down, and you charge the cockpit, and you didn't make it, at least it doesn't go down with you thinking Damn, I should have. It's like, well, I did, right.

**Eric Weinstein** 54:34

I'd rather be bleeding from a box cutter than obediently in a sitting in a in my seat with a white shirt that has, you know, not a speck of blood on it. The point that I'm trying to get at is what would it take each one of us as an exogamous event, like if somebody large signed on to this really big, would that change your mind if some people litical person, you know, what if what if Ted Cruz and I just did an interview where Ted didn't, you know, didn't come over to my side, I didn't come over to his side. But we renewed the fact that whether we disagree with each other because we're on opposite sides of the aisle, we would both repudiate our own wings in order to further the American project in tandem. That was a painful and difficult thing for I think, both of us, but huge positive commentary in the comments. everybody's like, this is the discussion we need. We need to be able to see somebody who you know, is absolute right to life with somebody who's, you know, strongly pro choice in the lingo. And both of them actually able to admit, hey, this isn't capturing really what's going on in embryonic development. This is just some language. Okay, well, what do we do now about this issue about getting your people excited and jazzed about the American project? Not kleptocratic? Not far left? Not far right. You get to fight all of the baddies at once. Think about this. You've got the extreme right wing baddies, the ethno nationalists that people we saw in Charlottesville, you've got the extreme left wing people who want to just all cops are bastards tear down all of the federal buildings, EFF this stuff. You've got the crazy governors and mayors who are experimenting with abandoning this stuff. You've got people who are experimenting with militias. You've got kleptocrats trying to put their children in positions of power from the center left and center. Right? We get to fight them all. That's a terrible thing. sort of think about the bride and the crazy aids in Kill Bill. Bet on the bride. So it's on Well, you know, I'm with Beatrix kiddo. And I you think you want to be with the crazy 88? Guess again. So my feeling about this is this is fun, fighting badness is fun, get excited and tell us what would it take for you to view this as the most romantic positive thing you've ever done?

**Bret** 57:04

Nice. So the question I don't know if Noah has already asked it. But the question I think you're looking for, and the way it interfaces with this tool. is you want people obviously people who are tuned into this are more likely on board already than not probably. But if, if you could ask the question such that people who aren't on board answer for themselves and people who are on board answer what they've think thing would cause people to I saw George W. Bush and Barack Obama get together and say unity, 2020 2024 and 2028? Because we need it now.

**Eric Weinstein** 57:44

would that change my mind that this was an adult grown up project? Who would you need to see defect? Who would you need to see is open support? What would you need to see about names on ballots? Tell us start to confront your fears? And let us know the worst stuff? Why does this not feel like a grown up project? And tell us what it would take before it felt grown up? Because to be honest, what it really takes is an article or two in the mainstream, very high profile people saying you know what, this is the right thing. So just tell us tell us who those people are, tell us the amount of money that would need to come in. Because let me just tell you, you may not be able to ask for money. This guy needs money. If you have extra money lying around and you're frustrated about the country not functioning, don't send an amount that's gonna piss off your kids. We're not killing somebody at the moment where I'm telling you, then you're making a mistake. I don't know what you're doing. There needs to be money somewhere.

**Bret** 58:42

Well, there does need to be money at some point. The question is, it comes with constraints It comes with liberty and

**Eric Weinstein** 58:51

somebody who understands money get bred out of the loop and make sure that his team has enough money that they can do small things so that this can be done at a professional level. It doesn't take a huge amount these guys are running things on a shoestring. Am I right? You put your own my nephew to work rather, getting this whole call up and running. And we Brett's using child labor. Save him for being busted by the fence. All right. All right.

**Bret** 59:17

No, do you have feedback for us?

**Moderator** 59:20

Hi, Brett. Hi, Eric. Yeah, we right now so we asked almost looks like over 300 people, a painter paints a picture of what could happen that would allow you to go whole hog for unity 2020 and the vast majority of people the most popular answer already there. Give us a candidate. Next most popular answer are candidates to rally around and individuals with enough clout to grab the public attention. If you guys want to bring this up on screen, it should be the most recent screen grab on as I scroll through this list. Candidates candidates and Ready to go as soon as we have the candidates, and that's across people from both parties?

**Bret** 1:00:05

All right. And on the earlier questions about whether or not people think this is a moment of a mag revolutionary magnitude?

**Moderator** 1:00:16

Yes. So they're a little bit less higher percentage of agreement around 62% of people are saying, Yes, but to give you a sample of the answers 62% of people of the 259 people that responded would agree with the statement, yes, feedback loops are heading rapidly in the wrong direction, one major event away from chaos. People from both parties agreeing to that at about 60 to 63%.

**Bret** 1:00:45

Interesting, so at least a lot of people who have ears to hear so that's such that they've shown up to hear this campfire discussion. Also see one event away from chaos, which I think is actually not a bad estimate. I mean, it's a, it's a system that is now held together by self restraint, that there are in fact, certain things that we are not seeing, but could show up at any day, which would kick things into a very different phase, I suspect.

**Bret** 1:01:24

No need I don't think. All right, so where are we timewise? Five minutes from an hour. All right, so we're gonna go for another five minutes or so are there things that you think we should cover to wrap this section up? And then we'll take a break and come back and be more interactive? Carrick?

**Eric Weinstein** 1:01:51

Well, um, I really think that in part, one of the things is, is that we should stop promising people that we can solve all of their problems. The issue about how do we know that you're not a spoiler, you guys have said, you know, what, we were going to take some measures to make sure that we don't spoil by appealing to both parties. I think that was very clever. I think the idea that you can shut this thing down at will, if it appears to be a genuine threat. But to be honest, it needs to be a genuine threat. And we should stop bending over backwards to constantly reaffirm that, don't worry, we would never do anything to upset the applecart of the big boys. Because frankly, I'm not feeding from that apple cart, you're not feeding from that apple cart, most of America is not feeding from that Apple carts a tiny number of people who have a broken system working for them. So you know what, we'll do our best to make sure that you know, in the situation that we take some precautions to make sure we're not doing an obviously screwed up thing. But this is a dire circumstance. And don't expect that everything is going to be made, you know, out of foam rubber, so that nobody can possibly get hurt. This is really a very dire situation. And I think one of the things is good job for you guys trying to figure out how to assuage some of the risks, but you can't switch them all. I think, with respect to tell us the candidate names. The key issue is, you know what, you're gonna have to wait for the right moment. Because to make this work strategically, one of the reasons I never defined the intellectual darkweb was because everything that gets defined gets asked way too many hot, specific questions in an effort to destroy it. So I think it's important that we not ask too much of breadths concept of unity 2020, that we understand that it can be made artificial, arbitrarily rather specific as need be. But that in part, we should be log rolling a little bit more. Also, I want to know more about the names. Is it Oprah? Is it Obama? Who are the people that you still really respect? You know,

**Bret** 1:03:57

when you say names, you're talking about people who wish they would change things?

**Eric Weinstein** 1:04:02

Who is it john stewart, tell me, you know, Thomas soul? Who is it? That you know, if Glenn Lowry and john McWhorter, were talking about this? We've got amazing people left and right, that we've been talking to. And one of the things that I would say is that those of us who are still living in the legacy system, don't ask for complete consistency from us because I have to keep one leg in the legacy world allow us some freedom of inconsistency if we're trying to build the new so I'm not you know, 100% on the on board with Unity 2020, but it's the right smart thing to be doing to build the boat before the rain. And the issue is whether the rain comes or not. I think we're going to get very dire stuff happening right as the republic really starts to unravel. That is the moment where we have an opportunity to do something. This is what Obama didn't understand in 2008 He let a crisis pass without trying to get the change during the crisis. So we're going to have a new crisis. And we need people who are know how to manage a crisis in real time. And I think that that's really important and

**Bret** 1:05:11

who don't have perverse incentives that would prevent them from managing it properly, which we've seen, I

**Eric Weinstein** 1:05:15

think Obama may not have had that many perverse incentives. But he did not know at the beginning, how to handle a situation which almost nobody gets, there wasn't an instruction manual and his his tendencies to go back towards the establishment were too strong. I think it's really important to recognize that, you know, we have ex presidents wood, wood wood, George W. Bush and Barack Obama together, be your clue that in fact, we've got to reverse some of the damage of what came later. Also, being able to say what we got wrong, I'm on this call, in part to say I got something wrong. That's not easy. It's not fun. But part of what we do is we say we got something wrong. In my case, what I got wrong, was I didn't realize I was penalizing unity 2020 for agency, having agency and a time when everyone else exhibits learned helplessness. And so that's what I'm here to apologize for. And I think, Brett, if you fail at some things in this process, I know you'll be one of the first people to admit it. That's real leadership, and not let's not wallow in our mistakes, onward.

**Bret** 1:06:24

Fair enough. All right, one last question. I see a lot of people who I think are using personality as a proxy for danger. And I think it's a terrible mistake. I don't think it's a, an accurate calculation at all, but more about what you mean. What I mean is, I see a lot of people who are very convinced that everything has to be put off until Trump is removed from the White House. And then I see a lot of other people who are just absolutely convinced that, you know, having Biden in the White House would be an invitation to chaos. And at some level, I think my feeling is I'm not looking at these people as people at all, they are scenarios, right? So there's a scenario in which Trump continues in the presidency. And there's another scenario in which Biden ascends. And the thing is, if if you take taste out of it, right? I don't know which of these scenarios is more frightening, right? It's not a question of the person there and what you think of them, right? i?

**Eric Weinstein** 1:07:29

Well, I mean, the Trump scenario is about idiosyncratic. Corruption, effectively. And in the case of Biden, you're talking about systemic corruption machine. So yeah, so you know, of course, Biden looks more respectable, because he's the front end of the machine. And Trump looks, you know, more bizarre, because he's done this Drunken Master boxing routine, where, you know, it's like watching a manual Augustus, it's very hard to hit a guy who looks crazy, but in fact, appears to be playing by some rulebook that you've never seen. So what is the aggregate effect of being forced to choose between these two and having a choice between Trump and Hillary first, and then you know, before that, it was like Jeb and Hillary and, look, the big problem is, is that you don't have a future you're excited about. And that's the key issue. Neither of these scenarios is an exciting future. We've seen what Trump did for the last four years. No, we didn't become Nazi Germany, we didn't become all sorts of things that that most overblown, were saying, but we did lose a lot of what it means to be ordinary Americans. Had Hillary been in in the White House, I have no doubt that she would have continued lots of things that would have caused people also to feel that they were losing their mean, the Gini coefficient undoubtedly would have gone up. We would have been more in bed with China because these people cannot say no to China, and every time they hear something patriotic, they say nationalistic and jingoistic. So the problem on the left and the problem on the right, I think once you realize that you don't have to choose between them. And that you caucus with one or two caucus with the other, but they ain't your people. Suddenly, you feel much better about the world. And I think that the most of the people are still in the framework where they see one evil or the other are not used to the problem of alliances. I mean, let's be honest, we aligned ourselves with Stalin to defeat Hitler. Pretty bitter pill to have to ally yourself with Joseph Stalin. On the other hand, we went into the Cold War just as soon as we could. You know, in this situation, look, you're gonna have to sit down with some people that you're not entirely enthusiastic about and the pleasure that comes from doing it is different. It's It was great wrapping up with Ted Cruz and saying, you know what, we actually had a real conversation across an aisle that didn't become horrible. side just gave up and, you know went over to the other in an in an effort to appear kind. It feels good to fight with your friends who that you can break bread with and drink beer with and do whatever. After knowing that when all said and done, you're on the same team, we need to get back to that team and we have a growing threat coming out of China, and a multipolar world. And it's time to get back to being the US of A period. The end there is no more.

**Bret** 1:10:26

Yeah, I agree with this. The the conversations with other patriots with whom you disagree about issues often feel very good. And I think what

**Eric Weinstein** 1:10:39

it's so naughty to it's like, I can't believe you sat down with that person, right? But yeah, and they were awesome. They care about their country like you do. And they think that you think insane things, but you don't just the way you think that they think and saying things that they don't.

**Bret** 1:10:55

Exactly. And so the one thing is we have a situation in which something really shocking would have to happen in order that we don't end up with one of these dire scenarios or the other. come November wouldn't have anything. Yeah, yeah. However, it's 2020. shocking things are now a regular occurrence. And this one would be perfectly in keeping. And the thing that people don't get is that it's actually possible. It really just takes people recognizing that they don't have to vote for these people. I think

**Eric Weinstein** 1:11:29

that this is a little bit where we run into trouble. And if you don't mind you had you're having me on, I'll give a different perspective. Sure. It's not possible. If everything happens the way it has always happened. Of course not right, just the way powered powered flight is not going to happen, because it's never happened. This is one of these things that's not going to have ever happened until it does. And it has to be the case that either these parties are going to sooner or later, there's nothing left to steal, you've hollowed the thing out to such an extent that even the kleptocracy can't support itself by just stealing from other people. So we are headed very quickly into some scenario where we are not going to recognize that we're going to lose the republic we thought we had. And if you're excited about that Republic as I am not because it's intrinsically the project that I wanted to give my life for. But everything that I ever wanted to do rests on the idea that there's some place to turn in your good work and make sure that you can get enough resources to go do some more. And we lose this thing where idiots complete idiots because we're losing it for the dumbest of reasons. And I really believe Brett that this at the center, it's the fact that we could no longer trust the core of these two parties, because they broke faith. And that's why the creek creepy crazies. And the reason that this is going to work, if it's going to work at all, is that something will happen, which will take this from being a crazy idea to a non crazy idea. If you remember the moment in The Big Short that you were just referencing, where the hero is sitting down with Goldman Sachs, he wants to structure a bet. And he says, Yes, I am trying to bet against you. But it's very important that if you go bankrupt that I still be able to collect. And at that point, he realizes that they think he's a crazy person. Because that seems like a very weird, how could anything ever happened to Goldman Sachs? Well, this is the moment to bet against goldman sachs and JP Morgan, only they're called the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, because what's going wrong is so much more profound than either of these things. If you thought that those things were, you know, stable and strong, then you're fooled by the fact that somebody paid for a cheap layer of marble to cover the lobby. Yep, it looks like marble.

**Bret** 1:13:45

Yeah, but you can you can just look at the candidates, it's delivered. And you can tell that thing has gone completely off the rails. But the other thing is like, okay, so that piece of luck arrives. Let's say it does. Things change. We could actually feel positive again, come November.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:14:04

company requires a piece of luck, of course, is the thing that the thing that I want, you're you're skeptical people. Look, you're willing to trundle into this. And that's why we're doing this because you built something right? I'm signing on to saying, I didn't get this right now if I'm more reluctant, I haven't had the other thing happen. In order for this to work, something else almost certainly has to happen. That could be an endorsement. That could be a giant amount of money coming in. That could be a terrorist attack. It could be a new health threat. It could be anything that shows up like, I want you to come up with a list. If you're going to have me on I'm going to task you with the following bread. Tell me the catalysts. What if Biden and Trump both show that they're not mentally up for the task because cognitive cognitive and inventory wise that they just don't have either

**Bret** 1:14:56

even one of them, potentially even one of them?

**Eric Weinstein** 1:14:59

Okay, That would be one of these things. A more significant walking away from policing duties in a major city would be another one of these things. Some sort of clear hate crime, not some sort of, you know, thrown together accusation for which the President didn't respond sufficiently, whatever, whatever the crazy catalysts are, you should make a list of things that would cause you to say Thank God, somebody built something. Thank God, somebody created an alternative.

**Bret** 1:15:35

I'm not whatever the I'm not sure what the point of the list is, obviously, you can't make an exhaustive list because you can't anticipate all the things that could happen. And

**Eric Weinstein** 1:15:42

we just had a major explosion in Beirut, Lebanon, nobody knows exactly what it means. What if you had an explosion of that size and an American city and there was a claim that was credible, that it was a terrorist attack? Right? What would we do in response? You know, I don't know. We should anticipate all of the standard scenarios where things are destabilized, there are deaths that are incredibly important. There are discoveries that are incredibly important, we could find out something with Gilliam Maxwell being in court, that implicates huge swaths of our political class, whatever these things are, we should make a list of things that could be the catalyst. So people would have an idea of that's one of those things that was part of the signal that 2020 was ready to go in unity 2020 was ready to go into high gear. I think the difference between you it, you and myself in this in this regard is I'm more waiting on the next piece of information to arrive than you are. And that is why you are the person building it. And I'm the person saying I really applaud you for building it. So

**Bret** 1:16:52

Well, I appreciate that. I have to say, you know, this is this is an awkward spot to be in. Building on the front end for the straight forward path is one thing and preparing for the other is front of mind. But it is not front of discussion.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:17:10

I think that the point of I'm building an ark, because there is a 60% chance of a flood is not a dumb thing. If it turns out that ex post, there was no flood, right? So my point is, I don't know what the probabilities are. But the key point is, I want to say to some people, I don't promise you that there's a flood, I don't promise you that this is going to work. I don't promise you anything that even vaguely sounds like this, I promise you that it is a smart idea to have contingency plans. And all of the rich people that I know are thinking about their own contingency plans. Those of us who cannot afford those contingency plans need to think about what we're doing with each other in order to save this thing. because let me tell you something. I cannot believe how little help we're getting from our very established class. And I'm hoping there's somebody out there who's got executive function coursing through their veins with tons of cash. It says, You know what, I love this country. I came I came here as an immigrant. My parents came here as immigrants. I don't know. I want to help. I hope that they force resources on you. I really do.

**Bret** 1:18:22

Alright, well with that I believe we are going to take a break of I believe 50 would you say that? Yeah. 15 minutes and then we will be back and we will interact with you through the democracy AI back end that will allow us to find out what you think. So until 15 minutes from now, be well

**Bret** 1:38:13

Hey folks, welcome back to the Unity 2020 campfire with Eric Weinstein, we are now ready to interact with the audience and to respond to some feedback that we've already gotten. first piece of feedback is that apparently 70% of people watching feel that candidates are the most important question but that given a pair of candidates that matches the criteria that we have suggested that they would support unity 2020 at the ballot box, that's a very encouraging number. So there is consensus around the idea that candidates are the key if you I should say, we are planning to unveil a process for nominating candidates. In the coming days, that process will be official, we have some unofficial feedback data collected on this stream that we will talk to you about in a moment. But essentially, we are going to open up a process that's going to allow the Unity 2020 community to deliver suggestions for candidates from left and right that they feel have the three characteristics. We are looking for those three characteristics being courageous, capable patriots. So Eric, are you able to hear me,

**Eric Weinstein** 1:39:29

I can hear me,

**Bret** 1:39:30

I can hear you. So we have a list of names that were submitted. And I confess to you, I'm learning to use this interface and to understand what it means.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:39:41

I should say, I've only heard two names floated so far, which is mcraven and Yang and that candidates are not particularly important to me, provided that they simply be what you say which is patriotic, capable and courageous. courageous, and anybody who's willing to stand alone and try this thing, certainly is courageous. And now if they're capable, and if they're patriotic, then they'll get called jingoistic and nationalistic. And then I'll know we're with good people.

**Bret** 1:40:14

So I agree with you, I would vote for any courageous, capable Patriot, even a single person running for office without the Unity 20 2020 plan of pairing them would be a breath of fresh air compared to what we've been living through. Now, the reason that we have built the plan, the way we did, with the somebody from the left, and somebody from the right, paired together in a governance team, is that everybody who contemplates this knows that if they are anywhere on the the main spectrum politically, that their interests will be understood by somebody involved in the decision making process. And I think many people would be concerned if their interests are somehow not understood even by a courageous, capable Patriot, even if that's not where you and I fall out, Eric, right. But let's take a look at this list and talk about the people who have been suggested and what we think of them relative to those characteristics. And I guess it's also an interesting question whether we understand them to be right or left or hard to place. So the top name, the top name, is maybe not surprisingly, Andrew Yang, and 77% agree that Andrew Yang would be an excellent choice. Now, you know, Andrew, personally. Sure. What do you think about about Andrew as a candidate you wildly in favor,

**Eric Weinstein** 1:41:44

I mean, my first thought is, is that I'm wildly in favor of the human being. That is Andrew Yang, and I'm wildly in favor about getting him away from the campaign process that I saw, you know, there's something about our process, which deforms everybody. And so there was a weird sense of relief, almost when he left the race after being brutalized by MSNBC and not getting the airtime and the all the usual dirty tricks. So my feeling is, is that Andrew, the human being is a sparkling, wonderful human, who loves the world, his country, his family, as sensible, he is one of the first people to square with us, which is education and training and jobs are not going to get you out of where you are. And that speaks to his courage. It speaks to his acuity. So I think that Andrew is a marvelous choice.

**Bret** 1:42:38

Yeah, I agree. And I also feel like he, you know, you might want somebody who has a good healthy dose of ego, to be able to fight the battles that a president has to fight, but in his case, I thought, actually, he was very undistorted by ego. I don't know what his relationship is with it. But I felt certain that if, for example, it turned out that there was a compelling argument against universal basic income, but that there was some other way to do it, like participation income, that he would be wide open to hearing about how it might be done better, and there would be no part of him that would shut down the idea because it wasn't the one that made him famous. Yeah, he

**Eric Weinstein** 1:43:19

and I disagree about UBI. To an extent, just the way I disagree with you to some extent about about the Unity 2020. But the key point is somebody I could definitely work with. And you know, again, he's not attached to the instantiations. He's attached to the idea of getting sense back in our political process.

**Bret** 1:43:37

Yep. Great. All right, second on the list is Tulsi. So presumably, that's Tulsi Gabbard, I can't name another Tulsi who might have risen to the top of this list.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:43:48

Tulsi. Tulsi made the point to me that she said, You know, I didn't understand what this process was when I signed up for it. And I believe that Tulsi has a lot of presidential temperament. Whenever my disagreements with her art might be on foreign policy, I'm not even positive that I understand her positions well enough. She is somebody who is one to watch. And she's somebody who I think I would take orders from, and will allow to lead me into battle if if that called for that. And I think that another wise choice of somebody who could benefit from not being put through this incredible force.

**Bret** 1:44:27

Yeah, I agree. There are things about policy stuff that of course, worry me a little bit, but in general, I had the sense of a very solid human being. Interestingly, she seems to resonate better with people on the right than on the left. I find even though I don't see any reason to think that she actually is right of center. What do you think?

**Eric Weinstein** 1:44:49

I think that the fact is, is that well, first of all, if the right wants to embrace a capable woman of color Hello I mean, I think it just gives you an idea that the right isn't what many people claim the right to be. I think that she's, you know, as a mutual friend of ours, Mike Brown would have said she's a command and control babe. She's hard as nails soft when she needs to be. She's that person who combines so many traits and shows that, in fact, I think one thing is, is that she appeals to a hierarchical nature of somebody who's not so driven by ego that you're, you're following them is, I think she really behaved egoless relative to me every time I've interacted with her. And so my personal interactions with Tulsi have been sparkling, fantastic. Interested in all of my criticisms, slow to anger, not defensive. A fighter willing to go up against the DNC. So my feeling about it is despite my foreign policy concerns, just the way foreign policy is her signature issue and Andrews is UBI. I don't need to agree with them on their signature issues either.

**Bret** 1:46:04

Yep. Agreed. Okay, so she reached 70 67% approval in this straw poll. And let's see next on the list is mcraven. Of course, maybe not surprising, given that the idea was launched with them as a prototype ticket. How much do you know about mcraven? Not enough? Not enough. You have a thought about whether he fits the bill or?

**Eric Weinstein** 1:46:36

Again, you know, my feeling about this is if you asked me for all of my wishlist items. When I looked in, my feeling is that there's there are things to find that are not perfectly aligned with me. Who the hell cares? Yeah, who the hell cares?

**Bret** 1:46:53

Who the hell cares? I agree. I will say if you're not familiar with mcraven, it is well worth looking into some of his public speeches and things he's written, I find them actually quite compelling. He gave a recent talk at I guess it's the Navy War College, on leadership. It's quite good. Anyway, I think people who don't know him would be well served by just getting a sense for the man's. his temperament, his approach his sense of humor, it's all I think, very positive.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:47:27

By the way, the first the first two are really disliked by the Democratic Party, I hope that he is really disliked by the Republican Party, because being dead on arrival to one of your own parties would seem to be a prerequisite at the moment.

**Bret** 1:47:39

Well, actually, if we can just point out with, with Yang and gathered, there's a sense in which, as they left the race, and apparently signed whatever pledge it is to not get in the way of the ascendant, Joe Biden. I understand the instinct to be a good soldier. And I understand also potentially the idea that if you behave yourself long enough, the DNC would let you run, but I have to say, as a longtime observer of the DNC, there's no way the DNC will let either of those people attain power unless they agree not to use it. So unless they

**Eric Weinstein** 1:48:16

change or the DNC changes, yeah. So dead on arrival is a huge plus.

**Bret** 1:48:23

It's a it's a prerequisite. And if I could reach them with one piece of information I think they need to have it's that the DNC is using you, and it's not your friend. Okay, fourth on the list, so mccraven was 59% approved. Next on the list is Joe Rogan. What do you think

**Eric Weinstein** 1:48:46

Joe? shuts me down whenever I bring this up?

**Bret** 1:48:50

He does. Hmm.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:48:51

He's got a beautiful life. He's been, oh,

**Bret** 1:48:55

he shouldn't do it. Because it's good for Joe because it wouldn't be.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:48:59

Look, my point is, is that if the world were calling Joe Rogan's name, I'm not saying that he would not answer the door, but when, when I'm calling his name and say we have to get involved. I think he has an instinct, which is politics be too crazy.

**Bret** 1:49:15

Yes. Although, you know, I mean, again, it patriotism.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:49:20

I'm happy to talk to Tulsi and Andrew, I don't know mcraven I'm not going to call Joe and suggest this to him because he's already told me

**Bret** 1:49:28

we're we're not we're not calling Joe. We're just talking you me and you know, 7000 of our closest friends right

**Eric Weinstein** 1:49:36

behind his back. Okay, good. Right.

**Bret** 1:49:37

Well in front of his back actually. All right, so Okay, so Joe is pretty clearly left even if the left or elements of the left want to portray him as right. He's definitely not there's nothing about him. That's right. I find he hunts elk. Oh, right. His elk hunting nobody. He he Old school. He's easy. He's pre left right on with his bow hunting.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:50:03

Oh, I see with the bow hunter that makes it better. Yeah. Okay.

**Bret** 1:50:10

Now interesting. He only gets 24% approval so these are not in order then because something about the average Okay, there's something about them that's not clear to me the order there's they're nearly an order, but okay, it's good back to the names. Okay, next on the list Oh friend Shah,

**Eric Weinstein** 1:50:35

Natalie Crenshaw,

**Bret** 1:50:36

I believe it's Dan Crenshaw.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:50:38

Oh damn Crenshaw, there's a huge difference between a Dan and a Kimberly Crenshaw.

**Bret** 1:50:43

Not unless they want there to be a huge difference. Yes. Well, interesting.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:50:48

Well, Kimberly came up with intersectionality, I would think that she would probably want one

**Bret** 1:50:53

I, I would imagine. So yeah, I was actually speaking with Dan Crenshaw this morning. So second time, I've had an extended conversation with him. And the funny thing is that for people who are quite far apart politically, we find very little to disagree over, I suspect we would disagree over the standard things that liberals and conservatives disagree with, which is how close to the particular desirable end state the country is, as a liberal, I probably think we're farther away, and he probably thinks we're closer to it at the moment. But in terms of the world that we want to see, it's amazing how little difference that turns out to be in. In our case, do you have much sense of the man,

**Eric Weinstein** 1:51:40

I have the sense of a good man who's tough as nails with a patriotic spirit, who is more American, then he is Republican. And, again, you know, this is just clear sign read that you and I are part of the far right extreme. I like him.

**Bret** 1:52:01

Yes, well, welcome to it. Yeah. All right. Cool. Yeah, there is something interesting to just in

**Eric Weinstein** 1:52:09

your earlier point, I should say, it's very hard to care about whether or not you think the tulips should be yellow or pink when you're being attacked in Pearl Harbor, you know, and so the fact is, I look forward to my disagreements with Dan Crenshaw, Tulsi Gabbert mccraven Yang. But my point is, is that mostly what this strikes me is the patriotic crew rather than party.

**Bret** 1:52:36

Totally agree. And I would put it slightly differently, which is that our system is so distorted by corruption, that the number of things that we should just obviously do for the public's well being is huge before you get to the stuff over which we might actually defer, right? Just simply governing in the public's interest would be such a break from recent history that

**Eric Weinstein** 1:52:58

I can't even imagine it right. It's worth it. What a day. That would be Wow,

**Bret** 1:53:02

yeah. Hey, could be January. All right. Next on the list is Lowry. I assume this is Glenn Lowry who is being advanced. Now Glenn? Is could be any Lowery.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:53:19

As your clients wife, I'm gonna assume it's Glenn.

**Bret** 1:53:22

I read her recent piece. I can't say I would be all that favorable to seeing her in a position of power.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:53:29

Well, her quote is progress is messy, so I think not.

**Bret** 1:53:33

Right. Okay. So let's assume Glenn Lowry. You know, Glenn? Yeah. What do you think of him?

**Eric Weinstein** 1:53:39

I like him a lot. I don't know him. Like you do. I think I've had a phone call with him. And that's been I've never met him. But my sense of it is that he's brilliant, tough. And radical individualism. Yeah, love.

**Bret** 1:53:57

Yeah, he's a razor sharp, has no cowardice that I've seen whatsoever. He just shoots from the hip, and is also the accurate. Yeah, and he's just unbearably likable. And he's one of you. Every so often you meet one of these people. And it's like, hard to imagine that anybody dislikes him. I find him to be a little rough. He be a little rough. He can be a little gruff. But even that is kind of an era is the thing that

**Eric Weinstein** 1:54:24

Gee, before rough. Good. Exactly.

**Bret** 1:54:29

All right. Next, john stewart.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:54:35

I have a lot of positive feelings about john Stuart from years ago. He did something that really bothered me, which is March on Washington, where he refused to make it about anything. And so we've now had these multiple marches that aren't really about anything. Nevertheless, at the moment, sure. Yep. If you're detecting a theme, it's Like any one reasonable okay I think we're courageous competent patriotic all have a double helping of that

**Bret** 1:55:09

yeah that's a good list all right keep going yeah all right so I it's funny

**Eric Weinstein** 1:55:13

I don't all these people I slightly disagree with Is there anybody you don't

**Bret** 1:55:17

like at least slightly disagree seem to me like it's likely to be the least amount of disagreement there's probably no

**Eric Weinstein** 1:55:24

people I agree with to frighteningly high order and I do agree that once you have booked a tremendous amount of agreement that you're you're fighting takes a different character which is that the small things really really matter but what I'm seeing is basically just doesn't doesn't even matter yes any other than Trump Biden hell yes if I could, if I could wave ones Yep.

**Bret** 1:55:53

All right. Yeah, we would expel yarmouth's our way right to them. Okay. Next on the list Actually, I can I see the data Jocko is the next one on the list. Can you scoot this over so I can see how that breaks down? So I am

**Eric Weinstein** 1:56:09

not waking up at four o'clock every morning to do calisthenics?

**Bret** 1:56:13

90 huddle bells, he would wake up at four o'clock, so you know that I don't have to right exactly. Oh, no, no,

**Eric Weinstein** 1:56:19

I know Jacko. So,

**Bret** 1:56:21

Jocko gets 39% agreement from Trump supporters and 22 from Biden supporters. So I guess I'm a little unclear on what the implications are about how the question was asked because it does that mean that only 22% of people who consider themselves would be Biden's supporters would support Jocko if he was one of a pair, right? I can't imagine that actually, I don't know.

**Eric Weinstein** 1:56:47

But Jocko is pretty, pretty straightforward, no nonsense. He's got a huge heart. A guy who has never had a cowardly day in his life, loves his country. And, you know, certainly again, whatever my differences with Jocko irrelevant.

**Bret** 1:57:10

So I want to just in passing point out that we have a number of these individuals who are special forces trained, who show up in our political and academic landscape. And I think it's trying to tell us something I'm not sure exactly what but

**Eric Weinstein** 1:57:31

relationship with the unforgiving if you have a relationship with something that is not mediated by other humans, that punishes you when you get things wrong, whether that's investing, whether that's rock climbing, whether that's hunting Special Forces,

**Bret** 1:57:49

building machine buildings, building buildings, carpentry, any of these things, solving partial differential equation, right, anything in which it's not mediated by social approval. But I guess my point would be, there's something about I think there's something about the special forces that is generating a different style of intellectual. And anyway, they're

**Eric Weinstein** 1:58:12

free. They're free things, and they have proof. Well think about the word elite. We don't mind. There was an elite unit that was deployed, Oh, thank God, we have elite units. We're not angry at our elite Special Forces, guys. And the idea is that they walk around with a certain amount of swagger. Because they're doing the Lord's work. You know, and at some level, I think that that's part of the whole thing that the intellectual warrior, we want people to have the ability to go to war, but not the need to go to war nor the pleasure in war. Yeah. And I think that there's something very noble about the philosopher warrior.

**Bret** 1:58:53

Yep, I like it. I think that's that's the right category for the thing. I'm, that's what I'm hunting for. Here. Also,

**Eric Weinstein** 1:59:00

I should point out that Andrew Yang skateboards, and Tulsi plays the ukulele, which is much harder than most people imagine, especially while you surf. So everybody here is doing something that is mediated by a direct connection to reality. And I also think that these people have humility and have strength to project into those things. Sort of rare to get an in general, together, and it's one of the reasons that they're so likable.

**Bret** 1:59:35

Agreed. So, so far, have you seen anybody on this list or heard anybody on this list who you think fails on any of the three criteria?

**Eric Weinstein** 1:59:43

No, keep going. We'll get there.

**Bret** 1:59:45

Yeah. All right. Next one, things are going to get dicey. Tucker Carlson, Tucker Carlson 17%. Approval overall, can you scoot over so I can see 33% against by would be Trump's quarters 6% would be Biden supporters.

**Eric Weinstein** 2:00:03

Yeah, that's gonna be problem problematic for a lot of people because I think Tucker Carlson gets sloppy on some stuff, or at least he did. And then I think that he's a he's a complicated case for many different reasons. And so he's the first one where I sort of have a slightly different feeling. I believe he's patriotic. But did you have competent and courageous? Yep, he's all of those things. I think that one of the problems, though, is that he's a little bit sloppy when it comes to things that don't sound good. Like, I think there was an issue with immigration where he used the word dirty, but dirty, wasn't necessarily used about immigrants being dirty, but maybe coming from dirty countries or whatever. This sloppiness issue is going to make the left hate him. Yeah. in large measure. On the other hand, I think that your point is, is that he's a much more complicated object than the left of center portrayal of him. And that people should take the time to figure out what they're really upset about, as opposed to what they've been told they should be really upset about. I know Tucker slightly. He was princely in my interactions with him. I've never done this show, I've been sort of avoiding doing more things, you know, right of center, because I feel like the left of center has a game where they won't give you any place to do your thing. So if you accept any right wing invitations, then you become like owned by the right. But I think that Tucker is an interesting case that people need to understand much better. And he was one of the few people who was willing to cover the Evergreen situation, which is the precursor for a lot of what's collapsing. And have you on. So and

**Bret** 2:01:56

yes. And I will also say a

**Eric Weinstein** 2:01:59

jon stewart Tucker Carlson matchup for president and vice president would be awesome. It

**Bret** 2:02:06

would be very entertaining. And I actually, I think I agree with Mike,

**Eric Weinstein** 2:02:09

they might not get along.

**Bret** 2:02:10

Oh, I don't know. I suspect they would I mean, you know, I've seen Tucker Carlson. Maybe I haven't seen but I've heard him interact with Glenn Greenwald. I certainly know that.

**Eric Weinstein** 2:02:21

You saw that you saw the jon stewart blowing up crossfire.

**Bret** 2:02:26

But that this is the other point I wanted to make. Is that my sense watching Carlson over many years, I used to absolutely detest him in the crossfire era, which I actually told him, right, I told him that he used to be my example of a weak man who wears a bow tie as a bully. And he, he laughed it off. He said, You know, you should see my inbox is literally what he said. But in any

**Eric Weinstein** 2:02:53

case, he said, the thing that he said to me, I said is I said, you don't want me on your show, because I'm just gonna say that fox news is a propaganda network. He says, No, that'd be great.

**Bret** 2:03:04

Well, so I have the sense that he's very much in motion and that he is now you know, when I tune into his nightly rants, there's always 20% of it that I find hard to take. But there's 80% of it. We're actually feel like he's speaking to issues that the left is supposed to be speaking to when nobody else is like class warfare. He does a much better job than most

**Eric Weinstein** 2:03:26

But well, you can in cultures, like the only person who supports me when I say we need to deep and biting labor shortage that has their CEOs howling in pain to last 50 years. Who who supports that? You would think it would be the party of Mother Jones? Would you think we'd be the party of labor? No, it's Ann Coulter, everything is flipped because the democrats flipped on labor.

**Bret** 2:03:49

Well, I'm going to sidestep Ann Coulter here and just say that the thing about Carlson is a, he appears, maybe in part, you know, in recent years hearing from people like us, but he is aware of an honorable left, which he is now championing. I think, if I removing if I read him correctly, he actually knows that the left has to do a job in order for America to work, that the tension between the left viewpoint and the right viewpoint is important. And if the left fails, that it is

**Eric Weinstein** 2:04:27

a problem. The problem we're gonna have is is the Tucker Carlson, in the minds of many people immediately points to racist beyond the pale white nationalist bs people have invested in summing him up in those terms and his sloppiness in a few places, has made that easier than it should be given that I don't think it's actually true. Right? I think that he's a very different sort of an object. However, you know, all of those Bubba the love sponge phone calls when he was calling in and yucking it up. I mean, the fact is, He's, he's a wild man a little bit. And you know that wild man persona can get him into trouble when it comes to saying a lot of things that cross through your mind. But he's an interesting person who has largely been misunderstood. misclassified, he has done things that are going to make it very tough to have him as a bipartisan this be the first one where I would say, that's, that sounds like a bridge too far.

**Bret** 2:05:24

Yeah, well, I think it is a bridge too far based on these data, at least on the basis that he's so wildly polarizing. Yep. Okay, next one. Interesting. Thomas Sol. told I would I knew you were gonna say that I think far too old by your normal criteria. I would say like Bernie Sanders, I see no evidence of cognitive decline in you know, he's done fewer appearances, but his appearances are razor sharp still. Nonetheless, there is a question about whether we should be electing people this old man, of course, you know, old is he? I don't know offhand. All right. But the thing is, he'd be a natural as an advisor.

**Eric Weinstein** 2:06:13

I mean, I want them in. I want them in the process. I don't think I want them as my president. Yep. I want to I want to see people turning towards people in their 40s and 50s. And even 30s. More. Yep. I'm sorry to say I mean, 60s would have been okay, but I'm sick to death of the septuagenarian plus impulse. As if, as if, as if we've always done that. Yeah. What How old? Is he? 90

**Moderator** 2:06:40

according to the internet

**Eric Weinstein** 2:06:41

now? Yeah,

**Bret** 2:06:42

if he's 90, it's too It's too old. But a fine advisor he would but you know,

**Eric Weinstein** 2:06:47

like Noam Chomsky is still with it. So it's not no no reflection on him being to diminish,

**Bret** 2:06:51

right. It's just it's actuarial. Yeah, actuarial Okay, so let's just look at the data on him. 24.

**Eric Weinstein** 2:07:00

So if you if you'd run with Tom lair, I dropped my drop down. Just Just because of this. Yeah.

**Bret** 2:07:07

So 27% approval amongst would be Trump voters. 18%. In would be Biden voters. That's, that's good. He's much less polarizing. That's great. Okay, scoot back over to the names. Oh, now it gets really dicey. Brett with one T, that's got to be me. And then you're right there. Eric with a C. So, but in light of the fact that those show up here now, are you ready to call Joe and get him to do it?

**Eric Weinstein** 2:07:42

First of all, I clearly lack courage, and competence. So really, we're going on my patriotism. So in my case, I must decline because of my my cowardice and my lack of competency. However, I've certainly noticed that when we get into a jam, like if I were to get into a powerboat, and we, the motor stop working, I would hope to be in there with you. Because for some reason you learned how to do all this stuff that I didn't learn how to do when we were growing up. So I would I would put Brett Weinstein above Eric Weinstein, by far.

**Bret** 2:08:25

I wouldn't, but let's just say we can do better America. We can do better. We can do better. America. Okay, good. Oh, but pretty good. I think neither

**Eric Weinstein** 2:08:34

one of us has ever sought power. I've definitely thought to have our voices amplified. I've never thought power. Yep. Don't think I want

**Bret** 2:08:44

so let's take a look at those numbers. Because Because it's interesting. 39% overall approval on me 36% on you like, Well, hold on, I think 43% I think weird. Okay. 43% approval for me. Amongst would be Trump voters 33 Biden voters. For you. It is 35% Trump voters. 29% would be Biden voters. So these numbers don't tell the complete story. There's some missing number here. We can't one

**Eric Weinstein** 2:09:17

thing I do believe that. a fair number of conservatives really vote conservative to stop madness on the left. And a fair number of left of center voters vote to stop sort of meanness and an evil greed on the on the right. And that one of the interesting things is if somebody else were handling your problem with the other side, what would it free you up to be for? Because I think that a lot of what the right really values in you, Brett is is that they know that whatever brand of left you are, it's not lying about Science or nature or data. It's not By going along with a group, you're an anti collectivist. And I would say that I am more anti collectivist even than you. I think that iron Rand was insufficiently individualistic. So, you know, in part, I do think that they are correctly picking up on you in you that you are the guy on the left who would fight the thing that is terrifying them, which is sort of this Mayor Jenny, Mayor Wheeler phenomenon.

**Bret** 2:10:28

Well, okay, good. I'd like to think that's what people are responding to?

**Eric Weinstein** 2:10:32

Well, because, you know, George bridges at Evergreen State College was the precursor of Mayor Jenny and Mayor Wheeler. And in some ways, Joe Biden. And in some ways, Joe Biden, stand down the police, that would be a terrifying thing to do, is giving the army the week off, because we don't like guns they are.

**Bret** 2:10:53

All right. Next on the list, interesting, a different term Condoleezza Rice.

**Eric Weinstein** 2:11:01

Totally unenthusiastic about it. I hear she plays amazing piano. I hear that she's smart as can be probably patriotic, I want to know that she's not patriotic to that class of people to many entanglements. Not wildly enthusiastic, however, I could, I could have a dinner with her and change my mind in an instant.

**Bret** 2:11:24

Yeah, I think that's a that's a good analysis. I sort of have the same sense. You know, I hear mitt romney's name bubble up. My sense is the last time I checked in with mitt romney, he doesn't qualify, but it doesn't

**Eric Weinstein** 2:11:40

mean stop that outsourcing stuff. Yes, he was part of the thing that broke the bonds that we feel to our fellow countrymen and and as you know, I think Brett, the simplest thing to say is that you and I come from a patriotic left. And the modern left is anti patriotic very often, you know, it is against anything being American, anything being, you know, market driven. And so coming from a market oriented patriotic left. I think that that's just, that's a huge difference. In the case of Condoleezza Rice. I worry that she's too much a part of that kind of group of people who divvied up, cut us all up and served us to each other. The same thing is true with mitt romney, the way in which he made his money was in part by breaking the bonds that we feel towards each other. So I'm happy to find out that they've moved on, they want to repudiate previous positions. I am not enthusiastic without further clarification. Yeah. Again, who am I? I'm just one guy who happens to be on the campus.

**Bret** 2:12:49

Right. But no, I think this is a good analysis. And I you know, I think in a lot of these cases, you would want to check in with where they are not under the former constraints, but the same, same concerns.

**Eric Weinstein** 2:12:59

The other issue is, is that if I was going to vote non Trump, non non Biden, you know what, I want Condoleezza Rice with somebody who I felt more certain of him I, again, I'm feeling desperate, I'm willing to swing at some pretty far out pitches under normal circumstances to get rid of this ridiculous choice that I'm having shoved down my throat.

**Bret** 2:13:22

Yeah. All right. Well, we've worked our way pretty far down the list here. I think maybe, would you say? I'm being told there's another slide with interesting data? I'm not sure what I'm looking, I'm

**Eric Weinstein** 2:13:43

just going to repeat to people. For those of you in Brett's camp, who are, you know, already, you know, very clear in unity 2020. Maybe this is the right question for people who are more in my camp, which is unity curious. My feeling about this is, I really don't care quite as much. The whole point of abstracting this was to avoid getting into the particulars of individual names and whether they had something in their past or it's to focus us on the idea of Get me the hell out of here. Right? Arnold Schwarzenegger his famous line, which I think everyone needs to repeat is, come with me if you want to live, right? It doesn't get better than that.

**Bret** 2:14:29

Yeah, I like it. Alright, is there anything that you want feedback on here? Do you feel like we've

**Eric Weinstein** 2:14:37

pretty early is, is that you've done a pretty good job. I think people need to hear, let me let me just give you some brotherly advice. The whole principle of the slow clap, right is is that you need people to reify what you've done and what you're trying to do. And if there's one person who doesn't want to reify what you do It's me, I hate I hate having to say this, but it's the right thing. And you're you're right, and I didn't get it. And, again, I'm not wildly unity 2020. But I'm unity curious, I care about unity 2024, unique 2028. We need to alert people to how badly this thing is rigged. If you step outside of the normal boundaries of the Democratic Party. For example, if we hold a debate, that is long form that gives people huge ability to respond, you are having those candidates break with the party. If you don't, if you want to challenge the super delegate system, you're asking people to break with the party. People don't understand how constrained This is, we used to have the League of Women Voters, for example, conducting debates. I don't know how we now throw it to here, CNN, you get this one in new york times you get this one. And NPR, you can participate in the ideas like f that stuff. What we need is extraordinarily different procedures. Long Form podcasting is the new thing that has taken over the intellectual interest of people who have real concerns and issues with the world. They want to figure things out. The idea that we're still doing this in short form, and that Andrew Yang, and Tulsi Gabbert are getting like a tiny number of minutes compared to Joe Biden and Elizabeth Warren and all this stuff. You know, I also think that Elizabeth Warren could have been a much better candidate, had she not been subjected to the process, it's corrupting everyone, you either want to be relevant and therefore corrupt, or you want to have integrity and therefore irrelevant. And

**Bret** 2:16:41

that's the measure as a feature, not a bug. The purpose is to prevent anything engaging change from getting through the primaries,

**Eric Weinstein** 2:16:48

how can we trust you, if you have any integrity left at the end of the process? How do we know that you're not going to stab us insiders in the back and actually govern the country. And so the idea effectively is we need to make sure everybody is corrupt and has blood on their hands so that we can we can remove anyone at will, because these these individuals are the equipment of a process. And I also think that we just have to recognize like, I want things that are bad for the donor classes. And we can't expect a process in which the donor classes are necessary to produce things that are hostile to the donor classes, like, do you think that the donor classes who contribute because of the carried interest exemption from an income taxes, right? Do you think that those people are going to turn around carried turn against carried interest, you know, the fund managers and things, there's no way that that's going to happen. And so what we need to do is to recognize that what we need is dead on arrival ideas, the kind of ideas that have been dead on arrival, contain many bad ideas, but they also contain all of our good ideas, any good idea is dead on arrival. And that has to do with the fact that rent seeking has taken over, we need to get back to doing what Americans do, which is finding vaccines and and launching and landing rockets and and, and creating software that nobody's ever seen before or probing the the heart of you know, condensed matter whatever it is, we need to get back to being a smart country, the the, the vacation in the land of stupid must come to an end. And there's so much stupid in left, right and center, that I think that one of the great opportunities here is to oppose all the stupidity at once. And at the moment, you probably have signed on to some stupidity because the other guy's stupidity is driving you crazy. In my case, I can't imagine walking away from policing duties. I can't think about anything else, when I find out that people are walking away from policing, in part because my own family you Heather and the kids were subjected to this, we ran an experiment where the President of Evergreen State College, stood down his own police so that people could run around looking for you f that stuff. Now, does that mean that I've lost track of the fact that I'm left of Senate? No, but you're experimenting with stuff that is so dumb. And then the idea is that somebody says well, you surely you don't mean abolishing the police and that's what it says. We don't want no mo police. Okay, what the hell does that mean? You're saying it in black vernacular to make it absolutely clear. And honestly, there are so many other communities that require the police for their protection. If you don't want to experiment with the police, you have a problem because where the weather the police are, are terrifying to all of us and they are terrifying to all of us. My particular bugbear there is you cannot suspend policing. You're talking about anarchy. Again, whatever. That thing is so expensive to me that I weirdly can't see anything else. If you suddenly removed that I could start talking about single payer, I could start talking about abortion rights, I could start talking about all sorts of things about Gini coefficients. But at the moment, I'm so focused on the idea of who is going to stand up to these mayors and governors who want to stand down the police. I can't think straight now that normally would push me into the arms of a Donald Trump. Except I can't obviously, I can't go to Biden, and so that that issue about a supersaturated environment, which is somebody get me the hell out of here. That's really what 2020 is about. And if your particular bugbear is like kids in cages, and that's your thing, you know, it's like, I can't believe how horrible Trump is, and Biden is going to deliver me from that, or the Supreme Court, my god. Look, it's wonderful to worry about the Supreme Court that imagines a functioning Republic decades into the future. I'm really not seeing that that's a guarantee anymore. And so thank you, Brett for trying this for not succumbing to learn helplessness, for not listening to me when I told you this was a crazy idea.

**Eric Weinstein** 2:21:15

It's going to need some luck. And so in part, people should just just get ready be if you can't fully sign on yet. At least be unity curious and wait for the luck. Because in 2020, you'll never know what might happen next. And Brett, I really do think you should anticipate all of the signs that the universe is telling you to go for it with Unity 2020 I think you're waiting for an event. I don't know what its name is, but I know what the flavor is. People are gonna be shocked to their core. And they're gonna say, isn't there something to deliver us from these two men? And what when people started asking that question, then you have a Mercutio moment and a plague on both of these houses. But mercu shoe doesn't die in a scenario once you plan to head So good luck. Well,

**Bret** 2:22:03

thank you, Eric. That was a beautiful way to end this unity curious is a great concept and I hope that lots of people will discover that that that's where they are. All right. So thanks everyone for joining us and we will see you on the next unity campfire be well

**Eric Weinstein** 2:22:23

he will everyone