Unity Campfire #4\_ Bret Weinstein with Ryan Bennet and Elisa...

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**SPEAKERS**

Elisabeth Sweet, Ryan Bennet, Bret

**Bret** 00:01

Hey folks, welcome to our unity 2020 campfire. I am very pleased to introduce the two guests for this evening. Ryan Bennett is on I believe the left part of your screen. And Elizabeth sweet is on the right side of your screen. They are friends of mine who are volunteers in the unity 2020 organization, you'll see that they are. They are an indication of the amazing collection of awesome that has arrived on our doorstep as a result of people recognizing how much danger we're in and how much the republic needs our help. So welcome Elizabeth and Ryan. Thank you. Thank you.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 00:45

Great to be here.

**Bret** 00:46

All right. So I should correct something I introduced a few minutes ago, I suggested people go and log into democracy AI so that they could interact with us, that's still something that they should do. But in suggesting that I made a joke about still fumbling with Tinder in order to get the campfire going. And I got a flood of correspondence from people under 35, who alerted me that Tinder is not only a physical mechanism for starting fires, it is also now a software platform that allows people to have sex with each other without having to talk. So I didn't realize that. But anyway, my bad. We were in fact talking about real Tinder have a metaphorical time for our campfire. So let me explain a little bit about what campfire is and why we're using that metaphor. campfire is a place that for likely, millions of years humans have gathered at the point when the light was failing. And they were therefore no longer going to be ecologically productive. And at those moments, people would either have talked and joked and sung and danced. And in times that were not so good, they would have talked about what was supposed to happen next. So we in the unity movement have appropriated the metaphor of campfire, to stimulate these kinds of conversations. And as you'll see, there's lots of outgrowths from using this metaphor among them. a campfire is something that you can take a Ember from and start your own discussions, which is something we very much hope that you will do. All right, so let's get to the business of the evening, we have announced six candidates who rose to the top of our nomination program and through democracy, Ai, you all are going to be telling us something about how you feel about those six and the tickets that they might be arranged into, through our voting process. Sorry, I'm struggling a little bit with my glasses and this font size. Okay. So you've logged into democracy AI, and we are from the announcement of having six candidates that can be arranged into nine tickets. We are going to have a unity 2020 vote, that voting process is going to begin on Tuesday, the mechanism for gaining access to that vote involves being registered with Unity 2020. That means you need to sign up and give us your email address, join our email list. That is the mechanism. So for those of you who have not yet signed up with us, it is important that you do that tonight. All right. Is there anything I've missed on that front? Elizabeth and Ryan? I

**Ryan Bennet** 03:49

think you covered it. All right.

**Bret** 03:51

Cool. So

**Elisabeth Sweet** 03:53

no receive? Oh, I'll just add one thing. You'll receive further instructions on Monday evening for those who have registered and voting begins on Tuesday, like Brent said,

**Bret** 04:02

All right, great. Now we need to Sorry, I'm still struggling with this small font. So I think we wanted to talk a little bit we get a lot of questions in the unity 2020 movement about various questions like what is our ballot access plan, obviously it's too late to collect signatures, we've said that we do have a ballot access plan, etc. We also receive feedback about the fact that several people Andrew Yang, has expressed doubt about the Unity ticket and yet he is on our list of nominees. Dan Crenshaw has said he's not planning to run for higher office. So there's a question in the air which is what is it that we are thinking in light of the fact that some of the people that we have nominated are apparently not yet on I'm bored. And we wanted to have a little discussion about this. So you could understand how we're thinking about it. I think the first thing to say is I would expect people who were in a good position to lead the nation to have this reaction until we deliver a groundswell. And so this is very much a matter of the complexity of the political situation that we find ourselves in. That is to say, Andrew Yang is simultaneously somebody who appeals to a great many of us who see the danger that the Republic is in, he represents somebody who has expressed a new approach that has captured the imagination of many, and he is also somebody who is still functioning within the Democratic establishment. So he is in a position where we do not want him burning bridges, and he does not want to burn bridges. And so we essentially expect for him to decline until we make it clear that there is some path for him to actually achieve a leadership position.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 06:09

You guys want to this goes, yep. Yeah. This This goes far beyond Andrew Yang. This is every every candidate that has been nominated for our shortlist, they are all patriots, and they are all willing, we would imagine willing to step up once the American people call for them to leave the country. And so we need to create this groundswell now, and we need everyone's support. And we need everyone to show that these are the leaders that we deserve, and that we need in this country to really lead us into a future that we can be proud of, and that we are not fearful of, because right now our country is going in a direction that none of us want to go in.

**Ryan Bennet** 06:48

Yeah, I would just add to that, that, you know, if anyone who wound up on our shortlist were to say yes, today, to me personally, that would be disqualifying. Because they wouldn't have, they wouldn't be demonstrating the presence of mind to make hard decisions and take the proper amount of calculated risk, right? It's on us, it's on the people who've already been volunteering for months, it's on the people listening to this call to become inspired and look at the, the, you know, the trash on either side of the normal offering, rejected and build the public call to action that doesn't ask Andrew Yang that doesn't ask Dan Crenshaw, that doesn't ask any of the other six or four people on our list, but demands it of them as their patriotic duty. Great.

**Bret** 07:44

And so this also suggests that really, the answer to many of these questions is one of whether or not we can get enough people to admit that they understand that we have to do something unusual, like a unity 2020 proposal in order to give the legitimacy that will allow people who, who know that some kind of new leadership is necessary to join us publicly. So please appreciate the position that we are in and also appreciate the position that those who are functioning at a high level in our political structure find themselves in it's a very difficult one, and were you in their shoes, you might very likely recognize the need for something new and different. And also recognize the hazard of being too direct about that in public. All right, let's see. Next thing on our list.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 08:48

I think we can fire off with the first question good from democracy.

**Bret** 08:52

Let's do it.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 08:53

Yeah. Why don't we go ahead? No, I know you're not on camera right now. But would you mind firing off the next question, please? So our viewers and our audience, participants can can answer the first question, which Brett, do you want to kick us off?

**Bret** 09:09

Sorry, is no one not able to do it?

**Elisabeth Sweet** 09:13

Well, no, sorry. just picking up on democracy

**Bret** 09:15

I okay. So I think the first the first question is, which of the nine possibilities in terms of tickets that the Unity 20 that the six nominees would generate? Which of those tickets do you prefer? And why?

**Elisabeth Sweet** 09:37

So all of you were asked in the onboarding, to select a ticket that you chose. So we're asking you, why did you choose that ticket? And we would like to see your answers and understand where we're at right now.

**Ryan Bennet** 09:49

And for those watching that, maybe didn't get in until before the maximum was reached on democracy AI. And while that question is being asked on democracy Yeah, can we maybe enumerate those tickets and talk a little bit about the process of assembling a list of nine out of a list of six?

**Bret** 10:10

Great. Are you asking me? Sure. Okay. So essentially, what we discovered in our primary process was that the Unity 2020 community nominated six people at a disproportionate level. And it just so happened that three of those people were identified as left of center and three of those people were identified as right of center. So the left of centers were Tulsi Gabbert Andrew Yang, and Jesse Ventura, and the right of centers were Admiral mcraven. Jocko Willink, and Dan Crenshaw. And so we could go through the math here, but it's probably pretty clear, you can take any one of those left of centers, and you can pair them with any one of three on the right, and then you can go to the second left of center and pair them with any one of the three on the right, etc. And you come up with nine possible combinations. Now, I should remind people why it is that you know, there were various reasons to have a left of center and a right of center paired. But the most prominent of those reasons, and the most important is that one of the things that divides Americans is a fear of the other side, and that the values that one holds might be frozen out or is sometimes frozen out of government when the pendulum shifts to the other side. And so in order to break the increasing polarization, our plan ensures that your values, as long as they're somewhere near the main stream, are always in the room. That is to say, whenever there is a discussion of what policy direction to take, your values will be represented somebody in the room understands them keenly, by virtue of the fact that they are home values to them. And because our team would be drafted Under the agreement, that they would govern together by consensus. It's not to say that you will be thrilled with every policy, but it is to say, you can be comfortable that every policy takes into account that which you hold at the highest level. All right, you guys have stuff to add on this front.

**Ryan Bennet** 12:40

I think there's an add on here. Oh, Elizabeth? No, no, go for it. Well, there's an add on here that there, there's two concerns. And one of them you just laid out, which is, you know, I'm saying I'm left to center, which I am, you know, I want to know that there's a left of center person in the room. But the reason I'm an early adopter to unity 2020, is not so much because I want a left to center voice in the Oval Office or in any position of power. Because I'm looking around me, and I'm seeing my, my neighbors, my fellow citizens, you know, inches away from tearing out each other's each other's throat. And I'm seeing that as a consequence of their insecurity. So when know when the morning of November 4, arrives in 2020. And we have an answer, that's part of the duopoly. The people that are most the people that are driven, most insane by not having a voice in the Oval Office are going to be very distraught, and that distress is going to manifest it. And that's, that's part of the danger that I think we're trying to prevent with this movement. It's not just the danger of a Trump, it's not just the danger of a Biden, is the danger of large populations of our fellow citizens reacting to their fear of not being represented by causing massive amounts of civil unrest. So yes, I want to feel represented as part of the Unity ticket. But I also want my opponent, my political opponents, to feel represented by a unity ticket, so that the temperature of the nation lowers because the temperature has been rising steadily and that at a increasing rate of change for several months now.

**Bret** 14:45

I think that's very, very well said, Elizabeth, did you want to jump in?

**Elisabeth Sweet** 14:50

I have some results actually from from democracy I that I'd like to share about about some of the about some of the ticket choices that that people have made. So far so we have 62% of our current audience think that Jocko and Tulsi are both charismatic, that would be able to win over a lot of voters from either of their respective sides of the aisle. And a lot of the answers that we're getting here are all based on the character of the candidates, which is something that you don't hear a lot of people talk about anymore. You don't hear people talk about character as much as you hear them talk about, you know, the, the negative aspects of people and what's not and what's not serving you in particular. But here our second answer we have that Andrew and Jocko have qualities which appeal to both sides and less dirty laundry, which I think really speaks to the values driven aspect of unity 2020. In in a way that I think that, you know, none of the political parties do at the moment.

**Bret** 15:49

Yeah, I think that's well said. Now, one thing that I thought was interesting was our process, you know, we're all new to this, everybody, including me in this entity is a volunteer, and we're discovering how to do this on the fly. Nonetheless, we created a process we've attracted people, these people have expressed preferences, it is amazing how non partisan things are within the movement and how balanced the nomination process ended up being between right and left. That was an accident that the the top six who were the most popular by a large margin, turned out to be So evenly divided if they did, but I think the thing that's hard for me to express is how easy in some sense, that means it is to find candidates that are better than the ones settled on by the parties, that there's something about the process that the parties engaged in, and I would argue about the thing that drives the parties, the actual purpose that those parties serve. Its purpose is not to find how high quality patriotic leaders if it was, it would succeed much better than it actually does. It's doing something else, and it's pretending to identify these people. And so if nothing else, I think we have established that citizens simply figuring out how to arrange a process that works better, aren't finding that difficult, we are able to identify people who are more qualified, less polarizing people who can talk to each other. I mean, one of the, it's a shame that telsey was not able to join Dan and me and Eric would also have been present in that conversation. But one of the things that's so interesting is Dan and Tulsi are from opposite sides of the aisle. But they're friends, they get along, they don't have a problem interacting productively. So this tells us how far off our process is that it's constantly settling on people who are less capable of interaction and less likely to trigger people's sense that they are honorable. Yeah,

**Elisabeth Sweet** 18:14

I couldn't agree more with you, Brett. And I think that this movement, for me has really been a proof of concept. You know, my friends and family asked me what I've been doing for the last month and a half. And I have found a group of people that believe that we can come together and disagreement and fully make things better and make the country better. And I think that the candidates that we've chosen and that we've nominated, are, are like the biggest, the biggest manifestation of that, because every day, we're all, you know, back and forth. And we spent so many hours making this happen. And this has been truly a show that America is still capable of agreement and coming together and compromising on things that need to be compromised in order to make progress. And it's really been a beautiful process. Yeah,

**Bret** 19:01

it is. I hope we succeed, but you know, succeed or fail at the initial mission that we've chosen. It is heartening to have a process that brings together people who are clearly ready to participate this way with each other. And so it's also something I've seen in my life prior to unity 2020, where I found myself interacting with lots of people who were, you know, quote, unquote, from the other side, lots of conservatives. And it was amazing how regularly I felt welcomed by them. I got a lot of curiosity. You know, there was a belief among many conservatives, that, you know, a rational liberal was not something that they were even sure existed. And in any case, I've had many, many conversations and it's we are told things that are not True about how difficult it is for us to get along. And hopefully the Unity movement will reveal to people that there is a path to getting along. And it's not that difficult. It really, it's a matter of disbelieving what you've been told about how unreasonable other people inherently are.

**Ryan Bennet** 20:19

Yeah, there was a there was a moment during the 2016 primaries that stuck with me like a knife in the back. And it was during one of the primary debates. And that was sort of the last closing question. I'm in this for the Democratic primary. And the question asked was, to the effect of what do you think is the greatest threat to America? And I don't know whether it was just Bernie, and Hillary at this point, or whether there were some other answers, but I only remember there are two answers. Bernie said climate change. And yeah, you know, that's a standard left leaning answer. You wouldn't necessarily get a lot of agreement to that on the right side of the aisle. But Hillary's answer was the Republic and. And in that moment, in that moment, she lost the election, and won the primary. And that's the problem with our process right now, right is because we have these engines that force you to tear apart the country in order to have the chance of running it. And it needs change. And, to riff off of your point, Elizabeth, I just have to echo everything you said, you know, since joining this incredible group of volunteers, I am gobsmacked, day after day after day, of just how much work people are putting in, and how much just raw talent and creativity is at display every single day. And the best part is, I think maybe there's, I've met dozens of people over the last, you know, several weeks and months that I've worked with on various projects. And I think I maybe know two of their political orientations. Like it doesn't come up, we recognize the problem. It's like, Okay, if we can, if we can get off this brink, if we can save ourselves from this hazard, then let's start an argument. And let's have some great arguments. But first, let's, let's solve it, let's bail the water out of the boat and get to shore in time. And it's just it's incredibly encouraging because, right to your point, you know, we're, everyone knows, we're making a moonshot right now, like, no one has any illusions about it, you know, we're not delusional people, we're recognizing the magnitude of the challenge. And recognizing that, given the magnitude of the danger, we have to attempt the magnitude of the challenge. And if we fail, then this is the network of people that I want to be able to call to lower the temperature and keep keep our country together. In the wake of the of whatever happens on November 4, when, you know, when Trump cries for fraud, or Biden cries, suppression, and every end, some number of people, regardless of whether they're from the blue team, or the red team are in the streets, ready for blood.

**Bret** 23:45

So I want to talk about two things that surround this issue. One of them has to do with what we think is in the minds of people who we would imagine would be on board, and yet are slow to come around. So I'm, I can't quite help it. But I'm building a model in my own mind, of what people's resistance is because, you know, in their regular lives, I hear people complaining about the quality of the choices they've been offered. I hear people fearing for the future. I see people choosing to move, like leaving cities that they've lived in for decades. Some of them are selling homes, they don't even know where they're going. Right. So there's something going on that would seem to suggest that this was obviously the moment to mean we haven't elected the next president. It seems like an obvious moment at which we could do something new and different. And yet, even as people are up ending their lives and contemplating They never thought that they would have to to worry about, there is still resistance to something of this nature. And so anyway, I be curious if you guys have a sense of what it is that keeps people from joining, and then I'd be happy to share what I think is that?

**Ryan Bennet** 25:17

Well, really quick, I think this is a perfect question, Noah, if you're on the line listening, if we can relay this question to, to those watching, because I'd love to hear what democracy AI has to say about it.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 25:34

And let me just interrupt you right there. I'm because democracy ai 65% of our participants want to know what we see as the biggest challenges for this movement. And I think that's a great question on everyone. Yeah, so we're all

**Bret** 25:46

we're all of like mine. Okay, cool. All right.

**Ryan Bennet** 25:50

The elephant in the room, right? And the

**Bret** 25:53

donkey

**Ryan Bennet** 25:55

the gorilla? So if I can rephrase your question a little bit, I think, what is it? That stops someone who buys a bumper sticker that says giant Meteor 20? Or any functioning adult? 2020? What is it that stops the person that buys that bumper sticker from signing on board? Because it seems like that that's the bumper sticker version that that illustrates the problem. But for some reason, there's, instead of actually trying to articulate or fight for or seek a solution, it turns into cynicism. So is it just the sheer sense of impossibility? Is it just the sheer sense of being outnumbered? Or the learned helplessness? helplessness, as Eric said, on the first campfire, you know, what is it? Well, I think

**Elisabeth Sweet** 27:01

I was gonna say that I think a lot of it comes down to comfort, people are comfortable where they are as far as where they are intellectually, or where they are, in their day to day lives, whether or not that means that they struggle financially or anything like that, I think it's really difficult for people to make a change. And for people to imagine something that's not there. It's deeply unsettling and uncomfortable to imagine something that doesn't exist. And then when the answer to your questions, or when the answer to, you know, whatever, you can't imagine when it's right in front of you, it's even more difficult to accept that, I think, because you have a different idea of what it should look like or this or that, and you just have these different conceptions. And so I think, I think our biggest challenge is showing people that we're all in this together, and we're all learning together, and nobody has all the answers. And that's something that I think is really important to remember is that while we're up here, and you know, we, we, we, we've been in this movement for a while, and Brent has, you know, a lot of public notoriety, none of us have all of the answers. But we can we can find the solution together. And I think that's what's really important to remember, but it's difficult for people to get there because we want to be told what to do and when to do it.

**Bret** 28:15

Well, I want to point out something I think you're right about comfort, and I think you're right about your answer hints at the following thing. People fear being blamed for something, right? Everybody knows that there's an outcome in the next election that will cause whatever group they're hanging out with, to be frightened and upset. And it doesn't matter whether you understand, for example, that we built the Unity 2020 proposal, so that it would not spoil an election, so that we would not be putting people who support us in the position of being blamed. People are so used to the idea that if you do anything other than what your friend group is saying, is the required action in this election, that you're responsible for whatever outcome might happen, other than, you know, the when. And I should say, for whatever reason, I'm hearing this more from Democrats at the moment than I am from Republicans. And I don't know why that is because I don't think it's inherently one side of the aisle or the other. But in this election, there is a sense of moral obligation not to think outside the box and people say this, they say, you know, blue, no matter who write blue no matter who, and they'll, you know, they'll frankly, talk about all sorts of things that might be true of Biden that don't dissuade them from thinking that this is the answer and I think what distinguishes the constituency of the Unity movement is a recognition that it actually, everybody seems to see one disaster or the other, and a small number of people see two disasters and an uncertain choice between them. I honestly don't know which outcome I fear more. Right? I know that Trump nominally is farther from the values that I think are most important. But I don't know that a Trump presidency is more dangerous than a Biden presidency in light of what Biden is playing with in terms of partners and policy. So yeah, to me, you know, I'm not all that interested in which disaster it's going to be because I think both of these disasters are so dangerous, that it is unthinkable that we cannot at least attempt to divert our course, which is the whole reason I'm here is I'm trying to divert our course from disaster. And I think a lot of people who were thinking similarly heard that message and responded. But when we talk to other people, if you if you have a blind spot that covers one of the disasters, right, and you only see the other disaster, then the point is, well, this election is as obvious as it could be. Right? You got to vote for a or you've got to vote for B. And the problem is, how do you reveal to people what's in their blind spot?

**Ryan Bennet** 31:23

Yeah, I think there's, there's something I want to highlight about what you just said, and having, you know, watched a lot of your arguments in streams for a while now. Brett, I, I find that there's, there's a response that comes back to not necessarily your arguments in specific but this style of argument that's tries to not have either of those blind spots that tries to recognize where we're at. And it's the it's the both side isms. It's the milk toast model that is discussed with milk toast moderated moderation. And the thing to convey, and I'm saying this, just because I think it's important for people to know is that it's not, the argument isn't that the two sides are the same, they're very different. They have a very different taste and character and shape. And, but, you know, there's, they have a charge symmetry, right, the tension between the two of them, is in some sort of balance, even though it's playing out in different fields, right. In the on the federal government. In the federal government right now. The Republican interests are overwhelmingly over represented in the, in the sort of, if I could coin the the sort of federal cultural governments, right, in Hollywood, and in the universities, it's universally left in the Senate, right. So there's, there's domain distinctions about where these battles are playing out. But they're still that there's a symmetry of tension. And I'm less interested in which team wins the tug of war, what I'm interested in is the amount of explosive potential energy that is being generated in the rope. Because when that rope snaps, like it doesn't matter who gave you the last hug, that snaps the rope, what matters is that the rope is snapping. And we're all going to be bleeding.

**Bret** 33:26

Yeah, I think that's very, very well said. Nonetheless, I have a sense that people, there's something in the tension between people's if people fast forward, and anything that is pleasing to their social group occurs in the selection, they fear that they will be blamed if they have done anything other than the standard thing. I think, frankly, it, I almost see, like rooms full of people, all of them wanting to entertain some other possibility. But all of them are afraid that the room is going to hold them responsible. And, you know, it's the kind of thing that really it requires almost a comedian to figure out how to phrase it to get everybody to laugh, and simultaneously acknowledge they're all fearing each other. You know, they're everybody's fearing the room is going to hold them responsible, when really the room wants to revolt together.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 34:26

Yeah. And let me just chime in here with the audience's answers which are much, much simpler than ours. Effectively, our audience says that people haven't heard about it, um, that they don't know about it, or that it's impossible. And I think we've sort of touched on the impossible part. And that's sort of like stepping outside of your frame of mind so that you can see that maybe this is, I mean, this is Bible. First of all, it's 2020. And anything is possible. Second of all, it's possible because we do have a Plan and one of the other big questions from the last poll of when we asked you, when we asked the audience for questions was, let me pull it up right here. Sorry, I'm pulling it up. Um, here we go. Are you keeping about access strategy a secret because those who oppose you to be 2020 could foil the plan in some way if it worked to get out? And I think that this question hits on a lot of aspects of what we're all saying, What's holding people back? Yes, people don't know about it. But when they do, they recognize that there are forces that are working against us, and that could work against us that could that could seriously damage the movement. And that's not a reason that, you know, that. Well, I've lost my train of thought now. But that's the question is, are you keeping the ballot access strategy a secret? Because those who oppose you to be 2020? Could file the plan in some way? If it were to get up? Brett, I'll let you take that one.

**Bret** 35:59

Yeah, so let's just say, first of all, we all know the plan, there is one, okay, so the people who say there's no plan that this is mathematically impossible at this point, are just simply incorrect. The only reason to keep it secret is to keep the those who oppose any sort of unity plan, including unity 2020, from foiling the plan in order to continue to hold whatever power they hold. So I don't think that it's a secret that a plan that seeks to restore the public's influence over policy would have many enemies, that those enemies would be well resourced, and would use any means at their disposal. So there's really no reason to share information with them. So it just seems to me very straightforward, we could in an effort to show that we are, you know, not lying, we could reveal the planets some substantial cost to the plans working. Now that said, we are getting to a point where it becomes important to share the plan and to activate it. And we will get there soon. If you want to be kept apprised of things, this is an excellent reason that you should register for our email list so that you can be looped in as quickly as possible. But I think at some level, I want those who are listening, to listen better and to think harder, right? To the extent that you want something different to happen to the extent that you are looking at the choices that the major parties have delivered you and thinking to yourself, oh my god, how could we possibly be in such a bind, then you are also somebody who should be open to the idea that if there's a way to get there, and it requires you not knowing this instant, exactly how it works, that you should be on board with that? And, you know, if it turns out, we're lying, I guess you'll find that out, and we'll have egg on our face. But would we really be doing that? It just doesn't make any sense from from I mean, you know, from my perspective, does it make sense to pretend that there's a plan when there isn't when that will ultimately become clear? Of course, it doesn't. So it doesn't mean the plan will work? doesn't mean you're gonna like it. But is there a plan? Of course, and we've been clear with you all along about that.

**Ryan Bennet** 38:28

Yeah, I'd like to add on to that. Oh, you go, Elizabeth.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 38:33

No, please.

**Ryan Bennet** 38:35

Well, there's a distinction, right. And this, if this is clear to all of us, and it's clear to everyone that's already signed on. But I think it's sometimes not clear to the critics, or at least they weaponize the potential ambiguity, that a plan is not synonymous with a guarantee. Right? So if I can touch on that, that word impossible, right? There's two types of impossible. There's very, very, very, very difficult. And then there's perpetual motion, there's violating the second law of thermodynamics. Right? And a plan gets you to the second type of impossible. But you know, it was impossible for colonists to go up against the largest empire the world has ever known. It was impossible to abolish slavery and maintain the union. It was impossible to fly. It was impossible to secure women's suffrage. It was impossible to go to the moon. The history of this country is a history of impossible accomplishments. And it's our turn. So are you going to try or are you going to give up without trying and let our country disintegrate?

**Bret** 39:48

Which it clearly is doing so, you know, we're being forced into into attempting the impossible and it shouldn't shock anybody that people by responding anyway, go ahead, Elizabeth.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 40:03

Oh, no, I was gonna say that. Um, so in when you when our audience on democracy I went through the onboarding questions they identified as their their different age groups. So we've we've categorize people into boomers, Millennials etc. And it seems that boomers and millennials Surprise, surprise, don't agree on a lot of things. However, we see that, you know, there is a lot of entrenchment from boomers on not being able to break outside of the frame so that they don't think it's realistic, and they can't get away from the party. That cynicism is too high. And so I think we need to really, Ryan, to your point, like, look to these things in the past that we've accomplished, and all of these, you know, incredible things that were never possible that now, you know, shape our world, we need to really look look forward, take those and look forward into the future and not, and not rely on the frames that that were once that that is one surface.

**Bret** 41:02

Yeah, I mean, we are in some sense, or didn't

**Elisabeth Sweet** 41:05

even serve us really, I mean, if you look at it, they didn't really serve us at all. Because look at where we are, however, we can accomplish so much. And we need to believe in ourselves to do that. Believe in this.

**Bret** 41:15

So at some level, I would ask people to stop considering unity 2020 in isolation, right? You may consider this so unlikely, as to be not worth considering. But how likely is it that a major party would feel the candidate who can't be allowed off script because he's no longer competent to deploy a message off the cuff? This is a remarkable thing. This is a candidate who's going to face debates, presumably, nobody knows how that's gonna play out. So we are dealing with a landscape that is already in the realm of the impossible, not because of anything that we've done, we're just simply responding to it. So anyway, it's a landscape of the impossible, it is the era of the impossible. And the fact that this is an impossible plan, as Ryan points out, it's it's a was it type two impossibility. Ryan, did I it was, yeah. Type two and possibility. All right. Do we have more data coming back from democracy AI?

**Elisabeth Sweet** 42:24

Indeed, we do. We have a question here. What's the plan for continuing the movement after November, if not enough swell to activate in this election? And what I would say to that, is that unity 2020, unity is about leadership. And regardless of our moonshot, what unity does is it shows us where leaders are in this country and helps us identify leaders not only on the public sphere, but in our own channels and in ourselves. And so I think that no matter what happens, we need to continue seeking the values and other people and finding the leaders that we deserve.

**Bret** 43:04

Yeah, I think this is this is exactly right. And one thing I in fact, in all of the conversations inside the Unity movement that I've been party to, this has never really been a question wasn't on my mind when I set the ball in motion. But as soon as people started to gather around it, and it became clear that we don't see exactly the same thing, but we see very much analogous frightening processes, unfolding danger to the Republic, that seems to call many of us to action. If the plan fails to recapture the white house in 2020, that's a terrible setback. But it doesn't reduce the need for a unity movement. Obviously, the need for a unity movement only increases in that frightening circumstance. So at some level, it has to continue. We are learning from this process, we're discovering each other, which is really it's a great reason to join is that finding out how many people you know far flung people that you would never have encountered otherwise, are feeling the same way about where we are and recognizing the same sorts of obligation? That Yeah, the movement has to continue, it has to do whatever is necessary, I would say, in some sense, what I'm realizing is that it is simultaneously a movement that is apolitical. It is non ideological, but that that has more content than you would imagine. In other words, a non ideological movement should oppose corruption. And so in some sense, unity is inherently a movement against corruption. It is a movement about restoring the democratic force, so that it governs policy. You know, essentially if your ideology is not ideological, if you believe in democracy, if you believe that consent of the governed is the source of the legitimacy of government, then you should be for a process that purifies that so that it actually is meaningful consent of the governed rather than coerced consent, were really, you know, manufactured consent, as Chomsky would have it. So yes, the movement has to continue, I'm sure it will change in the aftermath of this election, one way or the other. Hopefully, we can keep it on this positive track. Because inside the movement, it is hopeful and reassuring and patriotic. And as Ryan said, up at the top, you meet people, you find that you are very much in alignment with them. And you don't know their political background, because it's not highly relevant. Right. Patriotism is patriotism.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 45:59

And to your to your point, Brett, um, I think as much as this is about leadership, it's about teamwork. And that's the whole point of the Unity ticket. And in thinking about the candidates, I know that, let's say, Crenshaw, for instance, a lot of people think that maybe Crenshaw is, you know, not favorable enough to the, to the democrats or, or something like that. And what I say to that, is that, okay, so of Crenshaw, has been paired with Tulsi Gabbard that balances out, and so you know, that someone's fighting for you in the office and someone and it's, it's, it's really about balance and about and about unity, but leadership and teamwork, effectively.

**Ryan Bennet** 46:39

Yeah, and leadership, not just in the political realm, right? It's, you know, I've, I've met more leaders in the last three weeks, than in probably in my entire life, interacting with this team. And, you know, the people that get on board that I've seen, you know, those are the people that when there's tear gas in a street, and there's a standoff between some group and knock cases, and I don't care what banner they're flying, but some group of nut cases, and some group of authoritarians, when there's standoff, and there's tear gas, and there's rubber bullets, you know, these are the people that are going to run out and pull a kid out of a fog of tear gas, and give them a bottle of water and give them shelter. Those are the people that are going to look out for their fellow citizens, no matter what. And that's, that's the banner that we're flying under right now. And that's going to be our job. If we don't get in the Oval Office, if we're not able to prevent this, whatever sort of snap or schizophrenic fit that our country is headed towards. Our job is to heal and protect each other in whatever challenges we have to go through afterwards.

**Bret** 48:08

Alright, I want to try a formulation out on you. When, when the Evergreen situation happened to Heather and me, we were asked to reflect on it many, many times by many different people. And it became clear that there were a few things that were the key lessons, the one that maybe is most prominent in my thinking is crisis reveals everyone's character. For both better and worse. I've seen people who you would absolutely think would be courageous fold, and display pure cowardice. And I've seen people that you wouldn't imagine, had heroic courage within them display it. And the senses there was nobody left on the sidelines afterward, because the crisis forced everybody to reveal which of those things resided within them. And I think if we can go back a little bit to the conversation we were having 20 minutes ago. I think there's a difference between seeing a crisis and thinking it's other people and seeing a national crisis that clearly involves us all. Only one of those things produces the reaction to crisis that will tell us who you really are, right until you see that actually, it's crisis either way. We don't know. Because people are telling themselves Oh, it's very simple. You just do this, you, you know, pull the lever for these people. So I guess what I'm, I'm thinking is, in some sense, the Unity movement is composed of people who have seen the full crisis early enough and reacted with courage rather than caring. It is. And what I'm hoping is that, however it happens, as the crisis reveals itself as it becomes impossible to deny that there is no safe answer here that both answers are dangerous in different ways. And we're going to get a very destructive outcome in either case, as that reveals itself, people's character will also. And I think the point is, it's not really unity or not, its unity now, or when you finally get around to recognizing how much danger we're in for the courageous people, I think that's kind of it at some point, you're going to break free from the narrative you've been told is right, which is, you have to choose this side, because the other side is is, is the hazard.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 50:51

And I would imagine that a lot of our viewers right now, and especially the people on democracy, Ai, are these courageous patriots who want to know what they can do and how we're going to do it. And a lot of the questions that we're getting on democracy AI, are about strategy and numbers and where we are right now. And I think that it's really important to reiterate, I know we keep saying it like broken records, but the groundswell is hugely important to our success. And so strategies around that we are cooking them, they are on the way, and also it begins with you. And it begins with and it begins with the people that you can tell them the people that you can convince that something is really wrong, and that we have the solution. And something else Brett, but a lot of people are asking is have we spoken to the candidates who are who have been nominated? And I think that's a fair question, because we need to know, you know, how viable are these candidates, and in the beginning of the show, we talked about the political complexity of coming out in favor of unity or not. And, you know, if anyone did that now, it would almost be like political suicide. So if we could speak a little bit about that, and about our candidates, and how we're communicating with them, and if we are that would be, I think the audience would like to know,

**Bret** 52:06

sure. So let me say we have not sought the candidates out, it's too early, we need a groundswell that's really on the public, I can't say who we have and have not spoken to, but I can say there has not been a systematic effort to talk to people who have been nominated because at the moment, what this is, is we are building to a draft and I believe everyone on the list that was advanced, the list of six would take the job if we could provide a path to it. And they would do so on the basis that they clearly are patriotic, they love their country, they understand the importance of this nation to the functioning of the West. And that means that whether it's a job they want or not that it's the right thing to do, but you know, put yourself in their shoes This is the movement is not big enough to to ask somebody to compromise themselves politically in any other mill you nor would we want them to because if unity 2020 fails to win the White House this time around, these people are still prominent functionaries within the the structure and so to the extent that the right things are desirable, if the structure continues to limp along the way it is, then we want these people as powerful as they can be within the movement which does not does not mean that it makes sense for us to approach them this early that said we would like to have the firepower that it would make sense to approach them and say there is a path we have the power to make this happen. And will you join us so we're looking for that moment and we hope we get there

**Elisabeth Sweet** 54:07

and I think sorry right and keep interrupting but i think i think what I'm something to to tack on to that is that we need so we know that all of our candidates right now they all have huge support already on Twitter and Social Media they already have a huge following. We need you there following who are sure to are tuning into this to see you know, can my candidate get past the RNC and DNC that they haven't been able to bypass and yours? Is it viable? And can they do it and we need your help and your support and getting out to your you know, the leaders that you want in this country to really, truly make this work. So, again, and I know I keep saying it, but it starts with you and the groundswell really is about you communicating with your people. It is Yeah, and go ahead. Oh,

**Ryan Bennet** 54:56

well I first of all, Elizabeth Don't apologize for interrupting me. And I was praying that you would say something because I was, I was deep in thought. So Second of all, yeah, I think, you know, we're going to be building out as as much tooling as we can for you, the the supporters, our fellow patriots, to convince your friends, family, and build this groundswell. But if you feel disheartened, consider, consider the the elephant in the room of 2020, right? Everyone understands that what an R value is right now, because we've had this pandemic and we know how we we now know why you call it going viral when something gets really possible on social media, because we finally were being presented with this real world example from whence the the term came. so weak, it's short notice, but it can be done. We can have a pandemic of patriotism in this country. And

**Bret** 56:12

terror or a terrible metaphor? surely surely we have somebody expert in marketing who can talk you out. That guy Oh, yeah, you're a tech

**Ryan Bennet** 56:24

guy. Yeah. Well, I just said it out loud.

**Bret** 56:28

Yes. Yeah, pandemic is definitely not in 2020. Especially, it's not the term you want to use. But anyway, I interrupted you if we if we imagined

**Ryan Bennet** 56:40

I was clearly saying something stupid. So you should have no

**Bret** 56:43

you were saying something smart in an unpalatable way. Alright, so here's the thing. There is organic skepticism. And there is cultivated skepticism of what we're up to. The parties have invested mightily in the idea that nothing outside of them can work. And this is clearly incorrect, but people have accepted it. And they have understood that to play with things outside of the mainstream offerings, is to invite ridicule, and stigma. And, you know, many will remember that Hillary Clinton portrayed Tulsi Gabbard, as a Russian asset, right. during the primaries, it was a very nasty stigma for her to deploy, obviously, one that had no basis in reality. But the idea was to tar her with the same brush that had been used for Jill Stein. The idea being that anything outside of the the mainstream offerings empowers the greater evil. Now, of course, we've dealt with this ad nauseum. This plan is built. So it doesn't create that hazard. To the extent that it is, for some reason, in this election cycle, Democrats who are complaining loudly about the possibility of spoiling the election, actually unity 2020 seems to draw slightly greater support from Republicans. And so therefore, if spoiling is your fear, it should be the republicans who level that accusation to the extent that there's any bias whatsoever it is in that direction. And yet, we don't typically hear it from them. We hear it from from Democrats. But what I want to get at is somehow we have to reject the idea that we will take responsibility for the whatever bad outcome it is that people fear in the selection, for daring to think outside the box. The fact is, the bad outcomes are the responsibility of the parties. Right? This is the natural outgrowth of the corrupt system, that they have instantiated and all of the Bulwark that they have installed to make sure that nothing can challenge it are challenging, it is absolutely necessary at this point. We are if anything late to the party, not early to the extent that people are saying, Oh, do this in 2024. My feeling is it should have been 2016. Right. This is a disaster already well underway. And so if you're contemplating joining unity, 2020 or becoming public about your skepticism about the major party offerings, then what we can say is there's a very vibrant group of people who have already forged this path and are not going to accept blame. In fact, I think the point is, we are trying to avert the disaster that is coming and the disaster belongs squarely at the feet of people who did nothing. So Though it is quite the opposite of the stigmatizing story that has been advertised to you, and I think we should just make no bones about that.

**Ryan Bennet** 1:00:11

It couldn't jump on in the water's fine.

**Bret** 1:00:15

The water's fine, it's, it's going to boil, but it's not there yet.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 1:00:21

And when we asked our audience about what they can do to increase, to increase our support, the top answer was to have conversations about you to be 2020. with friends and family, this person has plenty of friends from all over the spectrum. And that's really important to recognize is that you do have friends and family from all different political walks of life, and what do you love to be able to have Thanksgiving dinner and not like be super stressed about that conversation? that's gonna happen. I'm not sorry, not to trigger anyone. But another thing that people but that, that people are saying is, is posting on social media. And this is something that we haven't quite touched on yet is, is the power of social media, and how it can be a powerful tool, and also hugely detrimental. I think that echo chambers are keeping us all from each other, you know, they're the caves that we find ourselves in, it's really stepping outside of those and sharing messages that maybe people in your newsfeed have never seen people in your timeline have never seen, I think is really important. And so we do have tons of content that we would love for you to share, we're sharing with you all the time on Twitter and Instagram, we have our official channels, articles of unity. And then we have a lot of other, you know, awesome, awesome fan pages. And so you can check those out on our website. And this is how we get, you know, this is how we get the word out. And this is how we increase our support. And we are glad that you recognize that these are the mounts that we're doing, then.

**Ryan Bennet** 1:01:50

Yeah, if I could riff on that just a tiny bit. Social media is great, but it's also part of the engine that got us to where we are, right, those echo chambers, to your point, Elizabeth. But I would suggest is Get to know your neighbors again, get to know the people that are within 200 feet of you 90 99% of your day, that you might not even know their names, because of the sort of direction that the country has been going with depersonalization and sort of commodification of, of every interaction. Those one on one conversations like it's really hard, number one to get out of the echo chamber. And number two, that the thing that you Bret, were talking about that whatever that social forces that says, oh, if I'm going to think outside the box, the room is going to punish me, right? a one on one conversation isn't is way safer than you think it is. Because if you go into a one on one conversation with a thought with psychologically that you're under the gun of the group, the same person who might join in the taunting and mocking and saying that's impossible, or that's harmful, don't you dare do that in the group context. approaching them as an individual, you can actually get them to leave the script, right, because the script isn't provided by the group of 30. And they invented on the fly, or it emerges as some sort of multi person emergent script, right, but a one on one conversation. It's actually remarkably easy to have those if you remember how, and they're both even died from unity 2020 they're great for your psychological well being to actually have those one on one interactions with people. And they are the most genuine and most effective way to connect with people and convince them and even be convinced. And that's the the high ideal of negotiation that we're looking for in our eventual ticket, and also looking for in our nation's culture. So start to embody that right away and see what happens.

**Bret** 1:04:24

And I want to add two things because I do think you're right there. There's all the difference in the world between trying to do this in person or at least personally with somebody rather than where everything you're saying is broadcast and it produces the expected reaction. One thing is that you will be shocked at how frequently somebody is harboring similar thoughts, but isn't saying so because of what they fear. So I live in Portland, as you many of you will know. And when I interact with people, I am very careful Not to nod along to the conventional wisdom of the left, which is obviously very prevalent here in Portland. But here's the interesting thing. This is never gone that never once, where if somebody voices an opinion, it's very frequent that I have a different opinion that contradicts the conventional wisdom. And I'm very careful to see if I can say it in such a way that it can be heard. And it is amazing how frequently, what happens is somebody will say, one of the standard things that you say nowadays, and I will say, you know, I don't see it that way. Here's how I see it. And then what comes back is Oh, me, too, I also have a suspicion that it isn't quite right, this that or the other way. Literally, this is never once gone. badly. And so what I would say is, there's a skill, it's very often that both of the standard viewpoints are just wrong. And there's some viewpoint that's approximately right. It's not necessarily in the middle, but it's composed of different stuff. Right? So, you know, for example, you will hear from some people very often on the right, that COVID-19 is much less serious than we thought that it's, you know, it's a flu at worst, right. And you will hear people on the left typically talking about the numbers of people who are dying from it, and the, you know, the massive death toll already. And so what I frequently say to people is, you know, it's much less deadly than we feared and much more destructive, right? You can't hear that as one or the other, because it isn't either of them, the idea that fewer people are dying, but more of the people who are recovering are actually permanently damaged. That that is something you have to engage consciously and actively because it's not of some known stripe. So my point is, on virtually every issue, there's some way of not being seen by the person you're talking to as simply part of that group that they dislike and distrust. And if you can figure out how to say things such that you don't get immediately categorized as Oh, another one of those, you know, magga hat wearing or another one of those black lives matter this, that or the other. If you can just stay out of those traps, then you can have the conversation that Ryan is suggesting that you have, and you'll be amazed at a how wonderful it is to discover that those conversations can be had even with strangers, and be how much more progress you're likely to make in convincing people that there's something to be done. All right,

**Elisabeth Sweet** 1:07:53

I agree. And let me just let me just point out one more thing from from the audience. So first descent, so democracy is a really cool tool. And we have an awesome team on the backend shout out to Chris and Noah, who are, you know, synthesizing this as we're going and they pointed out that first time democracy AI users are a little less likely than the average respondent to talk to others about unity 2020. And I think that's really important to note, because I would Well, I would think that first time users are maybe tuning into this for the first time, or they just aren't as engaged, you know, maybe like directly, because we do have a lot of other answers that you know, we have a lot of current volunteers on this call. So what I would say is that you have a hole here like this, like, if you if you need talking points, if you need to just understand that there are people out there who agree with you about the fact that disagreement is okay, we're here. And we have a really exciting thing to announce at the end of the show, where you can connect with other people. So stick around, I know we're running a little bit over, but we'll get to it in just a minute. I just want to say that 70% of our audience agree that talking to friends, family and co workers about unity 2020 is the way that we're going to get this going. And we just have one more question for you know, if you want to fire that off, then people can answer. And the question is, after this conversation, did your ticket preference change? And we might not have talked directly about the candidates, but maybe, maybe you started to see things in a different light or maybe you know, in engaging, maybe you're on Twitter, you're on Instagram and you're seeing what the other candidates are sorry, what other people are saying, maybe maybe your preferences changed. And so we just like to see, you know, if this conversation hadn't had any impact on that.

**Bret** 1:09:42

Great. Okay. So it seems to me that we are drawing to the end of the conversation. Are we going to await answers on that question?

**Ryan Bennet** 1:09:56

Well, I can give my answer to that. Okay. Because it actually has changed, I have gone from really preferring a center left, paired with a center right to preferring a center right paired with the center left candidate, which I think is quite an important distinction depending on the results of the coin flip.

**Bret** 1:10:20

You want to spell that?

**Ryan Bennet** 1:10:24

No, that was that was an attempt at dry British humor dry? No, it was it was I did I drop it off. I didn't pull it off quite quite right. No,

**Bret** 1:10:33

you did. I just didn't want to laugh and then discover that you had actually meant something deep and leave you in assaulted and wounded here on camera with Oh,

**Ryan Bennet** 1:10:43

like, I can take the laughter? That's fine.

**Bret** 1:10:45

Fair enough. All right. So are we going to await the audience's answer to that question?

**Elisabeth Sweet** 1:10:53

Um, we don't I just saw one really interesting answer that said, I don't have a preference yet. But I really, really, really don't want to vote for so I really, really, really want to vote for a ticket that's not devoured by corruption. And I think that's a pretty salient response. Wonderful, keeping, keeping an open mind and understanding that, you know, where we're at?

**Bret** 1:11:13

Well, I think this is another, it's another thing that Unity has really accomplished already is that, you know, the fact of the obvious corruption of these parties has been difficult to talk about, right, there's a tendency to want to see them as somewhat corrupt. And I think they have revealed themselves as much more corrupt than that. And to the extent that we can now talk about that, in the open, that is progress of an important kind, because really, the question is until that problem is solved. We face the same issue, and we will continue to face it every election. So hence, unity. All right. So I think we should close this out here. Before we do that, we should alert you that there is a I don't exactly know how to describe it. There is something unfolding in the aftermath of this campfire that involves let me take it. Okay. Yeah, go for it, Elizabeth.

**Elisabeth Sweet** 1:12:17

So um, a lot of a lot of our volunteers, all of our supporters have been wanting to connect with people after the show, and in general throughout the week, and just in daily life. And so what we've created right now is something called a campfire s'mores. And so these more sessions are for our viewers to connect after the show to talk about the campfire, to talk about unity to talk about sort of what's going on in the world right now. And so we hope that you participate, we hope that you join, you're going to go to to the URL campfire smores dot articles of unity.org. And again, you're able to connect you're able to share and you're able to really grow with people who are like minded, but also dislike and also disagreed not but and, and also disagree and I think that we'll we hope that it'll be a really great experience for everyone. So head over again to campfire s'mores dot articles of unity.org and Zach's gonna throw a sign up at the end that that will tell you that URL.

**Bret** 1:13:15

So these these smarts, are they gluten free?

**Elisabeth Sweet** 1:13:20

Of course, I'm also they have to have

**Bret** 1:13:23

to be quoting a free, good

**Ryan Bennet** 1:13:25

vegetarian.

**Bret** 1:13:26

I am sure these smores have never eaten meat. That is my feeling about. Alright, I dodged that bullet. Did I not? Okay, good. Great. Any final thoughts? Ryan or Elizabeth?

**Ryan Bennet** 1:13:45

Thank you, everyone watching and thank you, Brett, for having us.

**Bret** 1:13:48

Yeah, thank you. Thank you guys. It's been a fun conversation. And I also want to thank you both individually. And as representatives of our amazing team of volunteers, I want to thank you for everything that you're investing in this. I know it is taking a huge amount from you and I I'm thrilled to meet kindred spirits who are similarly motivated to do something because goddamn right. Okay. Anyway, thank you all for joining us. And we will see you on the next campfire. Don't forget to register for our email list. And if you're there to vote, for which tickets you want to see, give us your rank choice on that. All right. See you all soon enough.