

TECH / ELON MUSK

I cannot describe how strange Elon Musk's CPAC appearance was / So here's a literal transcript, instead.

by Sarah Jeong

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Elon Musk spoke at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) on Thursday, giving a strange and often inarticulate on-stage interview to Newsmax presenter Rob Schmitt. Schmitt was all smiles and enthusiasm, and managed to steer Musk through the half hour, never pausing to look back on the obvious logical inconsistencies, various falsehoods, and mathematical errors that littered the

interview. He even did a decent job of keeping the entire timeslot from devolving into internet memes, although he couldn't stop Musk from loudly pronouncing "I am become meme." Still, the CPAC crowd ate it up.

The following is a transcript created from CPAC's own livestream of the event. This is, I emphasize, not a parody.

Flashing lights, large screens ablaze with animated graphics reminiscent of the 1980s. The CPAC logo spins around as generic rap-rock blasts across the crowd.

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen, it's time for the DOGE update. Please welcome Newsmax host, Rob Schmitt.

Schmitt: Man. That is a big crowd. And they are not here for me.

Crowd cheers.

Schmitt: How you guys doing? Nice vibe this month, right? After the best month we've ever had. Nice to see you. Thanks for coming out. It's good to see you. Let's not kill any more time, let's bring out Elon Musk.

Crowd goes wild. Elon Musk enters stage, pumping both fists high in the air, walking slightly unsteadily. He is wearing a black MAGA baseball cap and sunglasses that look like they were bought in a gas station in 1989. He continues to pump his fists as he makes his way in front of the beige arm chairs at the front of the stage. Rob Schmitt attempts to get his attention, but he turns and waves at the crowd.

Schmitt: We've got one more surprise, in case this wasn't enough.

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Musk: Well, President, uh, President Milei has a gift for me.

Schmitt: *[hamming at camera]* Javier Milei from Argentina, you guys know who that is, right?

Milei, a friendly-looking figure who resembles Bilbo Baggins right before he Smeagolifies, enters the stage carrying a chainsaw. He presents the chainsaw to the billionaire, who then waves it around unsteadily.

Musk: This... is... the chainsaw for bureaucracy. *[pumps the chainsaw in the air]*
CHAINSAAAW!

He takes a beat to examine the chainsaw. He is still wearing his sunglasses. He turns around and starts wandering to the other side of the stage, waving the chainsaw around.

Musk: Uwaaauwaargh!

Milei lurks awkwardly in the background, trying to wave goodbye to Musk, before Schmitt takes notice.

Schmitt: Mr. President, thank you so much. Nice to meet you. I love it. We love it.

Musk's attention snaps to Milei. The two men shake hands with the Argentinian president, who then departs.

Musk: Where should we put this —

Schmitt: They want it right here. *[moves the chainsaw]* A little stage prop.

Crowd screams for Elon Musk.

Musk: I love you guys too!

Schmitt: Thanks guys. Have a seat.

The two men settle into the armchairs.

Schmitt: So, uh. Heheh. That was something.

Musk: *[ineffectually suppressing grin]* I am become meme.

Schmitt chuckles obsequiously.

Musk: Yeah. Pretty much. I was living the meme. It's just — I was living the dream, and I was living the meme, and that's, pretty much what's happening.

Schmitt: It's —

Musk: I mean, DOGE started out as a meme. Think about it! *[laughs]* Now it's real!

Schmitt: *[smiling affably]* So —

Musk: *[to audience, sunglasses still on]* Isn't that crazy!

Schmitt: It is, it is crazy.

Musk: But it's cool.

“I was living the dream, and I was living the meme, and that's, pretty much what's happening.”

Schmitt: Let me ask you this. A year ago, if someone had told you you'd be at CPAC and working with the president to absolutely shred *[dramatic pause]* the government — the swamp — whatever you want to call it. Would you believe that?

Musk: No. *[snickers]* But it's cool! This is awesome. And I just wanna say, thanks for your support, I mean.

Crowd cheers.

Musk: You guys are. You know. We're, you know, we're trying to get good things done, but also, like, you know, have a good time doing it and, uh, you know, and have, like, a sense of humor.

Crowd cheers.

Musk: You know. So, like, I mean, the sort of the left wanted to make comedy illegal, you know, you can't make fun of anything. So this is, like, comedy suuuuuucks. It's like, nothing's funny. You can't make fun of anything.

He waves his arms so emphatically that the large gold chain he's wearing clanks against his mic.

Musk: It's like, LEGALIZE COMEDY! YEEEEAH! Legalize Comedy!

Schmitt: And we've shifted the entire culture in just the last few months, the whole culture of this country has shifted dramatically just because of that election.

Musk: Yeah, exactly. Freedom of speech, having fun again, it seems like we should... We should have a good time. You know?

Schmitt: I mean, it's a great time. Everybody in this place is so excited, and I haven't, I mean, when you talk to conservatives, everybody's happy.

Musk: *[nodding emphatically]* Yeah.

Schmitt: And everybody feels this great sense of relief, because we were going to hell for about four years.

Musk: Yeah.

Schmitt: It really felt bad, especially toward the end, it felt really bad.

Musk: *[still nodding]* Yeah. I mean, I thought, I thought we were sort of heading for a point of no return really, you know, until, um, that's why it was so essential that President Trump win the election and, and that there, there be a Republican majority in the House and Senate, which, thanks to you *[gestures generally at CPAC audience]* that, that has been accomplished. Yeah.

Schmitt: I want to ask you, one of the biggest questions I have for you is — you've been, you know, politically, you weren't really on one side or the other for a long time. You were a businessman, a lot of people, they stay away from it now. You're on a side, you've chosen a side. You're sitting here in a MAGA hat. How did that happen? What was the moment?

Musk: It's like, you know, dark gothic MAGA. *[preens over his hat, which features MAKE AMERICA GREAT in a blackletter typeface]*

Schmitt: That's a good one. Was there a specific moment? Was there a moment that it all changed?

Musk: Yeah, when I realized I was a fool.

He laughs, and his chain clanks against his mic again.

Musk: But no, I was, I guess, uh... yeah, I mean, I'd say, I was like, politically neutral for, for quite a while. You know. You know, leaning a little Democrat. You know. *[winces theatrically]*

Schmitt: So then how do you go from that to *this*? *[points at CPAC audience]*

Musk: *[sigh]* Well, uh, it —

Schmitt: Did they go crazy?

Musk: *[laughs]* Yeah, they did — they did go crazy. I mean that whole cancel culture and, you know, trying to, trying to stop freedom of speech, and um, infringe upon, just in general, infringe upon people’s personal freedoms. You know, they just want state control, state control of what you say... They wanna, they wanna, you know, take away your guns, and the reason they wanna take away your guns, is like, so there’s nothing you can do to oppose them. So it’s sort of like, you know, I just, I just, I just like. We, we, we, we just need to restore the fundamental elements of what made America great, which is, uh, freedom and opportunity.

Crowd cheers.

Schmitt: We’re seeing a lot of these freedoms disappearing in the West. It’s not just about America. We’re watching, we’re all watching Europe and knowing that they’re about 50, 100 years ahead of us, right? Because they got an early start, and we’re watching how they’re devolving, and you’re trying to save it from happening here.

“I mean, in Europe, they put people in prison for memes. Yeah. You know, I’m like, that’s insane.”

Musk: I mean, in Europe, they put people in prison for memes. Yeah. You know, I’m like, that’s insane.

Schmitt: They’re collapsing. They’re a collapsing society. It feels that way.

Musk: It... feels... like...

Schmitt: France was nicer 50 years ago than this.

Musk: Yeah.

Schmitt: I don’t think you can question it.

Musk: Yeah. Um. so. Yeah. So. Yeah. I mean. Really.

He appears to be trying to start a sentence. Eventually he breaks down laughing. Someone in the crowd cheers, he turns to them.

Musk: Yeah, I love you too! I mean. I really, I really, I really just want to do useful things, like, you know, basically build products, you know, provide products and services that are that are good and I wasn't really that interested in being political. It, just, like, there was a certain point, no choice. Yeah. So, yeah.

Schmitt: Can I ask you — on the same side of that coin — what's it like going from neutral to being vilified, largely vilified by the media? I think you're —

Musk: What? No. *Really?* HANHHANHHHAHA!

Schmitt: I mean, turn on some of these channels, brother. I mean, they're angry at you. Does it bother you at all?

Musk: I mean, were they chanting for my death? I suppose that's a little, you know... like, the song's not even that goooooood. And it's like, it's like, you call that a death chant? [*wriggles torso while seated*] That's noooothing, pleeease.

Schmitt: They've been singing a lot lately. There's a lot of music lately. It's not good music either. Yeah, yeah. I would say that they're, you know, watching what you're doing with DOGE is just that — people *love* it.

Crowd cheers.

Schmitt: I mean, I've always looked at the government and... I've always looked at the government. I've seen this big machine that, and you just know that they waste because they don't care. Nobody could. There's more money coming. They don't care. You're cutting all this out. Everybody in this country knows that the government is full of waste, fraud, and abuse, and you're doing the work, and the Americans love it. Watching their reaction politically to this, I can't believe how bad they are responding to this. I don't know how you're going to sit there and scream and complain because they're cutting waste out of the government and try to win another election. How do you try to win on that?

Musk: Well, at this point, I'm like, I'm not sure how much of the left is even real.

Schmitt: Like, how much was propped up by our money?

Musk: Yeah, you see, like, these, these sort of fake rallies with hardly any people and the media will, like, frame it, *[making a rectangle with his fingers]* and like, you know, get all six people you know, in the frame, but it's like, nobody else is there, like, just, it doesn't have popular support, um. But there's, but then, but then you learn that, like, there's hundreds of billions of dollars going to these so-called NGOs, and that, and it's your tax dollars that are funding things that are fundamentally anti-American.

Schmitt: And they're propping up their narrative. A lot of that government money has been propping up a left that I don't think is, I don't think is as strong as they made it seem.

Musk: In fact, a massive amount of your tax dollars is going to legacy media companies, directly from the from, from the government.

Schmitt: The government wants to take over media.

Crowd boos.

Musk: Yeah, it's terrible.

Schmitt: Yeah, that's why we have X.

Musk: Yeah! And that's —

Schmitt: That's why you spent \$44 billion — I mean, there's a lot of money. More than it was probably worth, but it had, there was a message.

Musk: Freedom is priceless. *[nods sagely as crowd goes wild]*

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Schmitt: Probably one of the most important investments this country's ever seen. If you gotta protect the First Amendment, it's not much more important than that.

Musk: Yeah. I mean, I got a lot of criticism, and people, people, said, well, that proves he's a huge idiot from a, you know, like, look, he bought it for like whatever, \$44 billion and now it's worth, like, eight cents.

Schmitt: And it's not worth eight cents!

Musk: You know, there's that, but, but yeah, it was essentially to, you know, buy... freedom... of expression. And —

Schmitt: Once's that's gone it's all over, all over, yeah, tyranny is really quick after that.

Musk: Yeah. I mean, like, you know. All the sort of federal money going to media companies is what, what helps explain why the legacy media all says the same thing at the same time. Yeah, like, isn't it, like, it's like, weird, like, you put them up with, like, you know, like, when...

Schmitt: *[jumping in]* They're mouthpieces for...

Musk: For the state! Yes.

The billionaire, who owns a social media platform, and is supposedly also a federal official, nods.

Schmitt: That's what we've come to know. Yeah, scary.

Musk: Yeah. I like the theme with it, where, where, where, because they're always saying, like, threat to our democracy, threat to our democracy, but if you just replaced democracy with bureaucracy.... It makes a lot of sense.

Schmitt: Makes perfect sense.

Musk: *[smirking]* Big threat to the bureaucracy.

Schmitt: That's exactly right. Let's talk about, let's talk about these DOGE dividend checks that everybody's talking about this week. And I know you tweeted out that you're gonna because *[turns to audience]* Does everybody want, like, a \$5,000 check in the mail? That sounds kind of good, right?

Crowd cheers.

Schmitt: And the best part about it would be knowing where it came from, that that's five grand that you sent them last year.

Musk: Totally, it's money that's taken away from, from things that are destructive to the country, that and from organizations that hate you, to you. That's awesome.

Schmitt: Does it seem like —

Musk: I mean that's like, glorious. *[laughs]* The spoils of battle, you know?

Schmitt: Is there traction on that?

Musk: Yeah, yeah. So yeah. *[inaudible]* ...the president. He's supportive of that. And so it sounds like, you know, that's something we're going to do. So as we're finding savings, that's going to translate directly to reductions in tax. Yeah.

Crowd cheers.

Schmitt: I mean, I think they fired 6,000 people at the IRS today, and I think, they said last night that they're talking about shutting down the IRS.

Crowd cheers even more.

Schmitt: I think it's fair. I think people should realize this is, I mean, the amount of money that we said we send Washington, like five or six trillion a year, that is such an ungodly amount of money. I mean, like, a trillion seconds, is like 30 years or something like that. I mean, that's how much we send them. And they seem to never have enough. There must be a lot you can cut.

Musk: No, absolutely. People ask me, What's the most surprising thing that you've encountered when you go to DC? You know, we're in DC. And I said, well, the most surprising thing is the scale of the expenditures, and actually, uh, how easy it is to with a just, just when you add caring and competence, where there was absent before you can actually save billions of dollars sometimes in, in an hour. Yeah, like, it's wild.

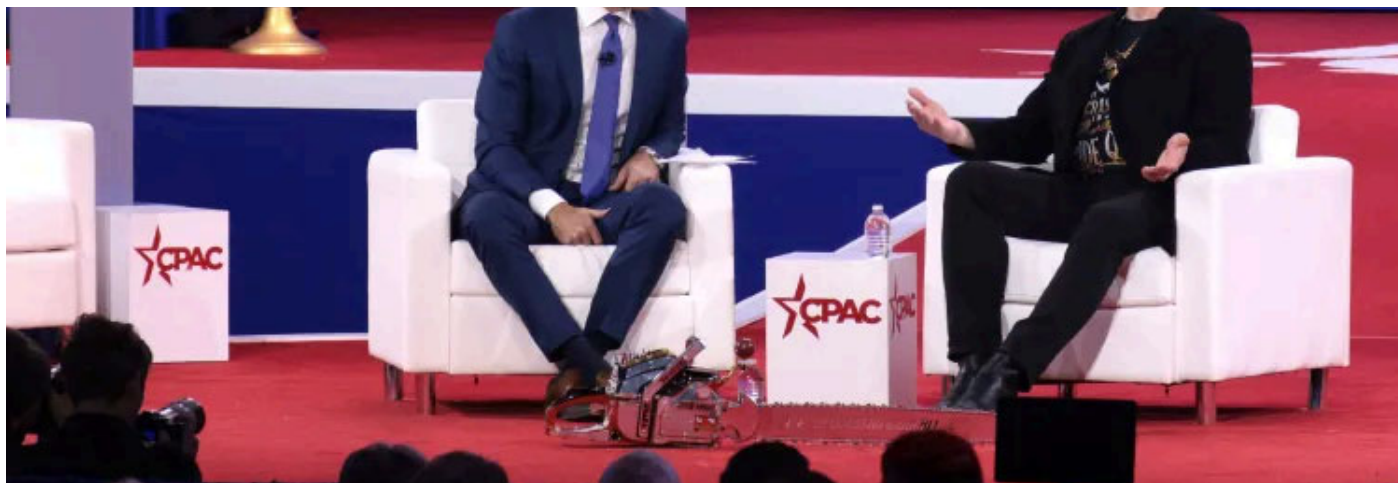
Schmitt: And then they scoff at it and say, oh, a few billion here there. I mean, the way they're talking about it, they, you can see they don't care. It's so it's such little money compared to how much they're used to wasting. That's what's really scary.

Musk: Um, yeah, no, exactly. But obviously it's, it's, it just shows that they really lack empathy for the average taxpayer who's working hard, paying, paying taxes, and then, and then they say, oh, a million dollars doesn't matter. I'm like, I think it matters a lot to people you know. So what are you talking about?

Schmitt: I'd like to have it. Let me ask you a question. You know, I know the President fairly well. Watched him survive two assassination attempts. The second, had the first one not happened, the second one would have gotten him, because without those extra guys, they would have never seen that gun poking through the fence at the golf course.

Musk: Isn't it mind blowing that this has happened? I mean, and just and what? By the way, why do we still know nothing about that guy in Butler, what's going on? But uh Kash is gonna get to the bottom of it! Yeah! Woo! *[pumps arms, but only about halfway up]*





Rob Schmitt and Elon Musk onstage at CPAC 2025. Getty Images

Schmitt: Just a couple hours ago, I saw that the security detail that you had come in with is enormous.

Musk: It's not that *enormous*, maybe it should be bigger.

Schmitt: It might. I think you could probably afford it. But, I mean, how concerned are you about your safety? I mean, it's you. Are you? You are a wanted man. Are you? Are you?

Musk: So I look, I'm open to ideas for improving security. I have to tell you. Like I don't *actually* have a death wish. I *think*. But, you know, it's not that easy. So, yeah, I mean, but I have like that, even like people like President Bukele from El Salvador, who managed to put in prison like a 100,000, like, murderous thugs. And he was like, he called me. He's like, I'm worried about your security. I'm like, YOU'RE worried about my security? Okay, you know. I mean, yeah.

Schmitt: Talk about guts to do that down there.

Musk: I mean, yeah, totally.

Schmitt: And then survive.

Musk: Like, I'm like, I was like, how did you put all those thugs in prison without dying, because things like that would have been not easy. You know.

Schmitt: Well, there's the President, as one of his top attorneys is now investigating, I guess Chuck Schumer, for threats against SCOTUS. Congress, on the Democrats' side, for saying, you know, basically saying he's gonna bring a war to you, like a fight to you. I mean, the rhetoric... you guys are screwing with things that are not supposed to be messed with.

Musk: We're fighting *[inaudible]*

Schmitt: — a lot of people that really don't want that to happen.

Musk: We're fighting Matrix big time here. It has got to be done.

Schmitt: Yeah, and it certainly does. *[brushing over the Matrix reference]* What's going on with — tell us about Fort Knox. Kentucky. It's a military base. It's a ton of gold, tons and tons and tons.

Musk: 5,000 tons of gold, something.

Schmitt: 5,000 are there in the ground and like this. I mean, it's a very secure thing.

Musk: I think we all want to see it.

Schmitt: I'd love to see it like this.

Musk: This is your gold, by the way. It's the public's gold.

Schmitt: Do you think it's not there?

“All this gold at Fort Knox. It's the public's gold. It's your gold. So, like, I think you have, like, a right to see it.”

Musk: I don't know, but I think I just want to see it. Yeah, we want to go see it and just make sure. Like, make sure, like, did somebody spray paint some lead or something, you know, yeah, like, is this real gold? You might have to bite the bar. You

know. But I think, honestly, you know, part of this also is just like, let's, you know, let's have some fun. And, you know, like, like, I said, this, all this gold at Fort Knox. It's the public's gold. It's your gold. So, like, I think you have, like, a right to see it.

Schmitt: And take a tour.

Musk: Yeah, I think we should have a — do a — do a tour. And the President last night was like, that's, I think he's in favor of it. That would be cool. And then we, like, it should be like a live tour, like, you'll see what's going on, open the door, *[gestures dramatically]* like, what's behind it, well, and there's, you know, I think I'd watch that. Yeah.

Crowd goes wild.

Schmitt: I mean, what is, what is 5,000 tons of is it? Is it the size of this —

Musk: Gotta be pretty big, you know. It's gotta be a lot of other stuff in there, like, around, like, I don't even... got some other stuff in there.

Schmitt: Are you thinking about auditing the Federal Reserve as well, which is obviously —

Musk: *[laughs, shrugs]* Yeah, sure.

Schmitt: — regulatory economy. I imagine you think the waste has got to be everywhere.

Musk: Yeah, no, waste. Waste is pretty much everywhere. People ask, like, how can you find waste? And, like, in DC, I'm like, look, it's like being in a room, and this target, the wall, the roofs and the floor are all targets. So it's like, you're gonna close your eyes and go shoot in any direction *[laughs]* you can't miss, you know. So it's, it's pretty wild, like, like, you just push on things a little bit, and you save billions of dollars, like, just a little bit, you know, it's wild.

Schmitt: Scary, isn't it?

Musk: It's why I say like, it really is underrated, if you add caring and competence, how much things improve. Yeah, and, you know, and we just find so many totally crazy things, which, you know, obviously we're sharing with the public. We post everything we learn, you know, just you know, so you can see it, you know.

Schmitt: What do you —

Musk: It's like, isn't it? Like, it's totally wild. Like, we did just, we just did, like, a check on the database on Social Security. Like, says, how many, a lot Americans, alive Americans eligible for Social Security, are there? And according to the database, it's over 400 million. And we're like, wait a second, and how many are you again? Yeah. And then, like, we found, like, one person in there is, like, 306 years old. I'm like, *[inaudible from crosstalk]* I mean, yeah, you know this, America doesn't exist before at that time. Like, so, why? So, you know, maybe it's just me, but I think it's a red flag. I don't know.

Schmitt: But are there indications that there were checks going to those people, or any of those people?

Musk opens his mouth and pauses.

Musk: Well... yeeeeeah.

Schmitt: I guess that's the question.

Musk: That's...

Schmitt: I get the Social Security Administration is dumb, but are they paying these people? Are they that dumb? I don't know.

Musk: A bunch of money is going out from the Social Security Administration, and, in fact, from all entitlement programs.

Schmitt: \$72 billion in waste in like seven years. It's \$10 billion a year.

Musk: Well, I think the rough estimate from General — Government Accountability offices, there's over \$500 billion in 40 years.

Schmitt: *[leans in]* Sorry, five?

Musk: *[enunciating]* Five hundred bill-i-on.

Schmitt: Over how long?

Musk: Per year, per year.

Schmitt: On Social Security?

Musk: No, no, on all, on all —

Schmitt: On all government?

Musk: On all entitlements, all entitlements. Yeah, it sort of actually makes sense. When you look at the thing from a top level and say, like, okay, there's \$7 trillion of spending by the government. What percentage do you think is fraudulent? Okay, exactly like a conservative estimate of the \$7 trillion would be 10 percent. Conservative.

Schmitt: Probably higher than that, yeah, exactly like a quarter every dollar, right?

Musk: But if the fraud is only 10 percent of \$7 trillion, you've got \$700 billion of fraud, and by the way, so it's like, really easy to take advantage of the federal government. *Very easy.*

The billionaire federal contractor nods knowingly.

Schmitt: Look at COVID! Look at all these scams! I mean, it's unbelievable!

“Listen, if there's going to be fraud, it should at least be domestic”

Musk: It looks like, for, in terms of covid payments, yeah, there was something like \$200 billion of covid payment fraud taken by fraudsters out of the country. That's

like, I think, listen, if there's going to be fraud, it should at least be domestic so, you know. But they managed to get \$200 billion out of the country. I'm like, what! Why didn't we notice that?

Schmitt: Let me ask you, let's do immigration here for a second. You know, there's this move now that Trump's latest thing is that he cut, he's going to cut funding any kind of money that ends up in the hands of illegal immigrants. So if you're funding these sanctuary cities and states, that's how they thrive, right? They're paying for these hotels. That's all federal money. If you got a hotel in your city in New York, you got all these hotels full of migrants. That's not state money. That's the feds are covering that, he's going to cut all that. It's really hard to deport 15 million people. And it seems like the move now is, let's make it so that they leave on their own. If there's no longer a dole system for them, if they can't get their hands on hotel rooms and money, they're going to go back, especially if there's no work.

Musk: Well, I think it's really important for people to understand that the Biden administration sent any possible money that they could, they could, if there was money they could send to facilitate and amplify illegal immigration, they sent it. Okay. They took money from FEMA meant for helping Americans in distress, and sent that money to luxury hotels for illegal immigrants in New York. That is an outrage.

Loud booing.

Musk: They actually did that, and not only that, even after the President signed an executive order saying it has to stop, the FEMA, the whatever deep state bureaucrats still pressed send on \$80 million last week to go to the Roosevelt Hotel in New York and other places last week. And now, and now, they're mad that they've got stopped, and they're like trying to sue to have it be restored. It's like, the *gumption*.

Schmitt: You think they're creating a new voter class? You think that was the goal? When they opened up the borders for four years, create a new voter class, get them citizenship, get them in.

Musk: Yeah, a lot of these things like, you don't actually have to assume some grand conspiracy. You just need to look at basic incentives. So if the incentives, fundamentally, if the probability that an illegal is going to vote Democrat at some point, whether it's cheating, but eventually they can become citizens. But if probability is like 80, 90 percent just look at California, which is super majority Dem. And then the incentive is to maximize the number of illegals in the country. That is why the Biden administration was pushing to get as many illegals as possible and spend every dollar possible to get as many. Because every one of them is a customer. Everyone is a voter. So the whole thing was a giant voter importation scam.

Schmitt: Pretty obvious.

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Musk: Very obvious. And then, moreover, then, they actually created the CBP One border app thing where they were, which is, like, where they could, they would literally fly people in. It's not like, like, at the point at which you know, people being flown in at your expense —

Schmitt: — sending planes —

Musk: Like building a wall up doesn't work.

Schmitt: They're literally flying them in. No other country in the world would do something like this. Nobody is this stupid.

Musk: Yeah. And then we found that there was, like \$100 million contract given to some guy in London, actually, while, you know, yeah, well, the CBP One app. So, so then, so they're flying illegals into the swing states. And if you've got like, a margin of victory of maybe 20,000 people, and you fly 200,000 illegals into that state, it's not gonna be a swing state for long.

Schmitt: Change the numbers. Maybe in four, eight years.

Musk: Exactly.

Schmitt: It's a long game. It's just a matter of time.

Musk: So it might take, like, a year for an asylum seeker to get on the green card and five years for the citizenship, it's an investment that is guaranteed to pay off. It's just a question of when.

Schmitt: They all remember who brought them in and who left them here.

Musk: Exactly, exactly. I want to go back. I want to talk about my big deal like, I think a lot of people like, don't quite appreciate that this was an actual, real scam at scale to tilt the scales of democracy in America.

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Crowd claps, cheers.

Schmitt: Treason.

Musk: Treason.

Schmitt: One more Biden question. I remember when, you know, when they would do the electric car stuff, they would always try to box you out, even though you have the only electric car anybody wants.

Musk: Yeah.

Schmitt: You said, I think this week that you think that Biden left these astronauts up in space because he didn't want to give you an opportunity to save them. Make NASA look bad, make the private sector look better, make you look good. You believe that?

Musk: Yeah, no, absolutely. So, of course.

Schmitt: I kind of agree. Why would he want to let you help them come down when you're supporting the president?

Musk: The Biden administration was, was attacking me next level. I mean, the Department of Justice — or Injustice, under the Biden administration — was, I mean, they were suing SpaceX. They're suing SpaceX for not hiring asylum seekers. And we're like, but it's actually illegal for us to hire asylum seekers because we're... rocket technology is covered under ITAR rules, which that means it's an advanced weapons technology, yeah. And so we can only hire permanent residents or green card or citizens, right? Like, so we're damned if we do, damned if we don't. We said like, so how can they sue us for not hiring asylum seekers when it's actually illegal for us to do so. But nonetheless, there was a big Department of Justice or Injustice case about this against SpaceX, so obviously it was an antagonistic situation, and those astronauts were supposed to be up there for eight days, and now they're up for eight months. Does that make any sense? And we, we, we, obviously could have brought them back sooner, but they didn't want anyone who could support President Trump to look good. Basically.

Schmitt: Yeah.

Musk: That's the, that's the that's the issue.

Schmitt: A lot of them are saying right now that the reason that you want to get into Social Security, that you want to get into all of these different — into Treasury and things like that, is that you're looking for personal information and you're trying to make more money.

Musk: Yeah.

Schmitt: I've never met anybody as rich as you that cared less about money in my life. Every time I hear a story about you, you're sleeping on a couch of some other guy in a city that you could buy the entire thing. I don't think you care about money, dude.

Musk: I mean, I, I, I. *[laughs]* Listen, like if I steal Social Security, I can finally buy nice things. Yeah?

Schmitt: And on that same question, they're also talking about, you guys are going to end Social Security, you're going to end Medicare, you're going to end these things. I don't imagine that conversation has been had with the President, and that's that's the plan.

Musk: No, in fact, the actions that we're taking with the support of the President and the support of the agencies, is, what will save Medicare? What will save Social Security?

Crowd cheers.

Musk: And and, because if the country goes insolvent, if all, if all the money is just spent on paying interest on debt, there's no money left for anything. Yeah, so that's, that's the reason I'm doing this, is because I looked at the big picture here, and it's like, man, our debt's getting out of control. The interest payments, interest on the national debt now exceeds the entire defense department budget.

Schmitt: A trillion a year. In interest, just to carry the money that we owe, is a trillion a year.

Musk: Yes.

Schmitt: Unbelievable.

“So like, I mean, a country's no different from a person. Country overspends, country goes bankrupt. Same with, same as a person who overspends goes bankrupt.”

Musk: Rising rapidly. So like, I mean, a country's no different from a person. Country overspends, country goes bankrupt. Same with, same as a person who overspends goes bankrupt. So it's not like optional to solve these things. It's essential.

Schmitt: So we're gonna go bankrupt.

Musk: Yes.

Schmitt: We are.

Crowd claps.

Schmitt: Couple minutes left here. Russia, there's a huge push —

Musk: Oh, yeah, yeah. People like, sort of like, the end, like, yeah, you know, I'm a, I'm a bought asset of Putin, yeah, I'm like, he can't afford me.

Schmitt: Yeah, I think, I think you're worth more than Russia.

Musk: *[mugging at crowd]* Think about it! *[giggles]*

Schmitt: So you're trying to end, you're trying to end a war. Ending a war always means you have to compromise. You have to negotiate with an enemy or an adversary. That's just what it is. And right now, they are lambasting the president for trying a different method to war that they haven't been able to end for three and a half years. Three years. Yeah, they, you know, they're saying Trump's blaming Zelensky for the invasion. How do you, how do you process all of the negativity toward him for trying to end this war?

Musk: Well, first of all, I think we should have empathy for the people dying at the front lines. That's the most important thing. If people have been dying, you know, like, how many more years is this supposed to go on? And imagine if that was your son, your father, you know, what are they dying for? What exactly are they dying for? That line has, the line of engagement has barely moved for two years. There's a whole bunch of people dead in trenches for what. And I'll tell you what for, what it's like for the biggest graft machine that I've ever seen in my life, that's for what. It's unreal, like the amount of money that is being taken in graft and bribery is disgusting. And so what's actually happening is that those, those you know, people, those poor guys, are getting sent into a meat grinder for money. That's what's actually going on. And needs to stop.

Schmitt: Trump is so pragmatic on this. He just, he's just looking at it, and he's saying it's Ukraine, it's not our country, it's not a NATO ally. I just want to see people not dying. I want to see, on both sides, I mean, think about how many young — so many young men have died in Ukraine that the army is starting to age out. The military is aging out. You get 40 and 50 year old guys fighting in a war because there's nobody left that's not killed or maimed in their 20s. That's the reality. Think about how many people that is, if you're a humanitarian at all, you just got to end the war, like, no matter what, just get it over with.

“The president has a lot of empathy. He really cares. You know, he's good, he's a good man.”

Musk: Yes, people, they need to stop dying and the graft machines got to stop, you know, so, and I think people that don't, a lot of people out there don't realize, like, the president has a lot of empathy. He really cares. You know, he's good, he's a good man.

Crowd claps.

Schmitt: I got one more for you. I've been *fascinated* by you for a very long time.

Musk: Thanks.

Schmitt: I've just, I just, I've never seen anybody that can, you know, do so many things at the same time. I mean, you've got the rockets, you got the cars. I've always wanted to ask you, what is it like inside your mind, like, this, is it just 1,000 miles an hour? I mean, are you —

Musk: Yeah.

Schmitt: Is it just not? I mean, just, does it ever stop? Do you sleep? How much do you sleep? Paint us a picture of inside of the mind of a genius? Like, how do you... can you answer that question? It's not an easy question.

Musk: I mean...

He pauses. He is still wearing the sunglasses, having never taken them off this entire time.

Musk: My mind is a storm. So. It's a storm.

He pauses again.

Musk: But, but, I mean, let me maybe tell you something like, you didn't ask the question, but, but I think it's worth nonetheless, maybe just elaborating on something, which is, you know, I grew up in South Africa and... but my morality was informed by America. I read comic books, you know, played *Dungeons & Dragons*.

Very small section of crowd cheers.

Musk: And I watched American TV shows and, like, it seemed like America cared about being the good guys, you know, about doing the right thing and, and that's actually pretty unusual, by the way. *[laughs]*

Schmitt: In the world, it's very unusual. Yeah, it's not like, actually, countries don't do that.

Musk: No, they don't, no. And so I was like, Yeah, you know, you want to be this good. You want to be on the side of good. You want to care about what's right. And, and uh, yeah. So that's, that's, yeah, what I believe in.

Audience member screams that they love him.

Schmitt: I gave you, I gave you a tough one at the end.

Musk: Yeah.

Schmitt: So yeah, that's great. That's great. *[to crowd]* Elon Musk.

Crowd goes wild. The camera zooms out, showing a standing ovation.

Musk: All right.

Schmitt: Thank you. Thank you so much. Appreciate you.

Elon Musk recommences wandering back and forth across the stage, waving the chainsaw. He pauses; an odd rectangular shape is bobbing through the crowd. It floats up towards Musk, he grabs it. It appears to be a very large fan art painting of Musk himself. He grabs the painting with one hand and the chainsaw with the other.

Musk: Thanks, guys!

They exit the stage.

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