

HBO's *Real Time with Bill Maher*

08/05/21

10:18:22 p.m.

2 minutes and 22 seconds

BILL MAHER: I thought with Tucker Carlson in Hungary right now, kissing up to the dictator Victor Orban, I thought it would be a great moment to talk about your book, *The Authoritarian Moment*, which, I must say, I'm not being snarky here, when I saw the title and I thought "Oh, he's writing about Trump. But you're not.

BEN SHAPIRO: No.

MAHER: Your thesis is, the authoritarian moment is coming from the left. And I must say, I don't — when I read the book, I don't disagree with a lot of what you're saying — I've certainly made that case myself. I might have been some of it just a few minutes ago. I just wanted to know, where's the other half of the book? It just — I mean, yes, I agree with you: Woke Twitter has power. People who think they don't have power. They have power in a million different areas. It's just soft power. I just find it perverse that you find that less alarming than the kind of old-school authoritarianism that Trump and his ilk are going for. Here's a new poll — 55% of Republicans say the traditional American way of life is disappearing so fast we may have to use force to save it, 47 percent of Republicans say it may be time to take the law into our own hands. That's not more alarming to you?

SHAPIRO: Well, I mean, clearly that is alarming to me, I think when it comes to, you know, Republicans suggesting this time to take the law into our own hands, the answer is we do have a democracy in this country, we do have elections in this country and the point of the book really is that

MAHER: But —

SHAPIRO: — for all of Donald Trump's attempts to overturn the elections, the institutions did not stand with him. There was not a single major institution in American life that stood with Donald Trump. When it came to the riots last year, every single major institution mobilized on behalf of Black Lives Matter — from corporate America to people like Vice President Kamala Harris, who was urging people to bail out rioters in Minneapolis — the question is not whether authoritarianism exists on all sides; I think there are plenty of authoritarians on all sides. The question is where does the institutional power lie and if the answer is that Donald Trump —

MAHER: — well —

SHAPIRO: tweeting and being a jerk is the essence of authoritarianism, as opposed to say, Joe Biden, the President of the United States saying this week

MAHER: — but that's —

SHAPIRO: — that he doesn't care whether it's constitutional for the CDC to extend the eviction moratorium, he's going to do it anyway, I mean, that seems rather norm-breaking.

(....)

10:21:27 p.m.

10 minutes and 24 seconds

MALCOLM NANCE: It's a nice title for his book, and I think a lot of people who would — who would assume that he's talking about real authoritarianism could be trapped into giving you a \$28.99, but for those of us —

MAHER: Oh, I said be nice! [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE] It only lasted 2 minutes!

NANCE: — that was pretty nice! But — but let's talk about bare facts. You're talking about a guy, Donald Trump who literally tried to suborned — you know, who has probably suborned perjury in order to overthrow a duly elected government and managed to mobilize 40,000 people to lay siege to the Capitol.

SHAPIRO: But that's inaccurate:

NANCE: A thousand or more entered the building, destroyed parts of the building, fought physically law enforcement there in order to stop American democracy. [APPLAUSE] I don't know about you but I've been around a little bit and I've seen some dictators and warlords and authoritarians, that is authoritarianism. You can't say some guys are writing on Twitter and they made, you know, Shaun King want to sell his house, that's — like you say — it's just gossip. Twitter will not kill you unless you use that social pressure in order to achieve an action on the street and believe me —

MAHER: I'm going to address that in a minute. But you can answer this first.

SHAPIRO: Thank you, I appreciate it. A couple of quick things. One, 40,000 people did not assault the Capitol, okay? That especially inaccurate. There were maybe a thousand people. That is not making light of the evil of those people who will all end up rotting in prison as they should.

NANCE: — how many people came to the rally?

SHAPIRO: Were all of those people assaulting the Capitol? Is that what you're contending now?

NANCE: They all marched in the Capitol and then the leading edge attacked the building.

SHAPIRO: They all marched on the Capitol? That's just inaccurate, Malcolm?

NANCE: It isn't, no.

SHAPIRO: Yes.

NANCE: No, it isn't no.

SHAPIRO: It is inaccurate, Malcolm.

NANCE: Facts, Ben.

SHAPIRO: Yes, well, you're not mentioning them.

NANCE: Okay, alright. We all saw what we saw.

SHAPIRO: It's just inaccurate.

MAHER: Let's say some of the milled around outside.

SHAPIRO: Yeah, but —

NANCE: Okay.

MAHER: And — and —

NANCE: Okay, guys. 30,000 stayed —

SHAPIRO: No, I'll tell you, Malcolm.

NANCE: — outside.

SHAPIRO: Wait, hold on. I'll tell you why this is an important point. I'll tell you why —

MAHER: We have a short amount of time.

SHAPIRO: — I'll tell you — this is very quick — I'll tell you why this is an important point, very quick, because, Malcolm, you have a terrible habit of conflating people who do actual violent activity with a broader rubric of everyone, for example, who voted for Trump, which was 75 million people, and that really is ugly. You've tweeted about me, for example, that I'm such a racist I shouldn't be allowed in Washington, D.C. That sounds rather authoritarian in attitude to me. I've never called for you to be kicked off of MSNBC; I've never called for anybody not to buy your book. I've never called for anybody to censor you on Twitter. I am talking in my book about the attitude that suggests that people who are outside the Overton Window should meet with not only with a social ostracization, but they should meet with real-world consequences that do affect their lives.

NANCE: Let me tell you something. Two years ago I was invited to Auschwitz for the Auschwitz Foundation where they were holding a conference call.

SHAPIRO: Are you going lecture me on the Holocaust?

NANCE: No, no.

SHAPIRO: Really.

NANCE: I'm going to tell you what the conference —

SHAPIRO: Really? Really?

NANCE: — was called. The conference was called never again, really? Now, when I have — we are at the point where people were talking about the rise of authoritarianism and — and autocracy around the world and wondering are they good to have another Bosnia? Are they going to have another Rwanda? Is — are western states going to the point where they are embracing authoritarianism, real authoritarianism, not the book authoritarianism that you write —

MAHER: Yeah, well —

NANCE: — more people die, then we have to pay attention. But you know what they're not doing? There not saying Malcolm Nance said something bad about Ben Shapiro on Twitter. That is not the reality of these world.

MAHER: — okay —

SHAPIRO: The attitude is the predicate for the action.

MAHER: I'm going to get to both these points. You brought up the real world dictators. Tucker Carlson, the leading voice on the leading conservative network in this country is embracing Victor Orban. If people don't know who Victor Orban is, he is — well — V-Dem, which is the organization that assesses global democracy, says Hungary, where he is the dictator, lapsed into autocracy in 2018. They're not alone. This is widely seen as the truth. Victor Orban, elected, he was elected, so was Hitler.

SHAPIRO: Three times, I believe, right? Orban?

MAHER: Right. Okay, it's a different kind of autocracy that he is practicing. It's — it's — it's kind of dangerous and the fact that — that Tucker Carlson embraces this guy, that the Republican party gets this dictator immunity that — I mean, if a Democrat kissed up to a dictator like that? I don't —

SHAPIRO: Wait. If? I mean, if a Democrat had — if a Democrat had kissed up to a dictator? Barack Obama went and held hands with — with Fidel Castro's brother at a baseball game. If a Democrat kissed up to a dictator like that?

MAHER: Yeah.

SHAPIRO: Barack Obama —

MAHER: You're right.

SHAPIRO: — said that he was going to —

MAHER: Castro was a dictator too.

SHAPIRO: — provide flexibility to a Vladimir Putin.

MAHER: Alright, forget that point. A dictator that was dangerous. Here's why it's dangerous.
[LAUGHTER] [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE]

SHAPIRO: I really think Malcolm might have some words about Putin on that.

NANCE: I was going to offer the Democrats that went to Iraq, you know, trying to stop the Iraq war beforehand. You want — you want a ballpark figure of people who may have, you know, sort of molly coddled on that point, but let's get — I'm sure you are about to make this point. Orban used his democratic election to dismantle democracy.

MAHER: Correct.

SHAPIRO: And that's how it dictators get it to work.

MAHER: Correct.

NANCE: Adolf Hitler was democratically elected to.

MAHER: This is — right. Yes, what I'm worried about is that this looks like a dry run for what, that Tucker Carlson would embrace him, it looks like a Spanish Civil War for what Hitler did later, if I may use that analogy, the kind of dry run that we are seeing where they foment fear of what the — and I would agree, are the exaggerations of the cultural left to say, "they're so dangerous that we cannot let them take over, no matter what, even if we have to get rid of democracy, it's more important than having these leftists with their ideas that will change our culture completely from the root, it's more important." And that seems to be the argument that they are making here in America. That's why you get these numbers of Republicans who say we may have to take the law into our own hands. So this thing of Tucker Carlson in Hungary, I think is a big deal.

SHAPIRO: Okay. Well, obviously, you know, anybody who says that would be morally wrong. I think there is always an element when you poll Republicans of "screw you" to the pollsters. And so they sort of tell pollsters what they think the pollsters don't want to hear. But let's assume that all those poll results are accurate reflections of what people actually think.

MAHER: Okay.

SHAPIRO: I feel like I'm living in a bit of a parallel universe in the sense that right now, the House, the Senate and the presidency of the United States are all controlled by the Democratic Party. It is the Democratic Party, large scale across the United States currently engaged in mask mandates, vaccine mandates, and lockdowns. So, for all the talk about Tucker Carlson, who, again, you mentioned, is not a governmental figure, or Donald Trump, who has not been in office since January last I checked, it seems that the great threat that people are experiencing right now is from the soft institutions, right? The institutions, the Facebooks and the Twitters and the corporate world, right, all those institutions on a soft level and on a governmental level, the people who are actually experiencing control top down from the government, the people at the top of the government right now are Democrats.

MAHER: And let me give you an example of what I — what you said doesn't get anybody killed — I think it does. Defunding the police, I think, came from wokeness and I think it'll get people killed.

NANCE: Well, that was.

MAHER: Wait a second. *The Spectator* says that *The New York Times* refused to investigate they called the biggest story of our time — they're talking about where the virus originated, maybe it was in the Wuhan lab, because they suppressed efforts to probe the viruses origins for among reasons because they thought it was racist. You see, because everything is race, come on, at *The New York Times*, the paper of record is not reporting what I would expect the paper of record to report, the accurate news. That is an example of the power of wokeness.

NANCE: Yeah, but —

MAHER: Yes, it does have power, so it's not just one sided. It's just not as bad.

NANCE: — well, let's — let's stipulate that, let's just stipulate from time to time and on many occasions, *The New York Times* sucks. [LAUGHTER] They don't report things that are sitting in front of their head. Look, they just called on Cuomo for resign. Over four years they never asked for trump to resign, alright? And he's had way more documented problems with women than everybody else?

MAHER: *The New York Times* never asked him to resign?

NANCE: *The New York Times* has never called on Trump to resign.

MAHER: That was a clerical error. [LAUGHTER] [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE] You must — I think you missed the paper that day. I don't — I don't think — I think they —

NANCE: Can I just touch on something Ben just said there. You know, by saying, "oh, the Democrats run the House, the Senate, and the presidency," that's like — reminds me of the chief from the penguins, right? He has that secret power where he goes, "there's nothing to see, boys. There's nothing to see." The last freaking four years saw the dissent of the United States into

almost sheer autocracy.

MAHER: Right.

NANCE: I have been on this show where we talked about it with one of my books, where Russia was backing Trump.

MAHER: Right.

NANCE: Russia backed Victor Orban. Russia backed —

SHAPIRO: Malcolm —

NANCE: — hold on — Austria. They backed the government of Serbia to do a coup d'etat in Macedonia. [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE] They backed France. The entire western world was teetering on the edge of turning into an axis of autocrats and to say, “well, liberals do things on Twitter and that makes you bad,” that ain’t autocracy son.

MAHER: No, it’s not.

NANCE: What autocracy does is it destroys governments.

MAHER: No, it’s not autocracy but it is antifreedom.

NANCE: Eh, I’ll give you that. [LAUGHTER]

SHAPIRO: Yeah, yeah, anti-freedom, eh.

MAHER: There is a chill in this country about what you can say, what you can do. It’s not a healthy thing.

SHAPIRO: Malcolm, I’ve notice how, when you talk about the last four years we are on the verge of autocracy, when were — did your last book come out?

NANCE: Two years ago.

SHAPIRO: Who was President.

NANCE: Donald Trump.

SHAPIRO: Were you thrown in jail? Were there any threats to do so?

NANCE: Was I thrown in jail? You know, I was pulled off an air from television for three weeks by express letter written from the Trump White House to MSNBC to pull critics off of air.
[APPLAUSE]

SHAPIRO: And why did —

NANCE: But, you know, I wasn't the director of the CIA, so —

MAHER: But — but — but Trump is off —

SHAPIRO: — why —

MAHER: — Trump is off of Facebook and Twitter altogether.

NANCE: Yeah, well you know what? I recall —

MAHER: Maybe we should all let each other speak.

NANCE: — living in a — what do you call it — a capitalist society and where private businesses can make determinations that their general counsel advises them to do in order for them not to lose market share. Donald Trump was an anchor around these corporations by espousing insurrection and insurgency. Bye. Same thing you can get kicked out of the Kroger's. [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE]

(....)

10:34:10 p.m.

9 minutes and 16 seconds

MAHER: All right, let's get back into hard news. I hate it. We're having such a good time and now — now we're going to fight. Now I'm going — now I'm going to make you fight again, but it's okay. But I got to talk about muzzle laws. There's these laws that have been introduced in the number of states to not talk about critical race theory. Now, critical race theory I must say, to begin with, I hadn't heard the term probably a year ago. Now, I hear it every day. I think Americans are just starting to hear it and I think no one knows exactly what it is. They know it has something to do with race and it's some kind of a theory. [LAUGHTER] Right? [TO SHAPIRO] How would you describe it what is critical race theory? [TO NANCE] And then we'll ask how do you describe it. [TO SHAPIRO] What is critical race theory?

SHAPIRO: I read a lot of critical race theory in law school, so — you know, the work of Derek Bell or John — or Jean Stefancic and Richard Delgado.

MAHER: This is what no one knows but you and six other people.

[LAUGHTER]

SHAPIRO: Right, so —

MAHER: What matters is what is it? What is it practically? It's being taught in schools or some

form of —

SHAPIRO: Yes, there's a certain sort of crystallized version of it that is a lot less complex than what Critical Race Theory actually is. But Critical Race Theory essentially argues that racism is baked into all the systems of American society, and that any sort of neutral system is in fact, a guise for racial power. And so the argument is made by Derrick Bell, for example, that *Brown v. Board of Education*, and this is an argument he made in 1991, that *Brown v. Board of Education* was actually a way for the white community to leverage its own power. It wasn't an attempt to end segregation in public schools. Even things that are purportedly good in terms of race, so long as they uphold these broader systems, things like capitalism, or things like the meritocracy, these things are actually just guises for power. And so what that boils down to in sort of practical terms is all disparity equals discrimination. If you can see any stat where black people are underperforming white people, this means the system was set up for the benefit of white people, and that white people have a duty to tear down these systems in order to alleviate the racism that's implicit in those systems. When it comes to schools, what this tends to boil down to is kids who are white have experienced privilege because the system was built for white people. And we have to change the standards.

MAHER: Well, right. So, Malcolm, you tell me your definition.

NANCE: Oh, I agree with everything he just said.

MAHER: Oh, oh, great.

[CHEERS AND APPLAUSE]

NANCE: And I appreciate you being honest and defining what it's like to be a black American, right? That is — I mean, we're talking about a system.

MAHER: But that's not fair. You're saying —

NANCE: No, I'm just saying I agree with all of those suppositions because, they are grounded in truth. [APPLAUSE] Look, when — I'm — you know, and the funny thing is, it's not just African-Americans, right? It's also the Scalp Act of 1749 where, for 300 modern dollars, you had to cut off the head or hair of an Indian to prove that you got them out of the way so they could settle. That's a little bit of American history that people should know about. The Chinese Exclusion Acts [sic] of 1840. These are things we don't talk about.

MAHER: Okay, but —

SHAPIRO: That's not, I mean, first of all —

MAHER: okay, but — and I —

SHAPIRO: — it's not — it's not true that people don't talk about these things. We all did learn

about —

NANCE: You don't want them talked about.

MAHER: — well, that's — that's —

SHAPIRO: — no, that's not true either.

NANCE: You want to get — “cancel” them.

SHAPIRO: No, Malcolm, I'm sorry, you're lying.

MAHER: — no, that's not true.

NANCE: That's not lying.

SHAPIRO: It is lying.

MAHER: It's not true.

SHAPIRO: Not only have I — I personally talked about —

MAHER: I agree.

SHAPIRO: — many of the things you just mentioned, I define critical race theory by citing the actual authors of critical race theory and you seem to be a pretty good beneficiary of the meritocracy because you have merit, Malcolm. So, if you're going to criticize the meritocracy —

NANCE: Yes.

SHAPIRO: — as an outgrowth of white supremacy then you're going to have to tear down the system that you've succeeded in because you merit or do not have merit?

NANCE: You know, you know, when my great-great-grandfather ran away from slavery to join the 111th U.S. Colored Troops and fight against the South keeping human beings as slaves, he didn't think, you know what, in 150 years, my great-great-grandson is gonna have to sit on stage and argue with the guy who thinks all that's bullshit.

MAHER: What is he saying is bullshit?

SHAPIRO: All of what is bullshit?

NANCE: No, no, I'm just saying —

SHAPIRO: Malcolm —

NANCE: — there is no controversy —

SHAPIRO: — Malcolm —

MAHER: Well, first of all — hold on.

NANCE: — the controversy that's made up is people saying that this is being discussed,

MAHER: But — but —

NANCE: — that this being taught in schools and that kids should be kept away from it.

SHAPIRO: — that's — that's not true.

NANCE: It's not even —

SHAPIRO: — Malcolm —

NANCE: — a real controversy.

SHAPIRO: — Malcolm, the fifth largest school district in America, Clark County, just decided that they were going to lower standards with regard to testing because they wanted to alleviate disparities in outcomes. That is an outgrowth of critical race theory.

NANCE: Can you draw a straight line to it?

SHAPIRO: Yes.

NANCE: Really?

SHAPIRO: 100 percent. Because when you say that the meritocracy is an outgrowth of white supremacy —

NANCE: I want to —

SHAPIRO: — and then you suggest that I'm somehow denying that slavery took place —

NANCE: — no, I didn't say that.

SHAPIRO: — or that your great-great-grandfather was a hero because I am saying that I want people tested when they are in school to see if they are good at school —

MAHER: — I must say —

SHAPIRO: — then what you are purporting to push, Malcolm, is nonsense and just sheer —

MAHER: — can I just say —

SHAPIRO: — bullshit, Malcolm.

NANCE: Eh, that's a big leap.

SHAPIRO: It's just bullshit.

MAHER: But I think it's also a leap to say that he thought that was bullshit, because that's not what it is. I mean, we're talking — are we talking about 2021? Or are we talking about 1861? Because —

NANCE: The point is, can we talk about 1861 and 2021 in classrooms?

MAHER: Yes we can!

SHAPIRO: You just did.

MAHER: And I don't — I don't know who is against talking about history.

NANCE: Well, I understand that they want to — you know, in Texas, they're talking about —

MAHER: Yes?

NANCE: — removing references to the Ku klux Klan. They're talking about removing —

MAHER: Right.

NANCE — I mean, come on.

MAHER: That's Texas.

NANCE: — I mean, how can you watch Forrest Gump without even knowing who Nathan Bedford Forrest is, right? I mean, these are people who are —

MAHER: But —

NANCE: — historical figures who did bad things, no one is actually saying, “we want to go back and erase everything and restart and talk to you about these things.” Critical race theory is a subject because the Republican right has made a subject.

MAHER: No, no, no.

NANCE: No real school organizations —

MAHER: Okay —

SHAPIRO: I hope — okay, Malcolm —

NANCE: — are mandating —

SHAPIRO: — I — I —

NANCE: — this towards kids.

SHAPIRO: — I hope every Democrat in America takes your perspective —

NANCE: I hope so too.

SHAPIRO: — and they will be shellacked at the polls. Roy Teixeira just wrote a piece — the emerging Democratic majority Roy Teixeira — he just wrote about what he called the Fox News fallacy, a tendency of people on the left to believe that just because Fox News mention something, it can't be real. The reality is a lot of the stuff is taught in schools.

NANCE: You mean like viruses?

MAHER: Well, okay. Can I — can I —

SHAPIRO: Well, I'm — I'm — now I'm just —

MAHER: — I don't — I don't know.

SHAPIRO: — now, I'm just confused as to what you're talking about.

MAHER: As far as what people are experiencing in their lives, in their schools. Okay, you're right, there are states, like, from the old confederacy, I think, who do want to airbrush history. That's not, I think, the majority in this country. If you ask me critical race theory, if you say, does that mean “teach history unvarnished?” I would say yes, then I'm totally for critical race theory. If you say, “does it mean acknowledging racism persist today?” I would say yes, teach that. “Should we have remedial means?” That's, like, affirmative action. There's lots of people against that. I'm still for that. I still think when you read the statistics — I have some of them here, blacks earn 40 percent less, 90 percent less family wealth, high poverty high schools, 72 percent blacks to 31 percent white, live it six years shorter, half as likely to go to college, eight times more incarcerated. These are real statistics. The question is —

SHAPIRO: Nobody's —

MAHER: — wait, how do we — what do we do to address them? These are real statistics. [TO SHAPIRO] You think we should address them? [TO NANCE] You think we should address them, right? The question is what are we doing about it? Because if race — if critical race theory

means making children in school fixate on race, I'm not for that. [APPLAUSE] If it makes — if it's about collective guilt, I didn't do anything to your great, great, great grandfather, I don't want to be responsible for that. [LAUGHTER] If it's about a toxicity of just from being born white, if it's about dividing everybody into oppressor and oppressive — oppressed and oppressor, I'm not for that. So, there are things that are being taught and are going around that I'm not for that — if that was critical race theory come I would be for it.

NANCE: I agree with you and I don't think that's critical race theory.

MAHER: But it's being taught. Okay —

NANCE: I think what's happened here is that —

SHAPIRO: You just spouting fallacies is very tiring.

NANCE: — I think what's happened here is that this — this terminology, sort of like defund the police, has been hijacked and been framed around the left as that they want to do all this —

MAHER: Alright, so —

NANCE: — they want to rip down the entire social fabric of America and they want us to be guilty about everything. I want you to teach history. I had a lot of people in the military — [APPLAUSE] — hold on. I had a lot of people in the military, senior officers who had to make life and death decisions who were total morons about the cultures and institutions —

MAHER: — alright, so —

NANCE: — in countries we were going into and people died because of that.

SHAPIRO: So, I have a question.

NANCE: I don't need that here.

SHAPIRO: If we agree that history should be taught, why are you defending critical race theory, which is not history?

NANCE: Did I not just say a moment ago that I think that term has been hijacked and that's not what we're talking about?

MAHER: Alright, so let's say critical race theory —

SHAPIRO: Then why are you defending it?

NANCE: I'm going to go back —

MAHER: — alright.

NANCE: — and repeat that I didn't say that.

MAHER: Okay.

SHAPIRO: You — you are literally defending critical race theory by redefining it as just teaching history which is a cheap semantic trick and you know it.

MAHER: Alright.

NANCE: Is this what you do on your show because it sucks?

[CHEERS AND APPLAUSE]

MAHER: Alright.

SHAPIRO: You know, Malcolm, I —

NANCE: I'm just saying.

SHAPIRO: — Malcolm, I appreciate that, but I —

NANCE: I'm sure you do.

SHAPIRO: — I will — I will comfort myself tonight by sleeping —

NANCE: I'm sure you —

SHAPIRO: — on my bed made of money.

NANCE: I'm sure we have an adult —

MAHER: Ohhh!

AUDIENCE: Ohhh!

NANCE: — I'm sure — I'm sure we have — I'm sure we have another adult subject to talk about.