

I've Had It

01/15/26

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4 minutes and 32 seconds

JENNIFER WELCH: What's it like in D.C. with the MAGA takeover? Is it different or the vibes different?

JIM ACOSTA: Oh, Jesus Christ, it is — it's my worst nightmare. I thought we were rid of this clown four years ago.

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: But no, they've come back with a vengeance. Fortunately, the D.C. restaurant scene is set up where, you know, the — the MAGA people have their restaurants and their places they like to go, and they're not the places I like to go. So I won't say where those places are because I don't want them to show up there, but so far so good, it's okay.

WELCH: Right?

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: The last time I was in D.C. I was invited to like a creator event at the Biden White House, a Christmas party.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — and I've never been in the White House, and I was so excited, like —

ACOSTA: Pre-demolition White House,

WELCH: Pre-demolition.

ACOSTA: Good yeah.

WELCH: So it was, like, in December and last December, and it was Biden's final like me and we were in there. My husband came with me and we were walking around. And I just said, Josh, like, next year, think about the energy in this place and think about all the fuckery and all of the emotionally stunted dweebs that are going to be walking around in the White House.

ACOSTA: Like Stephen Miller, basically.

WELCH: Oh my God.

ACOSTA: 1,000 Stephen Millers. No, I mean, you know, I covered the White House for almost

eight years, and just about every day I walked through those gates, I still was like, holy shit, I'm at the White House.

WELCH: It's so cool.

ACOSTA: It is, it's, it's a cool place to be and, you know, of course this fucking guy had to go and demolish half of it within a year of coming back, but, you know, I remember what it was like the first time around when he came in after Obama and they were all just traumatized. I sat down with this deputy White House press secretary, Eric, and it looked like, you know, he had been in a car accident. I mean, this is how traumatized they were at that time, and you got the sense that these were people who, who understood how important this place was, how you had to treat it with reverence. And when I covered the Trump people, it was just, it had turned into a frat party. I remember over at the EEOB as they call it, the office building that's next to the White House, the giant —

WELCH: Yes, where the Vice President's office is? Okay.

ACOSTA: — where the vice president, the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, they call it.

WELCH: Yes.

ACOSTA: And, on Friday afternoons, you would see these kids on the balconies with red solo cups. They were throwing like keggers on Friday afternoons during the Trump administration. This is how seriously they treated the fucking place and when they all got swept out and Biden came back and I agree with you, it — it — it turned back into like the West Wing TV show, like what you would think, like people who obviously respect the place.

WELCH: Yeah, yeah.

ACOSTA: But while Trump was there, there was, I mean, and it's obviously the case once again, where they've turned it into a goddamn shit show. He's bulldozed half of the, you know, almost half of the White House, and it just goes to show you what we're up against right now. This is somebody who thinks he's a king. And when you work for the king, you think you're a king. And so they're just gonna do whatever the fuck they want for the next three years is — is how it appears to me. Not to go on a tangent.

WELCH: No, I know you know. And despite all of those grievances, Jim —

ACOSTA: Yes?

WELCH: — I do want to ask you, like, I would call it a kitchen table grievance —

ACOSTA: Absolutely.

WELCH: — before we dive into the MAGA fuckers.

ACOSTA: Exactly, sorry, I — I jumped — I jumped ahead.

WELCH: No, I'm glad because that is something that I think occupies a lot of real estate in all of our brains because we all care passionately about being Americans and care and care passionately about each other and so, it's just an all consuming component. But sometimes we get to get irritated at just normal bullshit. So what have you had it with Jim Acosta?

ACOSTA: Okay, I have to give a shout out to my alma mater, JMU. I went to James Madison, an up and coming state school in Virginia. They made it to the college football playoff. I don't wanna get too sportsy, but there was, there was a lot of assholes on the internet, on social media, particularly on Twitter. Some — some notable sports figures who were shitting all over JMU getting into the College Football Playoff. People like Nick Saban and so on. I'm like, hey, fuck you. This is, these are the rules for getting into the College Football Playoff. They made it in, and by the way, they put up more than 30 points on Oregon. They put over, over 500 yards. In Alabama, Nick Saban, your old school, didn't do jack shit in the college football playoff. And so, I mean, I guess they got through the first round, but — but then they got blown out. And, you know, my — my sense of it is, is that we've — college sports has turned into semi-pro sports. Like, what are we doing here? And are we just gonna have it be the top schools with all the money and everybody else can just go fuck themselves? That, that doesn't work.

(....)

6:52 mark
18 minutes and 53 seconds

WELCH: Let's dive into these grievances.

ACOSTA: Sure.

WELCH: Let's first talk about ICE —

ACOSTA: Sure.

WELCH: — which I think needs to be abolished.

ACOSTA: Yes.

WELCH: I think that this is an organization that's behaving like ISIS, and you and I are old enough to remember when we would see these videos when America was doing nation building in the Middle East —

ACOSTA: Right.

WELCH: — and people would get kidnapped and they had hostages and they had on masks and all of these Republicans were talking about how chicken shit it was that they weren't man enough

to even show their faces and they wore these masks. And now I see this, you know, similar thing where I'm from originally in Oklahoma and your producer Sam can attest to this.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: You'll see a big pickup truck with a bunch of flags in the back of it

ACOSTA: Sure.

WELCH: — totally giving ISIS —

ACOSTA: Yep.

WELCH: — and then these ICE agents with these masks. I'm just — it's just amazing to me how irony is so lost on these people and just how morally depraved they are.

ACOSTA: Yeah, and, and listen, we can get into this and expand the conversation and talk about all this stuff, but I mean, this is, I think, a defining moment for the Democratic Party. I think if they are not going to take the position that ICE should be abolished, um, the moment a Democratic president comes into office, then you really shouldn't be up on the stage. It just doesn't make sense. Like, yes, you may think, okay, if we triangulate and, you know, I'll move to the left over here and then back to the center for the general election, we don't want any of that shit. ICE has gotten to a point, I mean, take a look at what happened in Minneapolis. If we have a situation in this country where the government can go out and murder a U.S. citizen with no — without any investigation that is credible, uh, then we've become a Putin-like thuggocracy, and we — that is not sustainable. And we can't have a situation where, you know, the governor of Minnesota says, we're gonna bring in our National Guard to protect our citizens from ICE. I mean, we all know where this is gonna end up leading. It's gonna end up with people shooting at each other in the streets and we just can't have that in this country. The problem that we have right now, and I don't want to jump too far ahead, but the problem that we have, I used to call Donald Trump the catch-me-if-you-can president when I covered him the first time around.

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: Now he's the, you can't catch me president. He thinks he is beyond, and this is because of the Supreme Court giving him a blank check, the immunity decision saying you can do whatever the fuck you want as president, and he has said, yeah, okay. That's exactly what I'm gonna do, and so invade Venezuela, invade Greenland, let ICE go crazy across the country, but you can't have a situation like we had in Minnesota play out all over the country. The citizens are not going to tolerate it. People are not gonna, they're just not gonna tolerate it. And the governor of whatever state can go out there and say, please remain calm, we can't have rioting in the streets, that's gonna give them what they want, blah, blah. I — I totally endorse that view, by the way, we don't, we don't want that. We don't want to give Trump and Stephen Miller what they want and end up with blood in the streets. But at some point, it's just gonna happen, like people are gonna, they, they, they're gonna reach the point where they've had enough. And to me, ICE is

the perfect — it — it just crystallizes perfectly exactly what we're up against in this country, where Donald Trump has said, and — and this has nothing to do with immigration.

WELCH: Right.

ACOSTA: This has to do with, can I build a secret police force that can go out there and scare and intimidate the shit out of people and basically say, we're in charge, you're not — you're not, the states be damned, local municipalities be damned, and that is not sustainable.

WELCH: Okay, I wanna ask you something about Trump because you've been around him more than any person I've ever sat across from and so this is my opinion of him. He is a guy, he's so narcissistic and he's so into himself and whatever the shiny object is in front of him on that moment is what he's obsessed with.

ACOSTA: Yep.

WELCH: And I do believe he's a racist, but he doesn't have conviction about his racism like Stephen Miller does. Like Stephen Miller's a racist and he'll die on that hill.

ACOSTA: Yep.

WELCH: Trump, conversely, he's for sure a racist, but you know, he's a member of this party that's all about like, you know, we don't like Muslims and they're super Islamophobic and they don't want anybody who wasn't born in America here and walks in Zoran Mamdani, good looking.

ACOSTA: Yep.

WELCH: New Yorker took on all these billionaires and Trump was razzle dazzled.

ACOSTA: He was.

WELCH: He didn't see a Muslim. He saw a good-looking winner. He didn't give a fuck where he was born. He didn't give a fuck that he has brown skin. He didn't give a fuck about his religion because he liked the fact that he was a good-looking winner and you saw all of the people who used to do your job, who are now like joke fringe podcasters and they were pissed.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: Like that Posobiec. He turns around, stops, and he —

ACOSTA: I saw the video, yeah.

WELCH: — and he, you know, he — little, you know, twats out of there really fast. But let me ask you this.

ACOSTA: He had a hissy fit.

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: Let's just say it. He had a hissy fit

WELCH: When you worked in the White House and you know you would go after Trump pretty hard. I loved it, by the way. I was like inject into my veins, loved it and so, then, like, the cameras go down.

ACOSTA: Yeah?

WELCH: Is there like asshole buddy moments where Trump's like, Jim, you're such a dick. Can't you be nicer? I mean, what? Take us behind the curtain of that.

ACOSTA: Okay, so in the beginning — this is the way I explain it to people. Donald Trump, I think, went into all of this thinking this was sort of like when he was, a player on the New York scene, and that the New York Post, the New York press, they're basically there to perform a — a PR role. You know, I show up, I give a press conference, you know, I do my thing where I look around the room like this, like on The Apprentice, and the — the fawning New York press corps just sort of ask me questions that help me, you know, sell my products, my — my shitty Trump wine, my shitty Trump vodka, the planes, and so on. He thought that was gonna be how it worked, going out on the campaign trail and into the White House. But if you go out on the campaign trail and you're gonna say, we're gonna ban all Muslims coming into this country, or if you say that all Mexican immigrants are rapists and criminals, or if you're gonna say, that I can shoot somebody on Fifth Avenue and get away with it —

WELCH: Right.

ACOSTA: — the press is — the political press is not the New York press —

WELCH: Right.

ACOSTA: — and they're gonna respond differently and they're gonna start asking hard questions. There was a press conference in New York in May of 2016 where he kind of went off on me and he says, oh, you're a real beauty. I know who you are. Um, and, you know, but I think at that moment, he thought this was still Kfabe. You know what that term is from professional wrestling? That means It's all pre-coordinated.

WELCH: Okay.

ACOSTA: That's the term for it in pro wrestling, you know, I do this, then you do that, you body slam me, here I throw you into the ropes over there. He, my sense of it was, he thought all of this was an act. Now during the campaign, I will tell you, it, it did not feel like an act to us. We would be in the press corps, we called it the press cage at these Trump rallies. And there would be tens

of thousands of people, and he would whip these people into a frenzy, calling us the disgusting news media, the dishonest news media, the liars, the scum, and so on. And his supporters would come up to the press cage. These were the bike racks that were assembled around us to protect us — we also had bodyguards — and they would scream at us and call us a traitor and all this other stuff. It got to the point where not only did we need bodyguards, we had to run to our cars after the Trump rallies were over because we were worried that they would kick the shit out of us.

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: Trump never got the message that the — the — the hostility that he peddled, the outrage that he put out there was absorbed by people and then directed back to us. He gets into the White House, he and I have that press conference where he calls me fake news and so on. And it just sort of ratcheted up and got worse and worse and worse. And I think what happened in his mind was, it just — it changed from being an act to, oh, I think I see what I can do now. I — I control this army of people. I control, you know, through this cult-like following, this ability to go after certain segments of American society and it was early on in his — in his administration where I kind of got the sense that things were starting to change because, you know, he, he still had this mentality very early on that — okay, this is still an act. I got a call from Hope Hicks one day after a press conference. Do you remember her?

WELCH: Oh, totally.

ACOSTA: She was the lady that was like his press aide —

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: — and she was like a former Ralph Lauren model or something like that —

WELCH: Yes, she was really pretty.

ACOSTA: — didn't know what she was doing, and she calls me after this press conference, this is like February of 2017, so a month after he gets in and she goes, Jim, I just wanted you to know, I talked to the President and he said, that Jim was very professional today and that Jim gets it. Jim gets it. And I'm like, get what? I don't get shit. Like, I'm here doing my job, asking questions. This is not an act, this is not a show, and it was the next day that he first put out the tweet that the press in the United States is the enemy of the people, and it was pretty much from that point forward that he just sort of decided, if I can't, if we're not gonna have this pro wrestling cavefabe thing where I do this and then you do that and it's all prearranged and pre-coordinated, I'm gonna, I'm gonna destroy you. I'm gonna crush you. I'm gonna knock you out of the way. And he's been, he's been behaving that way ever since to the point where, in 2018 when he had one of, one of his supporters was sending pipe bombs around, I — remember that whole thing —

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: — sent it to CNN, sent it to a bunch of other media outlets, Democratic figures like Hillary Clinton and so on, and we received actual pipe bombs that could have detonated and hurt people. Our people went to Trump's people and said, you're gonna get somebody killed, and he did not care. He said, I'm gonna keep calling you the enemy of the people. Sarah Huckabee Sanders said — I asked her in a press conference, will you guys stop calling people the enemy of the people, stop calling the press that? And she said, no, we're not gonna stop doing that. And it, it turned from what he thought was an act into, we're, we're coming after you.

WELCH: So, what you're describing, if I were your therapist, and this was a work relationship

ACOSTA: Yeah, it feels like therapy.

WELCH: Yeah, I would say —

ACOSTA: Sorry I went on too long here.

WELCH: — no, no, I love it —

ACOSTA: Yeah, yeah.

WELCH: because I think this is interesting and I think it's important. I would say, Jim, it sounds like you're in an abusive relationship and you need to draw boundaries and you need to get out of this. So, obviously Donald Trump is an abuser.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: He's physically abused women. He's an adjudicated rapist. He's an emotional abuser. He's a psychological abuser, and he's doing it at a mass scale right now.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: We know that. We've known that. You can read, you know, testimony from his first wife and go on and on. This — that's never gonna change. He's gonna go into the ground and abuse her — abusing people.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: What I'm interested in right now is the trickle down abuse that has happened and as it pertains to being a journalist, you have people like Jeff Bezos and Larry Ellison. That own these news organizations —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — and they allow for the president whom they're beholden to they have all this fuck

you money but they won't tell him fuck you right?

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — and they allow for this abuse to be hurled at their employees making a very unsafe workspace and, to me, this is a really big story, but there's so much fuckery going on we don't talk about it —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — but there's there's been such a — a — a receding of decency of I'm your boss and I'm gonna take care of you. I'm not gonna allow you to be abused by this man. We are protected by the Constitution. The courts will protect us and that is something that we really haven't spoken about.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: The corporate media throws their reporters either dictates what they can say or what they can cover and how they can cover it —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — and what phrases they can use, which I think is a form of abuse, not to mention very anti, you know, First Amendment, and they also are throwing them around groups of people who will rile up the robes to send, you know, and I've been down at the — Fox has covered me before —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — and so I've — I've been in the hot seat of the MAGA, you know, we hope you die, we hope you get gang raped.

ACOSTA: Oh, yeah, I've received all of that stuff that shit, yeah.

WELCH: But what do you have to say of somebody who worked in corporate media and how the people that own corporate media are treating their employees this trickle down abuse that they've picked up that Trump has normalized —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — and now these industry leaders who should be advocating for safe, good workplaces and safe spaces and they're allowing — well he's an abuser so we're gonna abuse our employees too —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — like, if you think about Jeff Bezos spiking the story of the endorsement of Kamala Harris or what Bari Weiss is doing right now to those poor journalists at CBS.

ACOSTA: Oh!

WELCH: There are serious journalists at at *60 Minutes*.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: So will you speak to that?

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: And — and also, Jim, to your experience with when you started realizing, oh, these corporations don't care about journalism anymore?

ACOSTA: Yeah. I — I — a couple of things. One is I have to tell you, when I was at CNN and was the White House correspondent, I felt like I had the backing of my company. Jeff Zucker, I have to give him a shout out when he was president of CNN, he stood behind me 100 percent. I never thought for a moment, gosh, I better be careful what I say or else my boss is gonna come after me. I mean, if — if I, you know, if he didn't like a question that I asked or a story that I did, he would tell me. He was a good boss in that way. But in terms of the job that we had to do to hold Trump accountable, he was 100 percent behind me, no question about it. That has changed in our current media environment, and as I've been saying lately to folks on my show, when *60 Minutes* is in trouble, we're all in trouble. And when Bari Weiss is — is spiking a segment on CCOT and the gulag that they're running down there in El Salvador, a torture prison basically, that the U.S. is — is basically in business with, that's a big story. That's a big problem. And when she can spike a story like that because they're now owned by the Ellisons, which are MAGA friendly. That's a — that's a massive problem for this country, and I've been describing it this way. I think we have a system of state-compromised media in this country. We do not have a free press the way that we did a couple of years ago. If we have major corporations that are in charge of our media outlets that are under the thumb of the current administration, then you really don't have freedom of the press. You have — you have corporations running media companies that are subject to the whims of a mad king president, and that, that is a — that is a huge problem for all of us. Just the other day, the — anchor of the CBS Evening News ended his newscast by saying —

WELCH: Oh my God.

ACOSTA: — I, we salute you, Marco Rubio. I mean, not only was Walter Cronkite spinning in his grave, I was hoping he would come back from the great beyond to choke the living shit out of him —

WELCH: Oh shit.

ACOSTA: — and say what the fuck are you doing?

WELCH: You see CBS put out a statement and it was like we love America and we won't apologize for it?

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: And I'm like, that's not your job.

ACOSTA: No.

WELCH: Your job isn't to feel emotion towards America.

ACOSTA: No. Also —

WELCH: Your job is relentless pursuit of the truth.

ACOSTA: — also, get the fuck out of here. We all love America.

WELCH: Right.

ACOSTA: That's why we're doing this. The reason why I do my job and I like doing my job is I love this country.

WELCH: Right.

ACOSTA: I fucking love this country. My dad came from Cuba in 1962 three weeks before the Cuban Missile Crisis, fled communism. My mom, her folks were from the New York area. They came through Ellis Island. One of my great grandparents was a — was a maid at the Dakota building here in Manhattan, and these two families came together and there I popped out and I went to the White House and gave Donald Trump a hell of a fucking time. That's America.

WELCH: Yes.

ACOSTA: And I'm not saying that I'm exceptional or anything like that, but it's exceptional that something like that can happen in this fucking world.

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: And I, when I saw CBS doing that, I said, what the fuck is going on with these people? Because we all love this country, that is beside the point. What we should be having in this country is a free press that can hold the goddamn President of the United States accountable without everybody worried whether they're gonna lose their fucking job. That's — you — you can't have a situation like that in this country, and that is why things like what we're doing right now is flourishing and thriving, because the — the American people can sniff this out.

WELCH: Yes.

ACOSTA: They can see the pandering and the nonsense. And the other night, the anchor on the CBS Evening News on January 6 is saying, well, on one hand, the White House is saying that the — that Nancy Pelosi is responsible for January 6, and on the other hand, it was the rioters. No motherfucker, we saw it on goddamn television. It — it was a bunch of Trump thugs that he egged on and incited and sent to the goddamn Capitol.

WELCH: Yes.

ACOSTA: He's the one who did it. There is no both sides to that fucking story. End of fucking story.

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: And there was a time in this business when the anchor of the CBS, I worked under Dan Rather in the early 2000s, I was here in New York working under Dan Rather, and there was a time in this business where the anchor of the *CBS Evening News*, if he got a call from the White House or the president of CBS News got a call from the White House complaining about the story, they would say, go fuck yourself and hang up the phone. And that is — that ladies and gentlemen, is how shit should get done in this country. The president of any news organization, the anchor of any evening newscast should be able to tell the White House press secretary, I used to get calls from the White House press secretary, when Obama was president, Jay Carney would call me and complain about, you guys are covering ObamaCare, like, you know, like what the fuck is going on here? The ObamaCare website comes out. This actually happened.

WELCH: Oh, yeah, yes.

ACOSTA: Remember, it didn't work right away. Obama was out there saying it's gonna be like Orbitz, you're gonna be able to, like, if you book your flight, you're gonna be able to buy your healthcare, and the website didn't work.

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: So, we went on and we were on all day long saying that the ObamaCare website didn't work. That's the news.

WELCH: Right.

ACOSTA: I didn't — he called and Jay Carney, and God bless him, he's doing his job, calls me in the booth, which is the workspace we called it. You know, you and Wolf are really out of control talking about the ObamaCare website, and I was like, we didn't build the fucking thing, you did. And that is how it should work. The — the government, can get mad at you for doing your job, but you ought to be able to say right bac —

WELCH: Exactly.

ACOSTA: — fuck off. I'm doing the news. This is how it works. And we've gotten completely away from that to the point where, I mean, if — if the anchor of the CBS Evening News feels that the corporate overlords are making his life a living hell, then he should go on the air At the end of his broadcast and say, they're making my life a living hell. I can't tell you guys the truth. I quit and do it on national television and walk the fuck off the set. And if you're not gonna do that, you're part of the goddamn problem.

(...)

29:31 mark
44 seconds

WELCH: A couple of things about that you said and then I wanna move on to Fox News —

ACOSTA: Yeah, oh, good.

WELCH: — but you — you said, I know you said that, you know, they say we love America and I always think this is a red flag. The Republicans do this a lot. They'll say —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — well, I'm pro-family. Everybody's fucking pro-family.

ACOSTA: No, you're not.

WELCH: Yeah, and they're not.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: But any time it's a red flag for me anytime somebody has to be captain obvious —

ACOSTA: Right.

WELCH: — and so Bari Weiss and Larry and David Ellison and this propaganda that they're trying — I mean, it's — it's further than Fox. I mean, it — it is —

ACOSTA: Even the little North Korean lady —

WELCH: — yes!

ACOSTA: — who reads the news is like, dial it in.

WELCH: Exactly.

ACOSTA: You know what I mean? It's like — it's a little out of control. Even the North Korean lady is offended —

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: — right now, yeah.

(....)

40:59 mark

6 minutes and 17 seconds

WELCH: I'm not an Andrew Cuomo fan at all —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — but he did something smart politically at the time. And every night he had cameras in front of him and he was like the country's therapist —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: And he wasn't the president. He wasn't the governor of the other 49 states.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: He was just the governor of New York.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: But he got on TV every night and I lived in Oklahoma and I watched it every night because I was craving leadership of a sane person.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: And the Democrats have their voice and they refuse to use it. And when you talk about what the Democrats need to campaign on, I think another issue they're gonna have to address and the base has moved on this, and this is a — a — a national awakening that is occurring and AIPAC money is toxic. Any Democrat that is going to be accepting AIPAC money is going to face uphill battles, and you can look no further than what, you know, Zohran, he took on far-right AIPAC money. He took on billionaires.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: He didn't take a cent of PAC money, completely transparent, and my problem with Chuckles, Hakeem, Cory Booker, and a lot of other corporate Democrats is they're sitting there

getting their marching orders from Deloitte, and they are these preservationist party where they're preserving the Democratic Party that lost —

ACOSTA: They're preserving the past.

WELCH: — two times to a fucking unhinged, mentally ill moron —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — and they're still trying to preserve that program and —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — when — you didn't see — Chuckles went to Zohran's swearing in inauguration. Hakeem didn't and Hakeem, a lot of his voters in his district live in New York City, and this is a big thing and they —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — the problem with Democrats is they think they're smarter than their base —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — and they treat, uh, the base a little bit condescendingly —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — and I think they're gonna be in for a very, very rude awakening at — like, women that I know in Oklahoma who for sure have been Republicans the majority of their life —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — are woke ass, no corporate PAC money, rich women trolling around the city that are serious about this stuff and it's happening nationwide.

ACOSTA: No, I — I — I hear you. And to me, like, okay, Erika Kirk can go off and shoot off fireworks at the Turning Point convention, and yet Hakeem Jeffries is worried about going to Mamdani's inauguration. It was like, I would take it one step further. I would say that the presence of dark money in our politics from all of these super PACs is destroying our democracy

WELCH: Agreed.

ACOSTA: — and the Citizens United decision that opened up the floodgates on this. I talked to Sheldon Whitehouse about this the other day. It is destroying this country and we have to get to a

situation where either there are rules of the road because, you know, they, they argued in Citizens United that, hey, corporate donations, that's like free speech. No, it's not.

WELCH: Right.

ACOSTA: There's no way that a school teacher has the same amount of political influence as ExxonMobil, that's — that's just horseshit, so the whole premise of it is built on a lie. And, and until we get and inject some sanity into our campaign financing system in this country, the people are outgunned and outnumbered. The other day, Elon Musk tweeted out that he had dinner with Trump and Melania again. Remember Elon over the summer saying, the reason why the Epstein files haven't been released is because Donald Trump is in the Epstein Files —

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: — have a nice fucking day. And then they went to war with one another and everybody in the media said, oh, look at this. This? Oh, it's a, it's a war of words, and I was like, there's no fucking way this is gonna last because Donald Trump needs Elon Musk and Elon Musk needs Donald Trump, and Elon Musk will spend. He just got a \$1 trillion compensation deal with X or whatever the — Tesla or whatever the fuck it is. He will definitely spend that kind of money to try to lock the system that we have in place right now where Republicans can still run the rest of the country into the ground. And, to me, until you get that kind of dark corrupt money out of our politics, we're in serious trouble. And that is why, and I think a lot of others have made this observation, it is going to take a tsunami, a blue tsunami in the midterms to get the Republicans that message that, hey, you know, the bills are coming due, you can't run the country like Putin thuggocracy anymore, it's just not gonna work.

WELCH: Yeah, and I also think that Elon Musk and Trump hate each other, but I do think they have a shared goal, and that is preventing the blue tsunami —

ACOSTA: Yes.

WELCH: — because the blue tsunami means that Congress is going to haul Elon Musk big balls and a bunch of other people's ass in front and say what crimes did you commit and it's gonna get really serious and the same with Trump because I believe, and this is just my opinion, that Trump and all of the bottom feeding morons surrounding him and Elon Musk and all the bottom feeding Klinger honors that surround him, I think they commit crimes every day, and I think to reconcile all of this is going to take hardcore, not integrity Democrats, fuck you Democrats, fuck you for fucking over our country, we are serious about this. We are prosecuting.

ACOSTA: Yes.

WELCH: We're gonna uncover every document, every phone call, everything you did. We will be relentless about it, and that's the mindset they've got to have because I think the electorate is going from we've got to get him out, but also we want accountability.

ACOSTA: There has to be accountability. You have to have a situation where there's accountability, and I talked about this the other day with Fanone, the former, uh, MPD police officer who almost got killed on January 6. You know, he, he said, and I think it's true that it's more than just the Dems win back the Congress and the White House. There — we have to change this — this — John Roberts Supreme Court decision that gave the President of the United States a blank check. No man or woman should be above the law in this country, and Donald Trump sure as shit not, should not be above the law in this country. And I think the Democrats have to talk about it in these terms that listen, if we get back in there, and I'm not saying I'm part of the Democratic Party, but I'm saying this is the way the Democrats should communicate, they should say when, when they're back in there, if, you know, if you guys are, are gonna cling to this idea that Donald Trump is unaccountable, it's just not gonna work, and that means adding seats to the Supreme Court so that, that immunity decision can be overturned and so Donald Trump can be held accountable for his crimes.

(....)

49:23 mark
1 minute and 21 seconds

ACOSTA: He's the future of MAGA. It is a — a — it is a fascist, authoritarian, white nationalist MAGA.

WELCH: It's worse than Trump.

ACOSTA: It is worse than Trump.

WELCH: He's worse.

ACOSTA: It's Trump with staying power. You know, Trump, the other day is, you know, he's — he's — he's asking, am I gonna go to heaven? Am I gonna go to heaven?

WELCH: Yeah.

ACOSTA: It must be dawning on him that the sand in — in Dorothy's hourglass is running out, you know, in the Wizard of Oz.

WELCH: The curtains are closing.

ACOSTA: The curtains are closing. JD Vance doesn't have to worry about that. This whole crew of guys who are going to try to come in after it, they're — they're not worried about that. The American people have to show that movement the door. I'm not talking about — Republican presidents want to come in, and act like Mitt Romney and — and — and folks like that —

WELCH: Right.

ACOSTA: — everybody can deal with that. Everybody can stomach that. If — if Mitt Romney had been president instead of Donald Trump in 2016, you and I probably wouldn't be talking right now —

WELCH: That's right.

ACOSTA: — because you — you know, Jen, you'd be down in Oklahoma enjoying your life

WELCH: Instead of doing interior design, yeah.

ACOSTA: — you'd be doing that! But the reason why we're all fired up, the reason why I talk about politics in the news the way that I do right now is that I am deeply worried that this is coming to an end. This way of life that you and I grew up with, you know, our young producers who are sitting on camera, they don't — they have — they don't have —

WELCH: I know.

ACOSTA: — they don't understand what you and I grew up with.

WELCH: I know.

ACOSTA: This beautiful thing that came out of the end of the Cold War and the post-World War II era. It's a precious thing and it's being taken away from us right now in real time.

(....)

1:08:56 mark

1 minute and 27 seconds

WECLH: I think there was a huge backfire to Charlie Kirk's funeral and we all saw, I unfortunately saw it online, him violently get murdered and it was horrible —

ACOSTA: Horrible, yeah.

WELCH: — the most horrible thing, and I oppose gun violence —

ACOSTA: Yeah, me too.

WECLH: — so much a person who worked with us, he was killed —, last October and it just devastated me, a young black kid that could work for me for like six years and so, gun violence is avoidable and preventable and nobody surrounding Charlie Kirk even talks about that, but I digress.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: So, everybody saw that and it was horrible to see. Nobody's really talking about what he did. They just kind of ambiently knew who Charlie Kirk was —

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: — and then the funeral happens and it's pyrotechnics, Christian nationalist Bible thumping.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: And I was on Hassan Piker's show kind of right after this happened, and I said, Hassan, where I grew up I know evangelicals — like, I would go to church with them on the weekend and that's their vibe, but country club Republicans look down on Bible thumpers like that.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: Episcopalian and moderate Republicans and — and they put on this huge mega church funeral and I could see, you know, like it just there was kind of a backlash from that like, well this shit's weird.

ACOSTA: Yeah.

WELCH: Like why are they — why are there fireworks? Why is all of this talk about, you know, overt religiosity? There's something so off-putting about it and I think that's what's happening with a lot of this and I think there is going to be a blowback from it.

(...)

1:17:18 mark
41 seconds

WELCH: And we need to remember that none of these corporations are anything without us —

ACOSTA: That's right.

WELCH: and our money. And if they want to shit on their customers, we'll just start boycotting them.

ACOSTA: I canceled my Washington Post. I mean, this is the paper I grew up with. My mom would get it on her doorstep every morning, read it cover to cover every morning. I canceled that fucking thing.

WELCH: Did it feel good?

ACOSAT: When they came out with the editorial and said it was okay to bulldoze half the White House, I click, canceled — I canceled it live on my show. I — I said, no, fuck this noise. We have to start standing up, not just to Trump, but to all of the enablers, and a message has to be sent, this is running out. Which side are you gonna be on? Our side or his side?

WELCH: I agree.