

America: Attacked from Within

[00:00:00] **Bob Gatty:** We have a former president who, despite Facing more than 90 criminal charges, wants to be elected again, and there are millions of his MAGA supporters who would do about anything to make that happen. But who are these MAGA people? How are they a threat? Stay with us.

[00:00:21] Joining us today on the Lean to the Left podcast is Russell Jack, who worked for more than two decades as a federal air marshal and who's written a new book, "Is MAGA a Terrorist Movement?". Russell says that from 2016 to 2022, he saw MAGA operating freely inside the U. S. government, both as agents and management. Now what the hell is that all about? We're about to find out. Hey Russell, welcome to the Lean to the Left podcast, buddy.

[00:00:56] **Russell Jack:** Thanks, Bob. Hey, thanks for having me on. I appreciate it.

[00:00:59] **Bob Gatty:** It's my pleasure. Tell us about your career in government, Russell. You were a federal air marshal, a federal police officer, a member of the National Guard Military Police, right?

[00:01:11] **Russell Jack:** Yeah, that's correct. So my last 20 years, the federal government was with the Federal Air Marshal Service.

[00:01:17] Prior to that, I had five years as a federal police officer with two different agencies. And before that when I was 18, I enlisted in the Army National Guard as a military policeman and was deployed for Operation Desert Storm. And after I got back from that, I went through Officer Candidate School got my commission and led a platoon for about a year.

[00:01:36] So in total, I had about five years with the National Guard, five years as federal police, and then 20 years as an agent.

[00:01:42] **Bob Gatty:** Wow, okay. That's quite a career. Tell us what you saw as a federal air marshal in terms of the MAGA people working within the government.

[00:01:54] **Russell Jack:** One of the things I want to point out with that is one of the concepts I talked about in my book is tribalism.

[00:01:59] In both law enforcement and the military. I can only really speak about the MAGA influence on the law enforcement side because of how long I've been out from the military. But with tribalism. It's not just being loyal like you would be with your family or friends. It's overly loyal, excessively loyal.

[00:02:15] The tribalism is. So the problem we have is starting in 2016, going back a little bit, in that profession of law enforcement and military, we have to have each other's back. So there's a very strong bond, more so than with some professions. So because we have to have each other's back, We're not just a group of individuals.

[00:02:34] We operate as a team. So tribalism can become a big issue on that. And what happened is from 2016 to 2022, when I was working as an air marshal, they went from being quiet to saying the quiet part out loud. It went from quietly Thinking these things to being empowered and emboldened to talk about them more.

[00:02:55] So the Maga culture has co opted and taken over the federal government as far as law enforcement. And some of the things I've seen on that is like symbolism, like the QAnon or Punisher. QAnon is like an extreme version of MAGA. And then the Punisher symbol is interesting.

[00:03:12] It's a Punisher skull. It's based off the comic book. A lot of people in the military, like special forces would wear that. And it wasn't inappropriate for them because what that symbolized was that doing right and doing good meant going outside the law. So for them maybe that could be considered appropriate.

[00:03:31] But when law enforcement started wearing it I questioned my fellow law enforcement officers. I'm like, why are you wearing a punisher skull? And they're like it's MAGA. And I'm like you do realize that is saying that it's okay to act outside the law. As a law enforcement officer.

[00:03:46] And so that was an interesting topic. The other thing I noticed too was as far as I'm working in the government is they adopted the right wing viewpoints of MAGA, the bathroom bill against transgenders, climate change denial, and how that works is it ties in with the election denial.

[00:04:01] There's enormous amount of information out there refuting the deniers of climate change or the deniers of the election, but the problem that we're running into is they only listen to right wing media sources. So they would watch Fox News on TV and they would listen to radio broadcasts that were right wing.

[00:04:17] And when you questioned them or said, Hey, that's not correct. They said, what's your sources? And as soon as you cited a source outside of their specific media, they immediately said that's not a valid source. They called CNN the Clinton news network to give you an example. So one of the problems we're having with that is them acting on it.

[00:04:36] So what I noticed is there started to become incidents like intimidation of LGBTQ community. And also just following a lot of the things were happening with for lack of a better word, the takeover of the government. So it's very concerning that many people in law enforcement, especially my agency, were openly okay with MAGA, which, as we'll discuss later, does a lot of illegal activity, which as a police officer, you would think, hey, a guy who has over 90 criminal indictments against him allegedly could be a criminal. And why would law enforcement support something like that? Anyone else if it was, a Democrat with 90 plus charges, I'm pretty sure they'd say something negative.

[00:05:13] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah. Pretty sure. Why do you think it is though, that they bought into this MAGA stuff?

[00:05:19] **Russell Jack:** Going back to that tribalism the problem is what I noticed when I worked in the field office especially after 2016 and on is there was a very strong culture that was already there leaning towards the right that was more anti liberal.

[00:05:32] That was even before MAGA came into power. So you have a culture that's already leans to the right. And once MAGA came along, they're like, Hey, this really embodies what we're looking for. So they started really espousing it. They, they started with verbal attacks against liberals and things like that.

[00:05:48] And the other issue is. Because other agents in law enforcement wanted to fit in, they would just keep quiet. So there was a significant size group that was with MAGA, another significant size group that didn't want to be excommunicated from the tribe because they didn't want to get into arguments with their fellow workers.

[00:06:06] And then you had a small number. Agents such as myself, they were saying, Hey no, what you're thinking is wrong. And you shouldn't do that. Not only as a federal employee, but as a law enforcement officer, you can't say things like, let's go Brandon, which is a euphemism for F Joe Biden when he's the president.

[00:06:18] They were saying things like that on duty while he was president and I'm like, that's your boss. You can't be, you can't be doing that kind of thing. So the problem we have is that they've co opted. themselves into the federal government. Not only that, but also too from what I've heard, and seen, military and higher levels.

[00:06:37] **Bob Gatty:** Is this dangerous? Do you think?

[00:06:40] **Russell Jack:** Yeah. Very much the reason why is There's a difference between morality enforcement, law enforcement I was looking at one of the things that happened in Iran where a woman who wasn't wearing her hijab correctly which is a face covering very strict Islamic law she was killed, and allegedly, I could say murdered They say she died of a heart attack, and I think she was in her early 20s.

[00:06:58] So real common to die in your early 20s of a heart attack. But the problem is that there, that the legal law for law enforcement is the same as morality enforcement. So the problem is once they pass these into law, then that morality enforcement can become law enforcement, and they legally can do it. So my concern is if you already have a culture of law enforcement officers who support MAGA, what's going to happen if MAGA takes over and they start passing these laws? If they get a two thirds majority in the house and Senate and they have a president, the only thing that's going to stop them is the Supreme court, which has a six to three conservative majority.

[00:07:35] Yeah. Yeah, so if that happens and they pass these laws, how much resistance do you think the law enforcement officers are going to have who are pro MAGA to enforce these things that are against our current constitution?

[00:07:46] **Bob Gatty:** That's a very good question. So therefore you say that MAGA is a threat to our democracy, right?

[00:07:52] **Russell Jack:** That's correct.

[00:07:53] **Bob Gatty:** What freedoms do you think they want to take away?

[00:07:56] **Russell Jack:** I think the biggest thing is that they want to control the government and get a strong president at the top. And that's where the word fascism gets thrown around cause it's pretty accurate. So once they get that one party rule and control that's the threat to democracy like we talked about them having a two thirds majority in Congress and then having president, then they can add amendments. And they can take amendments away without any voter

having a single input because we have a representative democracy. So we vote in people that we hope are going to do what we want.

[00:08:26] But the problem is once they have that majority Congress can pass the laws and then they can be enforced. On that note with that two thirds majority, once they pass that, then they'll have complete control of the government. Then they can pass these laws that then people have to go out and do.

[00:08:44] **Bob Gatty:** What type of laws are you talking about that you're worried about?

[00:08:48] **Russell Jack:** So for example, the freedom of the press, okay. Freedom of the press in 2019, Donald Trump said in a tweet, and I'm going to paraphrase because I want to say the exact quote, but he said that the free press is the enemy of the people.

[00:09:00] Okay. So this is the president of the United States saying that the United States government, because he represents it, the executive branch is against the freedom of the press. And the reason they do that is they want to control the narrative. Okay, this is the same thing we've seen in other, autocratic rural countries.

[00:09:18] If you look at China. Okay, you look at what happened back in World War II with Germany. By controlling the narrative, they can now say, Hey, it's illegal for you to say what we don't want you to say, and then you can only listen to the state run media, which at that point will be MAGA. It'll be the right wing news media.

[00:09:33] Okay. So that's the First Amendment. And also, too like we talked about some of the LGBTQ laws and things like that, Are religious based. The reason they're passing isn't because they feel that they're a threat to them physically. It's because they don't want them around. So by passing these laws against individuals and individual groups, and then also trying to push forward an extreme version of Christianity in the coattails along with the MAGA movement. They're violating the first amendment.

[00:10:02] **Bob Gatty:** They sure are. You say mag is a terrorist movement. Terrorism. Really?

[00:10:07] **Russell Jack:** Terrorism is basically, and I'm going to paraphrase it is using coercion, intimidation, violence force to illegally, using those methods, to achieve political goals, especially if it's done against a civilian population.

[00:10:21] So when you look at the parameters of terrorism it becomes pretty clear that a lot of the activities that have happened January 6th, where they violated the 12th Amendment. Ratification of our votes. And by them stopping that, because the vote was stopped, they violated the 12th Amendment. That's, January 6th was violent.

[00:10:39] They injured over 100 police officers. They killed police officers. And then there's many other examples also to Paul Pelosi, Nancy Pelosi's husband being attacked with a hammer, the man fractured his skull, the surrounding of the Biden bus. Here's an example of civilian intimidation. So they surrounded that to intimidate them and that's terrorism.

[00:10:59] The let's go Brandon comment. What that was is there was an NASCAR race and the reporter hearing it misheard him saying F Joe Biden. I'm sure you can fill in the F part. And that's a euphemism for the Let's Go Brandon is a euphemism for F Joe Biden. So that is also intimidation. The purpose to that is to cow liberals or non MAGA people into silence.

[00:11:19] And then we go into that further on that, you have the death threats. Death threats have happened to election officials. They've happened to democratic members of Congress. They've happened to people who are involved in prosecution of Donald Trump. So those are all examples of how they are a terrorist movement.

[00:11:37] **Bob Gatty:** What actions do you think could be taken to counteract MAGA?

[00:11:41] **Russell Jack:** To counteract MAGA, I think the best way to counteract them is voting. Unfortunately as I discussed my book, I, you should never tell anyone how to vote. I'm not telling you how to vote if you're listening right now. But I want you to know how important that vote is and what it represents.

[00:11:55] So my problem is not, I'm not like the title of my book is not, we should all be Democrats or Republicans suck or anything like that. But my concern is that a vote for Republicans, we're in a two party system. We've been forced into a two party system in America. You either vote Democrat or you vote Republican, or you throw your vote away, basically.

[00:12:14] Third party votes usually just take away from a Democrat or Republican, they don't actually win. With this two party system, if Donald Trump is the choice for president for them. If he's their nominee, if that occurs, and he's in the lead to get that we can all see that. If that happens, Trump is MAGA is Trump, and a vote for any Republican at that point will be a vote for MAGA and Trump.

[00:12:41] So the problem is, even if you have a Republican candidate that you like that isn't president, but just a Republican you like, the problem is by voting that person in you're giving more power to the Republican party, which is now the MAGA party. So you're supporting in pretty much directly, you're supporting a terroristic movement in my opinion.

[00:12:59] **Bob Gatty:** Why did you decide to write the book? It's a big undertaking.

[00:13:04] **Russell Jack:** It is. And to be honest with you when I first wrote it, I didn't intend to become a writer or an author. I wrote it as a catharsis. I was very frustrated over the last six years I spent working with people who were in the MAGA movement and who, ostracized anyone who spoke against him to include myself.

[00:13:18] So it was a very hostile work environment to work those last six years. And I'm not saying that in a bad way as far as, it's nothing you can't handle, but it has an effect on. It's, I've basically done my entire career, my entire adult life has been defending people and their freedoms Americans, defending their freedoms, not overseas as a soldier and here in law enforcement.

[00:13:37] And my biggest concern with that is. The need to vote them out is so critical because the nature of what they're doing is unpatriotic. So the ways we can counteract it is by voting against them. And then also too if you see them doing something illegal, that needs to be reported. We need to call the police on them.

[00:13:57] We need to film them from a safe distance, of course. and report that. And if the law enforcement officers aren't doing their job, either nonfeasance, either deliberately doing wrong, not doing as well as they're trained, or just not getting involved that's a criminal thing for me. That's something where they have to get involved legally.

[00:14:15] They have to protect every citizen. So if they're doing that, go ahead and hold them account. Go ahead and film them from a safe distance and then

report it to their higher ups. If that doesn't work, you can always report it to, send it up to social media. The big advantage we have now is don't be silent.

[00:14:30] Unlike back in the fifties and sixties people could get away with murder. Some cases literally. Now almost everybody has a cell phone with a camera on it and you can live link to social media. So I'm all for holding people accountable. Our government officials, our law enforcement officers, our military should all be held accountable.

[00:14:47] Okay. So report to law enforcement and don't be silent and let's take back our flag. Call them out if the term deplorables, I don't know if you really like using that term or not, but the important thing is their action is deplorable. You don't want to have a group of people who openly are a violation of the constitution.

[00:15:03] **Bob Gatty:** Exactly. So you believe Trump is a danger to our freedom, I gather.

[00:15:09] **Russell Jack:** Yeah. Yeah, I definitely do. The reason it's such a danger is what happened in the past with other autocrats is they weren't taken seriously. And then they got a movement behind him through a cult of personality.

[00:15:20] And then eventually that movement started to gain traction and gain power. And we've seen that 74 million plus people voted up voted for Donald Trump. It was a record. The only reason he didn't get the presidency is because it was also a record with the 81 million that Joe Biden got. So it's a good thing that people realized the threat.

[00:15:35] But my goal with the book, with the website, and with these podcasts is to let people know, Hey, this is a really serious threat and you need to get out there and vote. You need to hold them accountable for their illegal actions and report them to the police. And if necessary, you need to upload things to social media and don't be silent.

[00:15:50] If they're espousing hate and bigotry, say something, don't just let it happen. We wouldn't do that. If somebody was walking around wearing a white robes and a Klansman or wearing a Nazi uniform with a Swastika, we should treat them the same way.

[00:16:03] **Bob Gatty:** So do you think Trump really wants to be a dictator?

[00:16:06] **Russell Jack:** I do. And I don't think he cares about necessarily using that term. And again, this is my opinion. But the reality of the MAGA movement, the reason why it falls into the fascist side of the camp, is the idea behind that, and I'm paraphrasing the fascism, is to have a control by one party and to have a very strong person at the top, a dictator, or in this case could just be a very strong president, but the reality is if you have a very strong president and you have control of Congress, You're very quickly going to have effectively a dictatorship.

[00:16:37] So I think it's a very real threat. If we don't, if we don't show up to vote, they're going to not, it will be there. Okay. They're very gung ho in supporting their leader. So they will vote. So we need to make sure we get out there and vote. We need to do what we can to make sure that they don't cow others into science.

[00:16:51] **Bob Gatty:** What's your prediction about Trump's effort to regain the presidency?

[00:16:56] **Russell Jack:** As of right now, I don't think he'll win. We had 81 million people show up last time versus the 74. Okay. I think their ability to get new MAGA adherence versus our ability to get the word out and get people to vote that maybe aren't already is going to add to our numbers more than it'll add to theirs. I think there's a very real chance that we'll be able to stop them. But part of the reason for this discussion and the vote can website is all of us together who are pushing for this message can get people out there to vote and get people out there to say, Hey, what you're doing is illegal.

[00:17:26] I'm calling the police and to not be silent and call them out when we're doing activities they shouldn't be doing.

[00:17:32] **Bob Gatty:** Okay. So we're can first of all, your book comes out when?

[00:17:36] **Russell Jack:** So my book is scheduled to come out in

[00:17:38] **Bob Gatty:** March. And people will be able to find it where? Amazon and other places?

[00:17:44] **Russell Jack:** Yeah, so it'll be available by print on demand or e book. Okay. And after it comes out, we're going to work on making an audiobook as well for people who like to listen on the radio. Okay.

[00:17:56] **Bob Gatty:** Okay. How can people reach out to you if they want to get in touch?

[00:18:01] **Russell Jack:** So my website, magaterrorism. com it should be online no later than March 1st.

[00:18:06] So I encourage people to go to that website. It'll have a link to the book. And I'll update the release date on the book as soon as it comes out. Okay. There'll be lots of information on there and over time as things come along I will add to that so that there's more and more to see on it over time.

[00:18:22] **Bob Gatty:** Excellent. Okay, Russell, do you have anything else you'd like to add?

[00:18:26] **Russell Jack:** No, Bob. I really appreciate you giving me a chance to talk about this important topic. Thank you.

[00:18:30] **Bob Gatty:** I'm, it's my pleasure. It is an important topic and I hope you guys pick up his book when it's available and check out his website.

[00:18:40] Thank you very much, Russell. Thank you, Bob.

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