

HAWK NEWSOME BLACK LIVES MATTER

DEFIANCE #014
WITH PETER MCCORMACK



DEF014 - HAWK NEWSOME INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION

BLACK LIVES MATTER

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Peter McCormack: 00:02:13

Hawk, man, finally we got to do this.

Hawk Newsome: 00:02:16

Right on.

Peter McCormack: 00:02:17

Thanks for coming on. So I obviously became aware of you when I saw the Mike Cernovich documentary. I've known about Black Lives Matters. Of course, in the UK we don't have as big a racial divide, but I also know that the movement has spread to the UK. There was a Black Lives Matters movement. So I just want to find out more about it. So a great starting point would be if you could tell me how you became involved in Black Lives Matters.

Hawk Newsome: 00:02:40

Okay. I was born into this movement. My parents met in 1969, the year after Dr. King died. It was protest all over the country and my dad was leading a protest at their high school so that they can have an African American studies class, and all the things that

followed. So my dad was outside, my mother was looking out the window from class and he told her, you know, "Come downstairs, girl. We protesting."

Hawk Newsome: 00:03:06

Fast forward a few years, I was born on April 4th. That's historically significant in African American culture because that's the day that Maya Angelou was born, that's the day that Dr. King was assassinated in a different year. Also the day that Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Died in a different year. All significant people in African American culture.

Hawk Newsome: 00:03:33

So my early childhood was very pro-black, very, very, very militant. And I learned things from a different perspective. Dad, why don't you like Elvis Presley? Because Elvis Presley is a racist. Dad, why don't you like John Wayne? Cause John Wayne is a ... you know? So I'll never forget my earliest memory was I watched the movie Top Gun. I loved that movie. And I was like, "Dad, I want to be a fighter pilot." And he was like, "If you go into that white man's army, you'll be mopping the deck that the planes take off from." Now, this is a man who always told me to shoot for the stars, but he gave me the world with a very realistic perspective.

Peter McCormack: 00:04:17

Right. Okay. And the start of the movement itself was a ... It was a hashtag, right?

Hawk Newsome: 00:04:22

Yes. Three sisters, one of them wrote an open letter to black people in the wake of the Trayvon Martin tragedy. And one of them hashtagged Black Lives Matter under it and it ballooned from there. They had a group out in LA, called Justice for Trayvon Martin LA, that became the original Black Lives Matter organisation and it spread. It spread across the world. There are 400 Black Lives Matter organisations. About 30 of them are sanctioned. We are not sanctioned because of political differences, but we carry the banner.

Hawk Newsome: 00:04:59

We've carried the banner since its inception and we continue to. We try to pay homage and respect to those who created it and try to stay true to the foundational principles as much as possible, which are black liberation, focusing on the most marginalised people, black people, black women particularly, people from the LGBTQ+ community. The vision is you should empower and amplify the voices of the most oppressed people and centre around them.

Peter McCormack: 00:05:31

Right. Okay, so it's moved beyond just the aggression and problems with police violence.

Hawk Newsome: 00:05:38

I don't think we can ever move past aggression until America stops being aggressive toward us, until you're ... the UK, until Africa ... And once the global assault on blackness is dismantled, then we can never move past the aggression.

Peter McCormack: 00:06:01

And how much of a problem is it still right now? Like what are the key issues that you are facing or black people are facing?

Hawk Newsome: 00:06:09

I was just down in Washington, DC with Byron Allen fighting against Comcast in the Supreme Court. Comcast is trying to take the teeth out of the oldest Civil Rights Act in America. We were supposed to get 40 acres and a mule after slavery. They denied us that and what they gave us was in 1866 they gave us a piece of legislation that said you'd have equal access to contracts, and right now Comcast is trying to do away with that in the highest court of the land, which is problematic because they had ... you know, I went to law school. They had other routes that they could go. They could have fought it out in the lower courts, but they chose to go to the highest court in the land under a Donald Trump government and, I don't know, disempower black people? It's egregious, it's malicious, it's a lot of things.

Hawk Newsome: 00:07:02

Police violence is still there. There are teenagers who are being beat up by officers in New York City. A lot of people saw a video a few weeks ago of a cop running through a crowd of people just randomly hitting people, people who were just filming, who were just cop watching. That's one of my big tenets. I have a show called Cop Watch America, which comes on BET every Wednesday at 11:00 PM Eastern, 10 central. It's going over to Europe and also Africa. But what we do is we observe the cops in their activities. We also challenge them. We challenge politicians. We march, we raise awareness, and most importantly we organise in our communities. So there's a lot happening right now.

Peter McCormack: 00:07:47

So quite interestingly, when I was on my flight on the way over, they had the LA92 documentary on there, which I hadn't actually seen yet. I remember it happened as a kid, I remember just seeing the riots kicking off. Was that the starting point of people being aware that this stuff could be filmed and it could be observed?

Hawk Newsome: 00:08:05

I think, yeah. I think ... Well, it was a resurgence, right? I believe that Dr. King was a brilliant leader, but the world doesn't appreciate his strategic mind. I don't know if nonviolence was more so a core philosophy as much as it was a brilliant strategy. Now you're going to take these aggressive police officers who are siccing dogs on people, who are spraying them with water hoses, who are shooting and beating them and put them on television for everyone in America to see. Right? That was brilliant.

Hawk Newsome: 00:08:46

So it's easy to accept racism. It was easier for the country to accept racism when it wasn't in your face. But it was on every television in America, then it became problematic. Then people started saying, "Hey, enough is enough. This thing has to change." What are they asking for? What do they want? They want the right to vote. They want civil rights. And then you had the passing of the Civil Rights Act.

Peter McCormack: 00:09:11

And there've been a number of key incidents, key shootings. You've mentioned Trayvon Martin. I've obviously, in my research I've read about what happened with Mike Brown, with Eric Garner. So there's been a lot. Has it been any change or is there still a consistent problem here?

Hawk Newsome: 00:09:27

No. And I always knew that it would get worse before it got better.

Peter McCormack: 00:09:30

Okay.

Hawk Newsome: 00:09:31

Look at Andrew Kears. Andrew Kears was a man who was not a saint. Andrew Kears had a lot of things that would make the average American not feel sympathy for him. However, the way he died, no one deserves to die like that. It was cruel and unusual punishment. An officer placed him in the back of a squad car. Over the next 17 minutes. He said, "Officer, help me. Officer, I can't breathe. I feel dizzy, tightness in my chest." Things that any normal American would hear, any humane person would hear and say, "Hey, this guy needs medical assistance."

Hawk Newsome: 00:10:05

The cop ignored him and Andrew Kears died. The cop was driving. He drove past two hospitals. So what we're fighting for is a legislation that says, if someone is saying they can't breathe, if someone looks or asks for medical attention and the officer does not give it to them, then that person should be charged with a felony. I believe in legislative fixes. I believe that legislation is a pill that will cure a lot of ills. A lot of people do not believe in that, but if you look at the progress that black people have made in this country, it has come in the form of legislation.

Peter McCormack: 00:10:44

Okay, so what are the other things that you are fighting for then? Other legislative changes that you think will make a difference? Because there is that, but there also seems therefore to be an institutional racism problem within the police.

Hawk Newsome: 00:10:55

Absolutely. Absolutely. You have to change police culture. I look forward to the day that we abolish the police as we know it today to where we do not need as many police officers, to where they don't occupy our neighbourhoods like a force. Another piece of legislation would be if a police officer ... Say it's me and you, Peter, and we're cops. Right? And we're both two tough guys and we ride around, we have a bond. Our families hang out together. And you beat the crap out of someone illegally and I lie on a report and say that the man attacked you, if I'm found to be a liar through videographic evidence or another way, then I should be charged with a felony and I should go to jail.

Hawk Newsome: 00:11:40

That way you will stop this so-called good cop. I don't believe in good cops. I may have said it before, but at this point I don't believe that a cop can be good if he'll stay on the same force is someone who brutalises, who murders people. Cops should be protesting more than us. If they want to stop feeling grief, then they have to take a hard stand and say we won't tolerate illegal activity on either side of the law.

Peter McCormack: 00:12:07

So can they not protest from within the police? And is anyone doing that?

Hawk Newsome: 00:12:12

There have been officers who stood out in support of Colin Kaepernick. There have been officers who came out and there was some, a group called the NYPD 12 who talked about a quota system. But when a police officer stands up in that department, they are scrutinised and they are penalised. Whether it's made public or not, there is a code. It's called the blue wall of silence. Silence. You don't rat on other cops. So you have cops that are living by the same code as criminals and nobody is seeking to cure this.

Hawk Newsome: 00:12:47

If you look at the police unions, police unions don't come out against officers who rape women. There are officer, there's a officer in New York city who was running drugs with El Chapo, the Mexican drug lord. They did not come out against him.

Peter McCormack: 00:13:06

Is he the guy who just recently died?

Hawk Newsome: 00:13:08

El Chapo?

Peter McCormack: 00:13:09

No, the cop.

Hawk Newsome: 00:13:10

No, the cop, he's still alive.

Peter McCormack: 00:13:12

Okay.

Hawk Newsome: 00:13:13

Yeah, I'm not sure. I don't know. I've been on the road, I've been in five states in the last 12 days.

Peter McCormack: 00:13:17

I'm sure I've read about a cop who was running drugs for El Chapo and he died recently.

Hawk Newsome: 00:13:21

Oh wow. Here in New York?

Peter McCormack: 00:13:22

I could be wrong. What's his name?

Hawk Newsome: 00:13:23

I'm not sure. I know it was a ... He was actually a black man. I don't think that it's just white officers. I think that policing as a culture is racist.

Peter McCormack: 00:13:34

Yes. Because there are black police officers. Right? Are you talking to those? What kind of feedback are you getting?

Hawk Newsome: 00:13:40

I'm a cigar smoker. All right? And there's rules in cigar culture. And we kind of leave politics out of these rooms and we have open dialogue. So I go downstairs in Papa Juan's, a local cigar place in the Bronx, and someone says, "Hey, I just want to let you know that these are two New York City corrections officers." And we had a real conversation, right?

Hawk Newsome: 00:14:14

January 1st, thousands of people are going to be released from jail and he believes that it will be a wave of crime that's hitting the street. I believe that we people who advocated for the release of those individual individuals have to do our part to stop the violence in our communities and find resources to help these people get on their feet. That way they don't break the law. If you do the math, drug dealing pays less than minimum wage.

Peter McCormack: 00:14:44

That book Freakonomics covers it.

Hawk Newsome: 00:14:46

Exactly.

Peter McCormack: 00:14:47

Yeah. They do the whole ... It's the most dangerous job and it pays lower than minimum wage.

Hawk Newsome: 00:14:51

That's it. Right? So if you give these folks a fair wage, then they won't be out there committing crimes. A lot of crimes are out of necessity. They're out of destitution. What we are advocating for now is a universal basic income. We want everybody in America, white, black, you name it, to receive \$1,000 a month. How do we do that? We tax data and we also tax the companies that are automating jobs away. I'm on the verge of doing something that's really dangerous. I'm going to go into rural areas in middle America and talk to white people who might not like me, but white people who face the same enemy that I face.

Hawk Newsome: 00:15:37

Let's face it, the rich are the problem, okay? I'm not saying you can't accumulate wealth, but along with great responsibility comes a great burden. I'm not wording it the right way. But at the same time, these people are worried about paying tax on their land. These people are worried about their jobs, their homes. So if you take \$1,000 and infuse it into these households, people might have a \$2,000, \$1,500 mortgage that they can barely pay, and it's four adults in that house. That's \$4,000 in that house. And American taxpayers won't tax it. It's only the 1%, people who are making tons of money. It's only these companies that are taking your jobs away.

Hawk Newsome: 00:16:27

I'm talking to people who work in malls. I'm talking to people who work in pharmacies. I'm talking to people who will be replaced by robots. I'm advocating for all of them. So it's Black Lives Matter, but it's also about everyone at the same time.

Peter McCormack: 00:16:44

I'll say, yeah, that's interesting. I heard the Andrew Yang interview with Joe Rogan, where he was discussing the thousand dollars. Do you know what, we'll avoid the debate today cause I think I would disagree with you on it. But I've got other things, I'm short of time, I want to talk to you about. Specifically you mentioned Colin Kaepernick. So I saw Colin plan London. You know we get NFL games in London?

Hawk Newsome: 00:17:04

Right on.

Peter McCormack: 00:17:04

Yeah. So 49ers was my team as a kid, right?

Hawk Newsome: 00:17:05

Oh. Yes.

Peter McCormack: 00:17:06

Oh yeah. So when I was a kid, they were the first-

Hawk Newsome: 00:17:08

Joe Montana?

Peter McCormack: 00:17:08

Joe Montana.

Hawk Newsome: 00:17:09

My man. Jerry Rice?

Peter McCormack: 00:17:10

Yeah, Jerry Rice. And then Steve Young afterwards.

Hawk Newsome: 00:17:12

Oh yeah.

Peter McCormack: 00:17:13

So that was the first team I've used to watch. So when they came to London I was like, I've got to go and see them. And Kaepernick was quarterback and he was brilliant. I'd never seen a quarterback run with a ball like him. He was running all the time. And then obviously I followed what happened when he took the knee. And then what it seems to me, he's almost been erased as an NFL footballer. No team will take him. No team will play him. And I'm thinking, he's good enough to play.

Hawk Newsome: 00:17:38

Yes.

Peter McCormack: 00:17:38

So this to me now says there's a problem of institutional racism within football. Yeah. I mean, what percentage of pro football players are black? Do you know?

Hawk Newsome: 00:17:47

I dare to say 60 to 80%.

Peter McCormack: 00:17:50

Yeah.

Hawk Newsome: 00:17:50

Yes.

Peter McCormack: 00:17:51

Yeah. But you've got this guy, he's not getting a team now for taking the knee. What's going on there?

Hawk Newsome: 00:17:55

What's the follow up question to what percentage of all football players are black? The followup question is, what percentage of owners owners are black or white?

Peter McCormack: 00:18:05

Yeah.

Hawk Newsome: 00:18:06

Like what? 100%? 97? I believe it's like 97%, really.

Peter McCormack: 00:18:10

So there's one guy.

Hawk Newsome: 00:18:11

Yeah, there's like one guy and I don't even know if he's black. I think he's like Indian and Persian. I'm not sure. But these are the problems that we face when we talk about black economics and us being employees and consumers as opposed to being

owners and producers. And it's harder for us to break into these industries. It's harder for us to accumulate power. And what is that? That's institutional racism. It's white supremacy, it's this delusion of white supremacy. And we say a lot of things that make people cringe. Just because you don't like the way I word something, does that make me wrong? Just because you don't like the way medicine tastes, does it make it ineffective? No way.

Hawk Newsome: 00:18:59

So why was Colin Kaepernick quote unquote erased? It's because he stood up for black people. What happens to folks who stand up to the government to benefit black people? Right? They're killed. They're placed in jail. I mean, they're assassinated. If we were to go back 10 years, 20 years, maybe a few thousand years, there was a guy who ran around preaching against corruption in the government. What happened to him? He was nailed to a cross. His name was Jesus Christ. He even had a problem with the church. He went in the church and flipped over tables. Jesus was a radical revolutionary. Right? And what did he want? What did he want most of all? For you to love your neighbour as you love yourself. There are a lot of people in this world who follow Christ but are not Christ-like. I believe that as an activist organiser, I'm following the path of Christ.

Peter McCormack: 00:20:01

How much of a change have you seen under Trump in that if we refer back to Colin Kaepernick, he was very critical of anyone taking a knee. And I think, didn't he say something along the lines of anyone who takes a knee should be cut from the team? I think he did. Has it got worse under Trump?

Hawk Newsome: 00:20:19

Donald Trump called Colin Kaepernick a son of a bitch for what ... Did Colin Kaepernick rape anyone? Did Colin Kaepernick beat up a woman? Did Colin Kaepernick break any laws? Did Colin Kaepernick do anything that was un-American? No. Actually what he did was the first thing listed in our constitution. It was freedom of speech. That was a patriotic act. And Donald Trump, Let's call it what it is. If it walks like a duck, if it talks like a duck. If he walks like a racist, if he talks like a racist, then he is a racist. I don't have to come right out and say, "I'm a racist," to exhibit racist behaviours and what you have to understand is if someone is hurt, if someone has a perception of you, it's not up to you to tell them that it's not real. It's up to you to try and understand why. And Donald Trump's practices have been really, really disparaging, flat-out racist to people of colour. He's targeting people of colour. When you start talking about immigration, who does he target? Immigrants, right? When he says, "Immigrants, undocumented people." He's going to have to Latin X people. He's going to have to black countries. What about the Russian people who are here? What about the white people from all of these other countries who are here illegally? You don't see them in ice raids. You don't see them in concentration camps. That's why we call him racist because it's manifested in his actions.

Hawk Newsome: 00:22:01

Once again, you do not have to like what I say but find your own truth. Take you a little bit of Fox news, put it in a pot with some CNN and go and find some guys who

are out there just doing the work, like you are my friend. And get your own information and get an understanding and I'm sure you'll come to the same conclusion as me.

Peter McCormack: 00:22:22

All right, well let me ask you a question. This one, if only word this insensitively, forgive me but I want to ask this question.

Hawk Newsome: 00:22:30

Go for it.

Peter McCormack: 00:22:30

Is there any possibility by having a movement such as Black Lives Matters? I understand the intention, but at the same time, are you carrying on the separation of black people and also is there any risk that you demonise white people with such a movement as a group of people?

Hawk Newsome: 00:22:48

Honestly, you know who's being demonised right now? The white American man.

Peter McCormack: 00:22:54

Okay.

Hawk Newsome: 00:22:55

All right. Because he has been in control since this country's inception and this country is not living up to his potential. Right. And he's done everything in his power to maintain power and to keep people out of leadership roles. Take black people out of it. Take brown people out of it. Women, think about how the white man has oppressed women. This is a reality. Can I curse?

Peter McCormack: 00:23:30

You can. You can say what the fuck you want.

Hawk Newsome: 00:23:31

I do not give a fuck about the white man's feelings. This is my heart. This is my soul. Look who's done the most egregious things throughout history and now that we say, "Hey, you know what? It's time to loosen up control and let other people in positions of power," they feel demonised. As they vote pressed people and hurt people for all these years, they feel demonised. Is this every white man? No, but are we talking about rich white man who enslaved people for labor? Who hanged them from trees when they try to get freedom?

Hawk Newsome: 00:24:09

Are we talking about rich white men who subjugate women, who oppress women who promote misogyny? Are we talking about the same people. This is the problem. Oh God. There is a person who is very popular and very much hated but the way he rose to power was because he told it like it is. And we all know who that man is and

what office he sits in. America, the world needs for more people to tell it like it is, but it has to be from a heart-centred place.

Peter McCormack: 00:24:47

Well, hold on. I know I'm thinking of. Who are you-

Hawk Newsome: 00:24:50

We're talking about the same person. I despise the man, but we're talking about the same person. And what he does is he speaks to his people. Donald Trump talks to his demographic, to his base in a language that they understand, that they like and he tells it to them straight. Imagine if other politicians did that. Imagine if other politicians told it to people straight and delivered. He's delivered on terrible policy.

Peter McCormack: 00:25:23

Well, there was one guy, Ron Paul he told it how it was. And then he got erased from all media when he was successful.

Hawk Newsome: 00:25:31

Yeah. Yeah. I mean, who was he talking about? Who were the enemy?

Peter McCormack: 00:25:38

But the thing is when you talk about the white man like that, I don't feel like you're describing me. I feel like we could be friends now. If I came to New York, we could hang out. I could of and smoke a cigar with you, and we can have an honest conversation and I could ask you honestly tough questions and you'll take them and back and forth.

Peter McCormack: 00:25:54

So you're still talking about an institutional problem, not an individual problem.

Hawk Newsome: 00:25:59

Yes.

Peter McCormack: 00:25:59

And I've also seen on, I think it may be some of the videos on Instagram, it's not just black people out these events, right?

Hawk Newsome: 00:26:06

No. No, no, no, no. There's a large amount of white people. Young white people who get it, who don't like the world that we live in. When we say that this is the new civil rights movement, think about what was happening in the civil rights movement. You had people who were anti war, white people who were taking over streets, they called them hippies who were promoting peace and love. All of that is happening again. And it's up to our generation to get it right this time. And for us to stop people from selling out. It's time for me to find ways to unite with other black people.

Hawk Newsome: 00:26:46

It's time for us. It's a message of unity. And I'll go into a room and I'll say, "Fuck this

whole room." And it'll be black and brown people in there who aren't doing what they need to do, who are playing their part in oppression. Do I mean fuck you, I hate you? No. I mean fuck you, you can do better.

Peter McCormack: 00:27:10

Okay. Let me pick you up on something. Because you talked about unity there. But when you say for example, Black Lives Matters, I totally understand the message because especially for the things that have happened with the police aggression, but at the same time it's not itself, it's not a term of unity. Black Lives Matters. And you've obviously faced the backlash where people have said all lives matters. And obviously my interest came from the Cernovich interview where he showed you some data you weren't aware of and you were taken aback by that.

Peter McCormack: 00:27:39

There's not really a question there. It's more of an observation. I guess the question I'm going to ask is what's the end goal? How will you know when you've kind of achieved what you need to achieve and things have changed? When will this campaign have to not be required anymore?

Hawk Newsome: 00:27:53

It's when you see me on a yacht somewhere in the Mediterranean. I don't know. Africa.

Peter McCormack: 00:27:59

Not in congress.

Hawk Newsome: 00:28:00

Greece. No. Not with me in political. I'm not a fool. People in Congress don't have the power. It's the people who give them the money to get elected. People who get them to votes, who call them and say, "Listen, here you motherfucker. You promised me this, you better deliver or I'll replace you." That's the power. People who tell them what to do. So for me, it's for black people to be liberated. What does liberation look like? Equal access. I don't believe in equality.

Hawk Newsome: 00:28:31

I don't believe in equality. I believe in access. Everybody has a base that they can start on and they can travel on a road that is free from impediment. That is free from impediment. So once we achieve that, once we start talking about Afro socialism. Everyone should have food to eat. Everyone should have a home and everybody should have guaranteed income. There's enough to go around. We need to stop being selfish, right? There are more vacant apartments than there are homeless people in New York. That's problematic.

Peter McCormack: 00:29:15

We have the same in London.

Hawk Newsome: 00:29:16

Exactly. You have mega churches. I walk past churches at night, I wander, I'm a

wanderer. I walk through the streets of the city. I'm a wanderer. I'm a big guy. I handle myself well. I might have some protection on me to protect myself, but I'm a wanderer to these streets.

Peter McCormack: 00:29:34

I'm not going to fight you.

Hawk Newsome: 00:29:37

And I walked past churches and I see people sleeping on the steps of churches and I thank God that they're there because they know they're safe there. But I often wonder, why don't they just open their doors and let people in? There was a mega church when the hurricanes hit Houston, Texas, that did not let the people in. Why are we this selfish? Why? Why do we live in this scarcity mindset? We have to understand that God gave us enough for everyone to live. We should be more willing to help each other out. Why do poor people who are on welfare have to pay for the train? If you have a card that gives you food stamps every month, why do you have to pay to get on the subway? Obviously you've met a certain need requirement. Let's help people.

Peter McCormack: 00:30:33

Help them get to work.

Hawk Newsome: 00:30:34

Help them. Let's educate people. Look at our schools. We need financial literacy.

Peter McCormack: 00:30:39

Helping is good.

Hawk Newsome: 00:30:40

Yeah.

Peter McCormack: 00:30:41

Do you think there's the chance that if you help too much, you disempower people in that my worry is that if you give too much away, you disempower people from actually making strong decisions of their own.

Hawk Newsome: 00:30:55

Have you ever been poor?

Peter McCormack: 00:30:58

Yes. A fair question on what you're considering poor? Probably not. But I've lost everything a couple of times and I've had to work my ass off, but I've always had a safety net.

Hawk Newsome: 00:31:07

Resiliency is a beautiful thing.

Peter McCormack: 00:31:08

Yeah. So I'm resilient. And everything I've had, I've worked for, but I do have a safety

net of family and friends whereby I've never been in that situation. And I'm quite conscious of this, I'm never in that situation, where I'm like, "Fuck, I've got nowhere to sleep and I've got no money for food." I've always had the safety net.

Hawk Newsome: 00:31:25

Now if you could imagine living in an apartment where you have an eviction notice, you're two months behind on your rent. You have to scrape together everything you got, borrow from people to pay the bills so you can live there, but you don't have enough for electricity. You don't have enough for phone. And you have children who have to have the basic needs. They have to have clothes. Why? Because if poor kids don't have the basic needs, they're going to figure out a way to go out and get what they need. And what's presented to them is that's by running a scam or selling drugs, right? So you can't pay your rent, you can't pay your light bill and your kids need clothes, or you might lose them to crime.

Hawk Newsome: 00:32:13

You know how stressful that is? Coming home and opening your refrigerator and saying, "Damn," and your refrigerator so empty, it echoes back. I lived it. So imagine if those basic needs were met. I believe in humanity. I believe in people. I don't believe that they'll get lazy if you provide for them. I believe that they will go out and find gainful employment to make more money. I believe that if their basic needs are met, they have the freedom from that trauma, from that stress of poverty that they can go out and be productive. That's what I think.

Peter McCormack: 00:32:50

Yeah. I'm in the strange position and the moment where I'm struggling for the left or right solution and I'm more interested in the solution, which is driven by having less government where people goals let's not swing left or right. Let's stop talking about redistribution of wealth. Let's talk about reducing the size of government and reducing all taxes. Have you looked into that at all?

Hawk Newsome: 00:33:12

I've heard the conversations. But when I think of reducing the role of government, I think of empowering people. I think that we can't get to a place where we reduce the role of government until the government fixes problems. The government is responsible for our safety and our wellbeing. Until they fix the education system, until they stop this food apartheid, until they figure out a way to protect people, they can't go anywhere. Now, if you get everybody to a productive place and then you say, "Okay, let's shrink the government," that's cool. You understand? The more you work, the simpler your job gets, and I think that's what we really have to look into.

Peter McCormack: 00:34:10

And these problems of poverty, education and food, they aren't race specific, right? They can affect anyone, but they disproportionately affect black people. Is that correct?

Hawk Newsome: 00:34:19

But it's targeted, man. You have to be realistic and say, "Okay, black schools are shitty

because X, Y, and Z. Black people can't get jobs because they're discriminated against. There is lack of opportunity in our communities because it's intentional." Democrats help us. But at the same time, if they get us to where we need to be, we won't need them anymore. You look at Republicans and their views and their policies and the people that they associate themselves with have anti-black sentiment, just flowing freely. Just flowing freely. So who do we trust? I trust the people. I think it's people v. Government. It's not blue v. Red. Because if you look at the Democrats, they're controlled by corporations. You look at Republicans, they're controlled by corporations.

Hawk Newsome: 00:35:32

It's the same prostitutes. They just have different pimps.

Peter McCormack: 00:35:36

So what progress have you made? What are the wins that you've had?

Hawk Newsome: 00:35:39

Ah, man. So it's sad, but all we got out of the Eric Garner case was the firing of the officer, which was at the very least, something.

Peter McCormack: 00:35:50

But he wasn't prosecuted.

Hawk Newsome: 00:35:52

No. He was prosecuted in long in Staten Island. Staten Island is a red burrow. It's very Republican, very pro cop, very pro just everything. Right. And he didn't prosecute the cop. The DA didn't prosecute the cop. And usually if you drop a big case, it's political suicide. But he dropped that case and got elected to Congress because he made his constituency happy. So how does that look to me as a reasonably intelligent man, that a cop can choke someone and people support that cop regardless of their actions?

Peter McCormack: 00:36:40

I mean, it's shocking.

Hawk Newsome: 00:36:41

It is but that's America. You can't be so pro cop to your anti people. And the police have so much money and so much power that folks cave.

Peter McCormack: 00:36:54

It was the same with Rodney King though, right? Because they moved the court case into a suburb of LA, which was very pro cop and the case was very bias and the jury was very bias. This is something that hasn't actually therefore changed in 25 years.

Hawk Newsome: 00:37:11

Hasn't changed in centuries, my brother. 1619. 400 years of our enslavement on this continent. And what I give credit to a lot of rich people for right now is that they're trying to decarcerate America. And it's not because black people are still enslaved. It's because they're spending too much money to keep people in prison. You realise that

we spend 180 something thousand dollars to keep a man locked away in Rikers Island here in New York for a year?

Hawk Newsome: 00:37:51

The reason we got Rikers Island closed was because of activists and a lot of hedge fund people coming to the conclusion that it's wrong and two, it's very expensive to keep people locked up.

Peter McCormack: 00:38:06

Especially those for nonviolent crimes. Victimless crimes. I mean, even Trump has recognised that.

Hawk Newsome: 00:38:11

Yeah. Yeah. In the first step back and he did something really great with Kim Kardashian and Van Jones. I'm not taking it. See, that's the problem. Because I'm this activist, I'm supposed to hate everyone who doesn't agree with me. I'm a ruthless pragmatist.

Peter McCormack: 00:38:27

I like that. Ruthless pragmatist.

Hawk Newsome: 00:38:29

Ruthless. Ruthless. So if someone does something good that I agree with, I'm going to acknowledge it. If there's a way for me to work with someone who I do not politically agree with and we can liberate some folk, we can help some folk, I'm going to do it. However, if I'm empowering you to do something else that is more horrific than what we're curing, then I won't engage you.

Peter McCormack: 00:38:55

Well, I look, I saw the videos at the rally. Is it MOAR rally or MOAR?

Hawk Newsome: 00:39:00

MOAR.

Peter McCormack: 00:39:00

It is MOAR

Hawk Newsome: 00:39:00

Mother Of All Rallies.

Peter McCormack: 00:39:03

So I saw that which was kind of mind blowing. I'll have to share that. What was it like? How did that even happen?

Hawk Newsome: 00:39:09

We went down to Washington... We went down to Richmond, Virginia to protest Confederate monuments and we had word that pro Confederacy, pro Trump, white

supremacists were there. They were in Charlottesville. We were in Charlottesville on the front lines fighting, literally fighting.

Peter McCormack: 00:39:28

So you were there?

Hawk Newsome: 00:39:29

I was there.

Peter McCormack: 00:39:29

Were you there the day?

Hawk Newsome: 00:39:30

I was there. I got hit in my face with rock. I may or may not have thrown a few punches or a few rocks but I was definitely there. In the tear gas and the smoke, I watched the police stand two blocks away while two groups that hate each other faced off. And I've been protesting hardcore for four or five years and police are always there. Always. But I think they actually wanted those guys to hurt us. Wow, Charlottesville. I lost my train of thought. But the mother of all rallies, so we went down to Richmond. It was a dud. You had two guys on the opposition show up. So we would driving back to New York and we got lost.

Hawk Newsome: 00:40:08

I was sleeping when I woke up. Someone was like, "Wow, Hawk..." Andrew Kears's wife, said, "Wow, Hawk. I've never seen anything. I've never been to D.C." Now, what you have to understand is we take victims and turn them into victors. Turn them into fighters, teach them how to organise, teach them how to fight for themselves and empower their community. So it's not like we're just coming here and saying, "Hey, let us speak for you," or anything like that. No, we're teaching you how to fight so you can teach others how to fight. So we went to D.C., We walked up, we heard everything in the book. Go back to Africa. N word, this, that. And we went to the front of the stage and the police ran over to us sweating. It was two cops, eight of us, and over a thousand, quote unquote-

Peter McCormack: 00:40:58

White guys.

Hawk Newsome: 00:40:59

Yeah. White guys. But no, it was some black guys in there. We call them Coons. What's his name? Who was there? And they are Patriots. Right now, when you say you're a Patriot in America, it doesn't mean you love your country. We associate that with you being a racist. Even people want on the Right are like, "These Patriots, they are not us." So. the police were asking us to go and stand in the back because they knew if something was to happen, they'd have to try and defend us and they'd get mowed down along with us. We might've been able to take out a couple, but it would've been a massacre.

Hawk Newsome: 00:41:34

But we stood our ground. And then some guys says, "Hey, you want to go on stage?" And I promise you, on the way to that stage, it was like heaven opened up and God was like, "Make them understand who you are." And I tell people all the time, if you put me in that situation again, I probably would have went on stage and cursed all of them to hell for their politics. But in Charlottesville I was given a speech, and I had a poster with a stick under it, and I had a bullhorn and every time I was talking, my friend would be like, "Watch out." And I put the poster in front of me, and water bottles, rocks or whatever, would hit it. I was blocking myself, and then they threw one too many and I said, "Fuck this" and I ran to the side to look for rocks to throw. I ran to the side, I gave her my bullhorn, and I said, "Hold this." And I started looking for things to pick up. And some little old white lady, she was probably an angel, way too old to be in the middle of a race riot, maybe 80 years old, said, "Son, your mouth is the most powerful weapon you have. It can do more damage than anything that you pick up out here." And I looked at her like, "Thank you ma'am." But in my mind was like, "Whatever lady." I picked up my rocks and I ran, and I jumped right back into action.

Peter McCormack: 00:43:02

Did you regret that whole ...

Hawk Newsome: 00:43:04

What?

Peter McCormack: 00:43:05

Getting in the action? Fighting, throwing rocks?

Hawk Newsome: 00:43:07

Not at all.

Peter McCormack: 00:43:07

You don't regret that?

Hawk Newsome: 00:43:08

No, not at all. These people had guns. Guns that were as long as our arms. They had pepper spray. They were attacking women with hammers. We had to hold the line for the sake of justice. These people had signs that said, "Kill niggers, kill Jews."

Peter McCormack: 00:43:26

It's fucking insane when you think about it-

Hawk Newsome: 00:43:26

Go Trump.

Peter McCormack: 00:43:29

... that it's that extreme stuff.

Hawk Newsome: 00:43:30

Yes, but this is what we faced, and I watched the right, I watched them tell their story.

Mike Cernovich's movie. They were like, "Oh we were peaceful." And I'm like, "Nah man, I was there. I was there." I walked over and I saw people from Antifa. I saw people who were peaceful protestors, just standing up in protesting in opposition. Right? No weapons. I saw a stick and a bat. I know that because I grabbed a bat later on that day. Didn't hit anybody with the bat, but as soon as I walked up, people were like, "Watch out." Things will fly in our way. I look across people were in military formations, with goggles, helmets, they came ready to fight. Sticks, guns, knives, machetes, these people came ready to fight. There was no defending their actions, because they were highly aggressive.

Hawk Newsome: 00:44:28

There was one thing that I witnessed firsthand. There was a group of white dudes who were pushing back against the police unit. It was kind of like this weird tug of war battle. There was shields in between them and each group was pushing back, and I just thought "If that was us, we would all be shot." But that's what you call white privilege. So that little lady came into my mind at the mother of all rallies, and now it was time to talk, and now it's time to make people know who we were, and I did that. A lot of people saw me as capitulating as tap dancing as ...

Peter McCormack: 00:45:10

But like you said, you got to talk to people.

Hawk Newsome: 00:45:14

Yeah and I'm supposed to let Nancy Pelosi talk for me. I'm supposed to let these politicians talk for me. I believe in the power of the people. I believe that the community should rule.

Peter McCormack: 00:45:28

Nobody can watch that footage from the Moore rally and say that wasn't a good decision, and that you hadn't changed people's opinions. It created more unity between people who were divided.

Hawk Newsome: 00:45:42

You know, who hate it? The people who are hardcore on either side.

Peter McCormack: 00:45:51

Of course, because they don't want any unity in the end. They don't want rational arguments, they just want to fight. It's like, Antifa I just see as irrational people who just want to fight. If you only want to fight, you'll never going to get anywhere.

Hawk Newsome: 00:46:06

I think it is a need for Antifa. I do. I think so. You know why I like Antifa? Antifa is a bunch of white dudes who are mad at other white racist dudes, and they're using the same tactics that other ... Let me sound like I have a law degree. Antifa sees themselves as protecting us from racist, right wingers who don't have a problem using violence. So they protect us by using violence. It's like the bully being mad when he's punched in the face. The people that Antifa fight, celebrate Hitler.

Peter McCormack: 00:46:51

See, I've got to pull you up on this one. See, I can't agree and I'll tell you why I can't agree, for a couple of reasons. Firstly, I think the fascist themselves, because their messages hypocritical. I also followed ... I think going around and hitting people like Andy Ngo with a bike lock in the head, and cracking people in the head, you're going to kill somebody, and you might kill an innocent person. Andy Ngo isn't a, isn't a racist, and he was attacked innocently. Also, like you said a moment ago, the most powerful thing you have is your voice. These people at the moment, the most powerful thing they have is their fists, and this is where I'd go ... I understand your position. I couldn't agree with that.

Hawk Newsome: 00:47:33

I appreciate your honesty, but at the same time, white supremacists killed Heather Heyer. They've shed blood forever. How hypocritical is it for America to tell us to protest peacefully, right? You get what you want through peaceful means. What has America ever achieved through peaceful means?

Peter McCormack: 00:47:59

Well you got rid of us with the gun.

Hawk Newsome: 00:48:01

Exactly right? With the gun.

Peter McCormack: 00:48:03

You got rid of us-

Hawk Newsome: 00:48:04

Or the threat of guns. We are bullies. We are imperialist and we believe in violence. However, America deals with activists with violence. I don't know if a lot of your listeners know this, but the American government was held responsible for the death of Martin Luther King jr. Right? This is a fact in a lawsuit like they were found guilty in the death of Martin Luther King. So how is it that the most violent people in the world could look at you and say, "The only way you could achieve your goal is through peace?" Doesn't that seem misleading in the least?

Peter McCormack: 00:48:45

I think given the history of the world, you've seen a lot of people the only thing they've achieved is through violence, whether any parts of the world. I get that and I understand that. I have to separate Antifa from this because I don't really know what they're fighting for. They seem like they just want to fight. Well listen, look, I've taken it through the things I wanted to get through, constraints of time, but I do want to close out on a couple of things. People listening to this, white, black people, whoever, what kind of message do you want to give to them?

Peter McCormack: 00:49:15

What's your hope, and what do you want people to take away from this, and how can people help? And even in strange, different ways that people might not even expect.

Hawk Newsome: 00:49:27

Go to my Instagram, it's @hawk.newsime, we need help from people who care, but we don't need white people to come into our communities, and be saviours. What do they call it? Poverty tourism and take selfies feeding kids in Africa. No. What you do is you teach people in your community. You reach out and you talk to other white people, and you say things like, let's see, you see your favorite newscaster on Fox news, right? I'm talking to people on the right-

Peter McCormack: 00:50:12

Yeah, I don't watch that.

Hawk Newsome: 00:50:13

... say something like .. Say something racist, you have to call him out for being racist. You have to enlighten your friend, that does not believe in systemic oppression. You have to pull that person up. You have to help that people, right? You have to make a difference in your workplace when you see that they're the discriminatory practices. When you see that in a corporation of ... When you look at the NYPD and you say this is the most diverse police department in the country. Our police department is bigger than the army's and they brag about diversity, but when you look at the upper levels, it's mostly white men. You have to call out these practices, do it on social media. You have to show up. Folks say protesting doesn't work. Black people earn the right to vote via protest. We ended Jim Crow via protest. The abolitionist movement was a protest in and of itself, so there was so much. It was so much that happened.

Peter McCormack: 00:51:21

It sounds to me that one of the consistent threads is a hierarchy problem, there's not enough black people in senior positions, whether it's the police, whether it's politics, whether it's sports club ownership, that seems to be the biggest problem. One of the biggest problems-

Hawk Newsome: 00:51:37

And it's not that black people are incapable, a black man ... No president has ever inherited America in the state that it was in when Barack Obama got this country, and I used to criticise Barack Obama a lot until somebody ...

Peter McCormack: 00:51:54

Because of?

Hawk Newsome: 00:51:55

Because of , George Bush and because of the collapse of Wall Street, our economy was trashed. People didn't know about their future. Their 401K's were gone. We were in Wars all over the place. Nobody knew where Osama Bin Laden was. He captured Osama Bin Laden, and rescued us from the brink of a financial collapse. This was a black man. So people saying that black people are not qualified to hold these positions, it's a farce. It's nothing but that white supremacist, patriarchal power structure. You got it. You hit the nail on the head. And like I said, I don't want your equality, keep your equality. You put it on a tee shirt, wear it, do whatever you want to do something nice with it. Give me access, give people access, and we'll handle the

rest. Because let's face the fact, there are white people, there are brown people, there are black people who don't want to do shit with their lives.

Hawk Newsome: 00:52:56

For many years, and up until like maybe the last two decades, white people were the majority of people on welfare. Let's understand that they are a lot of people who don't want to do shit with their lives. That's fine. But the people who want to do things with their lives, give them that opportunity, and the people who don't want to do anything, let's just make sure they have the basics. As human beings, as Christians, let's just make sure if they want to be able to just sit down and spend their lives watching TV, and horrible TV that not educating themselves, okay, let's make sure they have a house, and some food. Give your brother a cup of water. This is God talking, this ain't Hawk Newsome, right? Just make sure that people have the basics, and they can do whatever they want with their lives, and that money really won't impact you per se, because you'll be going out there earning. What's the problem with wanting to see people healthy and have health care?

Peter McCormack: 00:53:56

it's funny as well, another thing I'm noticing, it's almost like for you, this started as Black Lives Matter as a movement, but you're talking about a number of subjects that affect everyone, and it is political. We know your sister is running.

Hawk Newsome: 00:54:15

Yes Chinvona Newsome. She's running for Congress in New York 15, that's the Bronx where we grew up.

Peter McCormack: 00:54:20

Your sister's running for Congress, she's going to have to campaign for everybody who's in the Bronx. And have you noticed a shift in yourself that you're almost ... You're drifting part away from Black Lives Matter in that you're now becoming a bit more political, and having to consider the welfare of everybody?

Hawk Newsome: 00:54:41

I remain black liberation first, but I always show up for everyone. My spine is damaged. I have numbness in my hands and my feet because when Donald Trump started the first raids, the first ICE raids, I was protesting. My family's black, black, like New York black, which means you probably have family from the South. I have a mother from South Carolina, father from Florida, and I was out there protesting for undocumented people. And that wasn't necessarily my fight, so to speak. But I love all, I love everybody. You know what I hate, bro? I hate bullies. I hate fucking bullies.

Peter McCormack: 00:55:29

Yeah, I fucking hate bullies.

Hawk Newsome: 00:55:29

I hate bullies, right? I hate to see the powerful taking advantage of the meek. I'm going to stand in that gap, with everything I got. And that goes for all people, but I'm fighting this fight for black people first, because we're talking about 400 years of

oppression, and people don't want reparations like you got ... You have Jewish people who say ... Bernie Sanders writing a check isn't the answers, until me and other Afro socialists forced him to adopt reparations. Hiroshima reparations. Indigenous people, they got land, they got casinos, they got ... But black people who have suffered the most on this land, you don't want to give them anything?

Peter McCormack: 00:56:21

What is the state of reparations right now?

Hawk Newsome: 00:56:23

People are pushing for HB40, which is an investigation into what reparations would look like. I have this hashtag called run the check. Okay, yeah, whatever. Shut the fuck up. Pay me my motherfucking money. I'm an American descendant of slavery. I'm entitled. We talking about the country being on the break, brink of financial collapse. Tobacco was done right? And then cotton came. There was nobody to work, to do the work, right? So they enslaved black people and force them to do the work. Get this man. I want you to wrap your mind around this, Peter. Black people worked from sunup to sundown and beyond. They worked until their fingers bled. They did everything. They built this country, railroads, the white house, you name it, right? Only in white America, could you turn around and call those people lazy. They call us ... Who was sitting beg, drinking lemonade, whipping people for not working hard? Are you kidding me? Jesus Christ. It's like these shackles on people's minds.

Peter McCormack: 00:57:43

Let me ask you a question about reparations because it's not something I fully understand, but there are multi generation gap between the end of slavery and now, and I could see how somebody might say, "Well, there is a limited connection between you and the people who lived under slavery, who were enslaved because of this multi-generational gap." But it's actually, it's reparation about more about lifting all of black people up, because you essentially started at a disadvantage, because you were enslaved? Is that observation right?

Hawk Newsome: 00:58:16

You should look into House Bill 40 and you should also look into #ADOS African Descendants Of Slavery who talk about black ownership, and have really powerful pro-black platform. Yes, slavery was centuries ago, but the era of mass incarceration is now.

Peter McCormack: 00:58:36

Yes.

Hawk Newsome: 00:58:37

There's racism in education now. Racism in housing now, racism in banking giving loans to people who are trying to start businesses, now. We are blocked in so many different ways, and it all goes back to there. So we have to look at it holistically and say, "Yes, slavery happened. There's people that owe money, people are owed money. But look at everything that's happened since. And then run the check.

Peter McCormack: 00:59:07

Run my mother fucking check.

Hawk Newsome: 00:59:08

Run my motherfucking check.

Peter McCormack: 00:59:10

Well man, look, I'm really glad we did this. I'm glad for your time. We finally made it happen.

Hawk Newsome: 00:59:14

Right on.

Peter McCormack: 00:59:14

Glad to meet you, if I can ever do anything for you, let me know. I would definitely want to follow up one day. I also wish your sister the best. Good luck in your campaigning, and I definitely want to come down to that place in the Bronx and smoke a cigar with you one day.

Hawk Newsome: 00:59:25

Let's do it.

Peter McCormack: 00:59:26

All right man.

Hawk Newsome: 00:59:26

Let's do it my brother.

Peter McCormack: 00:59:26

Great to meet you.

Hawk Newsome: 00:59:27

A pleasure. Right on. Hey Cop Watch America on BET.

Peter McCormack: 00:59:32

Yeah, shout out.

Hawk Newsome: 00:59:32

Google it, find out your local listings. It's really intense. It's a lot of activism here in New York, and also down in Atlanta. You get to see how we organise and the thought process that goes into it, how our strategies are applied and the interactions with the police. I guarantee you, you will look at this show and say, "Wow, I didn't know it was like that."

Peter McCormack: 00:59:55

I've got to ask you that. And how else can people follow you?

Hawk Newsome: 00:59:58

Oh, a Twitter Hawk of New York, spelled out and on Twitter and on Instagram it's Hawk.Newsone, and holler at me. I answer all of my DMs.

Peter McCormack: 01:00:14

Yes you do. You answered mine.

Hawk Newsome: 01:00:15

I answer all my DMs. Right on. That's actually the best way to get in touch with me.

Peter McCormack: 01:00:19

I'll share that all out. But again, I appreciate it man. I wish all the best.

Hawk Newsome: 01:00:22

This was cool, man.