JA: And then I’m gone tomorrow. And also we met the reform group Tracy’s with with them. The groups that are trying to change the laws as we talked about. We met. We had a big meeting so (...) that was the third thing.

AG: So I want to talk about that. A little bit. I want to talk about first the Disease and then the hope for the cure. First of all, just before, while it’s in your head, you’ve seen I’m just a bill. How is (...) is that how it really works or (...) does it work a little differently?

JA: It’s probably a little, little different. The uh… That was very cute. But it’s not what goes on in Washington. What goes on in Washington is pretty much in almost every case special interests and people who have power that are not necessarily elected officials have a dramatic impact. And (...) the bill is very rarely, I would say never typed up at this point by the Congressman after hearing from a sort-of diverse group of citizens (...) in the common interest. I mean, Sometimes Congressmen will solicit their constituent’s views to create legislation and that is laudable. But often the legislation is either started or they try to stop the special interests and their lobbyists.

AG: Tell me so, and just, as a primer 101, is it common for lobbyists to actually write the bills that then become law?

JA: It… It’s become a little less common lately but it was very common at times. And.. And The main reason is that the lobbyists convince the members and the staff that their expertise is… is non-parallel and therefore let them create the first draft. And the lobbyists want to do this of course want to do this because then the template from which everything operates is their template. And you know the staff are busy and the Congressman busy so they frequently in the past and still avail themselves of the services, let’s call them, of the lobbyist to… to write these bills. And we did it. And.. Especially amendment of bills. When a lobbyist goes in to speak to a member Congressman and tries to get a bill changes. And in amendment language the lobbyist invariably will bring in the exact draft of what they want. The lobbyist does that primarily because they can make sure they get exactly what they need. They don’t want to waste time. They don’t want to take the chance that some staffer creates something that does not solve their problem.

AG: Now, As a lobbyist, what was your leverage? Was it the power
of persuasion or was there... you know. What was your leverage in terms of getting the member to want to sponsor the bill that you had written?

15:09:12:17 JA: Well... the process involves really two... two components. And one is access and the second is persuasion. Having tremendous persuasive powers is irrelevant if you can't get in front of the decision maker. It would be like being a lawyer trying to advocate for a client but you can't be admitted to the bar and get in front of the judge. You're useless. So a lobbyist needs to get to the decision maker. The congressman or the staff and that involves, unfortunately... financial... conveyances. Campaign contributions primarily. Meals, Golf, tickets to ballgames, travel, whatever it is. Anything that gets a... lobbyist in front of the Congressman or the staff for the requisite amount of time so they can convince them of the position that they are holding. That's vital. So, that being the cede-qua-non of the process but that's not all. You can't just buy your way in with money alone. You've got to make a persuasive case. So part of the lobbying campaign will include coming... marshalling facts, marshalling statistics, data and of course as we know, data can be anything that we want them to be and so persuasive lobbyists will come in with polls. They will come in with scientific studies and everything they can, depending on what they are asking for. And that combined with their access, bought with money, enables them to get in position and many of the Congressmen will acquiesce and go along... especially if it is not something they otherwise oppose.

15:10:43:02 AG: Now, what about... I mean. In this day and age, is the pressure to raise money to get elected increasing and does that give the lobbyist more leverage?

15:10:53:10 JA: Yes, it does. It... Every election is more expensive now. Particularly Senate elections are becoming outrageously expensive. Eight figures is a normal amount of money for a campaign for the US Senate. And as a consequence... (Siren)

15:11:06:08 AG: We may have to do that one over again... Because of that siren.

15:11:12:08 Ok so, Are elections becoming more expensive and does that give a lot of... did that give the lobbyist more leverage?

15:11:16:23 JA: Yeah, they are very much more expensive. And I think we have seen a steady increase in the cost, particularly in the US Senate races which invariably now are becoming eight figure campaigns. In
tens of millions of dollars. When you have campaigns that are costing tens of millions of dollars, the people who have the majority of the money to enter the process with large amounts are really the lobbyists with special interests who want something back from these legislators and, in fact, the irony of course in the senate races is that in 1913 the 17th Amendment to the constitution was put in place to take away from the state legislatures the power to appoint their senators, This was done ostensibly because there was corruption. People were buying control. Well, in fact it has come full circle now, that not only did the states lose the benefit of having representatives … keep their interests… keep private government away from their interests. But now it is actually far more corrupt. Where as before we knew at least who was doing this. Now, anyone from anywhere in the country is having a tremendous financial impact on these races. It’s much more expensive. And so the lobbyists themselves. They are much more important. Anyone who can bundle money is much more important to a senator or a congressman because if you’re a Congressman and you need to raise millions of dollars that means you need to be on the telephone, that means you need to go to events, you need to spend time with people who are going to give you money. And I use this to my advantage. Where I knew I could deliver 100, 200, 500 thousand dollars to a Congressman and I knew the cost to the Congressman of spending the time raising that amount of money was immense. And so when I could deliver in one fell swoop that amount of money, the Congressman got back days of his time and frankly, gratitude to getting back that time, as is often the case the Congressman will lend an ear for a shorter amount of time to the cause I was promoting or other lobbyists were promoting. And it is usually an ear rather that is genial and willing to be a compliant and that is how the process unfortunately works.

15:13:29:15 AG: Right. So it’s never Oh I am just going to completely do something that is counter my interests. It’s always something that is in line. But they also have to be thinking… the members that is have to be thinking downstream in terms of well this one sort of feels right but also I may need Jack or someone else in the future. You know when I am running again.

15:13:51:12 JA: Right. And they are always running. They are always running. Even if they don’t have an election for six years. There isn’t a. It used to be the case that a senator was out of cycle as they call it. You didn’t hear from them raising money for the first two maybe even four years of the cycle. But now that is not the case. You are
hearing from 535 members of congress all the time. It is a 100% fundraising efforts all the time.

15:14:18:00 AG: Give me a little bit, for those who don’t know. Give me a little bit of a sense of your personal background of how you changed from participant to reformer and why?

15:14:28:10 JA: Well, I wish I could tell you that in the midst of all my lobbying activity I came to an epiphany that this was wrong for the country and wrong for me. But I didn’t. It unfortunately for me required my demise politically and business-wise and every other way. My decapitation as it were and once I had hit bottom and started to rethink everything it was a long process for me anyway. I didn’t immediately come to realize that this system was wrong, I was wrong etcetera. I was as one is normally. I was defensive. I was defending the system I had operated in. But eventually I decided to be honest with myself. I decided to look honestly at the emails I had written and the past activities I had engaged in and while I certainly worked through with myself the things I had done wrong and why I had done them and what led me to them. I also systemically looked at the overall picture and realized the system itself was really badly in disrepair.

15:15:33:00 AG: And so now, you’ve.. I mean.. You are out campaigning for reform are you not?

15:15:38:03 JA: I am lobbying for reform (laughs) I guess. With that lobby I guess. I decided in prison. When I went to prison, I frankly just wanted to get away from everything. I wanted to. Not in prison, I wanted to get away from being the infamous, internationally known rogue. And just escape and not be in the … headlights of the oncoming traffic any longer. But in prison, I started to rethink it. And what got me to rethink it, the moment that was the epiphany probably was when they passed legislation to reform the system in the wake of my scandal. And correct all the things that were wrong with my scandal. Because the truth is 99% of what I did was legal. That’s the biggest problem. The 1% of what I did that was illegal I was punished for. Went to prison, I lost all of my money basically and had to live through a nightmare. But the 99% of what I did that was legal, and utterly contemptuous continues to this day. So, they… often as they will do, once there is a big scandal and it is usually personified in the form of Jack Abramoff, Duke Cunnigham, whoever it may be. That individual gets sent off to prison, everyone throws their hats in the air, let’s out a big cheer, passes a reform bill
and then everyone goes right back to what they’re doing. I read the
reform bill called HELOGA and saw that it is marginally better, some
things were better in deed but it wasn’t really a systemic change.
They didn’t really go after the problem. So I started thinking, what
would I do… if I were still a lobbyist? What would I try to stop?
What… What provisions would really disrupt things. And I started
writing them down, in prison. And thought through each of them, I
had plenty of time to do it. And I though through each of the cases,
and I ultimately wrote them in my book and came out and made
peace with the reform movements that had been bashing me quite
perniciously for years. I didn’t take it personally. It was… That was
there job and who they thought I was. And frankly, in some degree,
who I was. I understand. I get it that they were upset at that person.
But I wasn’t that person any longer. So.. I.. wound up connected with
them they went to a few early events I did and I reached out my
hand and they reached out theirs and I joined with one of them in
particular, United Republic. And I...a few months later had a meeting
with them and I said: you know... guys the thing is the lobbying
world doesn’t even consider you guys a punch line to a bad joke.
You are utterly irrelevant to them. You aren’t even a bump in the
road. So it is time to become a real organization. You have to stop
thinking like public service organizations and start thinking like
lobbyists. You think that you do things over ten years, twenty years.
You’ll make changes over thirty years. Lobbyists don’t think like that.
There is no thirty-year plan. There is hardly ever a three-year plan. It
is usually what can we do this session. We need to realign and
readjust our thinking. So what I did was spend several months in
that mode trying to retrain as it were the thinking of the reform
groups I was working with, then we quickly moved to let’s do this.
Let’s put a piece of legislation together that actually reforms the
place. And let’s not let Congress draft it, let’s be good lobbyists and
draft it ourselves. And so we got Constitutional scholars from not on
capital hill because the interest, the self-interest of people in the
system is so strong. To maintain the system of perquisites and
spoils and...and gifts that it is almost impossible for one of them to
step forward honestly. So we have the former head of the FEC,
Trevor Potter, one of the great scholars, constitutional scholars and
his team are drafting very draconian very impactful legisla
tion that
actually changes the system. The second part of the plan is to go to
members of Congress and candidates for Congress and solicit their
compact with their voters to co-sponsor this legislation and vote
against every amendment to this legislation until it passes. And we
are then going to launch in conjunction with people on the right and
people on the left. Because the right and left agree on these issues.
We may not agree on every provision. And what we are doing, by the way, is not including any provision that is either offends greatly the left or the right. But there is enough common ground here that we are able, we believe, to garner a lot of support and marshal organizations and go find ourselves some Congressmen and some candidates and them in fall, enter perhaps six races where one side is signed and one side is not signed on to what we are trying to do. And beat the ones that did not sign on. Put everyone in to those six races and beat them. And then announce afterwards, that this is what happened. And then next time there will be 50 races that we will be in and I believe that after two cycles they will start to treat this legislation seriously and we are going to have an opportunity to pass it. It is going to take two cycles. Right now, they don’t even laugh at it. Soon, they will kind of be uncomfortable with it after the first cycle and wonder what it is about. After the second cycle, if all goes well, they will be afraid of it. And at that point their constituents and the American people will have spoken and their jobs will be at jeopardy. That is all they understand, their jobs. They don’t understand money. There is plenty of money in Washington. I never when I was lobbying Congressmen, said: If you don’t support this, I am not going to give you any more money. I never said that, even if they did not support it. Why? Because they could walk out their door and trip over five lobbyists who have checks in their hand ready to give them. It’s not about money. It’s about their job. They can’t lose their job. Well, this effort is going to put their job at risk.

15:21:43:13 AG: Great, Now one aspect of what you are trying to do is go one to…. (Talking about makeup)

15:22:26:08 AG: … Staffers.. The.. You know… I want you to discuss it … I would be grateful if you would discuss it this way. There used to be a time where young people would go to Washington and want to be staffers for Congressmen as kind of a public service thing. Now, increasingly it seems like it is… like a… like going to a triple A ball club before going to the major league. Describe if you would the… how the lobbyist, how you used to work with staffers and how you intend to address that issue.

15:23:05:18 JA: Well, first of all as a lobbyist, I had about forty lobbyists working for me. And with one exception, I never hired a member of Congress or Senate. Mainly because the people who get things done on Capitol Hill are the staff. They control pretty much everything, the schedule. The members are there of course as the CEO or maybe the Chairman, that’s a better word, of the organization. The staff
runs everything. So with us, we lobby the staff and we hire staff to
lobby other staff because the staff knew the other staff members.
When… I noticed at the beginning when was building my practice I
offered jobs to people on Capitol Hill I needed them to come work for
me immediately. I need a lobbyist that week. They would come after
a week or two. But then, after I was expanding my practice, I would
hire people 3 months out, 6 months out. Come join me when you
can join me. OK in a year. Let’s do a year. And Then I noticed
something very interesting. Once, they knew they were going to
come work for me they started doing my bidding immediately. And…
like.. most people in most occupations if you know what your next
job is going to be you kind of loose interest in your current job. You
are thinking about your next job. Well, that is fine in perhaps…
although it is not necessarily the most moral thing, in other areas.
But in public service it is a real problem. Because even though they
were drawing salary checks from the federal government they were
working for me. They were calling me when they saw legislation that
threatened my clients or they saw opportunities for my clients. They
were in essence feather bedding. And that was going on roundly.
And In fact, I noticed it… I didn’t offer jobs to people I didn’t intend to
hire. But I noticed it and almost at times hoped people couldn’t come
to work for a year or two that I would have them in there. Because at
that point, they were mine. That office was owned by our office. Now
that still goes on. One of the things I proposed… Now there is a
certain cooling off period for senior staff members lobbying their
congressmen but the problem is.. and senators come out and
congressmen come out and they have a cooling off period as well.
But it is really a feckless arrangement because they only wait out the
period briefly and they are only a couple years. So what I propose is
this, I wanted to do a lifetime ban. A lifetime ban between public
service and cashing in. That would not survive legally. You can’t
make that kind of restraint on trade. However, we are confident that
a ten-year ban will. So we have in our bill for both staff and members
that for ten years after drawing their last government pay check they
may not draw a check in the influence industry. Lobbying redefined.
Because you need lobbying redefined. You have Newt Gingrich and
Tom Dashiell who… and even others, virtually everyone, running
around saying they are not lobbyists. They are strategic advisors,
they are history professors. All kinds of euphemisms. Anything to
avoid registering and falling in to that even minuscule at this point
waiting period. We are going to change the definition of lobbyists.
We are going to make it people who actually lobby. If you go lobby,
you are a lobbyist and the American people will need to know you
are a lobbyist and they need to know when their member of
congress or any member of congress meets with you immediately. We are going to change the reporting system. Right now it is very vague. You say I went and lobbied the House of Representative or I went and lobbied the Senate. Well, who did you lobby? Right now they don’t have to say who they lobbied. Right now, they can wait months. Six months at times to report. This is the age of the internet. They should be able to report within 48 hours. All of these things are part of the legislation. Tightening up these loopholes. In the case of the hiring, if you have, for the right reasons we hope, become a public servant, serve the public and go home, get some other job. Don’t cash in and make the trip through the revolving door in Washington. And if you want to do it, it’s going to take ten years. So all of your contacts are going to be gone.

15:28:22:08  AG: In terms of… for the Staffer. To give people a sense of the problem, what is the difference between what you can earn as a staffer and what you can earn from a lobbying firm?

15:28:40:19  JA: Well it depends. But it can sometimes be three times as much, it can be five times as much. It is certainly going to be more. Significantly more or why make the leap? The… they work pretty hard on capitol hill but depending on who they work for as a lobbyist they could work harder. People who work for me were pretty much 24 hours a day, six days a week. They looked forward to the Sabbath because they knew they weren’t going to be bothered. But they would invariably get email at 2, 3 o’clock in the morning. So, you’re working harder. You’re not in public service. You don’t have the moral delight of working in a good cause in the sense of public service so you are going to want to get paid more. And they do get paid more. And plus, they are selling the commodity of their connections.

15:29:32:14  AG: What I was wondering was whether you saw at any point while you were there if there was a change. In other words, whether people were coming and going not to serve for a little bit and then go off into private practice but just to pay their time in government so they could really do what they wanted to do which was be paid a lot of money as a lobbyist.

15:29:50:01  JA: There are not a lot who will admit that but it was evident to me that more and more, in fact, were entering that world just for that purpose. Yes, indeed.

15:29:59:18  AG: In the.. In the school version of our democracy, you know like
“I’m just a Bill,” the idea of a lobbyist is an appealing one. It’s efficient. you have a small group of social worker who decide that we are going to go off to Washington and we are going to tell our Congressman to get this social bill passed for us but in this environment (...) if you are a small community group that does not have much money do you have a chance against someone who is lobbying against you that has a ton of dough?

15:30:39:10 JA: No. If you are up against somebody who is using resources you have no chance to win. Fortunately, for the kind of causes that most local communities are engaged in, not a lot of money in it. So the lobbyists don’t show up. Criminal justice area, for example there is not a lobbyists there. But if a lobbyist is there, with their resources, they have no chance of beating them.

15:31:08:10 AG: And so. In terms of an equal playing field. Is it fair to say.. part of what I am doing in the film. Is there a problem with income inequality in terms of representative democracy? So, I will put that broad question to you. Is there a problem?

15:31:22:12 JA: Yes, Absolutely. There is absolutely not a level playing field. This is in fact the essence of what we are trying to do is level the playing field so that people cannot use resources to unlevel the playing field. It’s not right. We would never countenance in this country to plaintiffs or a plaintiff and a defendant going in front of a court and one plaintiff being able to use resources with the judge and having somehow an advantage. We would never agree to that. Yet we don’t have any problem with it in terms of the Congress. So let’s just way people inside the beltway don’t have a problem with it. I think the country does indeed have a very big problem with it.

15:31:59:05 AG: What about… When you were in prison and you were looking out at events in Washington…. Would… you were in prison during the… the crash of ’08? Weren’t you? What were you thinking at the time? Were you thinking… And then you saw some of the reforms coming afterwards. What did you make of the financial institute? Both looking at it from afar, from a prison and from having known what you knew you know as a lobbyist and talking to other lobbyists in terms of the clout that the financial industry had in Washington.

15:32:32:14 JA: There is no doubt that the financial industry has immense clout there. They are certainly in the top 5 of industries that have unbelievably sway and say as to what goes on there. I think in the case of… it’s very complicated obviously, the government's
involvement with that and the private sector’s involvement and where they interest and where they oppose. It’s extremely complex. Unfortunately, sometimes they are hoist by their own petard these guys. Where they invite or encourage the involvement of government so they can profit from it and get, when it swings back the other way, and things crash or things become difficult which sometimes is the consequence of government involvement indeed they are wailing and crying. So, I think one has to look at them a little bit askance and wonder are you not being again hoist by your own petard, are you not being punished by your own deeds but there is no question that they wield immense influence and they can effectively go after their goals whether their goals are good for the rest of us or not is often times of little concern to them.

15:33:41:17 AG: Now, I have to ask you a kind of ideological question. I mean when we interviewed Tom DeLay for the film that I did about you. He said, well you know there is not enough money in politics. That’s the problem. We don’t spend enough. We just let the market loose in politics everything will turn out ok. But, you know, you come from a background. You are very much of a kind of free-market conservative. So, What’s your view on that? Is that a view that’s changed or have you always believed that? (Fixing Make-up, laughing, jokes)

15:34:27:21 JA: Ok, Let’s see. How do I jump into this? …. Hold on a second. I have to rethink what you have asked. About DeLay and not enough money in politics. Yeah, I hear the case that we spend more money in this country advertizing soap than we do on all of our candidates combined. I hear that. I am not as concerned with the amount of money in politics as where this money is coming from. The reforms that I am proposing are campaign finance reforms but they are different from the normal tack that’s been taken. First of all, I don’t think that tack. Well we know this court will not agree to the approach of McCain, Feingold and others. Basic, overall, blanket limitations of money being spent. We know that the court has ruled that free speech includes speech that is beyond one’s lips. Including with one’s resources. So knowing the environment we are in and ideologically as a conservative, I understand a lot of that. What I have done is taken the approach that if you are getting something back from the government. You are paying to play. By the way, Virtually all the money in the system is that. Virtually all the money, particularly the big money. And it’s not just corporations by the way it’s labor unions as well. They are there because they want something. And the minute you want something and you apply your
money to it you are bribing a public official. So the tack I have taken is, all of that money has to come out of the system. Now, does that mean that if there is somebody out there who is trillionaire who decides that they just love America and they want to give money to a certain Congressman because they think they love America and they are not asking for anything back and they don’t have a regulated industry and they don’t have tax breaks for their companies and this, that. They can give what they want, ideologically, yes I think so. Finding that person may not be an easy thing by the way because I am not certain he is in the system right now. But if there is such a person who wants to speak with their money because of love of the country, because of the general good, because of general issues that don’t benefit them or their companies or their union, God bless them. But again, most of the money can come out of the system if the special interests and their lobbyists come out of the system. They can’t come out entirely, by the way. Constitutionally, we can only reduce them. But it’s a reduction down to $100 a year that we are proposing. So if you are a big corporate interest and you have tax breaks and subsidies and this thing and that thing you can give a hundred dollars and that’s not a hundred dollars per candidate. That is a hundred dollars. So that, if we can do that. If we can remove the special interest money, I think we will get to the same place, which is the removal of most of the money that is in the system but in a way that is consistent with how the court is now. And by the way, how conservatives feel. I think that Tom DeLay. I don’t know. I can’t speak for Tom DeLay. But a Tom DeLay conservative. And I am a conservative. Cannot sit and support bribery. It is inconsistent with biblical values, with conservative values, with anything that is traditional and American. No and by the way it is the same thing with progressives. Progressives don’t support that. So the right and the left support it. That’s I believe how we can solve the problem and that’s what we are trying to do.

15:37:49:14 AG: All of these groups. You see groups pop up like Americans for Prosperity and they all have carefully crafted general objectives for the common good. That’s how they do it. But, you know, in practice. There They’re targeting the money for very specific …

15:38:10:00 JA: The question is also where is that money coming from. The big issue. So, some of the other reforms that I haven’t mentioned yet in the package we are putting forward is to deal with the super Pac situation. Super Pacs, I guess, are supposed to be independent expenditure organizations. And by the way, it was very much the
case in the past if you made an independent expenditure under the old rules that you had to identify who the add was sponsored by. So we are going to reestablish and enforce all of those rules and by the way we are going to make it a crime to have someone who is within five years previous involved with any of the campaigns involved with the Super Pacs. So that indeed they are separate entities. Now once that happens, there is going to be less incentive on the part of a lot of people putting money in to the Super Pacs after meeting with candidates and after being impotuned by these candidates to support them. They are not going to be able to put their money in any longer. And so that is one of the goals we are doing as well.

15:39:09:08 AG: So…. Broadly speaking, did Citizens United change the landscape? If so yes… If yes, how? And in that Citizens United landscape how do you change it?

15:39:22:04 JA: Well, I had posited that … tons of money in politics is not new because of Citizens United. There were hundreds of millions of dollars being put in before Citizens United, all over the place. What happens with each of these cases, the court cases, each of the pieces of legislation is the territory shifts a bit. How you do it is different. You have a bunch of legal, brilliant legal folks working it out and the special interest find a way to get their money in … always. They are always going to find the loophole. They are always going to find a way to do it unless you ban it at the source. Stop them at the source. In terms of, what was the second part of the question? In terms of Citizens United?

15:40:01:01 AG: …. How can we deal…

15:40:05:23 JA: Can we deal with it? How do we deal with it? Exactly how we are talking about dealing with it. We are. We are crafting our bill, our legislation so that it conforms with the Citizens United until that’s overturned that is the law. And so we believe though that there is enough room in there to craft a bill and to take care of these things the way they are. There are provisions inside Citizens United that even as a conservative I am troubled about. Such as, for example, the… the linking between corruption and contributions. The court did not recognize the fact, and perhaps because there are no legislators on the court or former legislators for the first time in many years. They did not recognize the corrupting influence of campaign contributions. I think they have a more benign view of that than they should. Nevertheless, we believe that our provision would be sustained by this court if challenged by the lobbyists or the congress.
or whoever might challenge it.

15:40:56:07 AG: What about the provision for maximum contributions?

15:40:58:12 JA: Yes. Bringing the down to a maximum contribution. We also, by the way, have a provision that we hope will be enacted to democratize the elections a little more by providing a tax credit for every taxpayer to take a hundred dollar tax credit and give it financially in the federal election by doing so, by the way, forgoing the ability to give other money. … So that we think we will be able to have a much more widespread base of citizens participating in the election. And we don’t believe that these provisions would be struck down. We think that they would be supported and it is a way to solve the problem. What I tried to do is to look at what is the problem with the money. That there is a lot of money? May be a problem, may not be a problem. That money is being used to buy results, that is the problem. That’s how I used money. I know what I was doing all right? And I know what the problem is. And so. And the others recognize it as well. They fortunately for them, didn’t do it but both of us understand what we have got to do and that is where we are going. And fortunately, it’s something that I believe that both the left and the right do support. It is maybe not as much as the left would want to do. I think the left would like to have public financing of campaigns. The left would like to ban across the board big dollar amount. Those things are not feasible politically. This country is evenly divided. We have to have something both the left and the right support. I believe we are there though and we have something.

15:42:20:14 AG: Although it is interesting for me to see and I see to me, coming more from the left, you know I see some kind of ideological view that oh yeah we have to do something about campaign finance but in practice never happens. You know I hope that somebody like the esteemed senator from New York Chuck Schumer who became unbelievably much a part of ultimate pay for play, which, I thought, was the hedge fund loophole.

15:42:45:10 JA: Yeah. Yeah. I mean look. These folks are. It’s not about ideology in there. It’s about business. And this is how they do their business. We have to change the way they do their business. And force their business to be an illegal. That’s the only way to change the system. And forcing them to do it or loose your job, is the only way the American people are going to be able to exercise leverage. We have to get them openly for or against a piece that absolutely changes things and at that point there have to be consequences. And if there
are I think we have a shot.

15:43:14:23 AG: Well that seems to mean. I mean. It's the one thing I. I mean you were in the business of elections. And it's the one thing. I think it is the only thing that these guys understand. (JA: Yeah) Is whether they get elected or not. It's the only thing they care about.

15:43:34:09 JA: Right. Well … (chatter)....

15:43:49:01 JA: Congressmen as I mentioned don't understand money. There is plenty of money. They only understand their elections. Losing their seat is what it is about. And that's it.

15:44:00:22 AG: I think we need to. As someone who played the game for a long time, is that the most essential thing that we need to understand? Because you know, I've found really interesting that part of the problem is … communication some of these ideas to people. Is that there is a general sense in the country of Washington as a festering ball of corruption. But it's somehow doesn't get connected to their particular congressperson or senator who are you know to the fact that it effects the people themselves. It's like oh yeah them but it doesn't have anything to do with us. How do you get that across? I mean what was it you saw about Congress-people and Senators that … that was different than you?

15:44:55:01 JA: Well, first of all most politicians are very good at making themselves… (chatter about movies while they fix make-up again)… Gosh what were we saying?

15:45:49:11 AG: We were talking about the kind of disconnect. Everybody believes that Washington is corrupt.

15:45:49:11 AG: We were talking about the kind of disconnect. Everybody believes that Washington is corrupt.

15:45:49:11 AG: We were talking about the kind of disconnect. Everybody believes that Washington is corrupt.

15:45:52:06 JA: Oh Yeah. You know... politicians are good about making themselves liked. I mean that is the business they are in. Make themselves popular, make themselves liked. Their whole lives, most politicians have been trying to popular, trying to be liked. And so they are good at making themselves liked and at separating themselves from the process when they go home and and... getting out their vote. They know who is supporting them, who is going to vote. But most Americans first of all don't vote. Number one. Especially the off year elections. And they think oh he's nice. They bought it. He's nice. He's sweet. But the institution is broken, worthless, feckless but my guy's nice. So that is very much at play. American is a popularity contest. I mean we are basically American
Idol Nation. People running for president don’t need experience. They don’t need to have good ideas. They need to have good presentation. They need to be someone you want to go have a beer with. You want to have a beer with them, you vote for them for president. How absurd is that? Alright. But that unfortunately is on the Congressional level as well. So that it does not translate over. And you know what the other thing is you are right. People are frustrated with Congress. They are sick and tiered of them. Congress has a worse approval rating than Saddam Hussein did with the people who killed him. Ok? That’s what they think of Congress. But doing something about Congress? They think that Congress doesn’t affect their lives. They don’t understand that Congress absolutely affects every part of their lives. The federal government in the old days, and this is perhaps what they are remembering, is some memory vapor from the good old days when the federal government was not in their lives. But guess what? The federal government is in every part of your life now. And that’s why the 30,000 lobbyists. Because there is plenty to do for each one of them. That’s the problem.

15:47:36:00 Great. Good. Anything else you want to address? I think I am pretty good? Blair? (Blair: I think we are good)….Chatter, Room tone,