

Hell No, Trump! With Barry Robbins

[00:00:00] **Bob Gatty:** Hey guys. Welcome to the Lean to the Left Podcast, where we try our hardest to bring insight into the key political developments and social issues that affect us all. Since I established what is now the Lean to the Left Block site some eight years ago, I focused on Trump and the danger that I've always felt he posed and continues to pose to our country.

[00:00:27] It began in earnest when he labeled the mainstream media, the enemy of the people. And continues with Trump back in the White House and daily taking steps to enhance his power and wreck our democracy. That led to our book's, Hijacked Nation, Donald Trump's Attack on America's Greatness. Three volumes currently available on Amazon.

[00:00:50] Now. Today I'm delighted to bring to you Barry Robbins, author of two books, NO! and HELL NO! A response to Donald J. [00:01:00] Trump. Barry tracks Trump's actions from day one through the eyes of participating characters or non characters like the medical people that helped with his birth to the Resolute Desk that daily bears witness to his harmful actions.

[00:01:19] They are two engaging masterpieces worthy of your time. Barry, thanks for joining us today on the Lean to the Left Podcast.

[00:01:27] **Barry Robbins:** It's my pleasure, Bob.

[00:01:29] **Bob Gatty:** Hey, tell me about the origin of your books and why you wrote 'em as you did.

[00:01:33] **Barry Robbins:** Yeah. Like many people on the left, I subscribe to a handful of Substacks written usually by some really intelligent people.

[00:01:44] And what I, what you get from it after you read two or three or four, you you're getting the same thing. You're getting information uhuh, and that's important. I wanted to do something a little different.

[00:01:57] I wanted people not to think [00:02:00] about necessarily intellectualize it because other people were doing that.

[00:02:04] I wanted to make people feel Trump's actions and the administration's actions. The way I got that idea, some people get their best ideas in the shower. I sometimes get my best ideas someplace else, Uhhuh, and I just got this idea of taking various I would call outrages of the Trump administration, which were easy to find and deciding on an generally an inanimate object that was intimately related to that. And tell about the outrage through the voice of the inanimate object. In a way that would, people would feel it rather than intellectualize it because that they could get elsewhere better than I could do.

[00:02:50] And so I did NO!. What I called, NO!, I struggled with the title. I didn't know what to call it. Uhhuh. And one night in bed, I just, [00:03:00] it came to me. I just said the title is NO!. And then of course there were more outrages that could fill than could fill in one book.

[00:03:09] **Bob Gatty:** Right.

[00:03:10] **Barry Robbins:** So I did a, it is a sequel.

[00:03:12] It's pretty much the same idea, but just different outrages. And I went from NO! To HELL NO! And there were even more outrageous still. That's right. And then I decided what would I title the third book? There's an obvious choice, but I didn't think I could do that.

[00:03:33] So I actually did write the third book. It came out last week. I didn't call it NO! or HELL NO!. It's called American Monsters. Yeah. Because instead of inanimate objects describing the outrages I draw on usually Greek mythology and monsters like the Mino and the hydra. And they bring the particular outrage to our current state of affairs.

[00:03:59] **Bob Gatty:** Okay. All [00:04:00] right. Very timely since you just published that third book, which I was gonna ask you to tell us about, which you could tell us about a little bit more detail in a little bit. Now as we speak today, law enforcement officers in Utah are searching for the killer of conservative media personality Charlie Kirk, Barry, what are your thoughts about the political violence that's unfolding in our country today?

[00:04:30] **Barry Robbins:** To back up a little bit, to understand my perspective.

[00:04:33] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah.

[00:04:35] **Barry Robbins:** I had the, I think, good fortune to have lived in Finland for 12, 13 years. Until about 10 years ago. I married a Finnish woman. I had met and she moved to the United States, and then after five or six years we moved to Helsinki.

[00:04:52] So I lived in a, the classic Nordic social democracy for roughly 25% of my adult [00:05:00] life. Okay.

[00:05:03] I used to be a kind of a typical corporate establishment Republican in the way I thought, but being over there changed me. Okay. I saw what a society can be, okay, what it can be to disagree in an agreeable way, and to care for other people to put the society first, not the individual. So when I see what's happening in the US, it's so incomprehensible to, to my eyes from being that I got from over there.

[00:05:37] **Bob Gatty:** Okay.

[00:05:38] **Barry Robbins:** I think this country's doomed. I just, do.

[00:05:41] **Bob Gatty:** You think it's because what?

[00:05:43] I

[00:05:43] **Barry Robbins:** think we're doomed if I, I think however we got here is a question for scholars and people to discuss. And it probably is important, but the, I think of the country isn't, there are three groups of people.

[00:05:58] Probably the [00:06:00] largest group of people are people who don't really care that much about all this stuff that's going on. They just wanna live their lives. The other two groups of people, which are both sizable, absolutely hate each other. Yeah. Absolutely hate each other. I know for the left is considered not really nice to have the emotion of hate, but we do, they forced us to hate them and they hate us and I think that is the proper word.

[00:06:30] Yeah. And I just don't know how one can continue in a society where two very large groups of people hate each other. With the third group caught in the middle.

[00:06:45] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah. And I'm sorry, go ahead. Continue.

[00:06:47] **Barry Robbins:** I don't know how it actually happened. It, it started before Trump, although that certainly accelerated it greatly.

[00:06:54] So I, I don't know if learning or figuring out the origins will help to a solution. [00:07:00] But Biden, if I remember he, when he came in the office, I think Biden was a fantastic president. Yeah. His idea was that if we can just make government work for people, if we can show people, that government is good, then we'll make a lot of progress.

[00:07:22] Now, I don't know whether government wasn't as successful as he was hoping to be in four years. You can't do much. They can't do that much. Or whether that just wasn't the answer, but it didn't work. And we're where we and we are where we are.

[00:07:38] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah. So I was gonna ask you if you think Trump is responsible for these political divisions that seem to grow deeper every day here in this country?

[00:07:49] **Barry Robbins:** He certainly makes things worse. I wasn't really all that much involved or following politics before or more than when I was [00:08:00] living in Finland. I didn't bother much with the US so I don't know about the Obama years, but from what I gather, it was pretty partisan back then. Perhaps not from Obama's standpoint.

[00:08:11] But from the opposition to him speculate, whether that was racism or not, I don't know. I was in Finland at the time, so I don't know. But I think it started before Trump, but certainly Trump bears an awful lot of responsibility.

[00:08:25] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah. I can tell you one thing. I was not in Finland during the Obama years.

[00:08:29] I was right here in the United States and I was writing about all of that stuff and, it's my view that the divisions that occurred during his administration were born of racism. Just as it's just plain as the nose on your face. Yeah. And I've had personal experiences.

[00:08:52] I live in South Carolina and I've had personal experiences that, that prove that out on [00:09:00] the ground, at least here. And it, it's a damn shame. Yeah. And now with the way things are going with Trump and what he's trying to do. Don't, do you think the guy really has it in mind to be a dictator and a strong man and never leave?

[00:09:17] **Barry Robbins:** I think that's too sophisticated. I think the, it's too sophisticated.

[00:09:22] Yeah. No let me, what up? Trump probably. He's a very stupid man. He's always been never, he's never been very bright. Yeah. And now that whatever's going on in his brain with dementia or worse, his mind is probably 98% mush.

[00:09:37] Yeah. Which means he cannot carry through a thought.

[00:09:39] **Bob Gatty:** He can't even recognize his own signature.

[00:09:42]

[00:09:42] **Barry Robbins:** He has ideas in his head from years ago, like tariffs and but I don't think that he, number one, is capable. Of, of thinking through and espousing and agreeing to any political philosophy.

[00:09:57] I don't know. Putin and she, all those [00:10:00] guys, what do we know? We know what we read in the news and stuff. But. For all their personal flaws, I'm, my guess is they do actually have a philosophy of what kind of government is best for their situation. Now it's tempered by individual wanting to do what's best for them.

[00:10:17] But Trump is not capable of thinking through authoritarianism versus democracy versus, or he's not capable of doing it, plus he's not interested in doing it. He's interested his decision tree. Is very simply, Mr. President, you have a decision to make A or B. He said, okay, A or B Oh, and his only choice is what's better for me, right?

[00:10:40] All right, so he, it's not what's more authoritarian. It's what's better for me now.

[00:10:45] Probably authoritarian type things he would think are better for him, and in that sense, he wants to go down that road, but not because he has any sense of political philosophy.

[00:10:57] **Bob Gatty:** That's an interesting [00:11:00] theory, and,

[00:11:01] **Barry Robbins:** but I think if someone convinces him that authoritarianism, which is too broad a concept for him to understand, you have to drill down.

[00:11:08] **Bob Gatty:** That's too big a word. Details.

[00:11:10] **Barry Robbins:** Yeah.

[00:11:10] You have to drill down into details. But if someone convinces him that's would be best, what would make him happiest?

[00:11:17] That would hurt the most people that would feed most his cruelty. Then he'll say, okay, what do I have to do that?

[00:11:24] **Bob Gatty:** But do you think that, are you are. Let me ask you this, que ask it this way. Is your concern about our democracy even more pronounced today than when you wrote your books?

[00:11:37] **Barry Robbins:** Yeah.

[00:11:38] Yes.

[00:11:38] Yes. Why? When in the early, in, in the couple of months before January 20 inauguration and in the, remember the early couple of months, it was, the focus was mainly Elon Musk and Doge and cutting government. That's not, that's just, at least that's not what's being talked about now.

[00:11:59] What's [00:12:00] talked about now is military in the cities and ICE raids and cutting cancer grants and all that kind of stuff. Which is, I think it's I, back, I think maybe January, my ex-wife from Finland. Me. Yeah. Yeah. That's why, one of the reasons I left.

[00:12:19] **Bob Gatty:** Oh, okay. States are getting interesting now.

[00:12:22] **Barry Robbins:** Yeah, that was about, yeah, about 10, 11 years ago. Oh, okay. My kids are still over there. Yeah. Oh, okay. Ask me, what about, Trump can't be that bad maybe. Maybe if he does really a shitty job, people will sour on him in the next kind election, they'll vote 'em out and I said, I don't think that's the way it's gonna work.

[00:12:39] Okay.

[00:12:40] But I think that, I think we are really in bad trouble. And I would venture to say, without any specificity, just a general feeling, people on the left that were worried about what was gonna happen in Trump 2.0, and you ask them now, is it [00:13:00] worth, how much worse is it than you thought it would be?

[00:13:03] My guess is the number of how many times worse would be about a hundred.

[00:13:08] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Now in, in your, at the end of your second book, HELL NO!, You write America's Apology. Yeah. What was America's Apology? Tell us about that.

[00:13:22] **Barry Robbins:** Oh, I can't remember all the chapters, but basically, I've never really.

[00:13:29] I was born in 54, so how long, how much hard back do I go? But I never really thought that this notion of America is the greatest country in the world. I always thought that was poppycock. How do you measure that? What metrics do you use? Sure. It's too nebulous a question.

[00:13:44] Sure. You love your country? No, I don't love it because that's an emotion for people. That's not a, I like things about it. I don't like things about it. But ne despite all that, wW with that in mind, America was the country, the [00:14:00] democracy, the functioning thing the civil society, the science, all this kind of stuff.

[00:14:05] The movies that I think people around the world looked up to. Yeah. Whether they wanted to emulate it, completely or not. They looked up to it. 'cause when I was in Finland, when I first went over, I went in 2001, right? A month before nine 11 actually. Yeah. When people, when I met people starting to know people in the society, people were actually thrilled almost to meet me because I was American.

[00:14:33] Now, of course the thing would be much, I didn't have any, when I was over there for eight days, a couple weeks ago, I didn't have anybody come up to me and say, how can your country come to this? I didn't have anybody doing that.

[00:14:44] **Bob Gatty:** Okay. But

[00:14:45] **Barry Robbins:** again, I wasn't really in a position where they were gonna, not gonna come up to me at a wedding, didn't tell me that. But that's what they would've said. And to go from the reaction that I had in the early two thousands about being an American to the reaction that I would have now if people were.[00:15:00]

[00:15:00] In a position where they could be honest is night and day and for that America should apologize.

[00:15:10] **Bob Gatty:** Okay. Alright. Now about tell me this in your view, are we experiencing what happens when a nation chooses power over principle and ventures for values? What's the danger in that? I

[00:15:29] **Barry Robbins:** actually, as a \$64 million question of our day.

[00:15:35] How? See, I don't, in a way, I would say I don't blame Donald Trump in the sense of this. Donald Trump is one of the most evil, repulsive, reprehensible human beings, probably the last a hundred, 200, 300, 400 years. Pick your pick. He's a horrible person, but there's 8.2 billion people in the world and [00:16:00] unfortunately a half decent amount of them are pretty horrible people.

[00:16:04] The only difference is that he's the president of the United States and they're not.

[00:16:09] And he didn't make himself president of the United States. We collectively did, maybe not you and me, but we as a country in our system, we did. And the question is, the \$64 million question is, how the hell did we do that?

[00:16:24] Yeah. And so what was your question? No. Do I think that, I don't view it as people choosing power and wealth over over, decency. I think it's. I'm just, I'm making this up to a certain extent, but I've thought about it a lot. Yeah. People for the most part are pretty good people and they just want a decent life for themselves and for their kids.

[00:16:50] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah.

[00:16:51] **Barry Robbins:** And we live in a world now with AI especially, and with all sorts of other technology that is moving so incredibly fast. [00:17:00] And is inflation. Inflation and all these things that are going on that make people, regular people scared that they're, they don't have a grasp on things anymore.

[00:17:14] That their kids are not gonna have the better future that they wanted, and they just don't know what's happening and what to do. So when you're scared, fear, is it. The worst, it is the most powerful emotion. So when they have

fear, someone can come along with someone that is a gifted grifter, conman, you know who I'm talking about.

[00:17:36] And in the days when he could think through a thought and he said, I can take advantage of this to my, I can take advantage of this. I'm going to go and tell them, that it's not their fault that they're falling behind. It's not their fault that they're lost in this modern age.

[00:17:52] It's not their fault. It's somebody else's fault. And I'm gonna tell them whose fault it is, and I'm gonna tell them that I know what's [00:18:00] going on. I know how you feel. And don't worry. I can fix it. And when you do that for people who are, who have a lot of fear, you're gonna get a lot of people signing on. I think that's what happened.

[00:18:13] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah. Okay.

[00:18:14] **Barry Robbins:** All right.

[00:18:16] **Bob Gatty:** I saw, I think it was on the back cover of your HELL NO! A comment about vengeance over values, and I think you're talking about Trump and what he's been doing with people who disagree with him, right?

[00:18:30] **Barry Robbins:** Yeah, exactly. The values, the power, overstock vengeance over values, those I would not necessarily ascribe to.

[00:18:39] Regular old people, right or left.

[00:18:42] I said I think that most people would probably, say no decent person and we would probably agree with that, but it's the values that the the conman imposes on them to help swing them, their minds to, and brainwash them, essentially to [00:19:00] what he wants.

[00:19:00] 'cause remember the most, the, I think the most powerful, I'm on a psychologist. The most powerful emotion is fear, right? And fear can lead to hatred, right? Okay.

[00:19:12] **Bob Gatty:** All right. Now, tell us about American monsters. Does that kind of track only in a different way, your first two books?

[00:19:19] **Barry Robbins:** Yes. Yeah. Okay. It's the third book in the series.

[00:19:23] All right. And again, it takes in this time 29. Outrages, the other books had 50. But these are longer 29 outrages. Okay. Plus the 30th chapter. And so the same idea. Okay. Taking outrages and then, but I started doing it the same way.

[00:19:39] Having inanimate objects for each one.

[00:19:41] And I, I personally got bored doing it.

[00:19:43] Okay. So I came up with the idea again, it wasn't in the shower that instead of the inanimate objects, I came up with the idea of, for example, the hydra, the ancient hydra with, all these different heads. The cut one off and it grows [00:20:00] two more. Okay. The hydra from mythological Greek mythology.

[00:20:04] Comes to, our society and introduces the idea of tariffs. That is when you put a tariff on one country, two other problems arise. And when you try to solve those four other problems arise somewhere else. So I got this idea of having monsters not just describe the the outrage, but also it almost being the cause of the outrage.

[00:20:28] It embody the outrage. So it's the same as the first two, but using monsters and that has been an awful lot of fun.

[00:20:36] **Bob Gatty:** All right. It sounds like it's probably a pretty good read. So where can people find your books? Amazon.

[00:20:44] **Barry Robbins:** Yeah, I'm on Amazon. I'm, the eBooks. I'm also on Barnes and Doble and apple Books.

[00:20:50] 'cause I, I loaded 'em up there. But the paperback, there's no hardcover. The paperbacks are on Amazon.

[00:20:56] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah. Okay. And guys I'll have a direct link [00:21:00] to actually I have a link for a combo deal on his hell no. Is no and hell no books. And in a separate link for the third book that you can just click on and I'll put those links in the description of this episode.

[00:21:18] So be easy for you to find.

[00:21:21] **Barry Robbins:** I'd like to know if people if I decide to do another one, which I'm not gonna plan right now, Uhhuh, if no goes to hell, no does hell no go to. I don't know if I could do that.

[00:21:37] **Bob Gatty:** Maybe you might wanna come up with a different

[00:21:39] **Barry Robbins:** yeah. That's part of the reason I ended up with monsters, because Yeah. Yeah. I couldn't, I just couldn't go there.

[00:21:45] **Bob Gatty:** Yeah I get that because I read all of no. And I read about half or so of hell no. And I thought, eh, I'm getting tired of this.

[00:21:58] I probably should say [00:22:00] that because I want people to read your books and they are entertaining. I gotta tell you, they are entertaining. They're worth picking up. Really.

[00:22:08] **Barry Robbins:** If I were to try to, if I were to say somebody read no, and then hell no. So with not much break in between yeah. I don't think that's the best idea,

[00:22:18] **Bob Gatty:** but I will tell you this.

[00:22:20] When I picked up, no, and I first started it, I thought, man, this is really a creative way to do this. This guy is nuts. So anyway, congratulations. I think you pulled it along. Thank you. Thank you. If you

[00:22:35] **Barry Robbins:** think, if you think no is nuts, monster no is even nuttier

[00:22:40] **Bob Gatty:** Probably probably all right. You got anything else you'd like to add there, pal?

[00:22:44] I don't think so. I'll just say

[00:22:46] **Barry Robbins:** this. I thought a while ago, last year ago or so, if we all could sit down and come up with three things in our life that we've done in our lives that we never, [00:23:00] ever would've imagined. We would do. One of the things that I came up with that I never imagined I would ever do was live 12 or 13 years, whatever it was in Finland.

[00:23:14] Okay. Another one was write some books. Okay. All right. All right. But I'm glad I did both.

[00:23:22] **Bob Gatty:** That's good. You got 'em off your bucket list, right?

[00:23:24] **Barry Robbins:** Yeah.

[00:23:25] **Bob Gatty:** Maybe they weren't even on your bucket list 'cause you said you couldn't mention No, they weren't. They weren't. Yeah. No they weren't. Alright, it's great talking to you Barry and I appreciate it.

[00:23:35] It took us a while to get this thing put together, but I'm glad we did.

[00:23:39] **Barry Robbins:** I am too. Thank you Bob.