Jeffrey Tucker (00:00)

I appreciate your support.

Bill Walton (00:01)

Well, it's much needed. And we're likely to end up with another lockdown or something. Did you see that there are 200 medical journals led by the leading one in Britain that are now demanding that climate be declared a health crisis and the World Health Organization needs to start using climate as an excuse to lock us down again?

Jeffrey Tucker (00:27)

I didn't see that, but you know, that kind of stuff runs across my desk, you know, all day. So yeah, yeah. It's yeah, it's unbelievable. And you know, it's, it's the crisis is ongoing, whether it's climate or now in this country, we've got a major swath of the establishment now saying that we're in the middle of a political crisis because Trump could get the nomination and they're willing to do anything.

Bill Walton (00:32)

Yeah, well, yeah, we need a little more volume there.

Eh-heh.

Jeffrey Tucker (00:56)

they can to stop it from happening, including invoking section three of the 14th amendment. So, which has only been invoked once in the 20th century against a dissident against the great war, World War I. So it's getting crazy out there.

Bill Walton (00:58)

Yeah.

Yeah, so let's talk about anarcho-capitalism. I'm gonna kick it off with an introduction of President Millet, Argentina. It's a colorful guy and lead him in and I'm gonna end up, it's a short introduction, and Jeffrey Tucker, you founded Blownstone Institute based on part of this idea. You're also an outstanding protege of Murray Rothbard who coined the term.

I find it all very appealing, but there are obviously a lot of practical problems with it. What's this all about? And then we'll launch.

Jeffrey Tucker (01:46)

Well, well, Millet is the first, I think, the very first politician in the world who's openly declared himself to be an anarcho-capitalist. And for a lot of people, this is a shocking term.

Bill Walton (01:53)

Yes, he is.

Okay, I don't want to steal our show. I just wanted to give you a sense of where we're going to go. You'll be prepared. Let me, let me go ahead and do the rest of the stuff and then we'll jump bump, jump in. I also want to talk about dollarization. Uh, how much time do you have?

Jeffrey Tucker (02:02)

Yeah. Oh, okay. Okay, yeah, yeah.

Okay. Yeah.

Uh, whatever you need. I'm good. I- I self-serve. Yeah, yeah, it's fine. Yeah.

Bill Walton (02:14)

Okay, 30, 40 minutes, something like that, I think is what we'll do. Okay, let's go.

We ready? Okay.

Argentina's new president, Javier Mele, is a former goalkeeper for a well-known soccer club and the lead singer for a Rolling Stones cover band. He also taught for more than 20 years as university professor of macroeconomics, economics of growth, microeconomics, and mathematics for economists. An iconic moment in his campaign for president was a video that went viral, where he's dressed up in a yellow,

and black suit with a mask and a cape, singing Guzeppe Verde's classical operatic piece La Traviata as an anti-money printing parody. His aides shouted as the song ended, a round applause for Javier, General Ancap. Ancap is short for a narco-capitalist, the new president's

Millet believes the state is not the solution, the state is the problem. Here with Jeffrey Tucker, my old friend, wonderful man. Jeffrey Tucker, you founded Brownstone Institute based in part on this idea. You are also an outstanding protege of Murray Rothbard who coined the term. I find it all very appealing, but there are obviously a lot of practical problems with it. So what's this all about?

Jeffrey Tucker (03:53)

I have to say it's something of a refreshing thing to see a head of a state at least proclaim a philosophy. That's the first thing that's kind of remarkable. I wish actually that I've thought about this for years. Why don't we ask our candidates what they think about government? What's their philosophy towards public life? How do they think the world works? It obviously impacts on how they're going to be governed, but I don't

Bill Walton (04:02)

Hahaha

Jeffrey Tucker (04:21)

recall.

ever hearing a person being asked that question. The last candidate, the last major figure we've had at any high levels in the United States who had a philosophy of governing was Ronald Reagan, of course.

Bill Walton (04:35)

Well, you know, you mentioned it. I actually said to somebody this morning, he reminded me of Reagan in this sense, is that Reagan spent 10 years on the road giving his speeches for GE, and he spent every single day reading the great writers and thinkers, developing his own views about that, and writing his speeches. And so he developed a deep bedrock philosophy. And the reason I mentioned Millet's 20 years as economist is that...

He did the same thing. I mean, he knows his stuff, and he knows what works and what doesn't work, and it's the same thing that you and I think. I think it's a fantastic place to start, and he's going to have so many enemies, I think he might withstand the barrage.

Jeffrey Tucker (05:13)

Well, at least we know what he is.

Maybe and he's fighting philosophically in the first instance, which I find just intriguing At least people know exactly what he believes and he says it with a great deal of confidence He says, you know, the state has failed The market works freedom works Government management doesn't does not

He gave yesterday a long talk about the failure of socialism, communism, fascism, central planning, political despotism over society, and about the virtues and beauties of freedom itself and how business needs to be free of regulations and we need to have enforcement of property rights at all levels of society. It was really striking to hear him say all this stuff. So Millet came to all these ideas as an economist and, and

As you probably know, there's a great deal of mainstream economics that's very vulnerable to attack, or I would say like actually falling apart once you examine it carefully. And this is what happened to him. He started looking at it, particularly on the question of industrial organization, antitrust theory and monopoly, and bumped into the work of Murray Rothbard, who I think...

has written some of the most compelling critiques against mainstream monopoly antitrust competition theory there are. I mean, he was actually better than his own mentor who was Ludovic Mises, who's just great, but Rothbard became very precise on this stuff and really just shredded the whole thing. And Millet said that after he read that, he realized he'd been teaching the subject incorrectly for the last 20 years and went through a major intellectual metamorphosis. And then obviously he started

feeling as if Rothbard had a lot to say about a lot of subjects and so threw himself into it. My guess is he read the last section of Rothbard's great treat is called Man, Economy, and State, and it's a section where it's called Power and Market, actually. It was published as a separate book, now it's all together in one, but it's a wonderful thing because it takes apart every conceivable form of government intervention in the economy and shows what's wrong with it.

I mean, it's really quite a relentless. If there's one thing I just give every, you know, would be statesman something to read, it would be this, because it just shreds the whole apparatus of government itself. And I think that's what pushed Millet over the top. Now Rothbard called himself an anarcho-capitalist. And so now Millet calls himself that, which is a funny term. And I've had...

Bill Walton (07:55)

Thank you.

Jeffrey Tucker (07:56)

Um, my inbox just flooded actually ever since his rise, the people asking me, what is this an anchor capitalism, which makes me laugh because I guess I, you know, I've lived with the term for so long. I just assumed everybody kind of knew what it was, but it turns out that's not. I didn't know that. I didn't know that, uh, Mary came up with the term in part is a reaction against.

Bill Walton (08:10)

Nobody knows what that means. You may be the only person.

Jeffrey Tucker (08:24)

Um,

The anarcho-socialists. So in New York intellectual culture, everybody who proclaimed themselves an anarchist, this is true for large part of the 20th century, had socialist lenience, syndicalist lenience, socialist lenience, they didn't believe in private property. They didn't believe in capitalism, obviously. I mean, Noam Chomsky is a good example of that, a guy who claims that.

Bill Walton (08:46)

Calling yourself an anarchist in New York, particularly Greenwich Village, was a great way to meet girls. I mean, it was a very sexy thing to be counter-cultural.

Jeffrey Tucker (08:57)

Yeah. So yeah, the anarchism has generally belonged to the left. Like, yeah, if you look back even to Marx, I mean, Marx called himself an anarchist because all the socialists called themselves anarchists. Well, Murray's view was that, and he got this view in part from his mentors, Ayn Rand and Ludovic Mises.

was that if you leave people alone, they will figure out how to create private property and how to protect it. Because the protection of private property is most compatible with the thing we all want, which is peace with our neighbors, you know. You can't have peace with your neighbors unless you recognize what's the difference between mine and thine. That's how we get along with each other, recognizing who owns what. So in the course of human evolution, we've figured out

how to obtain peace with each other through protection of our rights to private property and the freedom to exchange that property. That's how we benefit from each other is by recognizing and respecting property rights and then engaging in trade with each other. So

Bill Walton (10:08)

Well, as you pointed out as you wrote in your piece in the Epic Times, it's not a plan, it's a prediction. And it's a prediction of what you come up with after people interact voluntarily with each other.

Jeffrey Tucker (10:11)

Mm-hmm. Right.

Right.

That's the critical thing. And there's a view on the left, it's been pervasive for a very long time, that we only have private property because of a ruling class imposition of some law or some conspiracy by the courts or by the king or something. And it was Murray's view, as was his mentor Muses and Ayn Rand, that you have private property.

because of the existence of certain limits in the world, that limit being scarcity, which is to say, we can't all own the same thing at the same time. That's not possible. I mean, this coffee cup is mine. If somebody takes it from me, it's no longer mine. That's why we need to figure out some rules for the engagement of the material world. And the number one rule we've come up with is private property. It didn't have to be imposed by the king or a court. It could be protected by a king or protected by a court.

But it can also be protected by private title companies, which exist all over the United States and always have in the history

of capital.

Bill Walton (11:20)

Well, you see a lot of claims for private property in kindergarten. It's a fairly basic instinct we have that this is mine.

Jeffrey Tucker (11:24)

I'm sorry.

Yeah, and so the idea of Rothbardian anarchism was to say, well, I'm an anarchist, but I believe in private property. And it wasn't just over things like consumer goods or the things around me. He believed strongly that there should be private property in the means of production itself, namely capital. Okay. So he thought that capitalism itself was an outgrowth.

of voluntary interaction. If you leave everybody alone, they will on their own create capitalism. So yeah, that was an unusual view actually.

Bill Walton (12:03)

Well, I've thought for a long time, and you've studied this much more than I have, but one of the principle sources of the wealth creation in the West, Western Europe and so forth from the 12th, 13th, 14th century was the protection of private property. And as we evolved from a feudal society to a bourgeoisie with property and ownership of the means of production and things like that,

That was the thing that drove the dramatic growth in the economy and the innovation. You own your innovation. The king didn't own it.

Jeffrey Tucker (12:35)

Sure. Sure, sure. And even.

Yeah, that's right. And I guarantee you, you can look around the world today and find, and you know, the poorest societies in the world, and they, one of the reasons, the major reason they're poor is because they don't protect property over capital. So you look at a place like Haiti, what happens, you know, everybody in Haiti is entrepreneurial, they're enterprising, they're working hard, they're not lazy people, lazy bums, whatever, everybody's working hard. The problem is anybody gets rich and develops, you know, a pool of capital from which they can hire laborers.

and invest in the future, it gets pillaged by the state. So the absence of private property and capital is a major reason for poverty. And it's also the case that without private property and capital, you don't have exchange of capital, so you can't have financial markets. And then you don't have prices attached to those capital. And without those prices, you can't have accounting.

And without accounting, you can't have profit and loss. Without profit and loss, you have no idea what you're doing. So the whole society collapses into chaos.

Bill Walton (13:42)

That's why the Klaus Schwab, world economic Davos idea that you will own nothing and you will be happy is an extremely sinister idea and is likely to take us right back to that 12th century.

Jeffrey Tucker (13:55)

Kind of, it's a weird view. It's almost, he's saying you will own nothing, but maybe he and his friends will own everything. Will own everything, you know, so.

Bill Walton (13:58)

which might be.

He will. So you point out that, and I think this is an important distinction, he's been called right wing. And you talk about the right in France, the right in Prussia, the right in America. Amplify that.

Jeffrey Tucker (14:18)

Yeah, I don't, so we have to reject this language of right-wing to apply to somebody like Mila or anybody with a classical liberal impulse like this. There is such a thing as a political right. In France, it was attached to the partisans of the old regime, right? The opponents of the French Revolution and the people who wanted unity in state and church. That's true throughout Europe and that's true in the Prussian empire.

Bill Walton (14:40)

Yeah.

Jeffrey Tucker (14:47)

after the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Hegel said, look, what we really need is complete unity between the church and the state, and then everything in society should follow along to that lead. The state and the church together are God-like, okay? So that was considered right-wing in 1820, impression. Right-wing in the UK and sort of commonwealth countries has always been about a Tory control. It was about

the lands attached to the monarchy and the preservation of a kind of a traditionalist hierarchical society. Okay. So that was what right wing meant in France and Prussia in the UK. Right wing in the United States doesn't really have much of a history really before the 20th century and mostly was used as an epithet to throw it anybody who resisted socialism. But if you wanted to identify

right wing in America if you wanted to do that. It would be associated with sort of Hamiltonian industrial protectionism and mercantilism, that kind of stuff. But anyway.

Bill Walton (15:52)

Well, it's also associated with the religious, right, who wants to use the state to enforce their idea about what ought to be. So it's still using the state and not letting voluntary exchange or free choice rule the outcome.

Jeffrey Tucker (15:56)

That's right. Yeah.

And it's very tempting in our times to, because we get so bludgeoned by the left, we get tired of it and they keep calling us right wing. At some point you just want to go, okay, fine, I'm right wing. You know, I get it. I understand it, but it's not, yeah, kind of, right? But it's not historically correct. So I really do wish people would drop that and really resist that tendency. These ideologies of left and right,

Bill Walton (16:22)

Ha ha ha!

It's like being a call to racist.

Jeffrey Tucker (16:38)

are not, neither of them were really consistently protective of the idea of human rights and freedom. And freedom is the word around which I've rallied my entire life. That's where my intellectual imagination was kicked off. When I was in high school, I fell in love with this whole idea of freedom. So the true partisans of freedom, we can borrow from the left and borrow from the right, but what we're trying to do is cobble together a different outlook.

Bill Walton (16:51)

Me too.

Jeffrey Tucker (17:07)

And one version of that is what Millet's pushing forward as anarcho-capitalism. Now, you made a point earlier, and I think it's worth reinforcing, this is not a plan. This is not a plan for society. It's not a central plan. It's not like, here's my legislation, anarcho-capitalist legislation to recreate society in my ideological form. That's not it at all. That is to let society alone.

defend human rights, defend private property as understood widely within the community of owners, and then let society evolve on its own. So it's the opposite of a central plan. The other thing is that anarchists were typically utopians. They imagined that they would recreate human nature in some way. Marx believed this. Every socialist believes this. That once we achieve their great revolution, we'll all change as people in some way become.

I don't know, compassion or sharing or something.

Bill Walton (18:04)

But the idea, and I think it's true and it's not well understood, is that this is absolutely not about anarchy and that people, if left alone, they don't end up in a state of nature where everybody's fighting for everything. They end up cooperating. They end up dealing with each other. They respect each other's rights. And they create contracts that they enforce. You know, they've got law, common law that...

protects rights and contracts. And it's an orderly society that promotes freedom and wellbeing and it's just the opposite of anarchy.

Jeffrey Tucker (18:40)

Yeah. Murray often endorsed Proudhon's slogan that order is not the mother but the daughter of liberty. He often said this, you know, that first you need liberty and then the result is an orderly society and the state itself is the source of disorder. And that's empirically true. Anywhere you want to look in the world today, whether it's the United

anywhere, China for that matter. The state has always believed that it's a source of order, but actually society contains within itself the capacity to create its own orderly

society.

Bill Walton (19:18)

Let me try an example near and dear to us. We were both fierce opponents of the lockdowns and everything that happened with COVID. And you look at what the state did, the federal state, local governments, locking people down, they shut down this business, declared it was not essential, and so on and so forth. They went in and decided in their infinite wisdom to you can do this, you can't do that, rule from on high. And what they did is they broke the economy and we're still paying them.

because the economy is a whole set of micro relationships among people and businesses and each other, supply chain things like that, all these all these edicts from the state wrecked an economy which was actually doing just fine thank you and now we're still we're still trying to heal that.

Jeffrey Tucker (20:05)

They said in those days that they didn't care what happens to the economy because the economy is just a stock market That that's what Fauci said. I'll leave the stock market to others. I mean the economy is what we do every day

Bill Walton (20:19)

Real real quick make give us the distinction between the financial economy and the real economy

Jeffrey Tucker (20:25)

The real economy is what we buy and sell and consume and what we do and it's what we work and it's our charitable giving And the it's the paying the bills of the church you're going to this weekend You know, it's everything that we do in the material world. That is what we call the economy. It's not just Yeah No, it's and so they said oh who cares what happens to the stock market? We've got a disease on the loose Well, they ruined everything they ruined education they ruined

Bill Walton (20:43)

And that's what we're talking about. It's not the stock market.

Jeffrey Tucker (20:54)

a church going, they ruined our ability to go see our families. If they're sick to gather for weddings and funerals, that's the economy. The economy is how we live. Mises always had this great slogan, he said, economics is the pith of life. I always like that because it's the pith meaning. Yeah, it's a metaphor from the tree. The pith is the thing inside the tree, the thickness that makes the tree grow.

Bill Walton (21:13)

Piff.

Okay.

Jeffrey Tucker (21:23)

He said it was the pith of life itself, and therefore it's the proper study of every human being. So yeah, they were very dismissive towards the economy, and that was very dangerous because it has shattered. It's shattered our psychology. Our health has never been worse. We've never been more depressed, mental illness, substance abuse, learning loss, isolation from our neighbors, meanness in general. It's all taken a toll.

Bill Walton (21:39)

Yeah.

Jeffrey Tucker (21:52)

since lockdowns.

Bill Walton (21:53)

Well, that's a topic of conversation all the time now with a lot of my friends we get together and we say people seem to be changed. And it's hard to describe, but it's real.

Jeffrey Tucker (22:06)

I agree with you. And so here's a great example. The state attempted to impose an order on us and look what they did. They created mass disorder and disorientation and confusion. We're far from having recovered from that.

Bill Walton (22:20)

Well, Murray Rothbard took it all away. He didn't think we needed a state at all. In other words, if we're going to get together to, if we need roads or bridges or things like that, instead of the state doing it, we'll develop a voluntary group that gets together and we'll pitch in and we'll make that happen. That's a tough, that's a tall order.

Jeffrey Tucker (22:40)

It is a tall order, but Murray always proposed this as an intellectual challenge. He would always ask you, can you think of anything that society needs necessarily, absolutely needs to have done that the state can do better than people can on their own working through voluntary interactions and exchanges? I mean, that's the way Murray put the challenge to me. And I thought about it for many months, did a lot of reading. I couldn't come up with anything.

And so I came up to him because I didn't, you know, here's the thing. I didn't want to be an anarchist. You know, I mean, do I look like an addict? I mean, I didn't want to be an anarchist.

Bill Walton (23:19)

Well, you don't look the part, but I, beneath that, beneath that, uh, rather dapper exterior lies a real revolutionary. I know that.

Jeffrey Tucker (23:22)

But I said I said to myself

So I didn't want to be an anarchist at all, you know, but he was making me very uncomfortable. And I finally thought about it a long time. And I finally, the next time I saw him, I said, Murray, I've been thinking about this a lot. So if I conclude that there's something that definitely needs to be done in society, that there's nothing that we definitely need that the state is by definition and by experience better at doing.

than society itself. If I can make that conclusion, does that make me an anarchist? And he said, well, certainly it makes you an anarchist. That's what you are. I took a big, deep breath and I said, well, I guess I'm an anarchist. And he was, you know, he was a darling man. He was quite short and very effusive and exuberant. And he just jumped up in the air like a little elf. Leaped three, yeah.

Bill Walton (24:23)

A converse.

Jeffrey Tucker (24:25)

three feet forward and grab my hand and say, I'm so glad Jeffrey, you're an anarchist, you're an anarchist now. And I'm like, oh, okay. So every time I have these discussions with people and that same more or less conversation is replicated, I always try to reproduce his mannerisms.

Bill Walton (24:46)

So, but you know, we're digging into this a bit. Another thing you point out is that this is, there are lots of people who might call themselves this, but there are lots of different versions of it. I mean, you know, we all, I, you know, I was all caught up in Anne Rand and Atlas Shrugged and Bountainhead, but Anne Rand believed in the state. And so there's a distinction between what we're talking about and what she thought.

Jeffrey Tucker (25:05)

She did.

There is, so he was a real fan of Ayn Rand, but, and I really have to say this name on this podcast because it doesn't get any attention. The name of the man who actually converted Murray to the anarchist side, his name is Frank Choterov. So it's C-H-O-D, Chod-O-R-O-V.

Bill Walton (25:32)

Mm.

Jeffrey Tucker (25:37)

And he was the son of some Jewish immigrants who I think from Russia in the 1890s, but was a very prominent writer. He used to write a little bit for National Review, but wrote for the New Individualist. He started what is now today called the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, which used to be the International Society of Individualists. A really important writer in post-

war America in New York intellectual circles. And even now his writing is really compelling. But he and Murray became really good friends. Chadoff, famous, who said, if anybody dares to call me a conservative, I'll give him a punch in the nose. So, you know, he was just a really good libertarian anarchist, but unusual in the sense he had very broad reading. And he was reviving, you know, an old tradition in Europe.

of people who believe both in private property and in the possibility of a stateless society, meaning a society without a state, and convinced Murray of that. And Murray was attached to this sort of iron-ran view that you had to have a state to protect property, provide courts, provide police, this kind of stuff. And Trout Rostead looked. Anywhere you look, you can see private police are better than government.

provided police, which ended up protecting criminals. I can tell you that's true. It really is true. I had a convenience store owner two weeks ago tell me that the state blitz, I'm sorry about that change in my, in my camera.

Bill Walton (27:05)

Well, we're seeing that right now.

You were making a point. It was a

good one. We needed a close up here.

Jeffrey Tucker (27:16)

Oh, I know this is terrible. Let's get back to normal. Okay.

Bill Walton (27:21)

Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my close up. Okay.

Jeffrey Tucker (27:27)

crazy. Yeah, I'm gonna turn that off now. Okay, back to normal. All this smart technology isn't so smart after all. So in the first generation of it, but you know, this convenience store owner, he had a sign on his door, it said, no pack backpacks allowed. So why aren't backpacks allowed? And he said, he said, well, because people walk in, they fill up their backpack with goods, and they run out the door. I said, why don't you call the police? He said, the police, the police do nothing.

They protect the criminals. The police are on the side of the petty criminals. That's what he told me. And I was like, oh, this reminds me of what Charteroff told Murray. Another thing that he would point out about the question of courts, the courts are unbelievably unfair and incredibly inefficient. You would always rather go into private arbitration than courts, that should tell you something. And in terms of the protection of property, Rand always thought you needed government to protect private property, to assign titles and that sort of thing.

Trader Afri point out we have a long tradition in the Western world of title companies. The private markets themselves are very good at enforcing and deducing and recording who owns what. If you've ever tried to buy a house that doesn't have a clean title, you know this problem. You've got to have a clean title even now, or else that exchange will not be made. Well, that's not because of the government, that's because of the banks and the title companies.

and your own personal interest. If you don't have a clean title, you're not gonna be able to resell your house later. So there's this weird way in which all the things we think the state is supposed to act on our behalf, actually markets are better at doing those very things. There's another aspect to this, which is that it's actually quite dangerous to create a state because as Acton said, power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. It's just a tendency that happens.

Bill Walton (28:57)

Sure.

W-w-

Jeffrey Tucker (29:24)

We have yet to figure out a very good technology for restraining the state once we have it. We've tried kings, we've tried constitutions, we've tried all sorts of things, and nothing really seems to work. Every time somebody gets power, they tend to abuse it. So putting all this together, you come up with a kind of a beautiful vision of what he called anarcho-capitalism, which is an orderly society, it protects private property, it protects human rights.

but doesn't introduce the grave moral hazard of having a monopoly and power on the part of the state.

Bill Walton (29:58)

Well, we're about to see how this works in Argentina. He's now, what, been in office three, four weeks. Yeah, that's about right, about a month. I guess he's already started announcing the shutdown of agencies. And Argentina, as you know, was one of the wealthiest countries in the world in 1900, and then bad ideas, socialism, and worse, Marxism, and seizing private property, all the things that we're saying.

you ought not to do is exactly what they did. So they're an example, an extreme example of this bad idea has gone wild. He's now trying to bring that back into alignment with something that we'd like to see happen, that the entrenched interest against him doing that are enormous and he wants to shut down the agencies and then the world, the IMF and the World Bank, they're already opposed to what he wants to do.

Jeffrey Tucker (30:49)

enormous.

Bill Walton (30:58)

So it'll be, what's your, are you following this and how do you think?

Jeffrey Tucker (31:02)

I am, but you know, I don't speak Spanish and so I have to rely on others to help me through it. I wish him all the best. And my first thought on this so far is it seems to be going well. He seems to understand the urgency of acting now. He passed some new edicts, you know, abolishing all sorts of agencies. Let's hope he didn't consolidate them. You know, I would have to look at the details, but it looks so far pretty good.

and getting rid of labor legislation, business regulation. Look, if he can act fast, and we can fire up the freedom impulses within people, and inspire some ebullient optimism towards enterprise and protection of property, and get rid of all the regulations of bureaucracies, we could see this economy turn around very quickly. Now, there are two enormous problems he's dealing with. One is the government spending angle.

because the publicly funded pensions are the number one problem Argentina has right now. This is where the state has obligated itself to pay people vast amounts of the population forever, you know, an enormous amount of money for doing absolutely nothing. I mean, this is like the equivalent of our social security except much worse actually. So it doesn't just apply to public.

sector employees, although it does apply to them. It applies to vast numbers of population. But you know, it's weird because it obligates everybody else in the population to forever pay for these continuing obligations that are not actually funded. So what are you going to do with those? I don't really have the answer. I've talked to a lot of his advisors a long time about this. There's no easy way. You can maybe sell off the obligations to other, you know, I don't know, maybe issue

issue bonds that are going to be privately held. I'm not sure how you cut those out. The other problem, of course, is the grave problem of the monetary system. And he wants dollarization, which is a great slogan, but you have to have dollars in order to dollarize. He doesn't have dollars, at least not enough. And the Argentinian currency, it's just not robust enough to really buy the dollar.

Bill Walton (32:57)

Mm-hmm.

But the three countries in Central and South America, I can't remember, I think Panama's had it all, been in a dollar system from the early 1900s. And there's a couple others that don't spring to mind. And they've dollarized and it's worked. And inflation went away. Are you sure this shortage of dollars is, I think that's a technical issue that somebody clever like you and me could help them figure out. I don't know that.

Jeffrey Tucker (33:31)

Yeah, yeah, I agree with that.

to me.

Well, and you can also sell off public enterprises, which I think is one of the things he's considering doing, which is going to give rise to all sorts of complaints about cronyism and allowing bandits to take over national property. And there's gonna be a lot of propaganda around that if you start to privatize in all the industries. And there are dangers associated with privatization, for sure, it does introduce problems of cronyism, that sort of thing, but that could raise dollars. There are two,

Bill Walton (33:46)

Well, there you go.

Jeffrey Tucker (34:12)

There's a good thing about dollarization and a bad thing. The good thing is that it gets rid of monetary policy. Like we don't have discretionary monetary policy anymore, which is wonderful because it'll stabilize the currency that people use.

Bill Walton (34:26)

Well, I'd like to then I'd like to dollarize the dollar.

Jeffrey Tucker (34:32)

Yeah, that's right.

Bill Walton (34:34)

I know those guys over there and I think they need a higher level of authority. Right.

Jeffrey Tucker (34:40)

Yeah, we need dollarization here, right? Just to get rid of a discretionary Federal Reserve policy. Yeah, that's right. So it eliminates, it creates a currency board. So you have a fixed basically, fixed supply of money, or at least it only increases insofar as the dollars can flow into the country. And so it eliminates Keynesian monetary policy and dramatically reduces the chances of inflation. I mean, the bad part of it is that suddenly you're dependent on the dollar, right? And the Fed is not entirely trustworthy.

And there's some people who believe that dollarized economies are more dependent upon the US as a political entity and become in effect part of the US empire.

Bill Walton (35:20)

but they're also now part of the Chinese empire. I mean, if all the governments of Central and South America or center left or even Marxist, even Marxist and China through Belt and Road and the other things they've been doing has real influence in those countries. And it's a Chinese block. And I think if there were one thing we could do was to bring these countries into the dollar block. And

Jeffrey Tucker (35:23)

Yeah.

Yeah.

Bill Walton (35:46)

A little Americanization wouldn't hurt them. I think their people would welcome it, but compared to the Chinese.

Jeffrey Tucker (35:48)

Well, I think that's where they're, they certainly were. Yeah. Ideally what Millet would do, and again, his advisors have said that he intends to do this, is really establish a kind of a country with competitive currencies. So that yes, you have an official currency of the dollar, but that other things that trade with the dollar, for example, you know, cryptocurrency, Ethereum, or Bitcoin, whatever it is going to be, or gold or silver or whatever the thing is, or some other foreign currency.

can also be used in payment of taxes and public debts and that sort of thing. So you have a society with many currencies floating around. Now, you know what's interesting about this? Americans cannot conceive of it. I mean, we just can't. I mean, for some Americans just think you can only have one currency in one country and that's it. In most parts of the world, people understand that's not true. I learned this years ago when I went to Nicaragua.

under Daniel Ortega sometime in the 1980s. And I was astonished to see seven and eight year old kids out on the streets beating the official exchange rate for the Nicaraguan peso or whatever it is, relative to the dollar, they were trading and arbitraizing currencies. I mean, these kids, little young kids of seven to eight years old with better math skills than graduate students at Harvard.

Bill Walton (37:05)

Thanks for watching.

Jeffrey Tucker (37:15)

And they're able to communicate with the market exchange rates are I mean most people in the world are very good at Dealing with multiple currencies they can keep the math in their head. It's just a matter of

Bill Walton (37:26)

Well, that was Europe before the Europe as well. I remember traveling around Europe with pockets full of this, that, and the other thing. And, you know, we, yeah.

Jeffrey Tucker (37:33)

Yeah, it's even true in Canada now you can use US dollars or you know, but it's only Americans have some of the one of the few people in the world that really believe there only can be one currency in a country and that's just not true. So ideally and by the way, Miele understands this and his advisors do that a competitive currency situation would be the ideal outcome. So not just full dollar monopolization but really a genuine competitive currency environment.

Bill Walton (38:01)

I wanted to get away a little bit from the technical to the philosophical and the human. There are a lot of people, including me, that thinks in America, freedom has lost its status as an ideal for an awful lot of people. And we live in a society where people feel like victims and the people ought to be taken care of, protected. And freedom and self-determination go hand in hand and what Millet is...

Supposing is something where people begin to take charge of their own lives again, and they've got to function in a way that's self-reliant, self-protective, taken care of, and a lot of people don't want that. And a lot of people have fallen into bad habits as part of the state providing everything. I think that we have that problem here. And what do you think about the...

the cultural habits that he's going to be forced to change to make it work there.

Jeffrey Tucker (39:03)

That's empowering and thrilling. And yeah, but again, yeah. I don't know, I don't know.

Bill Walton (39:06)

I think so. You think so, but I'm not so sure. Well, I don't know that we're, I don't know that we're the, uh, I don't know.

Jeffrey Tucker (39:13)

But you know, the human person is built with creativity, imagination, and a longing to be free. They just sometimes need to be reminded of it from time to time and have leaders that strongly believe in it and preach it. I strongly believe in preaching the idea of freedom. It's one of the things that drove me out of my mind about Obama, President Obama. I mean, he's so erudite and so intelligent, so well-read, and he could do, you know,

Bill Walton (39:21)

I quite agree.

Jeffrey Tucker (39:41)

interviews lasting hours where you could reprint every sentence. And it was always so impressive. But there's one word he never said. And that word was freedom. He just didn't really believe in it. And it was my problem with the Bushes too. They didn't seem to believe in it. And I don't know. Biden, the last time I've heard him say the word freedom was about, forget your freedom, you need to get your shot. So

You remember those days, right? And the people online were spelling freedom free dumb with an M-B at the end. So yeah, it's tragic how American culture has just been consumed by this sense of dependency and despotism and it's highly dangerous. Like we think about freedom in our patriotic songs, but do we really believe in it and practice it in our public lives anymore? It seems like not much, not much anymore. So, you know, God bless Millie for at least.

Bill Walton (40:10)

Oh yeah.

Not much.

Jeffrey Tucker (40:37)

talking about it, he's talking the talk, and he's walking the walk a little bit too. I hope we don't have to decline as far as Argentina did before we turn the corner. I mean, the lockdowns were a transformative moment for America because we experienced the fullness of total control of our lives. Churches, weddings, even domestic capacity restrictions, where we could travel.

It ruined so much. It ruined enterprise. It ruined millions of businesses.

Bill Walton (41:09)

Well, at Brownstone, you've gathered some of the best thinkers around who are very concerned about this issue. Is there a consensus there about how we get Americans to start reclaiming the notion of their freedom, independence?

Jeffrey Tucker (41:16)

Yeah.

Yeah, I think if there is a consensus, and I have so many very, very smart people who have a history on the left, or maybe in the middle, or maybe a little bit conservative, but nobody cares about this nonsense anymore. When you're in the middle of a crisis like this, I would say if there's a consensus at Brownstone, and frankly, we don't talk about politics much, or political ideology much.

But everybody agrees we need human rights and freedom. And if we could start by enforcing the Bill of Rights as we originally understood the term, and having an ideal of constitutional government, that would be great. So it's really frustrating. The answers are there for us. I mean, they're right in front of us. We know what the answers are. But getting from here to there, it's gonna require things that people are really not prepared to do. And you've got a whole ruling class now that's so dependent upon this gigantic administrative state

apparatus.

these trillions of dollars in spending, and we've got all these debts, and so much cronyism everywhere. How you unravel that, I don't know. Millet's trying to figure out a way out of this. This is a really important experiment for us as Americans, because we're going to face this problem. We have never actually seen, and I would say in all of history, a modern, industrialized, developed,

country with a democratic government, reform itself away from the social democratic administrative state rule with gigantic governments and gigantic government spending. We saw reform taking place in the old socialist countries in Eastern Europe and Russia. We've seen reforms here and there. A little bit of reform in the 1980s here, that was a good start. But the kind of...

big reforms that we need that's really gonna fire up freedom and give it new life and energy in our time. We have yet to really see what that looks like in a modernized industrial democracy like the US. So if it can happen in Argentina, then it can happen in the US too.

Bill Walton (43:32)

Well, let's continue this conversation. Let's follow root for him, help him, whatever we can do. And I think also show that example to Americans. Where can we your website is Brownstone Institute dot org.

Jeffrey Tucker (43:47)

Yeah, that's right. And I try to write more and more for Brownstone, but I write every day for Epoch Times too.

Bill Walton (43:55)

I don't even want to think about your writing schedule, Jeffrey. You spend 22 hours a day writing, as near as I can tell.

Jeffrey Tucker (44:01)

It is it's sometimes gets out of control. I noticed yesterday that I had five articles in me part times in two days Okay, that's

Bill Walton (44:09)

Well, they're good, though. Keep it up. If I'm your editor, I'm saying, you know, I'm going to tie this guy to his to his laptop.

Jeffrey Tucker (44:17)

Thank you It's fun, but you know There's so much to write about and our crisis the crisis of our times is so overwhelming And somebody the threats are so ominous like I really do believe that we all have a Obligation to throw ourselves into the struggle and thank you for your Podcasts because you really have and you're doing a lot of good, but it's gonna take a lot of us doing a lot of things

to get us out of this mess. It's probably gonna consume the better part of most of the rest of our lives, and that's okay. But yes, Brownstone is my baby, I love it. And we're a nice new think tank, I guess, but I think of it as a research institute. We have working groups on censorship, working groups on pandemic planning, and the World Health Organization, and starting a new working group on central bank digital currencies and the problem there, and

monetary reform. Yeah.

Bill Walton (45:03)

I've done some work on that too. So, well, this is, all right, well, you're in, I'm there with you. We will keep pushing this, trying to educate people and get people used to the idea of freedom again. So, Jeffrey Tucker, founder of Brownstone Institute, great thinker, charming rock on tour. Hail fellow, well met, I can go on and on. Anyway.

Jeffrey Tucker (45:26)

Thank you.

Yeah, there you go.

Bill Walton (45:32)

Thank you and I'll see you again in a month or two or three or whenever we get back to talk about the next big idea.

Jeffrey Tucker (45:38)

Pleasure and thanks so much for all you do.

Bill Walton (45:40)

Okay, thanks.