

This episode of *George Washington Slept Here* explores civic education and citizen preparedness for leadership with special guest [Jack Tomarchio](#). Jack is a seasoned expert in federal intelligence, and throughout his interview, he delves into the crucial topics of political polarization and the Democracy Perception Index. Listeners will gain valuable insights on cybersecurity as he shares his experiences and observations. Don't miss this captivating conversation on civic education, the hurdles of polarization, and the ever-changing field of cybersecurity.

Quotes

"Through public service, people from different backgrounds can come together, learn from each other, and build connections." - Jack Tomarchio

"True leadership lies in doing what is right, even when faced with challenges, and placing the needs of the public above personal gain."- Jack Tomarchio

"Be available, accessible, and build trust with those you serve, even with high-ranking officials." - Jack Tomarchio

Featured Guest

Jack Tomarchio

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Intro:

We the people of the United States. A House divided against itself cannot stand. Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Jason Raia:

Hello and welcome to *George Washington Slept Here*. A new civic education podcast from Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, where we explore American history, politics, economics, and the idea of liberty through conversations with some of our favorite thinkers, writers, and leaders. I'm Jason Raia, Chief Operating Officer at Freedoms Foundation, and this week's host of *George Washington Slept Here*. In this podcast the format is simple. It's a long-form conversation with a friend of the Freedoms Foundation where we can learn something new. Before we go any further, we encourage everyone to subscribe to *George Washington Slept Here* wherever you listen to podcasts and make sure you get every episode as soon as it is out. We love hearing from our listeners. So please email us at gwshpodcast@gmail.com with your comments, questions, or suggestions and hit us up at Freedoms Foundation's social media @FFVF on Twitter, and on Facebook and Instagram just @FreedomsFoundation. Today's interview with a longtime friend of Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, national security expert, and Army Reserve JAG Officer Jack Tomarchio. Hello, Jack.

Jack Tomarchio:

Jason, good morning. How are you?

Jason Raia:

I'm great. So happy to have you here. For those of you who are new to the podcast, our structure is pretty simple. We're going to ask Jack about his origin story. We are then going to talk about sort of his career and what he's doing today. And then as we do with all of our guests, we're going to jump into talking about America today, particularly the subject of political polarization, common ground, and how we can better interact with our fellow Americans. And finally, we end with the quiz, as we do every week. So, Jack, tell us, where were you born and raised?

Jack Tomarchio:

Well, I was born in Philadelphia, so this isn't that exotic considering we're in Valley Forge. I was born in Philadelphia. I was raised in the Philadelphia suburbs, the western suburbs not too far from here in a place called Marion, Pennsylvania, and Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. Went to grade school in Marion, Pennsylvania, and high school in Malvern, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Penn State University with a bachelor's degree in history. And that's the early educational background.

Jason Raia:

So who -- who were the people, and what were the things that influenced you early on and sort of set you on your path that eventually led to Penn State and law school?

Jack Tomarchio:

Well, I was always interested in history, always interested in current events, and always interested in the world. I remember my parents were great supporters of that. They used to get National Geographic and I used to pour through those things. And every month when one came, I was just riveted to National Geographic and looking at the maps and learning about the world. And then one of my kids down the street, his parents subscribed to American Heritage magazine when they had the old hardcover American Heritage magazines. And so we would go over to his house, and I guess we were kind of nerds. We would sit around on a Sunday afternoon and read American Heritage stories, articles about American history, and I was always interested in the military. My father was a World War II veteran. My uncles were all World War II veterans. Everybody's dad in my neighborhood was a World War II veteran. So, you heard a lot of these stories. And I was just interested in the military, and I was interested in the military and in history, and I just had a real affinity for that. And I majored in history because I liked it, and somebody told me, major in what I like. And so, I could have majored in something I didn't like as some of my friends did, they majored in things they didn't like, but they did it because they thought, well, I don't like accounting, but I'll major in accounting because I can get a job as an accountant.

Jason Raia:

That's funny you say that because that was always the fight with my parents, as I ended up majoring in philosophy, and they kept saying, well, you take an accounting course. And I'm like, I don't know. And I still find to this day, even though I work very closely with our accounting department, I'm not a fan of accounting. So, it was a good choice.

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah, absolutely. And I'm very happy that I was a history major and my daughter was a history major. One of my kids was, but no, I think it was a great major. And the reason I went to law school was because I didn't know what to do with a history degree. I thought, well, I don't think I want to teach, although maybe I would have liked it. I don't know. I know you were a teacher - history teacher. But I was also going to go to the Army because I had an ROTC scholarship to college. And so, I know I owed the Army a couple of things. A couple of years. I owed them four years of active duty. And when I was at basic training, I remember marching, walking, not marching, walking on these patrols at 2:00 in the morning, going through swamps and going through rivers and having chigger bites and mosquitoes, not getting any sleep. And I'm like, this would not be fun for four years. And with a history degree, what are you going to do? You're probably going to go in the infantry or something, because a lot of guys did.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

And I thought I don't think I want to do that. And I wasn't sure I wanted to do the infantry or the artillery. And so, I thought, there's got to be a better way to make the Army work for me because my father told me when I was joining the service, he said, I'll give you some advice that was given to me by an old sea salt on my ship, the USS Alacrity in 1942. And he said, never work for the service. Always make the service work for you. And I thought about that, and I said, that's a pretty good idea. So, I took that as a mantra, and I thought, well when I was exploring what branch to go into, what I wanted to do, I was looking at the different branches - MP's, intelligence branch, and all they had were these little brochures. And the one branch for the Army lawyer is the JAG Corps. Usually, the other guy pictures had guys in the field blowing things up, right? Picture of the JAG guys had these guys in their class A uniforms walking out of a building carrying squash racquets. And I thought, squash racquets? That's a pretty nice thing to do because I played squash.

Jason Raia:

There you go.

Jack Tomarchio:

So, I said, I think I'll try the law school thing. So, I decided I would shoot for law school. And I got into law school, and I received an educational delay from the Army to go to law school. And it worked out well because I got to go to law school for three years. The Army didn't bother me for three years. I didn't have to do anything. I was a commissioned Officer. I didn't get paid, but that's okay. And then at the end of my three years, I took the bar, passed the bar, and then I got orders and said, you're here now, reporting to this is where you're going to be.

Jason Raia:

Okay? So, you used the ROTC scholarship to get through Penn State. You owe the Army a certain amount of time, four years. And then as you're looking at where to go, you decide that law school fit both with your history degree as well as a path in the Army that looks a little more inviting. And of course, for those who don't know a lot about JAG, the Judge Advocate General Corps, those who have seen the different branch but the same idea, the great movie with Tom Cruise and Jack Nicholson.

Jack Tomarchio:

A Few Good Men.

Jason Raia:

A Few Good Men. That's what JAG does - you are prosecuting or defending things that happen within the military that are violations of the code or civilian law as well, correct?

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah. Well, you do a lot of things, and for me, I still want to do Army stuff, too. I did enjoy the Army. So, I volunteered to go to jump school, and I became a paratrooper. And not many lawyers in the Army become paratroopers, so you probably know what you're going to do. They're probably going to be sent to an airborne unit. But I wanted to do that. I wanted to jump out of airplanes, and I thought that would be something that would be really exciting and

interesting. And I couldn't get into the Army jump school because they had some rule that said you can't go to a graduate school until you go to-- you can't go to what they call a TDY school, a temporary duty school, like airborne school, until you've finished your officer basic class. And since that was, I wanted to go when I was commissioned at 22 after college, I didn't want to go at 26 after law school on the bar exam, right? I couldn't get in. And I found some guy who was a Marine midshipman at Penn State, and he had these really cool gold wings on. I said, how'd you get those wings? He goes to the Navy-Marine Corps jump school. I said I didn't know there was such a school. He says there is. I said, where is it? And he said Lakehurst Naval Air Station, New Jersey.

Jason Raia:

That's not far.

Jack Tomarchio:

So, I said, can I go? And he said, I don't know, but I'll give you the phone number. And I called this guy up there, and it was a crusty old Marine Gunnery Sergeant. And he said you can get orders from the Army, we'll take you. So, I went back and hadn't gone to law school yet, but I played lawyer, and I said, I'd like to go there. And I said you can't because you got this regulation. I said, but it says I can't go to a TDY Army school. This is a TDY Navy school. They're like, well, yeah. I said, therefore, it doesn't apply. I said, well, technically, it doesn't. I said, therefore I can go, and I'll go on my own nickel. And they're like, so if you get hurt, I said, it's on me. If you break your leg, it's on me.

Jason Raia:

So, in other words, you were definitely meant for law school.

Jack Tomarchio:

Probably was at that time.

Jason Raia:

So, you go to law school, you pass the bar. You're now in the Army - 82nd Airborne. Where do you end up, and what's your military service look like for the next four years?

Jack Tomarchio:

Well, it's really interesting. I mean, it was four years at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, which is not the garden spot of the world, but it was where a lot of things happened. And in those four years, I did about everything I think I could have done in four years as an Army Captain in a JAG. First of all, you start out doing legal assistance. You're just dealing with soldiers, and they're minor or major legal problems. They do that for about eight months, nine months. And then I became a prosecutor. And the idea is that they want you to be a prosecutor first because you're going to be in the courtroom, and you're going to make mistakes, and you're going to learn. So, they said, well if you're going to make mistakes, you might as well make a mistake on the government's time and dime, not on a defendant's dime.

Jason Raia:

That's really progressive to think that if you're going to make a mistake, make it on the prosecution side, whereas you don't make a mistake and somebody's innocence is lost to the system because you didn't get something right.

Jack Tomarchio:

Right, you're sending some poor slob to jail because you screwed up.

Jason Raia:

Yeah. In some ways, I think the way the Freedoms Foundation, our people would think about it, that idea of the civil liberties of the individual outweighs, in some ways, at least for young lawyers in the JAG Corps getting the prosecution right. That's it. Like, if you have to choose one, we want to make sure that the person being defended is innocent until proven guilty, that they're the top priority. And that's interesting to know. I don't know what I would have thought that.

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah. The idea was really, again, as you say, it was progressive, and it really was to protect the rights of the accused. Because when you're a brand-new lawyer, you're going to make mistakes.

Jason Raia:

Absolutely.

Jack Tomarchio:

No matter where you went to law school or how smart you were, you're going to make mistakes. So, I did prosecution for a while, and then your seniors determined whether you're ready. And one day I got a call from my Colonel, and he said, we think you're ready to go over and defend people. Really? Okay. And I absolutely love the defense work. It was way more exciting than the prosecution. I mean, the prosecution was okay, but the defense work was fun because you got to know the whole story and you didn't approve anything. All you had to do was make sure that the government couldn't prove its case if you could, and you just sat back and shot holes in the government's case. That's what you did. I loved that. So, I really enjoyed being a defense counsel. I had some really great cases. One of them actually made national attention and got on *20/20* - the TV show. And then I had a side jaw down there. When I was at Fort Bragg, I was asked to come over and be detailed to a special missions unit. And Fort Bragg is full of those kinds of places, units. These are very high-speed units, and it was very hush-hush. And so, I went over there on an as-needed basis, whenever they needed me, they knew who to call. So, I would get these really exotic phone calls from these guys, and I'd get these warning orders like, clear your case docket for the next month and be prepared to pack tropical clothing. Where am I going? We'll talk to you later. It must be one of those kinds of things. So, I got to do some really interesting things. And then the last thing that was really neat was for me, again, as a young guy in his twenties, I got to do two deployments while I was at Fort Bragg. I did the Grenada invasion.

Jason Raia:

Okay?

Jack Tomarchio:

Right.

Jason Raia:

For those who remember that's during the Reagan Administration, mid '80's?

Jack Tomarchio:

'83.

Jason Raia:

'83.

Jack Tomarchio:

It was right after the Marines were killed in Beirut.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

And we got called out, and I thought we, we got called out in the middle of the night, I came in, and I thought we were going to go to Beirut. And I remember walking in, and they said, we're going to Grenada. And I'm like, where's Grenada?

Jason Raia:

Right. Nobody in America knew where Grenada was.

Jack Tomarchio:

No, I mean, I knew a Granada, Spain, and I thought - Are we fighting, are we fighting the Spanish American war again? I thought we were fighting them and so I did that. And that was a very short engagement, but it was really very interesting for me. I got to do a lot of interesting things there. And then I did a six-month peacekeeping mission in the Sinai in Egypt, and I got to work with the Multinational Force and Observers as one of the two American councils. And that was fascinating to be doing peacekeeping work and dealing with those kinds of issues between the Egyptian military and the Israeli military.

Jason Raia:

Right. Because there's the crossing from the Sinai Peninsula into Israel, southern Israel, and of course, at different times, it's closed, and it's still in the news today. We still hear fairly regularly about the tunnels and about what passes. So, you were there as part of a Multinational Force.

Jack Tomarchio:

So it was for me, it was a great experience. I did it for four years. I did pretty much everything I wanted to do in four years, or I think I could have done it. And I had the option to stay in the Army and asked me if I would like to go to Special Forces school and become a Green Beret lawyer. I was very tempted to do that, but I knew that that would be well, I was getting married at a time that would be problematic because those guys are never around. And I also knew that if I did that, I owe the Army another, like, five years. And at that point, you might as well stay in for a career. And I thought, well, I don't think I really want to stay in for a career. So, I decided to not do that, and I don't regret that. But I stayed in the Reserves.

Jason Raia:

Yeah. So, you finish up your four-year deployment, and I have sort of two questions. I know you go on in law to become a litigator, and I'm wondering if part of that is your JAG Corps experience, that you've been litigating, because people know there are litigators and then there are contract lawyers and lots of lawyers who never go into the courtroom. But you were in the courtroom as this very young Army Officer, and so how does that impact your career after the Army?

Jack Tomarchio:

Sure. Well, I did stay with litigation. I really enjoyed courtroom work, and I wanted to continue to do it. So, I went to a civil law firm in Philadelphia, a big firm. And I learned, and I didn't know this, I learned that even though I was a litigator, it was very unlikely I would ever go to court because 99% of the cases settle.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

And so, I was doing civil litigation, which I didn't find as interesting or as exciting as the criminal work because I had some really cool criminal cases. And I think that I thought, well, I don't really feel I'm doing anything except moving bunches of paper around and shooting paper back and forth to opposing counsel, going to depositions. It was like playing a big game of chicken because you knew that in most cases, you were not going to try the case.

Jason Raia:

So, you're doing the prep work as if you're going to court, but then you end up not going. Okay.

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah. And that got old after a while for me. So, I eventually decided that I wanted to get out of that because there wasn't any real litigation. I think I tried one case in five years, and it wasn't that exciting to do one case in five years. So, I eventually switched over and became more of a transactional attorney. I actually switched law firms and got more into contract work and business law and then international law. And I enjoy that. That was good. And then after a while, I decided that I wanted to do something different again because I would meet with clients and I would know a lot about their case, I would know a lot about their business, and I would even know more about their business than they did. And I remember sitting in a meeting with a

general counsel from a client and his CEO, and every time the CEO had a question, he'd turn to his general counsel and say, what about that? And the guy couldn't answer the question, but I could. And I thought, well, he's getting paid more than I am, but I know all the answers. So, I thought, maybe I need to be on the other side of the table. So eventually I did leave, and I went over to the I guess in the dark side, I went over to the corporate side and became a general counsel to a venture capital firm.

Jason Raia:

Okay.

Jack Tomarchio:

And I got to learn a lot about the business of financing companies and not only how companies succeed, but how companies fail, which is very interesting.

Jason Raia:

Sure. And is that where you began or where you got into government affairs and that side where business interacts with regulation and policy?

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah, exactly. Eventually, I found myself existing at a nexus between business law and policy or politics.

Jason Raia:

Sure.

Jack Tomarchio:

And because of that, I got to know a lot of people in the political sphere. People would ask me to do favors for them. Don't you know Senator so and so's Chief of Staff? Yes, I do. Could you help me - could you get a meeting for me? And I eventually thought, well, there's a business there. And at the same time, I was getting a graduate degree at Penn in Government Affairs at the Fell School. And I thought, there's a business model here that I think I could execute. And so, a partner of mine, a classmate of mine, and I founded a partnership. We founded a firm called Hill Solutions, which was a government affairs and business-to-business, business-to-government consulting firm. And we built that from just two or three guys to about twenty.

Jason Raia:

Wow.

Jack Tomarchio:

And with offices in Philadelphia and in Washington DC. And then after 9/11, we saw another need, which was a consulting firm, consulting state and local governments in national security and counterterrorism. Because now after 9/11, all the state and local governments were in the counterterrorism business.

Jason Raia:

Sure.

Jack Tomarchio:

They didn't know how to do it.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

And even the local police, and the state police, didn't know that world. So, we thought there was a business opportunity there. And we founded a firm called Homeland Solutions. So, we had Hill Solutions and Homeland Solutions. We had those for collectively about six or seven years, and then we sold them both.

Jason Raia:

Okay. And it was not long after you sold them, if I remember correctly, that the White House came knocking on your door. And you've talked about this at different times here at Freedoms Foundation to some of our teacher groups. And I wonder if you'd just recount sort of that early process of when they came. I just read the article that you wrote a dozen years ago about that and the number of offers that came before the final one that you actually accepted.

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah, I wasn't playing hard to get or anything. This all happened, again, I was still in the Army. I was an Army Reserve Officer. And I had done one more deployment in the Gulf War in Desert Storm Desert Shield, in 1991. And I was now in the special operations community as a JAG Officer in Special Ops. And then I became a Civil Affairs Officer and commanded a civil affairs battalion. And then after I finished that, I had to find somewhere to go, and I got an assignment at the Pentagon. And I was working at the Office of Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict. It's a very long title.

Jason Raia:

You've had a couple of very long titles.

Jack Tomarchio:

OSD SO/LIC. And one day I was called in on my cell phone by my boss, who was an Assistant Secretary. And he said, when are you coming into the building again? Said, not for two weeks. And he said, well, I want you to come in tomorrow. Said, okay. He said I want to go to lunch with you. That didn't look good to me. I thought I'm going to be fired or sent to Adak, Alaska for the next five years. So, I went down there and he said, we'll go to lunch at the senior lunchroom, which is only two stars and above.

Jason Raia:

Wow.

Jack Tomarchio:

And he brought his special assistant with him, his principal deputy. So I thought, well, he's got a witness now to shoot me. So, I thought I was in trouble. And he said we have a new mission for you. So here it comes. Here it comes. He said, we want you to go and detach and reattach yourself to the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, which is a big deal down there. It's the number three guy, and we want you to lead essentially a study internally on whether the Department of Defense used or misused intelligence to justify the invasion of Iraq after 2002 or 2001.

Jason Raia:

So, this is essentially what some of us remember Colin Powell testifying that this is the intelligence that says we need to go into Iraq.

Jack Tomarchio:

There are weapons of mass destruction. And they didn't have them.

Jason Raia:

We never found them.

Jack Tomarchio:

We never found them. And so, I was asked to examine that. And so, I led an eighteen-month study of that with about five contractors. Everybody opened the kimono to us. We saw all the secret cable traffic from the CIA and everybody else and even from allied intelligence agencies. And at the end of the day, the end of the day, I remember writing in my office in Philadelphia on a weekend of my conclusions of law and findings of fact, and what I found essentially was I found smoke, but I didn't find the fire. And we couldn't directly point out that someone had broken the law, and someone had misused intelligence or shaded intelligence in such a way as to predict or allow our policymakers to make the wrong decision. Didn't see it. Was there smoke? Yes. Was there actual evidence? Couldn't find it.

Jason Raia:

Interesting.

Jack Tomarchio:

So that was submitted, and they classified it. And shortly after that, within three weeks or so, I received a phone call from somebody I didn't know at the Pentagon saying they'd like me to come down to the Pentagon to interview for a position. I said, what kind of position? They said it's Assistant Secretary of Defense. For what? There are a lot of those positions down.

Jason Raia:

There are more than any of us think.

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah, there are. I mean, is it for carpet cleaning or what, what am I going to do? Do the windows? And he said, no, it'll be for detainee operations. I said detainee operations. Is that the guy that would run Abu Ghraib prison and Guantanamo Bay? And he said exactly. Now, I knew that that was a bad place to be.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

Because the two assistant secretaries for that job had both been fired. And I thought, not a good career choice. So, I turned it down. And then they came back and offered me something at the Defense Intelligence Agency in an advisory role. And I knew enough about Washington having been a lobbyist down there, enough for a number of years through Hill Solutions that anything that has advisory on it in Washington is bad because nobody will listen to your advice. So I turned that down, and then they came back and offered me a position as the Deputy Drug Czar at the ONDCP - Office of National Drug Control Policy. Fortunately, I had an old army buddy that had that job under the Clinton administration. So, I called him in California and I said, Tom, do I want this job? And he said It's a great job but you don't want it.

Jason Raia:

Especially now, especially after 9/11.

Jack Tomarchio:

I said, why? And he said exactly what you just said. He said because once the War and Terrorism started, the war on drugs ended. No one will care.

Jason Raia:

And no resources. I mean, that's what we saw in all of the alphabet agencies after 9/11 is their mission became laser beam focused on terrorism and anything else that they might have been concerned with. I mean, even the Department of the Treasury isn't looking at counterfeiting until it becomes part of terrorism, even though that had been their main mission for decades. So, before I forget, I want to sort of remind everyone that part of the reason why the Defense Department asked you to do this investigation of the use of defense intelligence is because you were familiar with Washington, D.C. but not of Washington, D.C. Why was that important?

Jack Tomarchio:

This actually came up several times during this whole process and even later when I actually got an offer to go into the Department of Homeland Security. One, they liked the fact that I had a law degree. Two, they liked the fact that I had a top-secret security clearance that was valid and still active. And three, and probably the most important thing, I didn't possess a Beltway optic.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

You were really from beyond the Beltway, so you looked at things differently, which I guess is true. I didn't know that. But those are the three reasons. And when I joined the department, the guy that hired me, who was a big mandarin at CIA, and was seconded from CIA to DHS to stand up the Intelligence Directorate, he said the same thing. He said, I want somebody with a different optic, and you have a different optic.

Jason Raia:

Right. So that gets us to DHS and before we go to DHS, they offered you one other position right after Katrina. They offered you FEMA.

Jack Tomarchio:

They offered me to be the Director of National Security Coordination at FEMA. And FEMA had just fired all these people after Katrina. The Director was this guy named Brown. And the President said you're doing a hell of a job, Brownie. And he fired him a week later.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

And I thought, FEMA? That's like a four-letter word right now. I don't want to go work for FEMA. And I said, no, I'm not doing the FEMA thing at all. That's not where I want to be. And so, I had turned all these jobs down, and they called back again, and they offered me this position to be the Deputy Director at that time, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Intelligence. And I said that sounds really interesting.

Jason Raia:

Right. And this CIA star Charles Allen is your boss and you've talked about him before about probably one of the hardest bosses you ever worked for.

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah, he had a reputation. He was tougher than Attila the Hun. I mean, he was just one of these guys that he ate his staff for breakfast. He came in at 4:30-5:00 in the morning and didn't leave till 9:00 at night. And he was brilliant. I mean, you couldn't outthink this guy. He'd been in the intelligence community since 1957 and he knew where all the bodies were buried. He'd been involved in everything. Vietnam, Iran Contra, and the Berlin Wall. He did it. He was there for everything. And he was just brilliant. He was a brilliant guy. And we got along famously. I was told that he's going to be really tough to work for. He was not tough to work for. He was great to work for, and a tremendous mentor. Taught me a lot, learned a lot. It was the hardest job I ever had in my life. People said, what it's like? I said it's like combat operations, except you wear a suit.

Jason Raia:

And what people have to remember is this is when, this is in the earliest days of DHS where you are standing up. One is a new cabinet-level agency. But two, there is, and this is going to get us into an area that I'm very interested in and we've talked about before and I think our listeners will be interested in, is that domestic intelligence very quickly can run afoul of civil liberties and talk a little bit about the work you were doing. But also, that intersection with our people has rights in this country that maybe they don't have another. You know, I'm sure the FSB doesn't have to worry about the civil liberties of the Russian people when they're doing domestic intelligence. But you did. Very much so.

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah, we did. And we operated in a situation where we always had to be concerned and cognizant of civil rights and civil liberties. That was paramount to us. At the same time, of course, we had to collect information and we had to turn it into actionable intelligence or whether it was just white noise. But probably the hardest thing to do there was the fact that we were, as you said, we were a stand-up directorate intelligence and analysis, we call INA, was a stand-up directorate within a brand new federal agency, a new cabinet within the federal government. That's like working in syrup every day. I mean, the inefficiencies were tremendous. The amount of process to get things done was just like, it was so tedious. And we had to get people deployed. States and large cities were standing up, and state and local fusion centers all around the country. And our job was to seed them with federal intelligence officers from the Department of Homeland Security. And so, you would think to get a body from Washington and deploy him to Los Angeles for a three-year tour of duty would be fairly easy. Not so much. It was difficult. And then to integrate that individual who's a Fed, who's a federal intelligence officer, to work now with a watch commander who's a state police guy or a PD guy from a large city and say, you work for them, you are a rep, but you work for them. And then to work side by side with the FBI, which was frankly a little tough to work, they're a little tough to work for.

Jason Raia:

Sure, we all recall. And part of what you're trying to build is something where we all recall that language of - they didn't connect the dots on 9/11. And what you're trying to do is make sure that that never happens again.

Jack Tomarchio:

Right.

Jason Raia:

You've talked in the past about how this is really a trust-building exercise between federal, state, and local, between inter-agencies at each level, but then between the three levels themselves.

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah, it's trust based. It's relationship driven. You have to be who you are and do what you say. And one of the things I did was, I had cards that I made myself because I couldn't get cards from the department because they couldn't do it fast enough. And then they finally gave them to me. They had my name spelled wrong, and I said that, and then they had the email wrong. I

said these are worthless. But they said, well, that's your card. I said they were wrong. But anyway, I went out and got cards myself, and I put my home number and my home cell phone number, and I said, you call me at home anytime, and I will call you back. And I gave that to the customer, whether it be the Police Chief of Chicago, the Homeland Security Advisor for the State of Pennsylvania, the Governor of New York, the Governor of California, it didn't matter. I just gave those cards out and said, I'm the point of contact for you for any of this stuff. And we would get phone calls like, hey, we just saw in the paper that something's happening in my state. Is that something I need to worry about? No, you do not need to worry about that. We know what that is. We've got that.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

We're working with your people. It's not what you think it is. That went a long way in building trust with our customers, and we had tough customers because they were politicians, they were governors, they were mayors, they were chiefs of police.

Jason Raia:

But they're answering to their own constituencies, but they also need to protect those constituencies. And that trust, when you are talking about protecting a population from terrorism, is more important than trust anywhere else because there are serious consequences if you trust someone and they don't come through..

Jack Tomarchio:

That's right. That's right. So, it was a very tough job. And then we had again, we were like a startup business in a startup department in the federal government. It's really hard. And then we had a board of directors of 535 people in the Congress.

Jason Raia:

Sure.

Jack Tomarchio:

And we had always been subject to recall, come up to the Hill, tell us what you're doing. And so, I had to testify to our senators and congressmen in our oversight committees, and it was always harder to testify to House members because they were always running for office. Senators were a little bit more lenient with you because they had a six-year term up there, but they'd ask a lot of hard questions, and they were mugging for the camera, too, and C-Span. And if they could show themselves slapping around some hapless government official like me—

Jason Raia:

Sure.

Jack Tomarchio:

--that would play great down in the district. So, we were under a lot of scrutiny, and it was a tough job. And then, of course, we had to worry about real-world threats.

Jason Raia:

I was going to say. so that's where I wanted to go next. In addition to building out this infrastructure at all three levels, local, state, and federal government, you're also getting real-time intelligence, evaluating it, and making recommendations to the White House. And you've told a couple of these stories where, and there's one that involved the train system in the United States. Can you talk a little bit about what happened and how you came to a decision?

Jack Tomarchio:

Yeah, yeah, we had a situation where we were getting some intelligence out of India. There had been some bombings on mass transit in India, and there was some intelligence that said this was the beginning of a worldwide conspiracy attack against rapid transit systems in Europe and possibly the United States. And there was going to be a possibility that mass transit in the major cities was going to be targeted. So, I was in charge of the whole directorate then because my boss, the great CIA mandarin, the all-knowing Charlie Allen, was on vacation. And so, when he goes on vacation, they give you a letter in which they empower you to do certain things. It's signed by him, and it's a big deal. Anoint you with oil or something, I don't know. But anyway-

Jason Raia:

Do you still have that letter?

Jack Tomarchio:

I do somewhere, yeah. I did keep it. He's gone, and this intel comes down and we well, you need to tell the Homeland Security advisor, who will tell the President at 2:00 today, whether he needs to shut down the whole mass transit system. And it was kind of my decision what I'm going to tell him. So, I bring in all my senior intel officers from all my components, and that's the DHS components. We had 21 components in DHS. So, it's like the TSA, ICE, Border Patrol, Secret Service, Coast Guard. I want the intel chiefs, all of those guys in my office, and gals, and I need to go around the room and get a sense of your action. It's like a war counsel.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

Like, Washington would have councils of war here in Valley Forge. And I went around and asked each person, what do you think? And some of them were like, we need to shut down everything. Others like, no, I don't think so. And all this back and forth. And I'd only been in the job for, like, six months, and they all knew that I wasn't a professional, come up through the ranks, intel guy. I was like some lawyer from Philadelphia. So, they probably thought, this guy doesn't know what he's doing. So, I'm thinking, I have to use the old Hemingway grace under pressure kind of thing and just show that I'm in charge and I'm going to listen. And finally came down to one guy who was my senior intel advisor, a guy named Mustafa Javed Ali, who was obviously an American citizen, but a Muslim, and he was a graduate of the University of

Michigan, which was - his big passion was their football team. And we'd have bets on who would beat them, Penn State or Michigan in those games. And he gave a sterling analysis, which I agreed with, and I said, okay, thank you. I appreciate it. And at 02:00, we got on a secure video teleconference with the White House. And they came down to me and said, well, you got the ball on this one. What's your recommendation? I recommend to the President we keep the trains running. And I knew that if I was wrong, I was going to pay for that.

Jason Raia:

Sure, as were a lot of other people.

Jack Tomarchio:

As were a lot of other people. And fortunately, we were right, and it was the right thing to do. And it never really made the papers. We just made a decision. We kept the trains running. The intel didn't turn out to be what we thought it was. And we move on.

Jason Raia:

Right, right. And, I wonder, and then we'll move on, I wonder how often were those kinds of decisions being made that we knew nothing about as the American people, that you or others like you were making these analyses and these decisions that most people would completely freeze up and not know what to do. But is this every day? Is this every week? How often were those kinds of decisions being made?

Jack Tomarchio:

Well, probably across the whole federal government, probably every day. There's lots of special access programs that we don't know about, that I don't know about, that you're not privy to because you don't ever need to know. And there's some serious things that go on, and people are making really tough decisions every day.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

So, yeah, I'd say it's fairly common.

Jason Raia:

Yeah, it's frightening to think about sometimes. So, I want to ask you, we're 20+ years on from standing up DHS, and I wonder what looking backward now you're back in private practice and consulting, but as we've learned from other friends in the intelligence community, you never stop being part of the intelligence community. So, any lessons and anything you would do differently, or if they came to you and said if they were standing up another intelligence, what are the lessons?

Jack Tomarchio:

Well, I think, first of all, the mission has changed somewhat. I mean, the threat has changed. We've pivoted now from terrorism and the counterterrorism world. We're still doing it, obviously. But those threats, like al Qaeda and ISIS, are not as immediate as they were 15-20 years ago. We're now in a peer competitor world with Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea. It's a state-to-state what's going on in Ukraine and watching China get bigger and bigger and becoming more aggressive in world politics and geopolitics. So, I think there will always be a need to have this domestic intel. I think the DHS probably doesn't go away. I don't think it's a department we get rid of because we don't know where the world's going to go in the future. Certainly, if we get into some kind of war with Iran, Iran won't be able to attack us directly, but they might attack us through terrorism in the United States. So, we have to be aware of that. It's now an integral part of the threat matrix. So, I wouldn't get rid of that. I think that what I would say is that the department needs to exist. It needs to still be funded, and it needs to be recognized as still a player at the table. Because I think, like anything in the government, you deal with what's in front of you now.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

And if what's in front of us now is Russia and Ukraine and China, this other stuff people forget about. And certainly with what I would call a clear and present danger is the rise of domestic terrorism in this country, where our own citizens are now doing things. And I go beyond not just politically motivated terrorism in the domestic terrorism, but even one-offs where we used to talk about lone wolf guys who were like members of the radicals.

Jason Raia:

They've been radicalized either online or in some other place, and they take it upon themselves to go and create great harm. But they're not part of a network much harder to respond to.

Jack Tomarchio:

And I take that even one step further because I look at what I call an emergency of mass shootings in this country. I don't think anybody would be considered to be an alarmist if they said, and I'll say that we'll probably have five more shootings in this country. Just will. I'm sure we will. And we're in a situation where I think that is as much of a threat to our homeland as it was if al Qaeda was doing that. But these are our own people, and we need to find a way to deal with that, and we're not dealing with that. So, I've actually been working on an op-ed, as a former Homeland Security Undersecretary that I'd like to publish and write, talking about how we're in as much of a danger with domestic shooters, active shooters, as we were with potential people from ISIS or al Qaeda coming to our shores and doing mass killings.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

I mean, in Las Vegas, what did that kill, 150 people?

Jason Raia:

And I think that's a full-on discussion.

Jack Tomarchio:

Absolutely.

Jason Raia:

But I keep coming back to this idea of why it is and people so quickly turn to devastating violence as a solution to whatever problem it is, and sometimes they're incomprehensible across the board. But whether it's one person or it's one hundred people, it's this idea that this individual has a problem, an issue, and the option of violence seems like a good one. And that's something I can't wrap my head around. But it also seems like that has changed in some way, and I think we need to look at that as well as everything else. But I do want you to mention a lot of the things I wanted to talk about next, which is that there are times for those who read the news, the world is burning. It's Russia and Ukraine. It's China and Taiwan. It's a nuclear North Korea, it's immigration on the southern border. It's failed states, starting with Afghanistan. What do you see in the world that you're most concerned about that we ought to be thinking about, that we're not thinking about? What's your sort of analysis?

Jack Tomarchio:

Well, it's kind of grim right now. I think we're in a very dangerous position. I look at the world somewhat akin to the 1930's with the rise of fascist powers. I think certainly the Russians are in a mell of a hess or a hell of a mess, but the old mell of a hess, as one of my teachers used to call it, with what's going on in Ukraine. They certainly are not performing well. But we have what I see to be pure World War II-style aggression in Europe between the Russian state and Ukraine. And I understand a lot of their reasoning or those that believe that they're entitled to do that, but I don't agree with that. But the bottom line is Ukraine is a sovereign state, and so that's certainly driving an issue of precedence of a World War II-style, grinding, almost a World War I-style, now grinding warfare in Europe. We have a rising China, which you can't stop a country from rising, but we have an increasingly aggressive China. They've made no secret of the fact that they want to take Taiwan back. That's not going to be easy for them to do militarily. It's an amphibious operation. But across the whole spectrum, they're challenging us in many places, in many ways. Economically –

Jason Raia:

I was just going to say that. And they've weaponized their economics, their production. I think there are also weaknesses there that they are papering over, including half or more of their population, who are in just some of the world's worst poverty on the interior of the country. But it is - and nations don't quite know how to interact with China because they're so dependent on them for the production of goods.

Jack Tomarchio:

That's right. I mean, China is not a thousand feet tall. They do have problems and they have challenges, but they're determined that they're going to accomplish their goal, which in Xi's eyes

is domination, culturally, militarily, financially, by the year 2049, the 100th anniversary of the birth of the People's Republic of China.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

And whether they're able to do that or not, we'll see. I don't know. But it's going to be a huge managerial and possibly military problem for the United States to deal with. And there's just no getting away from that. I read an article in the Naval War College Review when I was in California, on my way to California, just about the rise of the People's Revolutionary Army Navy, which they call their Navy, the People's Revolutionary Army Navy. And by 2030, they hope to have 500 surface combatants. We, on the other hand, are declining in our Navy. We're at 235 now, and we're probably going to go lower.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

I don't know how you deal with that. I don't know how you deal with a defensive posture trying to defend Taiwan. If the U.S. Navy gets involved in the defense of Taiwan against a Chinese Navy, that's probably going to be superior to ours in a couple of years.

Jason Raia:

Right. A blue water navy where they're projecting power all over the globe. That is their goal and has been for the last twenty years. Absolutely. But the other thing that ties together all of these hotspots is an area that you've been doing more with in recent years, which is cybersecurity. We know that the Russians are hacking. We know that the Chinese are hacking. We know the Koreans are hacking. And there are threats there, whether they are threats to business, that we have seen a few of these things with companies that have been taken hostage, but also threats to power infrastructure. How big of a deal is this and what can Americans do to protect against it?

Jack Tomarchio:

Well, it's a massive deal. The whole cyber issue. Cyber is now a domain of warfare. It's certainly as much of a domain of warfare as submarines. And if you can cripple an enemy through the click of a keystroke, you've done a lot and haven't killed anybody. You also have situations where you're using social media, you're using the internet or other outlets to sow disinformation and misinformation, to attack a country's infrastructure, their political infrastructure, to fulminate political discord in the United States with regard to politics, for example, putting all that fake news out there. Fake news is very powerful. And people, not that they're stupid, but people will believe that because that's what they read. And they say, well, I guess it's got to be true because I just read it in the paper, or I read it in this online forum, and then you find out that, gee, that information came out of St. Petersburg or that information came out of some suburban area in Beijing. So these are challenges that are tremendous challenges for this country. What

I'm encouraged about, I mean, I just returned from three days at the Special Operations Forces big convention down at Tampa, I was there yesterday in the last three days, the industry has been engaged. And I was dazzled by some of the technology that we have to deal with these things. I was dazzled by some of the things that we are doing. It's a giant chess game and it's going to continue that way. But I do believe that our military, our government, does understand the challenge. It's not easy. And certainly, getting the money to do these things is not easy either. But we realize this, and we have thinkers, we have operators, we have special operators that engage in these things every day all around the world. And we need to get more of our industry involved in this and they are getting involved. We also need to get our population to understand this. We have less than 1% of the American population going to the military today.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

And probably a very small amount of the American population understands the Constitution or understands civics. And that's not helpful to us as a nation. We need to work on those things, which I know is something that is Freedoms Foundation is doing.

Jason Raia:

Well - a perfect transition. That this is at the heart of the Freedoms Foundation is civic education and the idea of preparing citizens for future leadership, for future engagement. We know the framers of the Constitution - they talk about the informed citizen, and how important that is. I was intrigued to read something that you wrote and I think this will get us there. One of the preoccupations of Freedoms Foundation of the work that we do on this podcast is the polarization that we see and the evaporating common ground, it seems at times, amongst American citizens. And you wrote a piece about the Democracy Perception Index, something that you attended in Copenhagen, the Alliance of Democracy. You're on the Alliance of Democracy Board. But there was this idea of people's perception of democracy within their own countries and it's this question of expectations. But this was the thing that jumped out at me. "Among the reports findings, a surprising 51% of people living in democratic countries think their voice rarely or never matters in politics. Moreover, in democracies a majority of the population, 64% believe that their governments rarely or never act in the interest of the public, compared with only 41% saying the same in non-democracies". So this gets at this idea of something you were talking about with DHS and trust and building trust. It seems like maybe one of the things that is at the heart of our political polarization is this loss of trust, the trust of the people for their government, the loss of trust of people between one another. And I wonder if you might have some thoughts about that.

Jack Tomarchio:

Well, I think that we do have a loss of trust. And I've talked to many people, very educated people that are just fed up, for example, with our system of democracy. I mean, it's scary. Some of them are just like, well, we just need someone in there to just get stuff done. That's what people said about Mussolini. He made the trains run on time in Italy. But I think those people are in the minority. I think the majority of people just feel that the people that we send to Washington, the elected officials, many of them are there because they want to be there. And

it's better than selling used cars back in Topeka or working for their father-in-law in the mortuary business back in Northern California.

Jason Raia:

You're talking about the 21st century, right? Not the 19th century.

Jack Tomarchio:

So, I am talking about the 21st century. But I think that our elected leaders need to make the hard decisions and they need to make decisions that sometimes might not be in their best political interest. I thought, for example, I thought Liz Cheney did some great things. I mean, she went down in flames, but she knew she was not going to get re-elected. But she did the right thing. I think she did the right thing. It makes me sad when I see elected officials making votes or taking stands that they probably don't believe in, but they're going to do it anyway because it's going to protect their seat, protect their job. I think we need there's not a lot of profiles and courage right now in Washington.

Jason Raia:

Yeah. The ideas of people who live by their principles, even when that decision to stick to one's principles may mean you don't get re-elected, it may mean you may have to go back to whatever it is you did before you went to your state capitol or to Washington or what have you. I think that's an important thing, and it's one of the things we try to teach is, you know what are the principles? And we talk about with young people who come here to Valley Forge, we talk about being accountable for your decisions. We talk about being respectful for the rights and beliefs of others. We talk about being generous with your time and your treasure. We talk about being productive citizens and we talk about participating in our system. And then those are the principles. But how important it is for principles to guide decision-making. I wonder what else you see as how do we, and maybe we were never there. I always want to be careful of romanticizing the past and saying everything was wonderful, but it feels like we are less and less able to recognize commonalities with others. That group shrinks that we're not able to see how this person and I, who vehemently disagree on some policy issue, might share something in common.

Jack Tomarchio:

Right. I want to say a couple of things about that. First of all, about the politics thing. I think again, with elected officials, we have to teach people at all levels that they have to do the harder right sometimes. Sometimes you have to take the harder right than the easier wrong. And you have to think of service over self. You're a public servant, you're serving. And a lot of people, I think, think of themselves first. And I think that's important. I think another thing that's important that would be helpful for this country and it's a real big lift and it's probably not popular is that we need to really think about, at least seriously think about, maybe bringing back some type of public service in this country. And people say, oh, we're the draft. I don't want my kids going to the military. Well, maybe it's not the draft. Maybe it's something every man, young man, and young woman is going to do in a year. They're going to do a year in public service.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

We could use those people kind of the 1930's model, the CCC, we need you to clean this up. We need you to go and teach, we need you to work in the inner city, we need you to serve in the military. I think, first of all, if you get those people together and here's a guy from the Barrio in L.A. and the guy that he's working next to is some kid from Montana, and the third guy that's working with them is some prep school guy from New York City and they have nothing in common. And how do you get that to work? I mean, it worked in World War II. You get to learn and meet people.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

And you know, they're not bad guys, they're good guys.

Jason Raia:

And we have lost those societal structures that bring different people together. And I've heard a number of people talk about the decline in church and synagogue, mosque attendance means that it is one of the places where the rich and poor, and middle class all came together. They shared this thing in common, this faith in a particular denomination. They showed up every Sunday without judging why people do or don't go. But that bringing people together allowed them to share different experiences and build respect and build trust that we've been talking about. And when that's absent, it's like what replaces it? What does – or bowling league. Back in the 70's when people bowled, there were people in those bowling leagues who represented all different facets of society. They had this thing in common and allowed them to interact. And yeah, they could argue about what bozo was in the mayor's office today or whether you supported him or not, but you had this common interaction and it seems like what you're pointing at is how do we replace that in a way that it could be known.

Jack Tomarchio:

It's funny you should say about bowling because there's a book called *Bowling Alone*.

Jason Raia:

Absolutely.

Jack Tomarchio:

And it studies the issue of Americans who don't go to the rotary, they don't go to bowling leagues, they don't go to church, especially even post-pandemic now.

Jason Raia:

Yes. Even worse. It has made it worse.

Jack Tomarchio:

It has. So, you have people going to work two days a week, three days a week. I'm going to work from home.

Jason Raia:

The whole offices that are closed because they're not returning.

Jack Tomarchio:

They're not coming back.

Jason Raia:

They're not coming back.

Jack Tomarchio:

And so you have that interaction that's now gone. It's been erased. And how do you build a fabric, a social structure of a country when everybody's sitting in front of a computer and then you just do your own thing all the time?

Jason Raia:

Right. And you select within the echo chamber of social media who are the people who already agree with you that you want to hang out with.

Jack Tomarchio:

Absolutely.

Jason Raia:

And that's one of the things I love about the fact that the program that we do, our high school program called Spirit of America Youth Leadership program, brings students from all over the country here to Valley Forge in person. We talk about the fact that we are low-tech and high touch because we're doing residential programs in person. And it's amazing. It's amazing when you see these young people who are from urban and suburban and rural places all over the country interacting and debating. But there is something valuable in that that cannot be replaced in the virtual world because it's too easy to just find narrow band of people who already agree with you and never interact with people who disagree with you.

Jack Tomarchio:

Exactly. I think we have to go back to that. I think we are very much of a fractured society.

Jason Raia:

Yes.

Jack Tomarchio:

Right now.

Jason Raia:

That's a great way to describe that - fractured. We usually end our podcast with a so I am going to ask you a series of questions, and it's known whatever sort of comes to mind, and hopefully we'll learn a little bit more about Jack Tomarchio.

Jack Tomarchio:

I was a failed Jeopardy contestant. I will tell you that. I came in second on the Jeopardy show, so I'm probably not going to do well.

Jason Raia:

You don't have to answer these in the form of a question. So, you're okay. So, excluding Washington and Lincoln, who's your favorite president?

Jack Tomarchio:

That's a great question. I'm a big fan of Teddy Roosevelt.

Jason Raia:

Okay. I like it. I like it. Teddy Roosevelt has always been one of my favorites. Now, this is really specific, but it came out of - I was interviewing Alan Gelzo in our first episode, and he mentioned something, and it brought this question to mind, and then he gave me an answer that I wasn't expecting. So, I love the question. Who is the best candidate who never became president? And I would say, feel free to be in your lifetime, who do you remember thinking, that's who we need and it just never happened.

Jack Tomarchio:

Well, in my lifetime, I liked Mitt Romney a lot. I thought Mitt Romney was.

Jason Raia:

And you worked for him.

Jack Tomarchio:

I did. I did.

Jason Raia:

Okay. What one thing do you think every American needs to learn more about?

Jack Tomarchio:

Each other.

Jason Raia:

Okay. I like that. If you had not become a lawyer, what would you be today?

Jack Tomarchio:

If I had not become a lawyer, I would probably become a lawyer.

Jason Raia:

You'd just go later to law school?

Jack Tomarchio:

No, I'm very happy with what I- I probably would have done if I didn't become a lawyer. I would have probably sometimes I would have liked to have had an offer to go in the CIA when I was coming out of the Army and I turned that down. Sometimes I wish I had not turned that down.

Jason Raia:

That's interesting. That's interesting. What pet peeve annoys you the most? And I have so many of them. I like to give examples, but mine was growing up in Florida, the directional that just stays on constantly as people drive perfectly straight down the road. And that was something that growing up in what was basically a very large retirement community, we had to live through.

Jack Tomarchio:

Pet peeves. My wife would probably tell you she always leaves the lights on. And I'll come home, they're like every light's on. Why'd? The attic light is on. I was up there two days ago. Do you ever think about turning the light off?

Jason Raia:

Now that I own a house, I find that I've become my father and I walk around the house in the dark making sure of all the lights.

Jack Tomarchio:

You become frugal when you have to pay bills.

Jason Raia:

Yeah, exactly. Let's see, what is your favorite movie, show, or opera?

Jack Tomarchio:

I do enjoy watching *The Godfather* every time I see it.

Jason Raia:

Good. It's a classic.

Jack Tomarchio:

It's a classic. But I'll stick with *The Godfather* for a minute.

Jason Raia:

And this is a question just for you. True or false, you have two credits on IMDb, the Internet Movie Database.

Jack Tomarchio:

Do I really?

Jason Raia:

Yeah.

Jack Tomarchio:

I didn't know that. Yeah, so I guess that's true. I didn't know that.

Jason Raia:

That's what it says. Now, there's one movie that you were an advisor on.

Jack Tomarchio:

I was the advisor on, *The Old Man*. It's a TV show.

Jason Raia:

Yepp. Yeah.

Jack Tomarchio:

I was an advisor on a show called *Jericho*. I was an advisor on a show called *Black Sails*, but I didn't get credit for that one, which is fine. And I am soon to be making my debut on camera in a show that will be released in 2024, that was filmed in January of 2023, about a fictional future type of January 6th attack upon the federal government. And I play the Secretary of Homeland Security for the entire show. All 6 hours of the footage was filmed inside a mockup of the situation room in the White House.

Jason Raia:

Okay.

Jack Tomarchio:

And that will come out next year.

Jason Raia:

Okay. I think that's the one because one of them is sort of a future project. So, I think that's the one. That was the second one I knew about *The Old Man*, but I don't have too many friends who have IMDb credits.

Jack Tomarchio:

I didn't even know what that meant.

Jason Raia:

Okay, we'll run through the last things. One thing about you is that most people, even people who know you, would be surprised to know.

Jack Tomarchio:

I'm probably a lot more liberal than people think I am.

Jason Raia:

That's interesting.

Jack Tomarchio:

I've had people say to me, I know, for example, my wife told me this story about some woman who said that her friend was marrying some guy who had an Arabic name. And my wife said, okay. And she goes, your husband must be enraged about that. Why would I care?

Jason Raia:

Right. But the assumption that because you're an intelligence and you're counterterrorism--

Jack Tomarchio:

That I'm a Republican.

Jason Raia:

Right.

Jack Tomarchio:

Although I'm kind of a proud R.H.I.N.O. that I'm super conservative and I'm really not. I mean, I believe that you need to look at all the sides of all the facets of the diamond before you make your decision. And there are certain things that people say that would be on the left that I'm like, okay, that might make sense, and on the right, okay, that might make sense.

Jason Raia:

Well, that's the assumptions that people make about other people. And I think again, coming back to your earlier question, what Americans need to learn about each other, the idea that you can't simply assume you know what a person thinks on a particular issue, and I think that's a really important one for us to remember. Okay, final question. Bourbon or scotch?

Jack Tomarchio:

I like them. Well, I don't drink that much, but I used to like scotch more than bourbon. But I kind of like bourbon more than scotch now, but I don't drink that much. And where I was down in Tampa, there were some prodigious drinkers at this convention, and I'm like, I'm going to switch to water right here. I'll have Pellegrino.

Jason Raia:

I hear you. Okay. Well, I want to thank our guest, Jack Tomarchio. I can't wait to have you back and expand our conversation but just want to say thank you for coming, but also thank you for always your willingness to come and speak to our programs and share with them your experience and your wisdom. I also want to thank our producers Lara Kennedy and Sarah Rasmussen and most of all, I want to thank all of our listeners. Please subscribe, follow, rate, and review *George Washington Slept Here* wherever you listen to your podcasts and tell your friends to learn more about Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, check out our website www.freedomsfoundation.org and follow us on social media or email us at gwshpodcast@gmail.com with comments, questions, and suggestions. Jack, thank you so much!