

**Episode 2,358: The Biden Corruption Problem**

**Guest: Jim Bovard**

**WOODS:**  Jim, welcome back.

**BOVARD:** Hey, thanks for having me back, Tom. And if memory serves, the last time you and I talked, it was during the "libertarian hour". It was the famous breakthrough when America had finally become libertarian. I think it lasted about six minutes.

But here we are now within the Biden era.

**WOODS:** They were a glorious six minutes, but...

**BOVARD:** [laughing] Yes, it worked out well for magazine sales.

**WOODS:** Yeah, right. You know, I'll say this. I have not really followed the details of the Biden corruption.

I think the reason is, although I know you've chronicled a lot of corruption over the course of your career, I'm sure you'll agree with me that at this point we almost come to expect that a lot of these people are going to be corrupt.

And I think people tend to be more interested in that kind of thing, at the individual corruption. Whereas I'm more concerned about the policies that they enact that are going to affect every single one of us.

Whereas that's never considered a scandal, whether it's bribery or whatever. That's the big scandal. But I do actually think that in this case we have a genuine scandal on our hands, and I'm interested in it.

And so, I do want to talk about it. But normally I just haven't taken that much interest. It's kind of like when I had David Stockman on and was saying I just can't get interested in these debt ceiling debates because I already know how it's going to come out.

It's going to come out, nothing changes. They raise the debt ceiling, and we move on. But in this case, it seems like this story which has been circulating in the background, but the establishment outlets don't really want to touch it, or they say it's Russian misinformation or whatever it is.

The dam has burst, I think, to the point where, maybe you saw this just the other day, reporters were asking the White House press secretary all kinds of uncomfortable questions about this, about...

**BOVARD:** They were badgering her. She was being badgered. And it was good.

**WOODS:**  "Badgering" now simply means – in the age of Joe Rogan and Peter Hotez, "badgering" means asking people some questions. That's now badgering.

**BOVARD:** Yeah, and it's a fascinating situation. To take a step back, I fully agree with you that most of the time the actual details of corruption aren't that captivating. And I certainly hope you're right that people who are intelligent just assume there's an awful lot of corruption.

But often, to see, like, people have a reflex: *It's our team versus your team, and our team is clean*. And it's like, in your dreams.

But this is a fascinating case because as the details are coming out, it looks more and more like the Justice Department and the FBI intentionally covered up wrongdoing by the son of the presidential candidate during the 2020 campaign, basically as a way to tamper with the election.

Basically the same way the FBI did in 2016 when they tried to swing the election for Hillary. And some of these details are coming out and it's great. There's some courageous IRS whistleblowers.

Hunter Biden is a tax cheat out of IRS central casting. I mean, he had millions of dollars in these wire transfers coming into his accounts. There were years he wasn't paying any taxes. He was apparently claiming there was a business expense when he was paying prostitutes.

Hey, that's something as a freelance writer, I would never do, okay? But there are just so many different levels of perfidy that Hunter Biden was doing. The IRS was even considering canceling his passport at one point because it was so bad, and yet there was never a criminal indictment.

**WOODS:** Well, and not to mention his father goes out of his way to say on Twitter: *It's about time the rich pay their fair share.* Well, physician heal thyself.

**BOVARD:** Well, yeah, I mean, but it's fascinating that Joe Biden's piety routine never had any credibility with anybody who's been paying attention to anything since the Nixon administration. That was when Joe Biden came to power in the Senate.

And it's like, he's always talked a bunch of trash to be this pious guy, and he's always been a weasel. But the media, in order to help Biden defeat Trump, bought into this storyline of Biden being a progressive reformer.

He's very experienced. It's too bad he can't find his way on and off the stage, but otherwise he's very experienced.

**WOODS:** Yeah, that seems to be our situation. But the thing is up to now, though, Jim, people in the media and elsewhere in the culture would make excuses for Biden pretty consistently. But for some reason now it seems like it's almost become legitimate to ask questions.

So, do you think that's because the appearance of wrongdoing has become simply so obvious that it's no longer plausible to play the old "pretend everything's fine" game?

Or is this (as some people suspect) a plot afoot to try to disrupt his candidacy, to try to get a more effective candidate in his place? I mean, I suppose who can really know?

**BOVARD:** Well, it's possible that it's both. It's been amusing to see how the media has worked very hard to avoid the evidence of profound federal misconduct.

Not just in the Biden case, but if you look at the censorship stuff by the Homeland Security, the FBI, a lot of other agencies, and the news media has basically embraced a National Lampoon definition of censorship.

That if there's not a photo of an FBI agent holding a gun to a Twitter employees head, than the FBI did not use too much pressure. But as far as Biden goes, I think these whistleblowers have kind of broken the dam, as you said.

But it's interesting. There was an article in the Washington Post last October 6th that said that the Justice Department was very close to bringing criminal charges against Hunter Biden.

And apparently on the following day, there was a huge uproar at the meeting of the US attorney's office. I think it was in Delaware, probably a lot of shouting, it'd be wonderful if someone had a tape recording of that meeting.

But that was where it may have been that Merrick Garland's people kind of put their thumb down and yanked on the reins. And ever since last October, folks have been thinking: *Well, are the charges are going to drop this day?*

Then all of a sudden, a week or so ago, we find out: *Well, it's all settled. It's a plea agreement, zero jail time, a smack on the wrist, and he pays $9 back to the IRS.*

**WOODS:** I want to read a few things from a post by a guy named Tom Elliott. I got to know Tom...

**BOVARD:** Yes. Tom has done some great stuff. He's doing some of the best stuff on Twitter on this.

**WOODS:** Yes., So, he's with a media company called Grabien. And you can get a lot of really great clips from them, from the media, that you can use, from interviews and stuff that you can use to comment on.

But he had a nice long post the other day. I met him because he used to be the producer of the Peter Schiff Show. When Peter was on terrestrial radio, I used to fill in for him.

**BOVARD:** Oh really? Oh, that's interesting.

**WOODS:** Yeah. That's how I met him. And that's actually how some of the people listening to us now got to know me because I filled in for Peter Schiff.

So, I want to just read a little bit of this, because when we say there's corruption going on not just among the Bidens, but among federal agencies, the specifics are really quite striking. So, let me just go through maybe the first third of this or so.

So, Tom says, *"An IRS probe into the Biden's money laundering payments from hostile nations (the normal outcome of which would have ended his candidacy) was instead given a stand down order. The FBI and IRS wanted to search Biden's house in September 2020, but were given a stand down order.*

*The FBI authenticated Hunter's laptop a year before the New York Post first reported on its contents. Rather than use the laptop's voluminous documentation of myriad felonies to incite criminal investigations, the FBI hatched a plot to warn social media companies of an imminent 'hack and leak operation' of what they heavily suggested was Russian disinformation."*

I'll say in parentheses, Jim, when you hear the words "Russian disinformation", you just have to think: *Do you think I have an IQ of 25? I mean, really?*

So, then he continues, *"The FBI used its 2016 Russia collusion probe, which the Durham probe has since proven was essentially an extension of the Clinton campaign, to rationalize its meddling in the 2020 election.*

*The FBI also conducted an influence operation with various reporters at major newspapers to convince them that forthcoming damaging reporting about Biden that they knew was true was in fact, not.*

*The FBI was spying on Giuliani when he shared the laptop's contents with the New York Post. When the FBI told Twitter and Facebook a Russian disinformation campaign was coming, they had already concluded Russia was not trying to game the election."*

And it just goes on and on and on. But I think the thing, though, that right now everybody's talking about, is that message that we have in which Hunter is saying to a Chinese associate that his father is sitting right here.

Do you want to – not word for word necessarily. But do you want to reproduce that?

**BOVARD:** Yeah, I mean, that's the thing, I think, the biggest smoking gun that came out last week with the Commerce Subcommittee making public the transcript of the whistleblower. He was sitting there – I think this is July 30th, 2017.

A WhatsApp message from Hunter to Henry Zhao (if that's how it's pronounced). *"I'm sitting here with my father and we would like to understand why the commitment made has not been fulfilled."*

And guess shortly after that two payments totaling $5 million were wired to a law firm, another firm associated with Hunter Biden.

So, it's fascinating to see how far that the federal agencies apparently bent to obscure this case or to sweep it under a rug, knowing that this is a thing that could sweep the turn the next presidential election. It's almost like I was not cynical enough.

**WOODS:** I know. And it's incredible to hear Jim Bovard saying those words, right? It's incredible. Alan Dershowitz commented on this – on this specific message.

And he said, *“It would be an impeachable offense if, in fact, Biden sat next to his son and heard him make that demand for money.*

*We don't know whether it's true. A, I don't know. I haven't heard the tape. B, I don't know if Hunter Biden was telling the truth when he said he was sitting next to his father. There was probable cause. There has to be an investigation."*

That's the words of Alan Dershowitz. Now, the lawyers for Hunter Biden are saying: Oh, this is a misleading, selectively chosen message." But they don't exactly explain to us what's misleading about it.

They then go on to say: *Well, remember, he was in the throes of addiction at that time.* Well, okay, so maybe it's not misleading. It's more that the best they can come up with, it seems to be, was that he was delusional. I mean, that seems to be what they're going to try to go with.

**BOVARD:** Well, and this is where the wire transfers and the Treasury Department's suspicious activity reports come in real handy. Because that's something I've written about since the late 1990s.

And if there's big wire transfers coming in from abroad and there's questions about foreign influence peddling, this can often be a great roadmap to track down the culprits and the recipients.

And it looks like that may be the case here. I'm not sure. I mean, I've heard some big promises from some of the committee chairmen on Capitol Hill. I'm kind of waiting to see them fulfilled. Hopefully, they're able to deliver what they said they would.

But it's interesting that you've got just an amazing amount of apparent criminal wrongdoing that has been obscured by the Justice Department. And same thing with this Hunter plea deal. Because it basically yanks the rug out from underneath a big number of federal prosecutors.

Because if the prosecutor is going before a jury and arguing for a conviction for a routine tax violation, well, it's easy for the defense attorney to say: *Well, what about Hunter Biden? Boom*.

And the same for gun violators. Lying and buying used to be a serious charge. But if the president's kid, it's like: *Well, we'll just send him for some more drug treatment.*

**WOODS:** Yeah, really. I mean, the thing is, it's such a ridiculous double standard that you don't even have to say: Imagine if the situation were reversed, and it wasn't the Bidens, but let's say it was another unpopular family, how different things would be.

I mean, they're going to prosecute Trump on absolutely any conceivable charge they can come up with. So, now it's gotten to a point where if you look at – I saw some interesting poll numbers.

If you trace the public's perception of the FBI going back 25 years in terms of whether they trust it or not, it's about even between Democrats and Republicans back in the mid to late '90s.

But now it's like pretty much unchanged among Democrats. But it's down to something like 17%. I mean, it's down a solid 35 percentage points among Republicans. That they just view it as the enforcement arm of the regime.

**BOVARD:** Yeah, it's also down sharply among independent voters. So, it's great. There have been some FBI agents and officials who have come forward as whistleblowers. They've been absolutely vilified by the Democrats on Capitol Hill. But that's to be expected, I guess.

But it's great. There are some people who are conscientious and principled inside, that are willing to come out and a step forward and take the risk and tell us what happened, or what is happening.

But as far as damage to the credibility of the Justice Department, this is getting closer and closer to 1973 when they had the Saturday Night massacre. When it was Bork, I guess, was the guy who carried out the orders after 2 or 3 other top people in the White House or Justice Department simply refused to fire the investigators or prosecutors.

I think you might know that a little better than I would.

**WOODS:** Yeah, but that is what happened. They resigned rather than do it.

**BOVARD:** Yep. And this is getting awfully damn close, if not worse than that. Because the type of abuse – and part of what's interesting here is, okay, so there's this WhatsApp message in 2017, maybe $5 million is transferred, an FBI memo claiming it was a $5 or $10 million bribe to the Biden's from Ukraine.

How much else might there be? I mean, this stuff is starting to get pretty damn thick. And at some point, the entire Biden presidency is going to fail the laugh test.

**WOODS:**  So, right now – I mean, things can change so quickly. Do we think that there's a chance this has an impact on the election in terms of Biden maybe stepping aside? I mean, meanwhile we have Trump. We don't know what kind of legal hot water he could be in.

We don't know if he might be in prison by the time 2024 comes along. I mean, I think this has to be one of the weirdest, most uncertain elections, at least in a very long time.

**BOVARD:** Well, it's part of my concern. I'm starting to lose hope that the 2024 election is going to restore Americans faith in the system.

**WOODS:** [laughing] I'm starting to lose that hope, too, Jim.

**BOVARD:** Yeah, it's just, you know, it is not looking good. However, I mean, it is fascinating because you got all these different strands of BS here. And it's kind of like peeling an onion: Oh, here's some more BS. Oh, here's another scandal which is covered up.

At some point you wonder if the entire roof is going to cave in. And the thing you mentioned earlier about that White House press briefing where a number of reporters were starting to hammer or badger the press spokes-lady.

I mean, this doesn't have to happen very often until there's almost a total collapse of credibility and defense, and people are like rats jumping off the ship and saying: *Hey, I don't want to be associated with this anymore. I'm not going to apologize for them anymore. I'm not going to defend this.*

There is apparently a handful of journalists (I guess mostly broadcast people, probably) buying into the "poor Hunter Biden. He's a suffering addict" story-line the Biden people were putting out. But you know that's a load of crap.

**WOODS:** Well, I think what's happened here is that the image they've created about Trump as being a uniquely and overwhelmingly wicked figure who needs to be stopped at all costs. I think they felt like that would give them cover for almost anything they might want to do.

Because: *Hey, look, you don't want Trump back, do you? And the only thing standing between you and Trump is the Democratic Party. You don't want that to happen*.

So, I think the insinuation is: *Don't ask questions and let the professionals do their job.*

**BOVARD:** Ha! Let the professionals do their job. Yeah, that's a line that would go well on quite a few Washington tombstones.

**WOODS:** [both laughing] It's: *Trust the science!*

**BOVARD:** Trust the science! Even better. Well, it's worked out well for Fauci. He's going to Georgetown University. So, getting $100,000 of speech, okay? $100,000 a speech is not as much as you or I make, but still, it's pretty good money.

**WOODS:**  Someday, he'll get into Bovard and Woods speaking fee territory. But he's actually getting a position at Georgetown?

**BOVARD:** Yes. I don't know if it's a visiting fellow or something, but Georgetown University. But think they've had a number of war criminals in the past.

**WOODS:** But did you know that Lori Lightfoot got a fellow position at Harvard? She was the mayor of Chicago.

**BOVARD:** Oh, yes. I heard about that. And I was thinking: *You know, Harvard has outdone themselves.*

**WOODS:** Oh, I know. But in particular, when you hear what it's in. Its in leadership and health. Now in health, the "leadership" she demonstrated was literally following what everybody else did.

That was her leadership, was to do exactly what every other blue city mayor did. That's leadership these days.

**BOVARD:** She was actually worse than most. And because of the kind of rhetoric and with the riots after the George Floyd killing. I mean, Chicago is one of the worst places in the country as far as just widespread damage, especially in low-income neighborhoods.

I mean, there was a meeting between the mayor and the aldermen – the city council, more or less. And it was during the height of the violence, and there were these aldermen, male and female, just in tears at how their neighborhoods were being destroyed by the rioters and the looters.

And this is in South Chicago, where they had begged CVS and begged Walmart to come in for years. And they'd finally come in and then everything's being destroyed.

And the Mayor says: *Well, you know, [he makes mocking garbled noises].* I don't know what she said, but it was basically all nonsense.

**WOODS:** I don't know if you've heard this or not, but I've heard that – I mean, it seems to me he's got the money and influence to do what he wants.

But I've at least heard it said that Trump is having trouble assembling the kind of legal team he might otherwise be able to assemble because there's a chilling effect of the demonization campaign against him all throughout the profession.

That if you take on his case, you're just going to have your name dragged through the mud and your reputation destroyed for all time. And so, now nobody wants to help him out. Now, I say this – I am not impressed with the way Trump governed. I'll put it that way.

**BOVARD:** [laughing] Those are harsh words!

**WOODS:**  [laughing] But he spends four years fighting against the very people he himself appointed, and then congratulating himself when he fires them. He shouldn't have hired them in the first place.

And then, I think it was Brett Baer, I forget his name from *Fox News*, who interviewed him recently, who called him on this. And said: *You said something like "I know all the best people."* Or whatever. And then he listed all the names Trump called his own people he had hired.

**BOVARD:** Oh, that's great.

**WOODS:** Why should we think you would choose better? You said these were the great people. And then before you know it, we're being told they have a very small brain. Like, whatever the insult is.

But all the same, I don't know if this is true, but it wouldn't surprise me if it were true. I mean, who really, professionally, would feel like walking into the lion's den against the FBI, the CIA, every institution, all of culture, politics, academia, to work with Trump on a legal team?

 Who would want to do it?

**BOVARD:** Well, a devil's advocate point here is that, okay, yeah. You've got a huge array against you. However, if you're able to go in there and win, then it makes you a hero forever for large part of the population and a swath of the media, conservative media.

And secondly, you've got the feds stacking up these charges and they want 400 years in prison for Trump. And I was reading the affidavit, just sort of, in the *New York Post* on this. And there were two very specific abuses which they noted.

And one was that Trump had shown a classified map to someone who wasn't authorized to see it. Now, people in Washington, DC might be: *Oh, my God!* But my impression is that this case is going to be heard down there in Florida.

And people down there are not going to be awed by like: *Wow, he violated government regulations. Yeah, 400 years. I don't think so.* But the second point on Trump and getting good lawyers – I mean, he's a client from hell because of how he runs his mouth.

I mean, he's always – you talk about undercutting your legal defense. And who knows what other tapes are going to come forward? And it seems to me like that there may be selective prosecution here.

And the Presidential Records Act has basically become a conspiracy to keep presidents' records from the American people. I mean, the National Archives is withholding a thousand times more records than Trump is with all kinds of BS FOIA stuff and other things.

But the flip side is, I don't know what Trump has said or done. As a lawyer, I'd be really nervous with a client like that.

**WOODS:** Boy, that is an excellent point. I don't know why didn't think of it. Because yeah, you don't know what's going to come out. And then even now, you don't know what kind of interview he's going to give, and what he's going to say during that interview.

And the very thing that made him an unusual politician of the sort that got people's attention was that he was unscripted. And that's great. Ron Paul was unscripted. That's great, in that it does generate news stories and attention because you're not speaking in soundbites.

But the other side of that is, if I were a lawyer, I would want a very scripted client.

**BOVARD:** Well, you would want someone who would not blow up your case once a week.

**WOODS:** [laughing] Right, Right.

**BOVARD:** I don't know if Trump is quite that bad, but he's said a number of things since this case broke. It's just kind of like, dude, whose side are you on?

**WOODS:** Yeah, I know it. I know it. So, again, I don't even know what's going to be happening by 2024. Who's actually running for president? Who's the front runner? I mean, I know Eugene Debs ran a campaign from prison.

But, you know, eh. He was a minor party candidate, and he didn't win, you know? So, don't think you can replicate that. So, I don't know. And the thing is, if by some miracle Trump didn't win the Republican nomination, it's not difficult to imagine him creating his own Trump Party.

So, it is just so wild going into 2024.

**BOVARD:** Yeah. And basically, the only thing that gives me comfort is that no matter who wins, that will be the will of the people.

**WOODS:** [laughing] Indeed, that's what counts. And who is it who said – Ralph Raico might have actually coined this. I can't remember. It could be somebody else. Maybe it was Harry Browne.

I don't know. But: *Democracy is the idea that Jim Bovard and I have twice as much influence as David Rockefeller.* That's the theory.

**BOVARD:** [laughing] That's a good line. Yeah. I'm sitting on the edge of my chair waiting for that influence to kick in.

**WOODS:** I know. Just like I'm waiting for my checks from the Koch brothers that supposedly people like you and me, we all get those. Not one, after everything I've done, has arrived in the old mailbox.

**BOVARD:** Well, it was probably lost in the mail.

**WOODS:** So, I'm just trying to think about what happens now. You have the press secretary not really answering questions, absolutely stonewalling the other day. And I suppose that's what you want in a press secretary, somebody who stonewalls. But I would just want a more effective stonewaller.

**BOVARD:** Yeah, it's important to have it be a credible stone wall as opposed to saying, "Nya, nya!"

**WOODS:** Yeah, it's not good. And her whole strategy is, she's got this notebook in front of her and you ask her a hard question, she flips through it, knowing for sure there's nothing in there that's going to answer that question.

Then she flips back. And then she refuses to answer. And that's pretty much how it goes. I'd love to know what's in that notebook.

**BOVARD:** Yeah, I mean, keep in mind the standard that she's being judged by. Just as long as she's a little more mentally sharp than Biden, she's considered to be doing a good job.

**WOODS:** Yeah, really. And incidentally, I have to say, as hard as I've been on her, I do not envy anybody in that position right now.

**BOVARD:** She was not conscripted.

**WOODS:** Oh, that's true. No. Right. She bears full blame. I get it.

I just mean, there really is no good way out of that. Other than resigning, there really is no good way to handle a situation like this: *Yes, I believe the president has contradicted himself. And yes, I think his son is corrupt and the whole FBI is shot through with corruption. Next question*.

I don't think you would survive.

**BOVARD:** Yeah, well, this is not a job where candor has been high up in the qualifications, going back at least to the Nixon era. Actually, much before the Nixon era, Lyndon Johnson at least as well. So, I mean, it's like your designated liar.

**WOODS:** Yeah. And in those early days, it's so interesting to hear – I don't know if it was actually RFK Jr or who it was recently heard. But I think it might be him, saying that up until the Kennedy assassination, it's hard for us to imagine now because this has all happened within one human lifetime.

Generally, Americans trusted their government. If the president said something, they just assumed it was true. Then the Kennedy assassination occurred, and that shook a lot of people. And there was something kind of fishy about it.

And now we're at this point where half the country just does not believe a word. If they say, *"I'm wearing a black shirt."* and it's obviously black, they're not going to believe it. So, we've gone to there.

So, now we've got this person whose job it is to obfuscate 24 hours a day. And this doesn't even surprise us anymore. We just kind of figure: *Oh, that's just the way the regime operates.*

**BOVARD:** You know, I don't know how many people are paying attention to her outside the Washington press corps and the people who have got a psychological addiction to the cable news stations.

So, I mean, I see her pop up every now and then on some Twitter feed where people were usually scoffing at something she said. And there have been a lot of people in that job over the decades, most of whom were not honest folks, and that's how they kept the job, so.

**WOODS:** Yeah. Well, Jim, where can people get more information about Jim Bovard?

**BOVARD:** Well, JimBovard.com is a good place to start. I've got a blog, doing stuff for, as you mentioned, the *Libertarian Institute*, the *Brownstone Institute*, the *New York Post*, the *Future of Freedom Foundation*. I do some stuff occasionally for *Mises*, fine folks there, and other newspapers and magazines where articles pop up.

**WOODS:** Well, we appreciate over the years the dogged truth-telling work that you've done. And man, in this day and age, it's like there's more truth to tell than ever.

**BOVARD:** Yeah, it's actually a little more than I'd like to see. But, oh, bother. It's a target-rich environment and I should be grateful for it.

**WOODS:** Yes, that's right. It gives you something to do. Otherwise, if the minimum wage hadn't ruined that job, we might all be pumping gas. But instead, we expose falsehoods that are widely accepted.

So, thanks again, Jim. I appreciate your time today.

**BOVARD:** Hey, thanks for having me on.