

JD

Media Network

*The **Jay Doherty** Podcast*

EPISODE 140

SHOW NOTES

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Today's Show: 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM

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Today on The Jay Doherty Podcast:

The United States of America has been attacked... virtually. It was recently revealed that, since March, at least 40 of America's acronym agencies were compromised, among dozens of other businesses in America and around the world. As talks of who may be the perpetrator heat up, the issue is becoming more of a political one than a technological one... and for good reason, in my opinion.

Also, COVID-19 vaccine distribution begins! At last, it seems the development is no longer the main focus of the powers that be; rather it is the distribution. We take a look at the efficacy numbers, the predetermined plans for distribution, and when you may actually be able to get this vaccine.

Finally, an overview of the recent and much needed COVID-19 relief. As millions of Americans sink into poverty and middle class families lose their jobs and businesses, the need for relief is becoming more and more desperate. The latest \$900 billion stimulus is expected to pass, and I'll break it down... plus try to give some advice to the President-elect.

All of that and more is next on episode 140 of The Jay Doherty Podcast.

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QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"If you're not at the table, you're on the menu."

- *Michael Enzi, Republican Senator of Wyoming (among many people)*

A MASSIVE CYBER ATTACK ON AMERICA

Please beware of the acronyms in the following segment:

This past week it was revealed that there was a *massive* cyber attack on more than 40 of America's acronym agencies among dozens of other NGO's, think tanks, IT companies, and other major institutions. According to an [explainer piece](#) published by the AP's Matt O'Brien and Frank Bajak:

"The hack began as early as March when malicious code was snuck into updates to popular software that monitors computer networks of businesses and governments. The malware, affecting a product made by U.S. company SolarWinds, gave elite hackers remote access into an organization's networks so they could steal information. It wasn't discovered until the prominent cybersecurity company FireEye determined it had been hacked. Whoever broke into FireEye was seeking data on its government clients, the company said — and made off with hacking tools it uses to probe its customers' defenses."

First, I think this story is so worthy of attention that I am making it the lead story for this episode. We don't know -- and might not ever know -- the full details of this attack, but the potential for damage, the scale, and the failure of U.S. acronym agencies and the third party companies they contract with to detect this, is a colossal nightmare for national security. At the moment, we really don't know much, and it sounds like the immediate victims (the government, companies, etc.) don't know either. All we know thus far, to summarize, is that a) this is a massive attack on America, its government, and dozens of other entities, b) that Russia is the speculated perpetrator, and c) that this will inevitably become subject to politics - it already has. I'll talk about why in one moment, but first, in the effort to provide needed context, I must read a post from Microsoft, whose research division is one among many working to learn more about this attack.

Microsoft [says](#)...

"This latest cyber-assault is effectively an attack on the United States and its government and other critical institutions, including security firms. It illuminates the ways the cybersecurity landscape continues to evolve and become even more dangerous. As much as anything, this attack provides a moment of reckoning. It requires that we look with clear eyes at the growing threats we face and commit to more effective and collaborative leadership by the government and the tech sector in the United States to spearhead a strong and coordinated global cybersecurity response."

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POLITICO also [said...](#)

First couple paragraphs, highlight last one.

Now, you may not know this, but the actual U.S. Nuclear control system, or systems, are operated on 1970s era computer equipment so that a) they wouldn't launch an unstoppable nuke when they tried to upgrade and b) because it is harder to hack if there is less subject matter to hack... an [article](#) from *The Guardian* pointed this out a while ago.

Despite the proportions of this, there has still been no official response from the Trump administration as of Sunday, December 20, despite many experts and lawmakers describing the historical proportions of this attack. Brad Smith, President of Microsoft, was on the PBS Newshour on Saturday and explained the proportions of this attack... SMITH 1.

When the acronyms of this fine country are agonized themselves instead of creating agony for others, we know the problem is a big deal. This is probably the most under-reported, severe cyber attack of recent times; this is a really big deal and, for purposes of ratings and politics, both sides of the run-of-the mill media are not reporting on it as much as I think they should be. That is not supposed to be a political statement; tech journalists and cyber security experts are saying the same thing and urging citizens to become informed about what just recently happened.

This is an attack that I suspect we will be hearing new developments about for months to come. There are journalists from multiple publications that cite unnamed sources and say, "Yeah, it's definitely Russia," but no one has officially gone on record from the government to confirm or deny that. The closest we got to hearing anything directly was when Secretary of State Mike Pompeo spoke with Mark Levin's syndicated radio show on Westwood One the other day, and he said this... POMPEO 1 (<https://jay-doherty.com/pompeo1>)

Now, of course, you can't say anything negative about Russia without Trump contradicting you, so, somewhat inevitably, Trump [tweeted...](#)

The incohesion here is not great but sadly expected. Trump tweeted his speculations about China in sort of an indirect yet baseless defense of China - who, by the way, I would hate to have hacked the U.S. I'd much rather have Russia than China attack us. Nonetheless, the incohesion is amusing in this situation because, according to the AP's Jill Colvin and Matthew Lee, in an article published on Saturday:

"Officials at the White House had been prepared to put out a statement Friday afternoon that accused Russia of being "the main actor" in the hack, but were told at

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the last minute to stand down, according to one U.S. official familiar with the conversations who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private deliberations.

It is not clear whether Pompeo got that message before his interview, but officials are now scrambling to figure out how to square the disparate accounts. The White House did not immediately respond to questions about the statement or the basis of Trump's claims. The State Department also did not respond to questions about Pompeo's remarks.

Throughout his presidency, Trump has refused to blame Russia for well-documented hostilities, including its interference in the 2016 election to help him get elected. He blamed his predecessor, Barack Obama, for Russia's annexation of Crimea, has endorsed allowing Russia to return to the G-7 group of nations and has never taken the country to task for allegedly putting bounties on U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan."

If I work backwards here, I will recite my opinions on Trump and Russia. Why on earth he is not more vocally outspoken against them, I have no idea. He absolutely should be condemning Russia and their anti-American sentiments at any chance he gets particularly when it is discovered they inflict what is probably the largest cyber espionage attack in the history of the world. But, the media does not ever do a comparative analysis of his administrations' policy on Russia vs. his Democrat predecessors. Trump, from the extensive sanctioning of Russia to arming Ukraine's citizens with deadly weapons, has been objectively tougher on Russia when it comes to policy but not rhetoric. Trump and his policy, though, have a complete disconnect. Trump and his administration have a complete disconnect, actually. There is no cohesion between the two; they are separate. Ironically, the biggest problem about Trump's administration is Trump. If he himself actually shut up for the past two years, I think he would have had a much bigger chance of winning this election and there would be a lot less subject matter for me to criticize. His administration has, for the most part, governed in a conservative Republican manner as their voters hoped they would, but Trump's personality, demeanor, and public lack of good character makes a red vote drastically unappealing to many run-of-the-mill conservatives who want the anti-American Russia to be condemned.

Joe Biden's transition team, who will have this mess on his hands along with many others in the coming months, put out a [statement](#) strongly condemning Russia and vowed for punishment.

Ron Klain, who is soon to be Joe Biden's Chief of Staff, was on CBS's *Face The Nation* where he reiterated what that statement said and also criticized Trump's lack of response... to save time, I edited out a part where he restated the uncertainty of the attacks... KLAIN 1

Mitt Romney, the [Republican](#) Senator from Utah, agrees. Here he was on Meet The Press the other day... ROMNEY 1

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Now, we also can't forget that the United States probably does the same thing -- or at minimum, something similar -- to Russia. In this case, I think it is very evident that the perpetrator's main goal was simply to spy; not to destroy, confuse, or even expose data... just unlicensed observance. If all of these reports about the attackers' scale of access are true, they could have collapsed the economy, leaked out sensitive data, deleted a bunch of stuff... who knows? In this case, the concept of mutually assured destruction has of course come up and the solution to that is continual, perpetual espionage in this case. The problem is that this seems to be a massive attack that went undetected for years and Russia seems to be the main suspect.

All of this talk indirectly begs the question... What does Russia have to say about these accusations?

Well, there have been denials from certain Moscow bureaucrats, but interestingly Vladimir Putin, on Sunday, when media reports were around their peak (oh-so coincidentally) told his spy agency staff to "keep up the good work," [according](#) to Reuters.

That's where everything stands on this attack so far, and I will keep you up to date as we learn more. The reason I put this story first today is because if the government cannot function internally or can function but with external interference, there is no point in stimulus checks, congressional negotiations, the stock market, anything. If basic infrastructure is intruded by foreign hackers, America cannot operate. It is as simple as that.

You may be asking yourself: what is the President doing on a day like today; every major institution in the government infiltrated by hackers, thousands dying from a pandemic, and millions sinking into poverty... and the President [resets the standards](#) for the design of federal buildings so that they can look more "beautiful."

Coming up: we'll talk about the COVID-19 vaccine, its distribution, its relevance, and when you may be getting it. You are listening to The Jay Doherty Podcast on The JD Media Network.

BREAK

THE COVID-19 VACCINE DISTRIBUTION BEGINS

Once again, I would like to say just how grateful I am for the doctors, nurses, and medical professionals who are out there every single day keeping the world safe, including the many scientists who spent lots of time developing the vaccine which is now being distributed and will eventually save millions of lives, hopefully without any problems. The scientists and the private

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companies overseeing them such as Pfizer and Moderna do not get enough credit for how efficiently they were able to pump out this vaccine.

On the vaccine front itself, nothing is really that new; rather its anticipated distribution is. As you probably know, doctors and scientists worked for months behind closed doors to get all of this ready (we only really started hearing concrete updates about it in the past month or two) and its distribution has begun in certain parts of the country and for certain people in the country.

According to USA Today's Elizabeth Weise... article [here](#).

There was some initial controversy over the methods of distribution particularly as it related to the CDC's first plans which would neglect elderly patients from getting the virus first and presented some odd loopholes in which younger people were able to get the vaccine first.

The government has [said](#) since day one that this virus, like most illnesses, affects the elderly population more than any other population out there. You would think that may inform the way they distribute the vaccine (i.e. give it to the older people first) and thankfully [it is now](#), but it did not at first. According to *The New York Times*... [Times](#)...

The initial plans received backlash from both sides of the aisle... one of the strongest Democrat responses was from Tulsi Gabbard who put out [this video on Twitter](#) slamming the bureaucrats who made the first decision... GABBARD 1

The argument was that the group that the CDC prioritized and declared "Essential workers" was way too broad to be the first in line, and that no doubt elderly members of the population should 100% get the vaccine first because they are at highest risk of dying. The argument from the other side is that, generally, the elderly population can, due to personal circumstances, quarantine easier than younger people, and essential workers are on the front lines. If you look at the data, it is abundantly clear that the first of those two arguments is the stronger one. In my opinion, it is much safer to first vaccinate a substantial proportion of adults with pre-existing conditions over the age of 65, then frontline medical workers, and then work your way down over the course of months and years to eventually a place where everyone can get it.

Other than the vaccine's initial distribution actually going as planned (eventually after some brief and quickly resolved turmoil), there is not much more news as of yet. The real thing we will be looking at is whether or not this vaccine will work as intended; of course, the trials have gone well, but efficacy is proven through scale and over time. I am personally weary of taking this vaccine just because they accomplished what would [usually take years](#)... within months.

As Dr. Fauci said on the BBC some months ago, the date you get your vaccine is determined by where you fall in the hierarchy of pre-existing conditions and age. FAUCI 1

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Exactly what he described is what is happening right now, and I hope it goes smoothly for the sake of everyone in the world. It will probably take more than a year for the entire population, or at least a significant portion of it, to be vaccinated. And, hopefully, within time, the virus will be killed off and eventually become a seasonal disease or something much weaker than it is now. An [article](#) from *Medical News Today* actually cited researchers' predictions about that... I hope the vaccine distribution goes well and the vaccine manifests itself similar to how it did in the trials. In the meantime, don't think it's over! Continue to wear a mask, socially distance, and be responsible! Hopefully, that's obvious

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STIMULUS TALKS COMPLETE

The other half of COVID-19 news -- what is impacting most of America right now -- is the fact that the most recent round of stimulus negotiations concluded Sunday afternoon and resulted in a [5,593 page relief bill](#). These talks have been happening for what feels like an infinite amount of time and they've followed similar patterns of what we've been seeing in the past couple of months with different and similar stimulus talks.

According to *The Washington Post*... [article](#)

Just with the coronavirus vaccine and just like the last major stimulus, distribution is once again a big issue... [article](#).

The checks are soon to go out and we'll hopefully see a positive reaction from the American people and Wall Street. Both Mitch McConnell and Chuck Schumer praised the outcome of their negotiations, so there was some much needed bipartisanship that resulted out of this... and most importantly, people now have some concrete hope of staying in business, going back to work, or even not becoming homeless. These checks were vital as millions of Americans have [plunged into poverty](#) as a result of COVID-19's impact on the economy.

What Biden should do is just throw money at all parts of the economy. Pour TONS of money into big businesses, small businesses, individuals; everyone. Just chuck it at the wall, re-evaluate over periods of time, but keep chucking.

There has been an odd division in this country (no surprise) between the Congressional Republican establishment and Donald J. Trump. On Friday, Trump tweeted:

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“Why isn’t Congress giving our people a Stimulus Bill? It wasn’t their fault, it was the fault of China. GET IT DONE, and give them more money in direct payments.”

This is a direct contradiction between Trump and the Republican establishment, and really it is a contradiction, on behalf of Trump of conservative philosophy. Conservative economic philosophy essentially states that corporations and businesses are made of people because they hire people (and by people, I mean working class), so, in order to have a strong working class and incentivize employers to stay in the United States, we need to tax the corporations (and essentially, everyone) relatively less because the benefits of corporations (and the people they employ) staying in America and promoting free-market activity will trickle down to the working class and allow those businesses to promote hard workers based on merit.

Democrats, however, prefer to, as I like to say, bypass the trickle. They want more money in direct payments of all kinds, whether we’re talking about COVID-19 or not... and they want more taxes/less bailouts on big businesses, industries, and corporations because their argument is that these are rich institutions that need to pay their fair share because it’s insane that millions are in poverty while Amazon paid \$0 in federal income tax.

Both of these things can be true at once and both the conservative and liberal philosophies are strong in areas where the other is weak

The conservative philosophy only works to a certain extent and is only strong in certain respects, in my opinion; namely in that it incentivizes employment and actually encourages free market activity. In my opinion, the downside is that the trickling down that Republicans fantasize over never actually happens; it goes into the pockets of rich CEO’s and executives who are not taxed as much.

The liberal philosophy only works to a certain extent and is only strong in certain respects, too; namely, that it focuses almost 100% on the working class and poor in America and tries to lessen the wealth gap. The rich multimillionaires and billionaire individuals should absolutely be taxed more! The problem is this philosophy, implemented on a large scale, ends up with citizens depending on the government and not themselves to solve their problems, and also does not help small businesses as much as their Republican counterparts because liberals generally believe there is little merit to the trickle down argument.

The reason I bring any of this up is because all of these philosophies are informing the stimulus talks that are consuming Washington these days, and having that frame of mind probably helps a) inform which economic philosophy you support and b) give insight as to how these policies are shaped in stimulus talks.

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Hopefully, we see a really nice balance between the freeing advantages of free-market capitalism and the protective interventions of government policy during a Biden administration. We want freedom from radicalization during this administration.

I said this the day Biden won: if the 46th President can bring the concerningly loyal, nationalist, Trump-supporting conspiracy theorists and the overtly pro socialist Marx-supporting tear-it-down'ers back to near the center by the end of his presidency, he will have had a good presidency.

WEAR A MASK AND BE SAFE!

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