

I don't know how much he actually thinks about Portland, but Portland is a key part of that narrative because it's here where there was a significant social movement that

I wouldn't say that we were necessarily victorious in pushing federal agents out, but we certainly outlasted them.

In addition to that, that movement represents a lot of the things that he thinks he's been elected to president to fix, notably sort of Wokism and other kinds of stuff.

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This is the Lawyers, Guns & Money Podcast.

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Hello, Lawyers, Guns & Money listeners. My name is Rob Farley and I am joined by Chris Koski, long-term friend of the blog and also blogger at LGM and long-term podcast partner as well.

I think this is your fourth or fifth to possibly sixth appearance on the podcast, which may make you, which may be a record, right? You may now be in the lead in terms of podcast appearances.

I feel fortunate.

Yeah, well, so in less fortunate things, Dr. Koski is joining us today from war-torn Portland, Oregon, where capitalism has ceased to exist, where violence is endemic.

I can see blames in the background of the picture. I would ask how Amy is, but I assume that she's already communal property and along a variety of other things.

We have exchanged messages through runners. It's been difficult.

Yes. Yes. So, yeah, you're joining us today from Portland, where you, of course, are a professor at Reed College.

And today we're going to talk about what the situation is in a city which is really actually much beloved by LGM because I live there and Eric is close to it and others have considerable experience with the city.

So I guess, yeah, to start off with, how do you feel about the situation right now in the Rose City?

Boy, honestly, it's kind of difficult to accurately assess what's going on because we're getting multiple impressions depending upon what media ecosystem you're in.

If you're in what we would call the real world, most things are sort of going on as they otherwise would.

For those of the people who don't know, most of the activities are concentrated at the ICE facility.

The ICE facility is not located really anywhere near downtown. It's in the part of Portland known as the South Waterfront.

That building is near as part of our kind of redevelopment area, a bunch of new apartments down there, as well as some of the Oregon Health Sciences University campus.

And as I think everybody knows who's listening to this, the vast majority of the protests have been kind of sort of pretty lame.

I said one way of thinking about it, pretty not populated. Most of the activity has not been super aggressive.

There are a couple of incidents over the summer which seemed to be the foundation, at least the attempted legal foundation for some of the arguments the Trump administration is trying to bring forward here.

In general, I've been trying to send some videos from the front to various people across Facebook land and other social media land.

I've got to say, the reactions have been pretty muted. They're wondering what kind of insurrection this really is.

In some ways, it would be like a typical Portland insurrection.

Most places will have sort of fighting and will have the equivalent of a cosplay kind of poetry slam or something like that.

I don't mean to diminish, however, I think some of the, in general, the kind of palpable sense that a lot of Portlanders are feeling right now.

If you're anywhere in the city, you'll hear at least two, if not four helicopters that are flying over.

One or two of them might be news, but the other two or three will be some service of some kind.

They fly low. I can see them from my deck. I live about three miles away from the ICE facility.

So it's something that is kind of like this. In some ways, there are certain sounds in certain parts of this process that are reminiscent of the 2020 protests, which were, as everybody knows, quite significant and also had their own kind of fallout.

So long story short is that people are certainly aware of it.

And we also live in this kind of weird duality where the government is shut down and yet Portland feels of the very weight of the government on it all the time.

So I do want to come back to because I think it's important to set the stage with the discussion of what happened in 2020 and what has happened in the ensuing years.

But how many troops are deployed in Portland currently and what is their nature? Are they Oregon National Guard or who are they exactly?

Right now, no troops are deployed in Oregon. There were several orders by the president to attempt to try to send National Guard to federalize the Oregon National Guard and send them to ostensibly to protect the ICE facility.

There's, of course, some concern that that would lead to mission creep, notably if the forces were assigned to protect ICE officers.

ICE officers go all over the place. So those folks were sent to the coast to train, I guess, a la Lewis and Clark.

And then the city of Portland was able to get an injunction and the federal government turned around and I should say the president turned around and decided to move already federalized National Guard from California.

The same judge issued the first injunction issued a very pithy or acidly, depending on how you want to think about it, other injunction which said, no, you can't bring any National Guard troops to Portland.

So at this moment, there are no National Guard troops in Portland. I don't know who's in the helicopters above. I'm sure some people would know. But right now, nobody.

Right. And so that's what made me curious about the fact that there are already is an air deployment. Right.

But yeah, and so that must be under sort of a different legal structure. I would imagine that sort of enables that. All right.

So let's then go back and roll back to these four years. Right. And so five years actually now and get us back to and to my recollection, the sort of the the peak of the protests is in summer of 2020.

It happens around the same time as or it happens in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, which first demonstrations all across the country.

But in Portland, these have a particular Portland character to them. So you were there. Can you tell us a little bit about what?

And so I visited Portland in the summer of twenty twenty one. I visited you in the summer of twenty twenty one.

And I would say, I mean, part of it was covid. Right. But, you know, downtown Portland was definitely sparser than I had remembered. Right.

Downtown Portland was more empty than I had remembered. But if you could take us back to the summer of twenty twenty and tell us a little bit about what happened in the city during that period.

I think a lot of people when they go on this journey back to twenty twenty Portlanders have, you know, are in some ways have to work through at least a little bit of memories they don't want to remember.

And also they remember the good parts, too. And so as you mentioned, there were significant protests regarding the death of George Floyd, the murder of George Floyd.

These protests really were organized across the city.

The typical pattern of protests would be hundreds, if not thousands of people, some cases even more than that, tens of thousands of people that would march gathering downtown, not at the ice facility, gathering downtown.

These protests were the facility even there was the ice facility.

Oh, no, no, no, no, no. No, these are mostly directed at municipal police. Right.

If you recall, the target of most of these protests were policing by local police departments.

And these these protests were they were active, as I mentioned, they were mostly peaceful, but you get thousands of people in one place and you're going to get a couple hundred that are not interested in that.

And certainly we had a number of individuals who are what do you want to call them? Antifa, anarchy, anarchists.

Oregon has a long as you know, Oregon has a long history of people like this.

And typically the protests would be large and then most people would go home because it was such a cross section of Oregon.

These are people that are going back to their jobs the next day. And then once those folks went home, once the sun went down, then there would be typically some form of, you know, organized.

I wouldn't say necessarily violence, violence, but certainly organized violence for the purposes of essentially stoking your response.

I mentioned all of that that happens sort of in June and what the mayor at the time, who no longer is mayor Ted Wheeler, as well as the city council, but really the mayor had kind of begun to essentially engage in a kind of a peace process.

That's the wrong word for it, I realize, but gauging in a process, almost a detente with the protesters such that through by engaging also law enforcement and such that these protests began to become a little more organized or I should say a little less chaotic and also frankly smaller.

Trump then deployed federal protective services forces, including ICE officials, operating under some very vague interpretation of what ICE officers are supposed to be doing since Portland is nowhere near a border of anything.

I think the closest border we might be to are in like international waters, essentially.

And so that that action just dumped gas on what were otherwise just sort of like embers about to go out. And that's when you saw a significant huge eruptions, even a much broader cross section of Portland coming out to really protest what they saw was a pretty significant threat on democracy.

And certainly there were that also sparked a lot more violence against federal protective forces.

These forces were often non-uniformed and plainclothes. There are several reports of people essentially being just sort of snatched, plates thrown in vans and driven away.

And the long term impact of that, of course, was frustration with the administration. The social movement morphed into a broader movement, a pro-democracy movement, something you might see in countries that are experiencing autocracy.

And eventually, over time, through backchannel negotiations, the governor and Vice President Pence, Mike Pence, were able to kind of work out a deal where there would be kind of this withdrawal.

But this took months. And the scarring, as you noted, even the year after and a couple of years later, certainly not a lot of that has to do with COVID.

But in truth, the foot traffic really dropped down there because there was just real significant threats of violence and really nobody really wanted to go downtown to Portland other than to protest.

And when the protest went away, the city took a long time to recover. So I think we have a law, all have these kind of distinct recollections of that moment in time.

But one of the kind of outcomes of that moment was, arguably, yes, a Democratic president takes over. It's part of a broader movement in America.

Oregon's going to matter in that regard. Part of a broader movement in America begins to prioritize democracy.

But the scarring is still there. And so one of the reasons why I think people are responding so critically to this moment in Oregon, although not in the same way, one of the reasons why we're all very tense about this is that we've been here before.

And I think, I think, I hope we seem to have actually learned a kind of lesson from that moment, I guess it's to say some of the lessons might just sort of be that like the other parts of that protest movement regarding race and regarding policing.

Those most of the goals associated with that seem to have not occurred. So there could be some kind of sense of like impotence and therefore why we should we demonstrate anything.

But I think the other thing is strategy wise, I think a lot of Portlanders realize that our city was forever, not forever, but was changed in a negative way when they tried to sort of engage violently with these officials.

And one other thing is that it's not just that they're sort of federal protective services that are here.

It's also that this is mobilized as other sort of right wing groups that are just right next door, like the Proud Boys in particular.

And those counter protests, it's really the kind of way this combination of counter protests and that make it even more volatile.

Okay, so I want to chase down both of these, but it did seem to me and I, you know, this was from afar, but it was from reading, you know, accounts, especially from people in northeast was that, you know, some of the contradictions that were kind of inherent in the George Floyd movement really became apparent in Portland.

Because I mean, you especially had a lot of people in Portland's black middle class who, you know, were saying, you know, you are attempting to produce, you're supposedly protesting on our behalf.

Right. But we don't actually want our businesses to be destroyed, right? We don't actually want zero. We want a police presence because, you know, we need this police presence in order to, you know, to continue to prosper, right?

So that there was some contradiction there.

And then, yeah, the second part was, you know, my experience, you know, I've lived in, you know, I lived in the northwest for many years and, you know, I remember the Portland of the 1980s and 1990s where, you know, white supremacist skinhead gangs in Portland, in Portland streets were extremely, were extremely common.

And so my sense here was that those people showed up in order to basically be counter protesters during this movement. And that that sparked a lot of the violence.

Or I guess the way I kind of felt about it at some times was there were a lot of people who were just eager to get into street fights and they found people to street fight with.

That is an accurate assessment. And unfortunately, that those sort of like those folks who were ultimately pretty small percentage of the folks that were demonstrating, at least in terms of the people that want to just fight those people demonstrated or rather generated a particular

response by the federal government was provided justification for the federal government. And in some ways, both of those sort of like street fighter sides kind of wanted that because they wanted to be in an air in a kind of like a war.

They wanted to create a war zone so they could be soldiers in that war. And to your previous point, it's also true that it's the, you know, there's a lot of good natured individuals who were marching on behalf, as I mentioned, for social justice.

But well, specifically, of course, we were one of the cities that was in America that tried to, you know, have significant defunding police movement as well as a movement to try to get more civilian oversight over the police.

Some of the defunding of police happened here, civilian oversight ended up not happening here. And part it's because it's unclear exactly on whose behalf the entire movement was really speaking.

And there were several divisions within the movement that several organizations that began to fracture. All of this, of course, is happening in the time of a national election.

Also, and also a local election. So we had just the conflagration of forces that led many people to be to try to speak on behalf of others, but whether they were actually whether the others or other the individuals who were ultimately really affected by the policies of the moment were actually had their voices heard is kind of an open question.

So, so what were the and this is something I'm completely distant from. So I have no grip on but but what were the politics of sort of how 2020 played out?

How did that play out in Oregon? Obviously, Portland is, you know, Portland has internal politics. Portland is also really super important for Oregon politics more generally.

In fact, Portland is like, I think it's more important now, because when I lived in Oregon, Republicans could still win statewide races. And that's not the case now.

But, you know, sort of from 2020 on how did sort of this situation affect Oregon politics, right? Both both in Portland and in.

Could you mentioned there was the former mayor, you know, what happened to him, you know, how was he replaced? What were, you know, sort of arguments that came out of that?

Yeah, so in that moment, the mayor, mayor was running for we have this kind of we had this peculiar election system, which maybe we still do for mayor where if you if you win an election, if you win the primary with more than 50% of the vote, you also win the general election, which is funky.

So for example, and it's a nonpartisan election. And so Wheeler, the previous mayor had won his previous election that way, he never actually won a general election before. So during this time, there's this election in April prior to the murder of George Floyd or prior to these demonstrations.

And so the the candidates that are chosen to sort of represent the potential he ends up drawing a challenger, this woman Sarah in Aroney.

And it's clear that as that movement happens, as the protests occur over the summer, it's clear that everybody who's involved in the protests and who are reacting to the protests want neither of these candidates, they would have chosen very different options if they knew the political reality were different.

And Wheeler is a pontina. Many people are very upset about Wheeler. They think that he, of course, is the face of the police. He's the incumbent incumbents, you know, in general don't do well when there's strife.

The challenge, incumbent mayors, right. And this is what I mean, this is one thing that's going to play out in the New York race, right?

And so the incumbent mayors always have to have some kind of relationship with the police, right? They have to. And it can't like there's a limit to the degree of antagonism that there can be between an incumbent mayor and the police. Right.

And that's exactly right. Yeah, that's exactly right. And so we had also gone through, I think, two or three police commissioners in a period of three years or two years.

So it was also there was a lot of churn at the top. A lot of this term was really was pre Floyd, but also was related to the issues that were brought up in Floyd.

And so the mayor himself, of course, is we have this old commission system of government and I won't bore the listeners with it, but suffice to say that each of the commissioners who would otherwise be city councilors and other towns were appointed to be heads of agencies, which is like old school, like Tammany Hall, where they are running a government, essentially.

And the governor and the mayor gets to choose which of those people get to head with agencies and the mayor himself would always choose himself to be in charge of the police.

So not only is he like there's this relationship, but like it's one theoretically he's chosen to be a part of. So anyway, that that transpires. And the candidate that in her own who that who had been nominated ends up sort of like she's she doesn't she does not campaign.

Well, I'll just say that is not necessarily the face of the resistance. In some ways, you'd think that Wheeler would have lost this race hands down.

But the challenger that was chosen at the time really was very alienating to many people. And so much so that there was a writing campaign for a third candidate, the legality, which is kind of questionable.

It's unclear actually whether you can actually do that or not. But regardless, the writing candidate won, I think, a pretty significant. I can't remember about 10 percent of the vote or something, which is not historically something that ever happened.

So the mayor sticks around in part because of just sort of like candidates, the candidate structure that was chosen prior to that event and a bad candidate from the perspective of who can win a race was chosen.

So long term, Wheeler doesn't run for office reelection again, and we instead now have a new mayor. But also we have seen the timeline here is sort of tricky for me.

But we also saw a fundamental change in the city of Portland's governance structure, where we moved from this commission system, five at large people to now a multi member district ranked choice voting model, which has produced, which has 12 members.

And that's a whole other conversation we can have. But that has also sort of just the government is entirely, for the most part, entirely new at this point.

So you see, you see some of the legacy of that, in part in the folks that are elected at the same time, there are very few people that have much of an attachment to that past anymore.

So it's all sort of like new people that are involved in Portland government at the state level.

We certainly has the our, our the current governor Tina Kotek won on her election, but did not win a majority of the vote in part because she drew a pretty competitive looking candidate.

And we also had a an independent candidate who Oregonians will know Betsy Johnson, who was essentially funded by Phil Knight.

And that was, again, sort of a moment we saw some pretty divisive politics in part based upon the positions that Oregonian politicians had to take during this time, which, you know, you know, which was sort of quite, quite polarizing even in a polarized era.

Yeah.

And so, so, I mean, so there really isn't in terms of statewide politics, there isn't any sort of transformation in terms of, well, when was Kotek elected when, when, when did her term start?

I want to say it's 2024, but it might be 2022.

Okay. So you don't have, I mean, there's an impact on Oregon state politics, but it's not something that's fundamentally transformative then.

I would say no, some people may disagree with me, I would say no.

Particularly the state level I would say no. The, the, in part because we don't see significant policy change at the state level, at least with regard to the issues that are mentioned, and I'm sure people are going to be howling at me about this but I don't see significant policy change.

We do see, however, one might argue that COVID in general was probably the bigger impact on, on the part of the fortunes of the Democratic Party notably like typical COVID politics

everywhere shut downs around popular with rural voters and some sort of things, that kind of stuff.

Yeah.

So, that was Portland of 2020, right.

You know we're now in 2025 obviously, and correct me if I'm wrong here right but but obviously there is, you would expect some degree of mobile of anti Trump mobilization in a state like Oregon in a city like Portland in 2025 so fast forward.

And if we're fast, if I fast forwarding we're missing some important events then let me know right, but we're fast forwarding here then to January of 2025.

Trump is elected again, right.

He takes office. You know what's going on in Portland to is anything going on in Portland to make Trump notice Portland, or is he just basically picking Portland out of a hat because he doesn't like it.

There are some protest activities that occur down at the ice facility there's some anarchists that are lighting some Tesla's on fire here and there you know a couple of cars get arson in response typically to doge, rather than to Trump specifically.

I think Portland is no different than a lot of other cities in America that was sort of in shock at the not just that Trump one but like the fact that he won sort of like more than he had before.

And I just would not consider there to be really significant.

There are some pretty significant responses to to the Trump administration in the summer of the summer in June and then maybe one or two other times during the summer there are some pretty significant protests at the ice facility but those are more related to the specific actions of the

Trump administration regarding immigration than they are necessarily to just like, you know, anti Trump there there are there's a there's a march there's a march that happens against Trump when he first gets elected there's a couple of different organizations I think some, some kind of like organized

groups are essentially marching and demonstration and we always see people along the streets here and there are but I'm saying that there's not like a, there's not a massive, I would say, massive sense of kind of like, this is not 2020.

This is not lame is this is just, this is just responses, you know, occasional responses that are part of broader national organizations of power so no Kings Day for example is a big deal here but it was a big deal everywhere so it's not specific I would say to Portland.

I know that at Portland State, and this is not associated with Trump necessarily but Portland State there were some significant pro Palestinian demonstrations in 2023 and 2024.

And I think, I think Trump is actually referenced back to those.

I think there's a lot of concerns of that so you know, I guess was there and was there anything sort of enduring from that period, where you had people picking up this tradition of protest in Portland and, you know, filling the streets, you know, the, the bad period of time it seems that

most of what, I guess it's sort of typical for Trump living in the past is sort of the way that he understands the future or the present I should say right so he could look at that of course during that period of time, some students, I will say as an aside, like, students, the student

body or the group of individuals that think of themselves as students of Portland State are much broader I think then we would typically conceptualize as students of Portland State in part because of the part time nature of that institution

commuter campus it's a community possible defense yeah for those of you who have been to Portland it's it's it's closer to downtown than the ice facility, it is a, it is, is a community campus.

It does have a resident population, it also has people that have taken kind of know a variety of different levels of coursework. And so, the activist politics there tend to be sort of like less, less typically associated with maybe say what we might refer to as a more traditional

campus. And so there are, you know, there are radical there are more committed members of those groups. And at one point during the, there are gods and the war on Gaza which I guess is over today.

Or in Gaza, they occupied a library they pushed for the or the institution to, to stop its support of Israel or to give money back to for example Boeing which was you know part of the weapons supply chain to Israel, certainly saw students from Portland doing this

and then engaging in an activism and protest here, typically here was again protesting the administration, really, I should say the administration of the college, really, I think, most of those protests that are directed at college administrations not specifically, you know, at the, the

administration which at the time was a democrat, certainly there were no big fans of Biden support but ultimately the target of that was the institution, and not specifically federal law enforcement or, you know, anything like that in part because of the nature of the

country. There is that, and we certainly saw that. And that was a lot of those protests were organized by groups that were external to these institutions. And it's also true that if Portland State really had sort of bore the brunt of the kind of the property

damage associated with that and the work stoppages and all that kind of thing.

It is interesting to me, and I think it's interesting to a lot of people in higher education, that, you know, what the administration which institutions the administration focuses its ire on, right.

I don't feel like it's random, but it also seems to be operating by a logic.

It feels like there's a logic, I just don't understand the logic right sort of why UCLA for example is singled out for punishment, but the University of Oregon is not right or Portland State University is not right I mean it feels like almost there is sort of some sort of set of grudges that

is happening within the administration towards particular institutions that are guiding sort of guiding the hand of retribution towards a particular higher education institutions.

I think that's a good point. And I wish a lot of horse faculty across the country, I don't care where you are concerned, we would have been concerned to read that, you know, because we are, you know, communism, atheism, free love is our motto, right.

So, we are concerned that the Trump would pay attention to this my my my argument has been like well we don't matter enough, right, I think that might be part of the logic is to identify institutions that are nationally recognizable or in places where Trump, you know, really wants

to pick a significant fight.

Also, it seems to me that be that that logic really has to do with, frankly, the ability for those institutions to pay. Right. So, since most of these are shakedowns and extortion like you don't, you know, I guess you could shake down the person who runs the bagel shop but it makes

more sense to shake down, you know, the person who runs the bank. Those are better, those are better, better strategies. I just don't know that America would care all that much if Trump decided to push his thumb on the University of Oregon or something like that I don't think it

matters and certainly not Portland State. Now, that doesn't mean that anybody's safe. If it's part of some broader campaign, certainly and I think that's also the point is to show strength by attacking these large institutions what would happen if Trump were

able to, to sort of like fix the eye of Sauron on Portland State would be devastating, be really devastating.

So, before we move on to sort of, you know, again what the protest looks like right now. What, how would you characterize. So we you know we kind of got to, you know, the Portland 2020 in Portland during COVID.

How, how would you characterize what you know, would you say there's a recovery of downtown Portland, right, how would you characterize Portland from like this 2022 to 2025 and turn in social and economic terms, right.

You know, is it sort of going back to right the Portland of 2008 to two. And my friend Eric and I talked about this a lot right because you know when we knew Portland it was Portland of drugstore cowboy right it wasn't Portlandia.

But, you know, does, does Portlandia come back during this period or. I mean how would you think about that or how would you ask us to think about that.

So, you know, what would you say to Portlandia versus drugstore cowboy versus Stumptown, I guess right these are all the different versions of Portland how far back do you want to go.

Portland had experienced post COVID during COVID and post COVID a number of other social challenges that are unrelated to the protests, and nonetheless, were either more left there indelible marks notably blisters may know that Oregon decriminalized essentially all drugs

for four years or so. And it was an incident initiative to criminalize drugs it also was supposed to provide for treatment.

Did the one thing well did the other thing, not at all. And so, it was pretty significant amount of, of, of, yeah, of drug use to the point where it would be not uncommon for me to be anywhere I would be on a bike path.

If I was on it for more than three or four miles I would see open air you know people who smoking fentanyl right that was very uncommon for sorry very common for me.

And then we also at the same time have a pretty significant increase in visible homelessness, either a tent camping or also car camping, the city seems to not.

And that's interesting right because I mean, that's always been part of the Portland experience. Right. Yes, that there's a visible increase is very interesting. Right.

Yeah, exactly. Exactly. I mean, the first time I visited Portland like 25 years ago or so I was sort of strict struck by it then and now it would be even more so now.

A lot of theories as to why all that happened housing affordability number one other might be drug use all that kind of doesn't matter. The point is, it was there.

And, and that was also viewed sort of like as a as a an impediment to recovery and also a marker for how far we had far out how we had fallen or how we had sort of been unable to essentially govern ourselves.

The, you know, the motto of the Portland Public Works is the city that works and I can tell you that that's sort of ironic kind of at this point, although those guys do find job and like in general.

So, we have these kind of like massive sort of social forces that are that are out we have this sort of drug epidemic epidemic with this massive increase in drug use.

We've also got a number of a huge increase in the visibility of homelessness. And these problems are become then kind of like markers for recovery that you're talking about I know I'm kind of taking a while to get here but I'm trying to think like okay what would

say about like has the city recovered, there are, you know, took years literal years for people to take down boards off their windows downtown which they have done for the most part.

It also took years to begin to have a more coherent policy on homelessness, and really even have a shared problem definition of what homelessness was it a problem or not, there are several counselors who didn't think it was.

And so, it's those kinds of things that have gotten better foot traffic is up. Downtown is still not a place that most people go, but you can definitely find Portlandia, really in all other kinds there's a bunch of neighborhoods that really aren't downtown.

At the same time we've seen downtown is some, we've seen revitalization downtown it's been driven by, by the, by a very very expensive building going downtown which kind of like strikes us all as kind of odd.

And maybe sort of more reminiscent of the kind of Gilded Age that we're entering I have no idea so yeah you can find Portlandia, but downtown I think it's probably more drugstore cowboy or it's more of a little grittier than it was in 2018.

So the question is how it gets back the city's trying to fix that.

Now, I'm this is also sort of an off that that occurs to me because you mentioned earlier about the Tesla.

The tech industry is so significant in Portland right I mean so there is still some tech industry like Intel and other places that that sort of are driving Portland growth right is that controversial or no.

Okay, and I think that you know there's tech and there's tech like the Intel facilities that really have very few major corporations in Portland.

Intel is one of them it's not headquartered here but it has a major fabrication facility in Hillsborough. That's not really tech that's chips which I think are sort of like two for me two different things.

There are a number of for a while I think the major tech companies had branch campuses here but then zoom got rid of most of that kind of stuff.

And then the other industries here are apparel. And so the economy here is uniquely is kind of in a uniquely precarious position because most of the industries we have here are dependent upon imported fabrics from all over the world or imported goods from all over the world.

And then the tech industry, the chip industry is doing great unless your Intel, then it's not doing particularly well so we've seen significant layoffs here.

So there's not a lot of controversy I think about, you know, employment. I think some of the real challenge there are significant challenges to Portland going forward some of which have been.

To do with downtown development but a lot of it have to do with kind of the relatively small concentrated and exposed economy that we have.

So your sense of the reasoning behind this particular movement by Trump right I mean it is it really just like the name Portland is supposed to signify something to MAGA and signify something to Trump.

And so therefore right he is he is willing and I'll just call him lies although right.

There have been lots of stuff brought up like that Trump doesn't lie in the technical term right he that because he believes everything that he says right.

But, you know, we'll just call him lies right but sort of fantasies about what Portland is I mean, so what is your sense of like the political logic behind what Trump is trying to do here.

And you know what may eventually result in something like DC with you know National Guard in fatigues walking the street support and especially around the ice facility but possibly in other neighborhoods.

I think porcupines is what the British call lies that they don't want to call them lies something like that. Yeah, it seems like he is what what I think about Trump as I think about him as incredibly personal.

I think of him as incredibly vindictive. I think of him as somebody who cannot and will not accept any kind of version of the world where he has been defeated.

And so what I think of this, his entire presidency this time around is essentially not even a revenge tour, but a way to rewrite history it began with January 6, and it's continuing to begin with January 6 that that didn't happen.

Also, he continues to question the reelection of the election of Joe Biden, but in truth, part of that narrative is, is something like I don't know how much he actually thinks about Portland but Portland is a key part of the narrative because it's here where there was a significant

social movement that I wouldn't say that we were necessarily victorious in pushing federal agents out but we certainly outlasted them.

In addition to that that movement represents a lot of the things that he thinks he's been elected to president to president to fix notably sort of wokeism and other kinds of stuff.

And so because this is, as you said, burned in the brains of a lot of conservatives represents kind of like a symbolic thing to him at that particular moment in time, when he was on his way, what he thought he was on his way to victory but actually lost it's those kinds of things

and he thinks brought him down, but also because most people in America really didn't know a lot about Portland unless they watch for landia kind of folks watching for landia though pretty, you know, we understand politically probably where they end up.

So the other people are watching it you know or you know people my family who watched Fox News exclusively and all they saw were months of you know, accurate reporting that there were fires and tear gas and you know fighting and between rival groups and stuff like that.

That's all they see. So I think that's the memory that he's got but really it's part of this broader idea to try to like show kind of retake take back essentially is kind of like the actual past that affected this four years where he was out of power and frustrated.

But in reality, honestly, Rob, like, there's, I read a lot about this kind of stuff I think a lot about it. I don't think that there's, there's an actual there there with regard to a policy agenda.

Most of this really has to do with the desire to create to concentrate power and to try to push as hard as he can against the boundaries or the perceived boundaries of the Constitution for the purposes of creating a very, very strong executive and if you look at the arguments that I just watched the

arguments this morning at least an hour of them for at the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals which are trying to rule on, you know, the current injunction which we can talk about regarding National Guard troops and it's clear that this is really not about the facts.

This is about trying to create a more powerful president, in addition to what I just said about trying to rewrite the past.

Well, so let's talk about that. So, you said you looked at the arguments you said or you said you watch the arguments and I believe you said earlier that you don't think this is going to go well for Portland right.

So, yeah, explain that and like do you think that we are essentially doomed to see soldiers by National Guardsmen on the streets of Portland and the in the not too distant future.

I mean, I'm not a legal scholar, I should probably Scott to talk more about that kind of stuff, but I mean what Scott will tell you is that everything right now is sui generis.

She said this is just like, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And I'm he's right, I'm guessing, you know, I mean, so the, you know, for those of you who don't know the, the district court judge appointed by Trump district court judge appointed by Trump, essentially issued an injunction regarding National Guard troops.

I mentioned this before, sorry. And then eventually appealed to the Ninth Circuit, the Ninth Circuit, the arguments that it seemed that the Ninth Circuit bench were three judges, two of which were appointed by Trump, and then one of which was appointed by Clinton.

These Trump judges definitely seem more Trumpy than the Trump judge that over who was in the district court of Oregon.

And they seemed to be making arguments or asking questions that would indicate to me that they are less interested in definitions of rebellion, which seems to be, I think, what the plaintiffs cases here that Portland is arguing that the use of authority, the federalization of National Guard for the purposes of, you know, protecting ice falls underneath this notion of rebellion.

And clearly, we are not in one of those. So if the attorneys can prove that that's the standard, then well, then that's actually relatively open and shut. Not enough. Well, it's an easier case to make.

That said, it's still seemed on that front that the attorneys, the judges were asking questions about different kinds of rebellion to the point where they asked them questions like, well, what does the whiskey rebellion count as a rebellion?

I mean, man, are we going all the way back to the whiskey rebellion? I can't even imagine this is just part of these guys are like, just like historians and just bad ones, because in part because they don't have a lot of time to put together the argument.

That's one side. But the other side really had to do with them, whether the president had the ability to execute the law. So less about the rebellion side and more about whether the unrest was getting in the way of presidential execution of the law, which, as we know, that's kind of a major heart of a major,

broader constitutional question that we've been asking about the executive all along, which is, you know, like, okay, what does it mean to execute the law? Does it mean to do whatever he wants to?

And there it was more difficult for the attorney from Oregon to make any, to make any headway in part because the judges seem to be asking if there were if the attorney knew what the internal decision making of the executive was, that is the rationale the executive was using to enforce the law or which of the hundreds of laws essentially executives trying to force.

In this regard, it would seem that there would be no way to prove that the president was not was the president approved residence logic was false because you couldn't possibly know the mind of the president.

Right. So I think so. It strikes me that that one of the outs might be for the court might be to say, like, this is illegal, legal federal, this is illegal use of troops. However, because the troops haven't been deployed and because they haven't done any of the bad things that the we think the president is going to do,

that's the but we think will probably happen that they may be open to an argument if they had done the bad things. So that seems to me to be the current situation.

And it's interesting to me because this legal strategy is a little bit different than I think the political strategy that everybody thinks we're playing and the political strategy is to try to create the conditions for a rebellion or can create the conditions for there to be intervention.

And those conditions are either to just simply lie that there is something bad going on or they are to create kind of an alternative media narrative by inviting a much conservative bloggers to the top of the ice building to film all the things that are happening and even to try to incite that violence.

Right. Through the placement of National Guard troops. Those arguments would seem to be important, but maybe might even not matter in the in the in one interpretation, a very expansive interpretation of federal of federal law.

And I hope that that's not true, but we we shall see.

Also, I mean, one of my concerns and this is a concern that I've always done blue style with all of the sort of blue blue sky responses that one expects.

Right. You know, the part of my concern was what has been curious to your thoughts on this. Right. That, you know, this is intended precisely to generate the kind of reaction that that Trump really wants.

Right. And that there are people in sort of the Portland radical fringes who are eager to offer Trump this, you know, people say people use Reichstag fire way too often.

But there are there are people in Portland's fringes who are eager to burn down the Reichstag if only they are given the chance.

And so that has kind of struck me as like that's why Portland has been chosen for this right that that they expect this kind of reaction.

Yeah, and I think that that's true. I also think, though, that frankly, Los Angeles experienced a lot more violence than we did. Right.

Chicago seems to be experiencing a lot more violence than we are.

It's also the case that even so the shooting at the ICE facility in Dallas, as far as, you know, a comparative in comparison to all of the other stuff that's happening at ICE facilities in America or in response to, you know, federalization of troops or the heavy hand of the federal government.

Prone's response been pretty muted. I mean, and I get your point that I should say I think that that's right, except that it's not working out that way.

And so I can't figure out exactly what the end game here is. Christy Noem was here a couple of days ago doing her Homeland Security thing.

And she she kind of maybe indicated that I think maybe there's a way for maybe one of the ways out that they see that there might be some kind of agreement, you know, which essentially upends part of the sanctuary status of the city or something like that.

Maybe that's what they want. Maybe there's a way to do that and not do it. I have no idea.

But the thing is that so far, we haven't taken the bait. And my students have been asking me, like, what can we do in the face of this? And I was like, well, I mean, don't take the bait.

I mean, I understand that it's angering to you, but don't take the bait. And to your other your other point about sort of like specific radicals, they don't seem to really be there.

I don't know where they are. I'm not asking for them to come. But they don't seem to be there. And there's some far right, you know, people that have shown up and they've been they've been given some people some static.

But it's, I mean, I'm sure people see the images, the kind of chicken costume down there is the people with like the frog costume is a do a lingo bird is like, you know, it's just at some point, I feel like there's going to be like, it's going to be like musical theater, but get the naked bike ride is going to happen in a couple of like a couple of days or something like that.

There's an emergency naked bike ride that's been organized in order to just sort of right in front of the facility. Like, this is the way that this works is that people sit out there, and then they wait.

And the eyes a shift change. So the ice officials essentially like open up the doors and cars come out. And that's the that's when there's always like some static because they tell people to move, they don't move, and then eventually they move.

That's it. They're doing a couple things that are really trying to press the issue. They're trying to they're they're increasing the perimeter in further and further to make it harder and harder.

But in general, you know, K2 News, which is our ABC affiliate, maybe you've seen it. K2 News last night set up a camera at midnight, and they're gonna do 24 hour live stream of what's happening right there.

And if you want to see it, you're welcome to but I can tell you it's a very boring 24 hours. The only time there's activity really is like when they open the doors and basically when the sun falls like, you know, people are still awake.

But for the most part, this is not this is this is like the the UW UNI with University of Washington, there's a camera that overlooks Red Square. And for the most part, not much is happening. The most exciting thing that happens sometimes the bird ends up in the camera.

That's basically remember that. Yeah.

Bird investigates the camera.

Yeah, so I guess my final question here, unless there's something else you think I should ask is, you know, you teach at read and don't so obviously, you know,

anonymize your thoughts here, right? But how are the students that read dealing with all of this, right? That's an odd time. Now, let me rephrase that. It's always an odd time to be at read because read is an odd place.

But, you know, how are people dealing with this?

Um, I'm truly impressed with the resilience of our students. I think, well, I know five years ago they were be, you know, just losing their minds storming the ramparts and they are an incredibly pragmatic group for people who don't know read, it's, it is a very, very, very, very, very lefty place.

It's a very open to whatever.

And students are very smart.

They have been more interested in understanding this phenomenon, rather than sort of like trying to like, burn down the machine. They do ask me questions like what can I do and I don't have very satisfying answers to them.

But for the most part, this is generation.

And these students in particular that have endured COVID they've endured Trump, they had, you know, by demonstration, you know, they have almost no real political recollection of Obama their entire lives have been this version of chaos and so in some ways they're just better off at dealing with it than we are.

So my students are, you know, I think that they're also like at the same time like they're pushing, you know, holding back a lot of very real fears they have about the Republic.

Real fears about they have for their own person because many of our students identify as LGBTQ. And so many of those students are, you know, have real fears about their future, whether they're going to be essentially enemies of the state just because of their identity.

But they're also, I wouldn't say optimistic, but they're ready.

And I like that about that.

Well, that's good. That's that's that's the most reassuring thing you've said.

One of the most reassuring things I've heard in the past few months.

Well, I don't know. Is there anything else you want to add about the situation right now in Portland or anything we should be looking out for or any sort of inflection points we should be paying attention to as we move on right obviously right.

This particular court ruling is going to be a big deal. But what should we be looking for in the news after that?

I think looking for in the news after that is a couple of things. First thing is that there has been relatively there's been relative unanimity across executive branch agencies.

Now they're all the same party theoretically. But in practice, there's actually quite a bit of division within the Democratic Party. Everybody's been on the same page.

So the point is to make sure that that's still true. The media has been on the same page. The Oregonian, which is our local newspaper, not known for being a lefty paper at all middle of the road, if not conservative.

And that paper has been all over this. I mean, it's difficult to find. There's been general unanimity. If that begins to shift, that's what I would be start to get a little concerned about, like, where the direction of this is heading.

The other way, the other issue that I would look forward to, not look forward to, but look for would be actual ICE actions, like significant ICE raids that start to occur in the Portland metropolitan area.

Those really have not been a centerpiece of this current issue, this current movement. But my guess is that if the president is able to have this authority, he might then feel more sort of like authorized to go out and do the kind of like organized sort of frankly terror campaign that he's been exacting upon the rest of the United States.

All right. Well, with those chilling words, Chris, I want to thank you for joining us and I want to thank all the LGBT for joining us.

And we're going to continue to pay attention to a city that is really near and dear to the hearts of a lot of us at at LGN, right, just because of proximity and having lived there and everything else.

So remain strong, right, you know, in the face of being buffeted by all in all in all areas.

Come visit us sometime. Thanks a lot.

Thank you again for listening to the Lawyer's Guns and Money podcast. We would like to thank Elizabeth Nelson of the Paranoid Style for supplying as our intro and outro music.

I bet my lands and titles a track on the album for executive meeting. If you would like to support the Lawyer's Guns and Money podcast or any other aspect of the Lawyer's Guns and Money project, please visit us at www.patreon.com/lawyer'sgunsandmoney

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