

## 50 Minutes with Jesse Ventura

Contributed by Chris Yandek CYInterview.com

Audio File at End of The Text In a joint interview with Jay Bildstein of diaday.com and myself, former Governor of Minnesota Jesse Ventura, speaks candidly about the future of America, America's economic woes, his time as Governor of Minnesota, and many more topics in a 50 minute interview that will be distributed in three parts. In part one, Jesse speaks about the possibilities of a powerful third party, running for President in 2012, decreasing the national debt, and much more. A condensed transcript of the first part follows:

Jay Bildstein: Your book *Don't Start the Revolution Without Me* was a phenomenal read. It kind of intertwines your travel log going down to Baja, California along with a variety of thoughts you had based on your tenure as Governor of the state of Minnesota. One thing that popped out on page three you said, "If you want good government, you must have an involved citizenry." In a modern day age of bread and circus, how do you grab people away from that and get them interested in politics?

Jesse Ventura: "It's difficult because people have their lives to lead. You run into it all the time. I don't have time to pay attention to that. I don't have this and that. What I try to convince people of is this, when you look at the fact today if you work a five day work week in the United States, well you work two of those days for the government. Now you pay attention to your job five days a week. Why wouldn't you pay attention to the people who take at least 40 percent of the fruits of your labor every week and pay attention to what they do with it? That's two out of every five days that you work for them. Your money goes to them. To me that's enough right there, incentive to pay attention. That's the battle you fight today in getting people to actually participate and hold the feet of government officials to the fire so that we can get good government."

Chris Yandek: I look at that situation and both sides have failed us. The Presidential Administration, not very popular. Congress is less popular than him. Are we ready for a dominant third party? A bunch of people getting together and forming something because I think America is very tired of both sides not accomplishing anything.

JV: "Well, that's always on the horizon, but that in itself likewise very difficult because you have the apathy factor out there. What will they actually do when push comes to shove? Then you also have the factor that the Democrats and Republicans control the game completely. They tell you who can debate, who can be in the debates and who can't. They change rules anytime they feel like it to suit themselves. They don't follow the Constitution of the United States of America, which is our governing doctrine. It's the basis of our country, the foundation of our country and they've turned it into a useless piece of paper. That's what we're looking at. Let me put it to you this way in a simple term. Since 9/11, we've been following a philosophy that number one you're convinced that we're under attack and number two you denounce the pacifists for being unpatriotic and you denounce them for supposedly putting the country in danger. Where Thomas Jefferson said, one of his most famous quotes, he talked about was that dissension was the greatest form of patriotism. Yet we're told that dissension &ndash; you're unpatriotic. Now the first words that I spoke, who did those words come from? The fact that it's easy to take a country to war? All you have to do is convince them they're under attack, denounce the pacifists for being unpatriotic, and then denounce the country for putting them in a dangerous position."

JB: Sounds like Adolph Hitler.

JV: "Well, you're very close. It was his right man Herman Goring. I find it very disturbing when my country is following the philosophy of Nazis."

JB: Wouldn't you say that perhaps the thing that the United States has become very best at on a multiplicity of levels not just the government level but the corporate level is persuasion. We are a nation of marketing, a nation of sales. In truth I don't know what we produce anymore other than the ability to sell just about anything. Isn't it true that the marketing people have gotten so slick that they really have entered into people's psyches and for lack of a better term almost hypnotized along with choices?

JV: "You may be right. It's hard for me to get a grasp on it of why &ndash; like last year. The governor's race in Texas, it was amazing. Only 26 percent of potential voters in Texas showed up to vote for their governor. One out of four. How pathetic is that? We're supposed to be this country going throughout the world and like Iraq giving them democracy at the point of gun. That aside, that's what we stand for throughout the world yet in a great big state like Texas only 26 percent of the people even show up to elect their governor?"

JB: Let me give you governor a kind of dream like scenario and see if this is something you'd go along with. If one fine sunny day the mayor of New York City Michael Bloomberg got together with Ross Perot. They're both billionaires and they called you up, Arnold Schwarzenegger who is not an Independent but seems to embrace a somewhat socially minded liberal philosophy with leaning towards being fiscally conservative and a disaffected Hillary Clinton who said that gee wiz, where was I in this last election cycle? Maybe the Democratic Party isn't for me anymore and Ron Paul who you were just at his alternative convention. He says, you have to ally yourselves with some people to accomplish something. If all these people got together, could you say as an independent that I am not gonna

get 100 percent of everything I want. I may have to ally myself with people who I ordinarily wouldn't think of being on my ticket, but for a sense of the great good of the United States of America. I think you said in one of your last chapters that we have one more choice than Soviet Russia and one more choice than a lot of dictatorships meaning the Democrats and Republicans are the double choice we're giving you. Would you get together with the kind of people I've mentioned to get together in kind of a super independent party which is well financed and had big names? Maybe even someone like Al Gore?

JV: "It's a possibility but someone has to initiate it. Someone has to herd the cats. To me it would be like herding cats because you'd have major egos involved as well as major money involved. It would be difficult in the fact that who would be in charge? Who's going to be the leader? Is it going to be a person like me who legitimately can get elected as an independent or is it going to be someone like Mayor Bloomberg or Ross Perot who is simply there because they have the finances, the big money, and they can buy their way into it. That's the dilemma that you face and of course you face the fact of will you be taken seriously by the media? Will you get a fair shake and all that? But that in essence is the battle that has to be fought. Your scenario is very attractive. I would love to see something like that happen. The reality of it is that I am not sure it could."

CY: You had to deal with the media for four years in Minnesota and obviously you were thinking about running for Senate this past time. It didn't happen because you didn't want your family put back in the media. Then you come back and say that ok, maybe I'll run in 2012 as an Independent Presidential Nominee. What would change in four years and your family regarding a situation to run in four years on an Independent ticket to be President of the United States of America?

JV: "Well, you know, I don't know. I just always leave the opening there because I am not a soothsayer. I cannot predict the future. Therefore I really don't know what my mindset will be or what the situation will be four years from now, but I've learned in my 57 years on the planet that you never shut the door to anything. If you would have asked me four years before I ran for governor — if it would've been 1994 or 95 and you would've said to me you know Jesse, I think in 98 you'll run for governor and win. I would've probably told you that you were crazy because at that time it wasn't even on my radar screen. Running for Governor of Minnesota truly didn't show on my radar screen until 1997 the year before the election. That's the point that I've made. It's four years from today roughly and one never knows what the situation will be. I won't know whether I am motivated to do it or not or whether my family would accept for me to do it or not in four years from now. They might say to me to go for it."

CY: Don't you think there is a big part of this country that's really fed up with both sides of the aisle saying, "we need someone to look at this from a fiscally conservative and socially liberal stance?"

JV: "Well, there may be, but the point of the matter is where are they? They're not speaking out other than the Paul Convention. That's the first time I've seen a massive amount of people speaking out and saying that we're fed up, we're tired of it. I guess in the words of Howard Beale from the movie Network we're mad as hell and we're not gonna take this anymore. That was the quote I remember from that film."

JB: You actually spoke fondly about Al Gore and when you began to speak about global warming and I think you were saying at one point you might've been in denial. You talked about how you unplugged three televisions in your house and you were saying that you saved an amp and a half a day. You went on to say at one point at night before you unplugged the television sets you can turn it to the Fox Channel and yell out like a network I am mad as hell and I am not gonna take it anymore and unplug the TV.

JV: "The part about the TV and amp use is exactly correct because when I live in Mexico I live in a house that is completely solar. You keep much more track of the energy that you use because you're reliant on the sun and the sun to give it to you. I just found it an outrage that they don't tell us that if you actually unplug the TV sets you save an amp and a half of power. My solar man in Mexico told me if everyone simply unplugged their television sets when they're not watching them — there is over one billion televisions sets in United States and Canada. We would virtually have no energy problems at all. Something as simple as that."

JB: It's the simple fact of being able to motivate people.

JV: "It's also educating them. I didn't know that when you shut your TV off with the remote that it was still running."

JB: I read where there was this misquote about you. You showed a couple places in the book where the media was misquoting you. One was some bizarre claim was that you were dancing in a bar in Montana where an elderly couple saw it and it wasn't you. You went twice to Montana with your mom and one time with your wife Terry.

JV: "We just passed through it. I assume I had to stop at a gas station because it's a mighty big state and

you can't get across it on one tank. That would be the essence of how much I stopped in Montana."

JB: There was another thing where the press said Governor Ventura doesn't read or something. In the book your wife Terry responded said, "One of the things I loved about Jesse is here is a man who reads and I read and this is someone I could communicate with." It seems to me you are motivated by information, but not everyone is so motivated about education and information. Let me give you a little information you already know and get your response, 53 trillion dollars in unfunded liabilities between Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid & Federal Government, United States. Nine and a half trillion-dollar national debt. A 500 billion dollar budget deficit currently. Ronald Reagan comes along and shakes his finger at the Democrats and Carter and says, "We've got a 900 billion dollar debt and they're gonna destroy the country." And I am like right on Governor Reagan. You're right. Reagan and Bush come into office and they take a 900 billion dollar debt and twelve years later it's three trillion dollars. By the time this current President gets into office it's five and a half trillion dollars. He represents the so called party of fiscal restraint and now it's nine and a half trillion dollars. The Democrats may be tax and spend, but the Republicans are borrow and spend. Aren't we going to end up like Argentina, Governor Ventura?

JV: "Well, I can't really say Argentina. I kind of lean towards more Rome. I lean towards the Roman Empire. I say that from this aspect in our world today, the most important eight hours of your life are when you don't sleep and you don't work, it's how do I entertain myself? That's what our society has gotten to in my opinion. Your job now isn't the most important thing in your life. You just go there. That's a means to an end so that you can have that eight hours of how do I entertain myself? Case and point in Minneapolis, Minnesota, they shut down my grade school. They would not raise taxes to keep my grade school I went to operating, but they would raise taxes to build a new [Minnesota] Twins stadium. It's priorities like that show how screwed up we are now that we are an entertainment based society. It's what do I do with that eight hours of freedom that I have."

JB: When I came in I used the term bread and circus. There are more modern examples of course like what happened in Weimar, Germany when eventually the government started printing money to cover its needs. One of the fears that I have at some point and time is that we will monetize the debt. The government will buy back its own debt, which in affect is inflating the system and printing money. I don't see how it's escapable with the trajectory that we are on.

CY: Is there anything we can do to decrease the debt? Is there anything we can do to turn ourselves around?

JV: "Well, there is only one thing that I see on the horizon and certainly it's not being talked about or looked at and that is in order to eliminate this massive debt, you have to make massive government cuts. You have to get government down into a manageable size. You have to convince the public that government can't be their crutch, that they have to accept personal responsibility at all levels and to me that's the only way we can do it with the people of the Democratic and Republican parties talking about making government smaller. Remember this, if I can simplify it, every time a legislature at a state level or a city level or a federal level passes any law, well, there is a monetary thing that comes along with implementing that law. I remember when I walked into the Secretary of State's Office in the state of Minnesota and I looked up and I saw a massive wall of books. It was like ten sets of Encyclopedia Britannica's up on the wall. It covered an entire gigantic wall and I inquired what is all this? They said, "Well those are all the laws of the state of Minnesota." I look at this massive amount of books and the first thing that popped into my head was the old saying, "and ignorance of the law is no excuse." So in other words, we citizens should know all these laws? What we try to do here now is legislate stupidity. Every time someone does something stupid, we then have to go into session and doing something stupid against the law, which then costs money."

To listen to the interview, click on the audio bar below.

{mp3}JesseVenturaPart1{/mp3}

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