

The West Wing Weekly
1:19: Let Bartlet Be Bartlet
Guest: Under Secretary of the Army, Patrick Murphy

[Intro Music]

JOSH: Well hello. You're listening to The West Wing Weekly. I'm Joshua Malina.

HRISHI: And I'm Hrishikesh Hirway. Today we're talking about season one, episode nineteen of *The West Wing* : " *Let Bartlet Be Bartlet* ". And coming up later, the United States Under Secretary of the Army, the honorable Patrick Murphy, is going to be joining us to talk about this episode.

JOSH: It first aired on April 26th, 2000. The story is by Peter Parnell and Patrick Caddell, which rhymes and that's cute. The teleplay is by Aaron Sorkin and the episode was directed by Laura Innes, whom you know as an actor from her work as Kerry Weaver in 249 episodes of 'ER' and all sorts of other things.

HRISHI: Part of the John Wells family then.

JOSH: That is true. I have a 'Laura Innes Directs' anecdote-

HRISHI: From a later episode.

JOSH: Yes. It's not a spoiler of any kind, except that I'll probably tell the story again two years from now when we get to it.

HRISHI: Sure, let's hear it.

JOSH: ok. So she directed an episode that I acted in, seasons after this one, and she's a very serious director and I'm a not very serious actor and so Laura came up to me to discuss a scene we were about to shoot and she had really thought it through, all the different beats and psychologically where the characters were at, and she kind of talked me through it and said "This is my take and I think what you're thinking here is this and that sort of reflects on - remember what happened last season - and I think what you're trying to accomplish here..." and this and that and she kinda gave a five minute spiel and then I said "So... bottom line... happy face or sad face?" and I just saw the blood drain out of her face. She was not amused by what I thought, what I meant to be just a light joke and she kind of just walked away like "Oh ok. That's who you are.". I was going, I thought, for just a small laugh but she looked really, really disappointed in who I was as a person and an actor.

HRISHI: Maybe that's why she isn't joining us for this episode!

JOSH: Maybe. Yeah, I was too scared to ask. But she's a fine director is really what I'm trying to say and I like to apologize for things indirectly... twelve years later, so let this stand as an apology to Laura Innes.

HRISHI: She's going to go on to direct a bunch of episodes of *The West Wing*, but this is her first and I read a story, that I will get to later about her and her directing style too, but first let me give you a little synopsis of the episode.

JOSH: Now, are we going to get Hrishi version or NBC version?

HRISHI: This is the Hrishi version. Here it is, four points: There's a memo going around; it's a strategic outline about how to beat the Bartlet Administration in an election. It breaks down all the weaknesses of the staff and the President, and it turns out it was written by Mandy and Danny Concannon has it. Sam and Toby have a meeting about "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" with some members of the military and Congress. Two members of the Federal Election Commission resign and the President asks Josh to look into bucking the traditional appointment routine and putting two of their handpicked reformers on instead. And Leo and the President, triggered by Mandy's memo, get into it over the political compromises they've had to make and who's to blame for losing sight of their original, loftier goals.

JOSH: Very nicely done. Bullet points.

HRISHI: We're getting towards the end of season one here; this is episode nineteen, we only have twenty-two episodes in the first season but this is a really good one. I think now we've come far enough along to say, safely, this is one of the best episodes of the season.

JOSH: In fact I'm going to go even further, I usually don't play this game because I often don't even know my own heart enough to pick favorites of anything, but this is, thus far, my favorite episode of the season.

HRISHI: Awesome. I am down with that. In the 'Previously on', we get kind of a highlight reel. It's really a lowlight reel; it's the worst moments of, the most painful moments of the Bartlet Administration. We often talk about compromises that they have to make or ways that they have to let go of their ideals for political expediency and we get a little compilation of some of those worst moments in the 'Previously on'.

JOSH: Yes. It would've been appropriate to have Tom Bergeron host the 'Previously on'. Clearly not a fan of 'America's Funniest Home Videos'.

HRISHI: 'America's *Least Funny* Home Videos'?

JOSH: ' *The Bartlet's Least Funny Administration Moments*'.

HRISHI: Uh-huh.

JOSH: I was disappointed that no-one took it in the nuts.

HRISHI: Only metaphorically.

JOSH: Right. But the cold opening; it's a near perfect cold opening, I think.

HRISHI: What more do you want from it, Josh, to make it perfect?

JOSH: I want... nothing more. Ok it's perfect.

HRISHI: Even before we get into the real meat of the episode, you get the sense that this is not a well-oiled machine. I think that that's the one thing I thought was so impeccably done in this episode is, there's a lot of grinding of gears, you know? It feels like things are out of tune and out of sync and it seems like it would be hard enough to write something and direct something that makes it seem like everything is working perfectly, but to be able to make it work perfectly to show how it's not working perfectly is... it seems even harder. I thought it was really impressive.

JOSH: Well said. And the characters also are aware of the fact that they're not a Swiss timepiece and I think ultimately that's why the memo really gets under the skin of everybody, because it's just a mirror being held up to them and it's not revelatory it's just rough to read it in print.

HRISHI: Right. But the very first example of this is just Sam being out of sync with the weather report and the speech; he has to change a line in case it rains - the speech is going to get moved indoors.

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

SAM: It's not going to rain until later today.

TOBY: If it rains, please remember to change the opening line.

SAM: It's not going to rain until one, maybe two o'clock.

TOBY: Yeah, but if you're wrong, you gotta change the opening line.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: And the whole time he's like, confident that even if he doesn't make the change, the President, being a smart guy and an observant guy, isn't going to just screw it up even if he has

it wrong on the page. But, of course, the President gets distracted as well for other reasons and so by the time he actually delivers it he blows the line.

JOSH: And I love the writing here because so much of the time Aaron Sorkin is one or two steps ahead of the audience but here he lets you get in front of him - you know what's going to happen.

HRISHI: Right

JOSH: You kinda know what's going to happen with the weather and you kind of know the first line of the speech is not going to go well, but it's all that much funnier and more satisfying because it's kind of a 'wait for it, wait for it' and then just the way he delivers... So even when he lets you, on those rare moments, get just a half a step in front of him, he delivers it in a really grand way.

HRISHI: Yeah. I mean Leo totally telegraphs it too, where they start to talk about... they find out about the two members of the F.E.C retiring and the President get this twinkle in his eye and he's like "Oh, let's, let's dangle our feet in the water" and Leo even says before he goes into deliver it, he says:

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

LEO: You're going to concentrate on this now? Or is your head going to be in changing the nature of democracy?

BARTLET: No, I'm definitely going to be thinking about the trout fisherman, Leo, because that's where my focus should be!

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: And so, Sam's initial idea that the President will be on it, we already know he's off his game, this isn't going to happen.

JOSH: Absolutely, it's completely teeing it up.

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: It's a beauty to watch.

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

BARTLET: Thank you. Thank you very much. It's good to see you. Thank you.

TOBY: Sam?

SAM: Damn it!

LEO: What?

SAM: I forgot to do something.

BARTLET [off screen]: As I look out over this magnificent vista...

[Intro music begins]

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: So we've talked about how Mandy hasn't quite clicked with the team and she was even missing completely for a couple of episodes.

JOSH: What has Mandy, ultimately, done wrong? Other than, I mean, there's a reference in her subplot from Josh to a burn bag-

HRISHI: Right.

JOSH: And she's clearly made a bad security mistake, but she is, I think, a little mistreated in terms of just the existence of this opposition research memo that of course she's written. She's treated as if having written this memo, this memorandum, when she was, in fact, working for someone else, that this is sort of an egregious betrayal.

HRISHI: I think it's less that the memo was written, and more that it got out there... right?

JOSH: I *think* ultimately that's how it's treated but at first in the scene with C.J. I got the feeling that C.J. was treating Mandy as if having written this was a misstep - like 'how could you?'

HRISHI: It crystallizes in the scene between Danny and C.J.. Danny once again is really the voice of reason and clarity and when he and C.J. are yelling at each other he really boils it down when he says:

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

DANNY: Mandy thought it was a pretty accurate analysis, and you know it. You knew she was working for Russell, and you knew why. You knew she had to have written the memo. Why wasn't it the first thing you asked for when you hired her? 'Mandy, tell us everything you think we're doing wrong.' 'Cause you knew what she was gonna say. You knew she was right. You

knew there was nothing you could do about it.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: So you didn't want to look, you know, face the truths of what would be in this memo and that's why you're all really upset because it's telling you something that you already fear is true.

JOSH: Yeah, and that proves to be the case. I mean, ultimately, the airing of this private memo is the inciting action that we've been waiting for the entire season to wake up and shake up the administration and the senior staff and prompt them into more aggressively pursuing an agenda.

HRISH: After the credits, by the way, we get a classic telladonna setup. Josh and Donna are walking and talking and Donna asks:

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

DONNA: How does the F.E.C. work?

JOSH: Six commissioners are appointed for a six-year term.

DONNA: Overlaps.

JOSH: Two seats come up every two years.

DONNA: And two commissioners just resigned?

JOSH: At the same time.

DONNA: How many times has that happened?

JOSH: Including this time?

DONNA: Yeah.

JOSH: Once.

DONNA: So the President has the opportunity to stack the F.E.C. with our people and make immeasurable impact on campaign finance reform?

JOSH: Yes.

DONNA: Well, do it baby!

[end excerpt]

JOSH: Yeah. I certainly needed it. My depth of knowledge on the F.E.C. was... slight... thin... [chuckles] Somebody pointed out on our message board, or on our website, that we are using the term 'telladonna' at times to refer to exposition shared with the audience through Josh's explanation of something to Donna and this listener pointed out that her name is actually 'Donnatella'. [chuckles] In other words, the listener kinda didn't get that that's why we call it a 'telladonna'.

HRISHI: [chuckling] Right!

JOSH: I thought that was cute.

HRISHI: I liked on Twitter when you were recently trying to explain to people about 'not joking the joke'. Can you explain that for people?

JOSH: So here's an example: I tweeted "Don't know a thing about Scandal Season 6 storylines, so I have no idea what shape to show up in. Hope buff and impossibly handsome works."

HRISHI: [chuckles]

JOSH: Ok people, the joke here is: I'm not so buff and I'm not at all handsome.

HRISHI: I would disagree with both of those... but I get the joke.

JOSH: In truth I am kinda buff-

HRISHI: You are!

JOSH: But ugly.

[Both chuckle]

JOSH: But anyway, and so somebody writes to me: "By buff do you mean Big Ugly Fat F#%er". That's joking the joke!

HRISHI: And not even well... there's nothing... like... if you were going to restate your joke and have it be funny that would be one thing, but that's not funny...

JOSH: Well exactly. There's nothing wrong with... look, in comedy writing any time you can beat or top or improve a joke that is welcome, but a less funny restating of a joke is 'joking the joke',

which is why I responded to this guy “No. I meant ripped, muscular.”.

HRISHI: [chuckles] Very good. In “ *Twenty Hours in L.A.* ” we talked about Bob Balaban’s character, ‘Ted Marcus’, and you said that it reminded you... that you thought the name might be derived from Ted Marcoux, who is a Sorkin player, and here he is in *The West Wing* .

JOSH: Yes!

HRISHI: I got excited when I saw his name, I said: “Oh yeah! There he is.”.

JOSH: “That’s Ted Marcoux.”. Exactly. He played Lieutenant Kendrick in the original Broadway production, and out of town, of *A Few Good Men* . Great actor.

HRISHI: And now he plays a another member of the military in this episode.

JOSH: Yes; Aaron has him pegged for, I guess, intolerant, un-evolved members of the military.

HRISHI: [chuckles] You know, despite what I said about the team not being well-oiled, not being a well-oiled machine, at the beginning of the episode, C.J., before she gets derailed by Mandy’s memo, is kind of killing it in the briefing room. She’s got some great jokes. I love this line, I think about it all the time.

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

C.J.: The theme of this year's event is 'Learning is delightful and delicious,' as, by the way, am I.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: And then she talks about the people from the American Egg Board.

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

C.J.: And I've hung with some of the cats from the American Egg Board, and they are party people.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: She’s got some jokes and everybody’s eating it up... I don’t know it just seems like she’s really... she’s in her element and she’s in a good mood and then suddenly Mandy ruins all of that.

JOSH: C.J.’s press conferences often go very well until she learns about that thing she didn’t know about.[chuckles] Right. That’s... that’s true. And then we get into a... I think this is really

the first time we're getting an exploration of Margaret and who she is.

JOSH: Major, major Margaret episode.

HRISHI: Yeah, previously I think that she had been portrayed as a caring and capable assistant to Leo, but here we find out that she's actually pretty quirky.

JOSH: Yes.

HRISHI: Yeah, maybe it was hinted at but here's it's like really, like they really blow it up.

JOSH: She's got a near O.C.D. level fixation with the caloric content of the White House Mess Hall's... raisin muffin?

HRISHI: But mainly because it seems to have messed up the email system within the White House.

JOSH: Yes, I also liked that in a throwaway line Admiral Fitzwallace says 'Oh the White House [Josh chuckles] the White House computers aren't secure'.

HRISHI: [chuckles] Right. My favorite, I think, of the Leo moments is when she's first talking to Leo about this, about the... her friend Lynette and the muffin...

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

MARGARET: Anyway, she sent me an email about the actual calorie count in the raisin muffins they're serving in the mess. I forwarded the e-mail to several hundred assistants and secretaries in O.E.O.B. and in the West Wing, and that was fine. But Jolene Millman, who works in political liaison, then hit reply, which apparently-

LEO: Oh Margaret! Margaret! I'm sorry. I'm gonna have to...I hung in there as long as I could, but you long since passed the point when I stopped caring.

[end excerpt]

JOSH: [chuckles]

HRISHI: It's the kind of thing I would... I wish I could say so often in life, but politeness forbids me. For such a bummer of an episode, I think I laughed quite a bit.

JOSH: Yeah, there are some funny bits. Josh and Donna are really, like, 'boyfriend-and-girlfriend' in this episode.

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: In a way that kind of annoyed me. Not annoyed with the writing of anything, but just their relationship is a little annoying. [chuckles] It's very unprofessional and I know, again, this is a thing Josh and Donna loves everywhere will assail me for, but... ugh... just be professional!

HRISHI: [chuckles]

JOSH: Just tell her what *you* need and then why don't *you* just go do it. She's really like a kind of wounded girlfriend and he gets his back up and he's kind of defensive and then he apologizes and I'm like 'just... just do your jobs...'.

HRISHI: I really liked the scene between them when she gives him the information on English as the national language.

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

DONNA: Six pages on English as the national language.

JOSH: Is it good?

DONNA: I gave you some good stuff on James Madison and the-

JOSH: James Madison?

DONNA: And the Teriman resort-

JOSH: I didn't ask for a damn social studies paper. I-I-

DONNA: Don't snap at me Josh.

JOSH: Donna?

DONNA: Look at the memo. I gave you what you asked for. Don't snap at me.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: I was like, 'yeah, Go Donna'.

JOSH: Hmm... I have to fight you on that.

HRISHI: Yeah?

JOSH: Yeah... it's just like... just... give him the thing and... [chuckles] I don't know, I don't know; their relationship is starting to bug me.

HRISHI: [chuckles] But it's like... but then she has this line:

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

DONNA: Why is everyone walking around like they know they've already lost?

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: If the whole episode can be encapsulated in one line of dialogue, I think it's this one.

JOSH: Yeah, that's right. I mean look, that's the little key-in that the White House staff needs to get their groove back and that's what this episode really is all about.

HRISHI: But I totally, completely agree, very unprofessional. I think the reason why I thought... why it felt so authentically like a boyfriend and girlfriend relationship is the reason why you're...

JOSH: Yeah, no, I agree. It's less cringey, but there's a similar thing going on with C.J. and Danny-

HRISHI: Yeah

JOSH: And that's unprofessional in it's way too; did C.J. really think Danny was going to give her the information she needed, or actually he does give her the information, he says 'I'm the one who has the paper; I've got the memorandum', but does she really think that she's going to talk him out of writing about it? Reporting it?

HRISHI: Yeah. I love before they actually get into that part, when she's just.... C.J.'s waiting to talk to Danny and she keeps trying to interrupt him while he's typing.

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

C.J.: Danny. I wanted to ask you-

DANNY: Hang on.

[typing noises]

C.J.: I wanted to ask you-

DANNY: Hang on.

[typing noises continue]

C.J.: Danny, is it the Magna Carta or-? [typing noises stop]

DANNY: I'm trying to finish a thought here. C.J.: Go ahead.

[silence]

DANNY: I'm finished.

[end excerpt]

JOSH: Yeah, that's another one of those moments, I mean it works perfectly for the characters involved, but, you know, Aaron, as a writer... I can see him wanting to try to get something down and saying to somebody 'Hang on!' and then losing it. It's just a classic little Aaron twist that I suspect comes from his personal life.

HRISHI: Yeah, no, that's a great point! That's something he's probably gone through. I was thinking about how much I loved that because it felt so real and also, in some ways, was kind of an unnecessary scene, like an unnecessary part to that scene. You know, I think in a lesser show you'd just cut straight to the action of C.J. comes in and they have their dialogue and they confront each other, but this part of her walking in and saying "Danny" and he says "Hold on", "Danny", "Hang on", and then he's trying to finish a thought... there's a minute devoted to her not being able to get his attention and it's a great authentic feeling interaction, but I had written down I was like 'I love that, but what's it for?' and I think you're right, I think it's probably Aaron describing something that actually really happens to him.

JOSH: Yeah and also I think in it's way now that... it didn't occur to me as I watched but now that you frame it this way, it also has the extra weight of showing us who Danny is; we get him in, you know, a lot of him either asking a quick question in a press conference or visiting C.J. in her office for other purposes but this is the guy, he's the guy who sits there in the dim light and cranks out, you know, great articles, and he's a writer and this is who he is and so it's kind of, in a very cute little way, also grounds us in this is why he's also not the guy who is going to, for reasons of love or romance, hold back on reporting about this memo because it's news and that's who this guy is.

HRISHI: Yeah, exactly. He's a professional, despite all the charges of unprofessionalism there is at least some part of him that is very much professional. The whole F.E.C part of this storyline and campaign finance reform was neat to go back and see it being discussed here so many

years before the Supreme Court ruled on Citizens United saying that money counts as free speech and that argument is articulated in here; Josh says:

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

JOSH: If big tobacco wants to wave a sign or put a bumper sticker on their cars, they are free to do so. That's free speech. Money isn't speech.

[end excerpt]

JOSH: Yeah, he's articulating the discussion of 'soft money'.

HRISHI: Yeah, it's cool. What I'm trying to say is "I like *The West Wing*", Josh. [chuckles]

JOSH: I do too. It's a fine show. It really is.

HRISHI: Glad we sorted that part out, at least. It was interesting for me to hear the argument that money isn't speech so succinctly articulated in this episode...

JOSH: So many years before it would be swatted away like a fly.

HRISHI: Yeah, exactly. I mean, it makes sense that a Supreme Court case had all of these years building up to it and they reference the Campaign Finance Reform Act of 1974. These are things I don't know about but I'm learning about on *The West Wing*.

JOSH: One of the interesting things about revisiting this show and then considering it through a lens of contemporary politics sixteen years later is seeing how slow, how glacial, the wheels of politics turn and so another example in this episode is a discussion of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell", which policy had been instituted under President Clinton and which eleven years after this episode, would be repealed. So-

HRISHI: Right

JOSH: Issues get turned and considered and brought up and padded and put aside and then revisited and progress happens but sometimes it's over such a long period of time that it's difficult to chart it or it's easy to fall into that cynical thought pattern that nothing ever gets done and nothing changes; there's a certain patience you have to have, I guess, with politics.

HRISHI: Yeah, and I'm excited to talk about the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" debate with Under Secretary Patrick Murphy.

JOSH: How about that great sort of *deus ex machina* arrival of Fitzwallace into that meeting where he just sort of comes out and lays it out in a very palpable way and exits.

HRISHI: Yeah! [chuckles] You felt like that was a *deus ex machina* ?

JOSH: I thought it was but not as a criticism.

HRISHI: Got it; ok.

JOSH: Yeah. Is that, I don't know, is that term necessarily, does it necessarily have negative connotations? I'm a fan of Greek tragedy! I enjoy a good *deus ex machina* ! I liked that there's this relatively low level meeting going on and then the big cheese walks by, drops in, lays it out for them, and exits.

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: I dug that.

HRISHI: It is a pretty incredible exchange that he has. I love the inherent contradiction in it, because he actually... he expresses support for getting rid of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" while explicitly saying that he actually disagrees with it.

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

MAJOR TATE: Sir, we're not prejudiced toward homosexuals.

FITZWALLACE: You just don't want to see them serving in the Armed Forces?

MAJOR TATE: No sir, I don't.

FITZWALLACE: 'Cause they oppose a threat to unit discipline and cohesion.

MAJOR TATE: Yes sir.

FITZWALLACE: That's what I think too. I also think the military wasn't designed to be an instrument of social change.

MAJOR TATE: Yes sir.

FITZWALLACE: The problem with that is that what they were saying to me 50 years ago. Blacks shouldn't serve with Whites. It would disrupt the unit. You know what? It did disrupt the unit. The unit got over it. The unit changed. I'm an admiral in the U.S. Navy and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff... Beat that with a stick.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: It's very complicated.

JOSH: Right. "And the unit got over it."

HRISHI: Yeah, exactly.

JOSH: I do like, and prefer, when Aaron, and he's generally pretty good about this on the show, lays out both sides-

HRISHI: Right.

JOSH: And even when you, you know, figure out where he comes down on the issue or where a certain character might, he substantively lays out both sides in a way where you could, you know, hook onto an argument on either side.

HRISHI: Right. Yeah. I think this one was particularly noteworthy for me because you've got one character doing both jobs. [chuckles]

JOSH: Yeah, that's right.

HRISHI: There's one thing in that scene also that I thought was a great detail - The Congressman who's in it. Before they start talking there's a shot of him taking off his watch, I don't know if you saw this, he takes off his watch and he puts it down on the desk in front of him right before they get started, and it's a great little detail that indicates something about his attitude towards this - that he's literally counting the minutes that this is taking up of his day.

JOSH: I didn't notice that detail but that's nice.

HRISHI: And it gets paid off, you might take it in, but it gets really paid off in the end when he asks Sam: "Is this meeting anything more than a waste of time?" and Sam has to say "No" and he says "ok" and everybody leaves and you see him pick up the watch again. That's the kind of thing that I wonder: is that in the script? He takes off his watch? He picks it back up? Or is that... it had to be in the script, right?

JOSH: No, I would guess that's a directorial and/or actor choice, but-

HRISHI: Yeah

JOSH: Who knows? Maybe we can dig out the script to find out.

HRISHI: I loved... I wanted to talk about two more things about Fitz. One, when he leaves Leo's office and, he leaves Leo's office and we don't actually see their meeting but Toby comes in and he's trying to talk to Leo and he says, you know, he's asking him about what the meeting was and Leo says that they want to put A1-M1s in Manila and Toby asks how much does it cost and Leo says "Not much; twenty billion" and just the look that Richard Schiff gives at that moment, he just, he doesn't say anything and it's really great. Just the length of the pause...

JOSH: Yeah, I noticed that too. It's just right.

HRISHI: And then later I also loved Ted Marcoux's character's, Tate's, "Oh my God" when Fitz comes in. [chuckles]

JOSH: Yeah, I thought the same thing too. It's great, it's a great delivery.

HRISHI: And Fitz kills it.

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

FITZWALLACE: We haven't met.

MIKE: Mike Satchel.

FITZWALLACE: From Oregon?

MIKE: Yes, sir.

FITZWALLACE: Percy Fitzwallace.

MIKE: It's an honor to meet you, admiral.

FITZWALLACE: I imagine it would be. Yes.

[end excerpt]

[Both chuckling]

HRISHI: Not only is "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" repealed, we're going to be talking to the Under Secretary of the Army, Patrick Murphy, who is one of the people who was most instrumental to getting it repealed, but the Secretary of the Army, Eric Fanning, is openly gay. He is the first openly gay Secretary of the Army ever and that's... that comes only a few years after "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" was repealed. It shows how so much progress can happen so quickly but also how far we've come since that moment.

JOSH: Yeah, well, I mean, you're right. Particularly in light of what Fitz says in that scene; you know he talks about desegregating the Army and then "here I am: Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff"-

HRISHI: Exactly!

JOSH: And look at us. So it took a long time, or you know, I guess in political terms not so long, but eleven years after this episode before "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is repealed and look how far we've come-

HRISHI: Yeah

JOSH: Since then.

HRISHI: Eric Fanning is Secretary of the Army and he's openly gay - beat that with a stick.

JOSH: That's what she said.

HRISHI: That was... [Josh laughing] that was my worry when I wrote it down and when I said it out loud just now.

JOSH: There you go.

HRISHI: Following up on Josh's conversation with Jeff Breckenridge recently and we talked about how, even though Breckenridge, while talking about reparations, was very calm and collected, Josh kinda got heated on it, here too Josh takes the bait every time. If you bait him it seems like he cannot resist. So when he has to talk about the Elections Commission and he says, he calls it a "fool's errand", right? He's gone to talk to these Senators who are on the F.E.C board, is that right?

JOSH: Yeah. Well I know... Onorato is the aide to the Senate Majority Leader-

HRISHI: Right.

JOSH: As played by Paul Provenza, an incredibly funny stand-up comic, I love that he has a nice little dramatic turn here.

HRISHI: Oh, Paul Provenza! That's Paul Provenza!

JOSH: Yeah, a very, very funny guy and he makes a good, quick, indelible impression here in this scene.

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: He's a formidable foe for Josh.

HRISHI: Yeah and Josh takes the bait. He said "I came in here and I knew this was nothing, I knew there was nothing we could do here"-

JOSH: "A fool's errand", I think he calls it.

HRISHI: Yeah, exactly. I thought it sounded like Mandy wrote her memo after listening to our podcast.

JOSH: [chuckling] Interesting! Wait, why do you say that? Because a lot of what we've been discussing in terms of-

HRISHI: Yeah, in terms of where the Administration is going wrong, where they're giving up the high ground, all the moments that we've noted where they have been defeated and why, or when they've given way to practical concerns over their own ideology.

JOSH: Right; which is interesting also I've found that it's all very subtle stuff and not black and white and it's all about the grey area, and so she's written this memo about where they're weak and where they're vulnerable, and there's a scene later on where, as you say, Josh has taken the bait and now wants to fight this F.E.C thing and she's actually pushing them kinda to stay in the middle and not get into a pitched, public battle about all these issues. So once she's working for them she's more of a moderating influence-

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: Pushing them, sometimes, not to fight their idealized agenda.

HRISHI: That is an excellent point.

JOSH: So I mean these are subtle things and there are inner tensions.

HRISHI: Yeah, you're right! She is the one who is always kind of talking about the public face and re-electability and what's going to work with the popular opinion. And it's explicitly stated in this episode that there are all these issues that the Senate Majority Leader's Office might take to force them to stand on the unpopular side of a lot of issues. I mean, English as the national language, stuff like that. School prayer, family support, the "Entertainment Decency Act", all these things that they know where the President stands and they'll bring it out in front just so that he has to look bad by stating his position, and she is very concerned with that, you're totally right. She's been the person who's been arguing against that.

JOSH: Right, in a way arguing against that memo she wrote under Russell.

HRISHI: This is also an interesting detail, I thought, given the context of all the things that came before, all the little political moments of compromise and failure, is this exchange between Toby and Leo:

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

LEO: *Toby, when you start thinking about jumping ship, you'll let me know, right?*

TOBY: *One victory in a year, Leo.*

LEO: *Toby-*

TOBY: *Mendoza. We got Mendoza on the Court.*

LEO: *This President was elected with 48% of the vote, Toby.*

TOBY: *Yeah, but he was elected.*

LEO: *Without a mandate. The majority of people in the country voted for somebody else.*

TOBY: *I don't care, Leo.*

[end excerpt]

JOSH: This is new information for us, yes? That he lost the popular vote.

HRISHI: I think so. That's what I was like: "Oh we knew that it was a close election, and that he had low approval numbers and they were struggling" but I think this was the first time, maybe, that it was explicitly stated that yes, he won without a mandate.

JOSH: This is not long before "Dubya", before Bush would be elected without having won the popular vote.

HRISHI: Yeah. True. The circumstances of his election though would have been too far-fetched for a TV episode.

JOSH: This is true. But they would help bring Eli Attie to the fold.

HRISHI: Yeah, yeah. Toby's making his point that it doesn't matter; he was elected, he was sworn in, he gets the chance to do something. But then I love that he reacts several sentences later back to Leo and says:

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

TOBY: I'm not too crazy about you questioning my loyalty just then.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: I don't know, that line that Donna has: "Why is everybody walking around here like they know that they've already lost?" it does, it feels like everybody is just kind of hangdog.

JOSH: Right, and it's all being teed up for this great scene between Leo and President Bartlet, between John Spencer and Martin Sheen, and it is a doozy, it's pretty great.

HRISHI: It is.

JOSH: For me it's a goosebump-y scene.

HRISHI: Yeah. I wanted to read you a little bit from a *TV Guide* article that I found about this scene and about director Laura Innes. It was in an interview that *TV Guide* did with Martin Sheen, he said originally that he and John Spencer were overdoing it in this scene, and then here's a quote: "She let it go for about six or eight takes and then she came in and began to take all the decorations away and said go right to the heart and just make it personal. I saw the scene get smaller and smaller and by the end of the evening we were just looking at each other and talking the truth and responding. It was phenomenal what she did."

JOSH: Ha. That's great.

HRISHI: And so I had read that before watching the episode. Watching the episode with that in mind I really appreciated the volume of that conflict and I started to imagine what it would be like as a much bigger blow-up, and hearing what that dialogue would be like if the tone were 'these guys are really, really going at it the whole time', it makes the moments where their volume does spike and the intensity gets higher really much more dramatic.

JOSH: Yeah, I completely agree, that's interesting, that's very astute direction because sometimes as a film actor over time you need to sort of ramp up into a scene but it's also important to take note of those times where you need to ramp down into it and where you're starting at a level you think you need to get to but that the real scene and the real good stuff lies someplace smaller, so I guess she saw that, she was able to see that and bring them there and it is a really focused and, I agree, very personal scene between these two.

HRISHI. Yeah. Do you remember this episode from when you first saw it?

JOSH: Ish...

HRISHI: You know, for me I knew there are moments that I anticipate, just like I was hungry for it, like in this scene especially, lines when waiting for Leo to say “You drive me there”, looking at John Spencer’s face I knew what was coming and just to see him sort of wrestling with ‘is he going to say this thing?’, ‘is he...’ you know... The President kind of lets him off of the hook, he says “We know it’s not true, you don’t drive me to the political safe ground” and it could be done, Leo says “I know it’s not true”, President Bartlet says “Good” and then he starts to walk away and Leo is just left hanging and then he lets it out!

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

LEO: You drive me there .

BARTLET: What the hell did you say?

LEO: And you know it too.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: Again, you can imagine the whole thing being screamed but instead it’s just that moment and then when Martin Sheen turns around and gives that with just a flash of anger in his eyes... ah, it’s so good!

JOSH: Interesting! It’s funny, as you describe it, it makes me wonder which is the better way to watch it. I watched it all originally back then, have not revisited it in sixteen years, so I don’t have anything near the level of recall that you do so I’m seeing it almost as if for the first time but you’re able to sort of get ahead of moments and kind of watch how they’re approached-

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: So we come at it from two different directions, both have their pluses and minuses. I was waiting for him to turn over his impeccably written “Let Bartlet Be Bartlet”-

HRISHI: [laughs]

JOSH: In this incredibly nice handwriting-

HRISHI: [chuckling] Yeah!

JOSH: Like, ‘wow, he did that on the fly?’. That was the only moment I was really anticipating. I forgot also that, when pushed to it, when under duress, Leo will mix his sports metaphors and say something like:

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

LEO: We got our asses kicked in the first quarter, but it's time we get up off the mat.

BARTLET: Yes!

[end excerpt]

[chuckling]

JOSH: Which I believe is a mixed sports metaphor. I don't think Wrestling has quarters-

HRISHI: Or Boxing.

JOSH: Oh there you go. Funny though that he started to indulge in sports metaphor just when I was thinking 'Oh, he's such a good coach and this is such a sports coach moment'.

HRISHI: Yeah, exactly. And he says "Our ground game isn't working", doesn't he say "It's time to put the ball up in the air"?

JOSH: He references most sports. [chuckling] It's a little bit like an advertisement for the Olympics.

HRISHI: He's like, 'also, no gutter-balls!'.

JOSH: [laughing] 'The shuttlecock has been struck!'

HRISHI: [laughing] 'And I only want strikes, so let's serve an ace!'

JOSH: [chuckling]

HRISHI: It is pretty exciting, the energy at the end of that episode. There's a musical cue that's pretty unusual, you know that little...

JOSH: Ah! I wrote down "different kind of music" and that "it really works for me for me here".

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

LEO: And we're gonna lose some of these battles, and we might even lose the White House, but we're not gonna be threatened by issues. We're gonna put them front and center. We're gonna raise the level of public debate in this country, and let that be our legacy. That sound alright to you, Josh?

JOSH: I serve at the pleasure of the President of the United States.

LEO: [to C.J.] Yeah?

C.J.: I serve at the pleasure of the President.

[Leo turns to Sam]

SAM: I serve at the pleasure of President Bartlet.

LEO: Toby?

TOBY: I serve at the pleasure of the President.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: Yeah! You know one of the reasons why I think it stood out so much is because normally all of the musical elements are orchestral, but this was a synthesizer, this was electronic and you have this little electronic arpeggiated thing, this do-do-do-do do-do-do-do do-do-do-do, and it was pretty unusual for the palette that we've had musically and it does, it changes things, and I felt like that was really appropriate because if things have gone a particular way since " *Five Votes Down* ", since " *Proportional Response* ", this whole idea of not being able to do stuff, if you're going to signal a sea change, why not bring in a musical element that's never been there before? I thought that was great.

JOSH: Uh huh. I guess that's one of the reasons why I picked this as my favorite episode of the season and thus the series thus far, is that it feels like an announcement for a sea change in the show-

HRISHI: Yeah!

JOSH: We have had a season-wide story arc about the gang who couldn't shoot straight and about being pushed to the middle and about few victories or maybe Mendoza being the only victory, and now I don't know whether they're going to be successful or not but they're going to go down trying. It is an announced sea change in the series, which I welcome.

HRISHI: Yeah, we've been talking about how things have been getting figured out; how the character of Sam is starting to blossom, here even the character of Margaret is starting to really become three-dimensional, and it feels like everything is revved up and now we can take it to the next place and this is the announcement of that. It makes me almost feel like the first eighteen episodes were like a prologue to this, like an excellent backstory to what's going to happen.

JOSH: How about the “Let Bartlet Be Bartlet” of it all? Is that a... that harkens back to “Let Reagan Be Reagan”? Was that a thing?

HRISHI: I think when Reagan was being re-elected in 1984, as they were going through the debates there was a strategy, they said, to “Let Reagan Be Reagan” in the debates and then I think they turned it into a slogan and, we’ll put up a link, there is even a button that said “Let Reagan Be Reagan”. So I’m sure that that’s what this is a reference to and I wonder now that we hear it so often in politics, in the U.S. and other countries, in England, people use “Let Blank Be Blank”, I wonder if they’re referencing Reagan or if they’re actually referencing *The West Wing* ? If they know what they’re referencing? [chuckling]

JOSH: I suspect it’s *The West Wing* .

HRISHI: Yeah?

JOSH: Much as Aaron did wonders for the joke about the guy in the flight in the helicopter and his discussion with God-

HRISHI: Right.

JOSH: I think that joke got a big lift from Aaron’s inclusion of it.

HRISHI: And so we can now blame Aaron Sorkin for the fact that we have to hear it left and right, most recently about Mike Pence: “Let Pence Be Pence”.

JOSH: [chuckling] That’s right.

HRISHI: Everybody gets to be everybody. This felt like a really beautiful, classic Sorkin line, when Leo says:

[West Wing Episode 1.19 excerpt]

LEO: Everything you do...

BARTLET: This morning-

LEO: Everything you do says: ‘For God’s sakes, Leo. I don’t want to be a one-term President.’

BARTLET: Did I not say put our guys on the F.E.C.?

LEO: No sir. You did not do that.

BARTLET: Leo!

LEO: You said -- No! You said, let's dangle our feet in the water of whatever the hell it is we dangle our feet in, when we want to make it look like we're trying without pissing too many people off!

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: That's a big sentence-

JOSH: Yeah.

HRISHI: And it takes... You understand why he works with the same actors, because it takes a particular kind of cadence and delivery to be able to pull a line like that off.

JOSH: That is true and I like that the foot-dangling is used to great dramatic effect here but it's a call-back to a moment that's kind of comical earlier in the episode.

HRISHI: Yeah, exactly! Yeah.

JOSH: He takes the same language that had been used for a lightly comic moment and infuses it with power and drama.

HRISHI: One way in which this is different from a "St Crispin's Day" or a coach-in-the-locker-room pep talk is that instead of 'clear eyes, full hearts, can't lose', we get the nerdiest version of it possible, which is "Let's raise the raise the level of debate in this country"

JOSH: YEAH! COME ON!

HRISHI: [chuckling]

JOSH: You just see hordes of people charging on a field to raise the level of debate in this country. Yeah, that's pretty funny.

HRISHI: What did you think about the very last bit of everybody repeating-

JOSH: "I serve at the pleasure"?

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: [stifling a chuckle] I don't want to criticize what I feel is an incredibly great episode... It was a little much, if you're going to force me. 'Now you do your version'...

HRISHI: [chuckles] Ok, I'm going to say "Bartlet"

JOSH: 'I'm going to say "the President"...

HRISHI: Right! Exactly! They all have their own... [laughs]

JOSH: Yeah. I wanted them, maybe a little bit just after that to then each reveal their super power.

HRISHI: [laughing] Right! Exactly! Right!

JOSH: Toby flies away in a bolt of lightning, Josh turns into fire...

HRISHI: Gimli shows up and he says:

[*The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001) excerpt*]

GIMLI, SON OF GLOIN: "And my axe!"

[end excerpt]

[laughter]

JOSH: And then C.J. casts a Dweomer.

[laughter]

HRISHI: Exactly!

JOSH: And... scene! But they've earned it. For me, they've earned it. I'm all on-board for this episode.

HRISHI: Yeah, that's...

JOSH: I didn't even write it down, you forced that out of me.

HRISHI: [chuckling] I didn't write it down, I was just thinking about it.

JOSH: ok.

HRISHI: Alright, let's take a break to thank our sponsors and when we come back we'll talk to Under Secretary of the Army, Patrick Murphy.

[Ad break]

HRISHI: Joining us now is Patrick Murphy, the Under Secretary of the U.S. Army. He was a captain, he served in Iraq with the 82nd Airborne and was awarded the Bronze Star, and became the first Iraq War veteran to be elected to the House, where he represented Pennsylvania. While he was in the House, he introduced the Bill that led to the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell". Secretary Murphy, thanks so much for joining us. What did you think about the scene in this episode where Sam and Toby are talking to the Officers and Congressmen about "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"?

PATRICK: I was in the Army at that time as a cadet, so I was not even an Officer yet, but you look at that scene and the Military Officers were basically not being very friendly and frankly a little aggressive toward Toby and Sam but that was the culture, in a sense, back then because "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" at that time was such a controversial thing and it's interesting when you look back at history and through the lens of the show to see that demeanor between two actors within the executive branch; obviously the military and White House staffers.

JOSH: I was wondering, did you take it as a measure of the Bartlet Administration's lack of seriousness about the issue that they hadn't included the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs in that meeting?

PATRICK: I did and it was two staffers, it wasn't the Vice-President, it wasn't a Principal, to have that conversation and so to not have the person who recommends military policy to the President, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in the room or to ask his advice was something that was a little disconcerting.

HRISHI: Do you think that it was an accurate portrayal of what the attitude might be to a meeting like that at that time?

PATRICK: I think if you're looking back at that, literally twenty years ago, it could have been that contentious but the only thing, the red flag as a military guy, that struck me is that you wouldn't have a Major and a Lieutenant-Colonel in that room, it would've been a full Colonel or a General talking policy.

HRISHI: The line that I think struck me the most was when he says: "Those weren't our guys".

PATRICK: Yeah, and that was the culture. It's interesting, I remember going through air-assault school as a Lieutenant, you know, rappelling out of helicopters and doing twelve mile ruck marches, and one of the guys I was going through with... frankly I didn't know because he didn't say it but it was during that time before repeal and he was quiet about his sexuality and who he was dating and I had no idea and then he, after graduating a really tough course, he was a combat arms officer, basically went to his Commander and said "I'm not going to live a life of a lie anymore and I'm gay" and so whether I was a Captain, teaching Constitutional Law at West

Point and talking about equality and talking about how I thought the policy was wrong even though it was the current policy, or whether I was Congressman fighting to repeal it, it was something that motivated me to try to make a change.

HRISHI: So can you tell us about that change? So this episode aired in 2000, we're here sixteen years later and I was hoping that you could catch us up on where we are now and talk a little bit about your part in what's changed.

PATRICK: Sure. When I joined the Army in 1993 it was when the President at that time made a compromise with the Congress. The Congress did not want to allow gays into the military, the President did, but that the compromise was half a loaf, which was "Don't Ask, Don't Tell", which meant that if you were gay, lesbian or bisexual in the military, that you could not make any statement that you were gay, be shown in an act, or show a marriage certificate, so it was "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue" but if word got out or if there were photos or you got married in a State then that was automatically triggered, you were discharged within the military. I ran for Congress because I lost nineteen men in my unit in Iraq, I thought the war was wrong, and I came back to do something about it and I won for Congress in suburban Philadelphia and when I became a member of the Armed Services Committee, to recognize that for sixteen years... I won in 2006 and in 2007 to see that they never even had a hearing on "Don't Ask, Don't Tell", to see if it was being implemented the right way or had proper oversight, so I asked my subcommittee Chairwoman, Susan Davis, a great Congresswoman from California, from San Diego, and I said "Hey Ma'am, let's have a hearing on this".

HRISHI: And how long did that whole process take? To go from your first actions against it to actually getting it repealed?

PATRICK: It took over a year but I'll tell you, what was very helpful was when President Obama spoke out about it at his first State of the Union address. So I became the lead sponsor on the Bill, I literally went to every member of Congress talking to them, both Democrats and Republicans, but when I had top cover, when the President said that he wanted it repealed, when members of Congress realized that if we would pass that repeal that the President would sign it into law, it was helpful.

JOSH: And am I correct that in instituting the policy, President Clinton had argued that the compromise would help protect National Security and that part of your counter to the argument was that in fact in addition to it being institutionalized discrimination that it actually ran counter to National Security to have that policy?

PATRICK: No doubt. Listen, I've been in combat and to see great Officers and great soldiers and great Airmen and Marines get thrown out of the military just because they were gay, not for any misconduct, because they were gay... and we've kicked out, in a time of war, since the time it was implemented to the end of it, but even after 9/11 happened, we kicked out over thirteen-

thousand troops-

HRISHI: Whoah.

PATRICK: Just because they were gay, because of a statement, act, or marriage; NOT for a misconduct. And listen, if there's misconduct, whether you're gay or straight, you should get thrown out, but just because of who they were.

HRISHI: One of the parts of the episode mentions that in the Uniform Code, sodomy is a crime. As part of the repeal did you have to have that changed?

PATRICK: No, it's interesting. It's still a crime but, again, Sodomy is only a crime if it goes against, basically, something else egregious, so it has to be something broader. It's usually tacked on, usually as part of a sex crime, but a standalone thing... it's not necessarily a crime unless it goes against the good order and discipline of a unit.

HRISHI: I just have one more question, which is I was wondering supporting "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and pushing it through, I was wondering if you, as a member of the military, or as a politician, if you ended up facing any kind of negative consequences.

PATRICK: Well I fought like hell to repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" even though I'm straight and a combat vet and I have a wife and two little kids, but to me I saw an injustice and I was willing to fight to change it, to fix it for the better and I think that's what a lot of folks go into Congress to do and I think some folks, frankly, lose their way once they get there, once they have a taste of that power, but to me I was willing to fight for it and even though I only won by 0.6% by the fifteen-hundred and eighteen-hundred votes of my first race, and even though there was a quarter of a million votes cast, I won my re-election by fifteen points and then I got jammed up because I was pretty aggressive on "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and "The Affordable Healthcare Act" and other things that I think have changed our country for the better, but I have no regrets whatsoever. The four years of serving in Congress was awesome, my time serving in the military made me the leader I am, but I think we all have our own things in our hearts that drive us and to me that was a pretty clear-cut one to fight for and that's definitely for equality; and we're not all the way there yet, there's still a lot more work to do in America, with transgender and some other things that I've led as Under Secretary of the Army now; when you talk about women in combat and women in Ranger school, when you talk about transgender service which we're right implementing now... so the long arc of equality is still happening and there's still a fight in that every day.

HRISHI: And what about from the military? You said that during the Congressional hearings there were some members of the military who spoke in support of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"; did you get any sort of blowback from your colleagues in the military, from any of the branches or anything like that?

PATRICK: Oh yeah, of course some folks in the military, you know, of course they always throw stuff, saying that I was gay and that's why I was fighting for it, other folks who said that there was my fellow paratroopers that were rolling around in their graves since one of their own is now fighting for this change... I used to do P90X in the morning with members of Congress, Paul Ryan and a couple of other guys we'd work out in the Congressional gym. I remember getting done working out and I took a quick shower, I was rushing off to an eight o'clock a.m. meeting and there was a Republican member who, and I'm not trying to be partisan here but, who grabbed me in the locker room and said "Patrick, you're going to have blood on your hands if this repeal law goes into effect, there's going to be people who are killed out there in the formations because of what you're doing." and I said "Sir, with all due respect, this is a generational thing. The men and women I served with in Baghdad could care less if you're gay or straight, they only care if you could carry and fire your M4 assault rifle and can you kick down a door. So maybe your generation would have problem with it, but my generation sure as hell doesn't."

JOSH: Huh. Well you know your real life and career parallels the main theme of this episode, which is about, as you say, what you do with power once you get it and I have great admiration for you and I appreciate your joining us and your service to the Country.

PATRICK: Nah, I appreciate it; listen it was one of my favorite episodes: "*Let Bartlet Be Bartlet*" and you know Martin Sheen, I think, had six brothers that served in the Army, including a couple that served in Vietnam, so I got to know throughout the years that he's a great American and I've been a huge fan of the show, in fact I used to watch it, the first two seasons at night, I was one of those members of Congress that slept in my office, so again I talked to my wife and kids, they were still back in Pennsylvania, I talked to them on the phone about nine o'clock, we'd hang up and then I'd watch an episode of two before I hit the rack. [laughs] On my little air mattress in Congress. It's a very glamorous life when you're a member of Congress, let me tell you!

[laughter]

PATRICK: So guys, thanks for having me on, I appreciate it, I had a blast and if I can ever be on for you let me know.

HRISHI: Thanks so much!

JOSH: Thank you so much! And that's it for our episode! Thanks so much for listening and we hope you'll join us next time.

HRISHI: In the meantime, check out the official West Wing Weekly lapel pin. If you follow us on Facebook or Twitter you've probably already seen it but if not, go to thewestwingweekly.com/pin to check it out.

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HRISHI: If you have comments or questions or if you want to discuss this episode with us or with other West Wing Weekly listeners, you can leave a comment at thewestwingweekly.com or on our Facebook page: facebook.com/thewestwingweekly .

JOSH: You can also find us, and follow us, on Twitter: @WestWingWeekly. Plus I'm @JoshMalina, Hrishi is @HrishiHirway; "Hrishi" starts with an "H", by the way, and Under Secretary Murphy is @USAMurphy [Transcriber's note: It's not, it's actually @PatrickMurphyPA].

HRISHI: Ok

JOSH: Ok

PATRICK: What's next?

[outro music]