



Written by [Staff](#) on February 6, 2024

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What They Said

Last year, Arizona candidate for U.S. Senate **Kari Lake** claimed that someone tried to bribe her to not run in 2024. Media questioned the story, but this January, the *Daily Mail* released a recording of a March 2023 conversation between Lake and Arizona GOP chair **Jeff DeWit**, who has since resigned. In a statement issued January 24, he called the recording both “selectively edited” and “taken out of context,” and said its release was a “deceptive tactic” that “undermines the integrity of private discussions critical for party leadership.”



AP Images

Lake: So, what’s going on? I mean, assuming this is our friend?

DeWit: Ah, this is, this is, this is back East. They ... there are very powerful people that want to keep you out.

Lake: I know they do.

DeWit: But they’re willing to put their money where their mouth is, in a big way. So this conversation never happened.

Lake: This is crazy, though. They should want me. I’m a great candidate. People love me. These people are corrupt.

DeWit: Well, maybe you’re right.

Lake: They are ri... They are corrupt.

DeWit: Maybe. This never happened. And don’t go [inaudible]. I’ll get myself in trouble. This, if you, if you say no, which is fine, it’s your choice. Don’t tell people.

Lake: They’re going to try to have me murdered. [Laughter]

DeWit: [inaudible] If that stuff that came out last week is right about the cartel stuff. [Inaudible] says the cartels are operating in all 50 states right now. So...

Lake: So what’s going on? Who is it? What?

DeWit: Forget the “who.” I’ll just tell you “what.” I’ll just say that people are calling around, saying, gosh, no, you can’t [inaudible]. If you say no, don’t say, “I got offered to buy out.” Don’t even say that, because then we lose our ability to get things done in the future.

Lake: Here’s my problem: Rather than just say, “Let’s work with her. She’s a great candidate.” Because they don’t own me. And it [expletive] me off.

DeWit: Yeah, it’s not [inaudible] about ownership.



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Lake: It's about control.

DeWit: I don't know if it's about control. It's about being on the team. I guess that's it. You know what I mean?

Lake: They want to be on the team.

DeWit: They want you to be on their team. You know?

Lake: But if they're pushing a globalist agenda, I can't do that. So what do they want? What do they want me to do?

DeWit: They want you to stay out for two years.

Lake: [Laughter]

DeWit: Well, I'll tell you what I can offer you. [inaudible] So the ask of me was... The ask I got today from back East was [inaudible] "Is there any companies out there or something that could just put her on the payroll and give her, to keep her out?" And I said, "Well, what do you want to do?" "Whatever we need to do."

Lake: This is about defeating Trump, and I think that's a bad, bad thing for our country. DeSantis is not America First. This is about the final death-blow to Trump. And I don't think that's good for our country.

DeWit: Look...

Lake: It's not good for our country, Jeff.

DeWit: It's not, but at the same time, I'm not even sure Trump can win again. I don't know that he can win. I think that what it really comes down to for a lot of people is not really about control or agenda. It's about the ability to raise money to win, you know. If you really want to know [inaudible]... even on their end, what makes them the most money.

Lake: All these concessions don't work. [inaudible] And I don't want to make a deal with these kind of people. This is a hill worth dying on. I'm not ... if they're going to steal the election to make me and our movement go away, I'm not letting them do that. I owe it to the people of Arizona.

DeWit: Or...

Lake: To carry their torch and their voice.

DeWit: Or, you don't go away, but you pause.

Lake: This is — the battle is right now, Jeff.

DeWit: You pause and refill your coffers.

Lake: No, the battle is right now. The battle is right now, and we don't have time to pause on this battlefield.

DeWit: You're not. You can't scratch this. [inaudible]

Lake: Yeah.

DeWit: You're not even nominated. [inaudible] It's a back-scratching club. That's all D.C. is. It's a big back-scratching club. You're in no position to scratch somebody's back. And you've already made it known that if you get there, you're not going to scratch somebody's back. I'll scratch people's back. I



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was, I've been on the outs with a lot of people all the time. We always scratch backs. Where are we in two years, if they steal the election again?

Lake: Listen to what you're saying. Why don't we do something about it? So that we the people can pick our...

DeWit: What can we do?

Lake: I'm not willing to accept that. And I'm going to be the biggest [expletive] pain in these people's [expletive] and go back and tell them that. I'm running, and I'm going to be the biggest pain in their [expletive].

DeWit: I'm willing to tell them that.

Lake: And they're going to have to [expletive] kill me to stop me.

DeWit: I know, I know. Look... and I...

Lake: You don't have to tell them that, but — I don't think they will, but...

DeWit: I don't think that's the way they are.

Lake: Either they come around, and try to work with me, or I'm just gonna...

DeWit: What would that entail?

Lake: That would entail not tell... none of them telling me, "You've got to distance yourself from Trump." No! You distance yourself from DeSantis.

DeWit: He's [inaudible].



Jeff DeWit (AP Images)



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Lake: But what I'm saying is, don't tell people that. I'm with Trump, okay? I want to work for the betterment of Arizona. And I'm not going to let these people back in D.C. tell me not to run.

DeWit: I'm not telling you not to run.

Lake: I'm not going to pause for two years. The battle is now. I'm offended by whoever these people are that they're trying to buy me out.

DeWit: You should be honored.

Lake: But they're... I'm offended that there's people back there just don't give a [expletive] about our country.

DeWit: Do you understand, though? You should be honored that, that means they know how powerful you are.

Lake: Well, I can tell them that...

DeWit: If you weren't powerful, they wouldn't want to have this conversation.

Lake: Yeah.

DeWit: Right? You should... very few people get this.

Lake: I know. I'm just... I'm [expletive] that they don't care more about our country. It's all about the mighty dollar to them. And that's offensive.

DeWit: I don't know. I honestly don't know.

Lake: They want to get Trump so bad. They want him out so bad...

DeWit: It's not about Trump. This isn't about Trump. It's about you. [inaudible] It's not about Trump. Some people are in on this...

Lake: Listen, I can win. Why don't you go back and tell them I can win, and why don't they get behind me?

DeWit: I see these things through a different lens. [inaudible] It's very personal to you. This is you, your name on the ballot. And I get that. And it's a very personal thing.

Lake: Well, I have a, um, appointment coming up, and I have to work on my book. I'm not... I appreciate their concern...

DeWit: Is... just to say... is there a number at which at which...

Lake: ... I can be bought?

DeWit: Not "be bought."

Lake: [Laughter] That's what it's about.

DeWit: Can you take a pause for a couple of years?

Lake: No.

DeWit: Then go right back to what you were doing?

Lake: Uh-uh. No. 10 million, 20 million, 30? No, no, no. A billion? No. This is not about money. This is about our country. I think it's disturbing that they would even — that anybody would think this is ...



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DeWit: No, to be fair, even me, even me, I'll say this: I want a fresh face right now for the reason that I've never seen anyone — I can't think of a single person in a federal race, who's lost, ran and then won. I can't think of it. If you can think of it, let me know.

Lake: I am not going to let these people who hate our [expletive] country tell me not to run. You should call them and tell them to get behind me. I can win, and they should get behind me.

DeWit: I will be happy to say those words, but do you think my words will carry enough weight? No.

Lake: Okay, well, did you think that you would come in here and that I would be bought? [Laughter]

DeWit: It's not being bought.

Lake: Yes, it is!

DeWit: I think...

Lake: It is being bought. They are trying to buy me out of running. And it's actually ... all right, I'm flattered, but I'm offended [inaudible] for our country that there are people like this who live here.

DeWit: What I think is this, is that it can give you an incredible opportunity to have a bigger voice to fight for stuff than you currently do. You know what I mean?

Lake: Yeah, I don't want to deal with people like this. These people are un-American, and I think they are unethical, and I would be absolutely immoral if I did that. That's immoral. I couldn't look at myself in the mirror if I, you know.

DeWit: It's just very powerful people that are willing to... They really want someone different, want new names, whatever it is.

Lake: So they want Jim Lamon, that's a new name?

DeWit: No, actually, that's not even... that's a possibility, but they even asked me...

Lake: I know, they've got all these new names, and I'm going to beat each and every one of them. Sorry, Jeff. Take it back. Take it back to them. I gotta get workin'. I love ya, but I gotta get workin'.

DeWit: All right, I appreciate it.

Lake: I mean, I'm just, I can't believe this.

DeWit: Hey, but again, be honored. Instead of them just, look... instead of just them working to beat you, they're trying to, like...

Lake: They're... This is about getting Trump out. It's about getting DeSantis in. Getting DeSantis in is getting Trump out.

DeWit: You're reading too deep into it.

Lake: Well, let's see what happens. Maybe my case will go through. Maybe they'll do the right thing.

DeWit: I hope so.

Lake: I do, too. That's my first goal. That they can't have me in the governor's office because then we're going to root out some of this corruption. You know what it is? The people don't get to choose their elected officials unless they're pre-approved by The Swamp. And The Swamp doesn't pre-approve of me.



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DeWit: You need a strong party to help you win.

Lake: I think you should go public with this, and then say, "Hey, these people don't wanna... they don't..."

DeWit: No! No, no, no, no, no. Then I'd turn my key and my card in.

Lake: [Laughter] Tell them I'm not flattered. I'm offended that they...

DeWit: Don't tell anybody that we had this conversation.

Lake: I'm offended that they don't care about our country more.

DeWit: I actually wish that you'd just give me a counter-offer that's big. Give me a counter.

Lake: I can't be bought!

DeWit: C'mon!

Lake: I can't!



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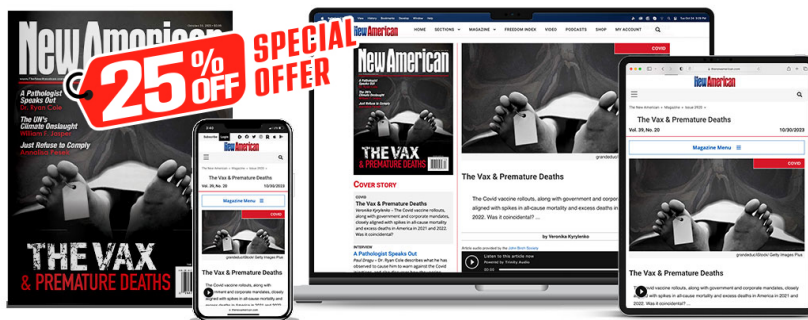
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