

Jesse Ventura: Part 2

Contributed by Chris Yandek
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In part two of an interview with the former Governor of Minnesota Jesse Ventura discusses 9/11, Mexico, having wanted to investigate the WWE and not always having to be the leader. The interview was conducted by Chris Yandek and columnist Jay Bildstein.

Listen to Part 2 of the Jesse Ventura Interview<http://thesportsinterview.com/mp3/Jesse2.mp3>

Jay Bildstein: I thought you had a brilliant solution. You wrote about in your book, you said I believe every third year, you wanted it so there could be not be any new legislation, only the repeal of laws. Do I have that right?

Jesse Ventura: "Yeah. You do. But I couldn't pursue that because the moment after I suggest it about an hour later one of my staff members came in and said, 'Governor, there is a problem.'" I said, 'What is that?' He said, "You gotta change the state constitution."

Jay Bildstein: And that's a 10 to 15 years process.

Jesse Ventura: "Exactly. I threw up my hands and said never mind, we'll move on. I knew I was not going to be around long enough to change the constitution."

Jay Bildstein: Having run a state as you have though, do you believe that for the United States of America, for the Federal Government, do you accept it as a possibility at least that the change can be made if there is the manifest will?

Jesse Ventura: "Certainly. I am a great believer in the United States spirit and what our country is founded upon. It's gonna take a massive wake up call to shake these people and get them out of their doldrum society or their lemming mentality as I call it. We're a country full of lemmings today. All we do is get marched off the cliff and we don't bother to look to the left or right and to see why."

Jay Bildstein: I don't know if you've experienced this. You mention that you spend half the year in Baja, California. One thing that I've found is that sometimes when you go next door you get an even better perspective of your own country. Sometimes when you're in a country people are absorbed of what goes on they don't realize it. You kind of step out of that bubble and you look and you kind of have to look in your head and say my God.

Jesse Ventura: "You're hitting the nail right on the head. I tell people often that I get a different perspective today from the outside looking in rather than the inside looking out. When you do that, at least in my opinion, I don't like what I see. You know when I am way down in the Baja because I am 850, 900 miles down the border and it disturbs me when I see young kids down there and you know what the most popular t-shirt is?"

Chris Yandek: What is that?

Jesse Ventura: "It's a t-shirt with George Bush's picture on it. It says weapon of mass destruction."

Chris Yandek: And why do you think that is though?

Jesse Ventura: "Because that's how we're viewed now. We're viewed by the rest of the world as don't cross the United States. You could be attacked. You could be invaded. You could be occupied."

Jay Bildstein: Victory over Japan Day took place sometime in August of 1945. The Nuremberg Trials against the Nazi war criminals began in November of 1945, about three months after the war ended. September 11, 2001 took place. I believe by the end of 2001 there were already some accused terrorists in custody taken in Afghanistan. They began by the beginning of 2002 flying them to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. We're coming up on seven years. Isn't it true that a bunch of these people have never been charged? Now I am not for coddling anyone who would attack the United States of America whatsoever. Doesn't that sound like a Soviet Gulag to take people, lock them up for seven years, and charge them?

Jesse Ventura: "Not only that, but maybe they didn't do it. Do you know what I learned that has me just stunned? Listen to this. The Department of Defense has never officially indicted or charged Osama Bin Laden for 9/11. They did it when he attacked the embassy in Africa in 1998. They convened a grand jury. They presented their evidence. The grand jury agreed and there was an indictment against him. 9/11, they haven't even done that and it gets better. The next time you're online go to the FBI website. When you get there you can go to the top ten international terrorists. Go to that. You will see a photo of Osama Bin Laden. Bring it up. You will see a multitude of crimes he's been accused of and yet ironically 9/11 is not one of them. Now when some of my people pushed the FBI to demand to know why isn't 9/11 included on his resume they hemmed and they hawed. Then finally they gave us the answer. You know what it was? We don't have enough evidence. Now don't you find that disturbing? It's seven years after 9/11. The FBI won't even attribute on their website Osama Bin Laden is attacking us because they say we don't have enough evidence yet. We went to two wars, we changed our foreign policy, and we adopted the Patriot Act all because supposedly of him."

Jay Bildstein: It's really true that Corona Beer, which is made in Mexico, uses Minnesota corn?

Jesse Ventura: "Absolutely. It's trained right down there. When I was there they made a point of taking me over to these massive pallets of corn and on every pallet was the Minnesota stamp right on there. They import tremendous amounts of corn from Minnesota to make a Corona beer. Whenever I have a Corona I always feel a little bit like I am back home."

Jay Bildstein: Your wife played heavily in your book. I found the parts that were kind of written cursive type very instructive and she seems like a very lovely...lovely person. At one time when you were down in Mexico, she got to ride a horse that belonged to a charo, which is a kind of prototypical Mexican cowboy stylized like we think of a Mariachi movie.

How did she enjoy as a horsewoman riding down in the Mexico?

Jesse Ventura: "Phenomenal. She still enjoys it today. That was in Guadalajara down in a rodeo during a trade mission. They allowed her to pick any horse that the charos were riding. She went out and picked this beautiful palomino. Very gorgeous horse and very well trained. She had this horse spinning in a circle, rotating on that rear foot, and rotating it into the ground. That's a tribute to the person who trained them and Mexicans are very...very good. Their cowboys made our cowboys look like nothing. You know how our cowboys rope a calf, jump off, and go out and flip into the ground, and tie him up? The Mexican charo does all that without leaving the saddle. It's amazing. They grab the tail. They wrap the tail around their leg and the horse bolts forward and flips the cow right on its back. A charo considers it undignified to get out of the saddle."

Chris Yandek: I want to touch on a few things regarding your professional wrestling days. You were one of the people who put literature around the locker rooms, wanted to come up with a wrestling union, and you got punished for that. All these deaths over the years, very devastating to the industry. Do you think we'll ever have any type of union even though it's sports entertainment?

Jesse Ventura: "Probably not. You know what bothers me even more? It's one of the things that if I would run for the senate I was going to do a senatorial investigation on the WWE. And you know for concerning what? What's even a bigger importance is the fact that today they are still called independent contractors by the government which is absurd. They tell you when you wrestle. They tell you who you wrestle. They tell whether you win or lose. They tell you where you're going to wrestle. They are your boss as much as any job in the universe. Yet McMahon is able to get away with calling all the wrestlers even today when he has them signed to exclusive contracts he still is allowed to call them independent contractors where they have to pay their own social security and he doesn't have to pay a penny."

Chris Yandek: What do I call it? A love or hate good for business relationship with McMahon?

Jesse Ventura: "We keep it strictly business. There is no personal with him for the most part. I've had a good and bad relationship with Vince. Vince is like any powerful...powerful mogul who runs something. The business itself, he's married to that and nothing's gonna deter him from that. Would I do that? Probably not but I respect the position that he has. I have great respect for Vince McMahon. He's the PT Barnum of our generation."

Chris Yandek: I had a chance to interview your manager Classy Freddie Blassie a month before he passed away in 2003 and he said the following, "He was a great talker even when I was managing. He wouldn't even listen when I'd tell him things to do. He had his own way of doing it and that was the way it was going to be. When he got elected Governor, I was very surprised. People said I should've ran competition to him. I am not a politician. I am strictly a wrestler at all times. Front, center, and end."

Jesse Ventura: "(Laughs) Well, Freddie Blassie was a character who I really enjoyed truly passing through our lives together because he was a one of a kind person that you could always think back on and chuckle with great fond memories. Another thing Fred said publicly was I was the only guy that he ever saw that would completely stand up to Vince McMahon."

Jay Bildstein: You're very good and comfortable with leading and you don't seem to mind to get out of the way, but Jesse Ventura the follower? I don't know if we've ever seen that.

Jesse Ventura: "You would've seen it back in my days in the Seals because I had officers and leaders there that I would follow to the end of the earth. I still do today. They are men that I served with in the military that I would not lead today. I would follow them to the gates of hell if I had to." You can find out more about Jesse Ventura's Don't Start the Revolution Without Me at the following link: <http://www.skyhorsepublishing.com/details.php?TitleID=144>