



Episode 1,169: How to Make Someone an Instant Opponent of the State

Guest: Keith Knight-

WOODS: Let's talk about this video of yours, "The Ultimate Red Pill." A lot of times people think: what is that video that I can send to my friend so my friend will either think I'm slightly less crazy than he thinks or that curious friend who genuinely wants to know? Look, I'm your friend and I want to know what your passion is, what really moves you and why? And so we look around and we find this little two-minute clip and we're not totally satisfied. We find a ten-minute clip and we say, "Oh, this one's pretty good." But what you have done is you've put together a massive compilation.

Now, it's not like you expect that your friend is going to sit through the whole thing, but my thinking about it is this — I don't know if you had the same thought. But for some people, for people who are destined to join our side, they hit play on this thing and they think, *All right, I'll watch a couple of minutes of this.* And then they just keep watching and they keep watching and they keep watching, and they can't take their eyes off. And they don't want to admit it to themselves, but they can't stop watching. That would be, if I were you, the goal that I would have in making such a long video. Am I on the right track?

KNIGHT: Absolutely, yeah. So I really try and open it up with, okay, give me 15 seconds of the best thing I got, and I start off with David Friedman in a quick clip. Then we go into Owen Benjamin. Now, the thinking is we start off with an intellectual making a cool point, and then you get a comedian talking about something very serious, and they talk about important things. So I really try to get right into it and not waste people's time, so even if people are on there for literally 30 seconds, you get David Friedman and a great point by Owen Benjamin.

And it's 5 hours and 10 minutes long, and I basically did this to combat the universities. I was watching Ayn Rand on Phil Donahue, and I forget how long ago that was recorded, but she said: watch out for the universities. They're hotbeds for socialism and Marxism. And then reading into a guy named Antonio Gramsci, had an operation or an idea, sort of the long march through the cultural institutions. Long story short, I'm like, okay, if I could get one school day, 6 hours of someone's time, if I could just get one school day compared to the 5 days a week for 12 years that people are in government schools — if I could combat that with one day, what would I put into those 6 hours?

So I found 66 clips, put them all together. I got people like — you're in there a few times. I got Michael Malice, Stefan Molyneux, Robert Higgs. I got — oh, gosh, now I'm blanking on the names.

WOODS: Yeah, but it's everybody. It's everybody. It's all over the map. Larkin Rose is in there, I'm pretty sure. It's from all over the spectrum too. It's not like it's just like it's a right-wingy thing or a left-wingy thing. It's an all-wingy thing, and it's on all the stuff that we all agree on expressed as persuasively as we can possibly express it.

So by the way, of course, needless to say — the episode show notes page for this episode number is TomWoods.com/1169, and needless to say, this video will be linked there. So I urge you to check that out. Before we go on, you have a YouTube channel. Just say a word about that, and then we'll talk more about your video.

KNIGHT: So my YouTube channel is Keith Knight — Don't Tread on Anyone. But YouTube, I went to look at an old playlist of mine. It had 200 videos that I added, and now 50 videos have been deleted from different channels that I just added to a playlist, so I've now decided to diversify my portfolio, and now I'm on BitChute, Archive.org, Minds.com, and I'm looking to get a Steemit account. So yeah, that's my channel. I advocate libertarian anarchism, voluntarism, anarchocapitalism. I have some great interviews with Scott Horton. I feel like they're really productive. Even though they're long, I think he and I go from I think the sinking of the *Maine* to the founding of ISIS in 2011, so we cover a lot of ground. I have four hours of interviews with Larkin Rose, just me and him. I got two hours with Stefan Molyneux. So yeah, that's basically my channel.

WOODS: All right, that's great. I'll link to that also at TomWoods.com/1169. I'm not going to say your age other than — well, people probably figured it out from my — so they already know your age. You're a pretty young guy, but you've got a lot of things figured out here. So based on what you know and based on some of the ideas that are expressed in this "Red Pill" video, and you're trying to talk to somebody who believes in the state, which is 99.999% of humanity, where do you start? What's the first thing you say to get them to think differently?

KNIGHT: I would say the first thing is: violence is violence, even when a group of people called government engages in it. So a lot of what we see are euphemisms for this violence. Their theft is called taxation. Their slavery is called a draft. Their mass murder is called war — sort of these things to get people to think consistently. So not really just memorizing arguments, but getting people to hold government to the same standards they would hold anyone else.

So one thing I did yesterday, there's a big Red for Ed operation going on in Arizona, and I was just talking to a guy, and I said, "So what do you think about this? I don't force you to fund libertarian research and false flag history research. Is that fair?" And he goes, "Yeah, of course. You shouldn't be able to force people to fund things they don't desire." And I said, "Well, would you extend that courtesy to me that I just did to you? I really do feel that, after reading the works of John Taylor Gatto, Antony Sutton, Charlotte Thomson Iserbyt, Johann Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*, I don't believe public schools are a productive use of time, money. Would you allow me to opt out of funding those?"

Now, regardless of whatever he says — of course he's not giving the myth up right away — but something like that gets people to reconsider their positions. Or you know, something like, you could ask them, "Is it okay to force someone to perform an action against their will?" And they'll say, "No, that's slavery." Well, the U.S.'s closest ally on the planet, Israel, has a draft which is forced labor. So things like these are the messages I try to get across to people, I try

to communicate to them to get them interested in voluntarism and just thinking critically about government.

WOODS: Well, in that case, they're more or less reduced to saying: my principle is nobody should be forced to do anything against his will unless I think it's really important. Then they think, well, is that really a consistent principle you would really want to uphold? Nobody should be forced to do anything he doesn't want to do unless I think it's important — is that something you would go to war to defend? You shouldn't be forced to do anything you don't want to unless we say you really, really have to do it. Like, that's your political philosophy?

By the way, let me jump in with something that's in the written word, just because I just reread it today and we're talking here about really effective people, effective conveyers of the message. I was reading just one section of *Atlas Shrugged*, and I don't talk a lot about Ayn Rand on this show because I don't think I would say I'm primarily influenced by her. But in *Atlas Shrugged*, if you read nothing else in that novel, the speech that's delivered by the worker from the Twentieth Century Motor Company is I think the best thing — and I think I've read everything she's written. I think that's the best thing she wrote. And I actually think that if you give that to somebody who's, let's say, 16 years old, you will inoculate that person against socialism forever. I'm not exaggerating.

Because in that speech, this worker is describing a company in which they actually implemented the principle: from each according to his ability, to each according to his need. And they go from a very productive factory where everybody's more or less content to an extremely unproductive factory where everybody's at each other's throats. And you watch the stages by which this happens, and there is nothing implausible at any stage. Every stage is entirely plausible. You can see that that is exactly how this arrangement would work out and that the result would be as appalling as it is. I strongly urge people to read that.

All right, anyway, that has nothing to do with what we're talking about, except we're talking about being persuasive and who the best people were. When you sat down to make this video, were you just sitting there thinking, *What are some of the best videos I've seen?* Or did you think, *I think these are the six or seven best speakers so I'll go look for their videos?* How did you start a mammoth project like that?

KNIGHT: All right, so I told you about the idea of sort of combatting the cultural Marxist Antonio Gramsci, the statist education system. So I just said to myself, *All right, what is the best video if I could just give someone like two minutes, a two-minute video to check out?* And then I found another one, and I'm like, *Oh, I could find a way to put these together.* Long story short, I had like five or ten, and after a month I hadn't really done anything with it. And I don't know, I just kept coming across these videos, and long story short, I ended up with 66 and I ended up putting them together.

I really, really like the ending. I end off with Robert Higgs, "The State Is Too Dangerous to Tolerate" section of that speech, which I feel is really persuasive that really gets at the heart of why I'm a libertarian because of state atrocities. Whereas previously we sort of talk about the logical applications, the rights applications, basically convincing people there's two ways — back to Frederic Bastiat and Henry Hazlitt's ideas of there's two ways we can organize society — and this is another good opener for people. We can use coercion or we can use voluntarism. Ask them what do they use, and most people will say voluntarism, but the double standard is when government does something. For some reason, they have that double

standard. So I think we do a pretty good job of tearing down the double standard in people's minds.

WOODS: Apart from inertia and just generally accepting ideas that everybody accepts and everybody seems to have accepted for a long time, how else do you account for what makes people believe in the state and its allegedly benign nature? Are there myths that are holding it up, or are they falling into logical fallacies? Where do you think it comes from?

KNIGHT: So yeah, it's definitely a mixture of historical myths and the ability to sort of change the story right in the middle. So whereas they'll start you off with: the state is here to protect you. We need to, say, invade Iraq. They have WMDs, and after a couple of years, we're just there to protect democracy. Going back to FDR, we've been suddenly attacked out of nowhere — which Ralph Raico has absolutely refuted in his book *Great Wars and Great Leaders*, along with a speech he gave at Cato.

So they'll start off: the Japanese have attacked us. This is simply out of self-defense and self-preservation. Now the justification is because: well, we were stopping the Nazis from taking over the world or things like the Japanese just refused to surrender when this might be a case of transference, considering Winston Churchill's famous speeches, "We will never surrender." We also have Joseph Stalin and the communist operation, openly advocated for world communism. So for them to say that we're fighting against the National Socialists trying to take over the world, that I think is another case of mythology, of sort of transference.

You have things like the *USS Liberty* that go totally unnoticed and undocumented, the Israeli attack on America in 1967 that doesn't really lead to anything, whereas the Gulf of Tonkin incident doesn't actually occur how they said it did. And then Robert McNamara comes out later and says, "Well, that was actually an intelligence mistake." No one's held accountable. At the time, people are scared into sending thousands of people off, dropping more bombs on Vietnam than the Allies dropped on the Axis. Things like the *Lusitania*. So they can say something like: we went to war because we were attacked at the *Lusitania*, even though the events were two years apart, the entry of the war from the attack. So you constantly see the state coming in as a savior.

Another one, how they get people on the other end is: there's a great predator, and that is the rich man who seeks to sort of dominate you and exploit you. The best example of this is Donald Trump before and after the presidency, where he's supposedly in the private sector this profit-seeking billionaire out to exploit the masses. People weren't afraid of him then, whereas they are now. This is a clear example of how it's not wealth or social power, as Rothbard would call it in *Anatomy of the State*; it's this political coercive power that we really need to fear. Even if you think John D. Rockefeller is evil, the only way he can get rich is by meeting consumer demand in his oil field, whereas if his grandson David occupies government, we can definitely get some terrible things from them.

Bottom line: they're always trying to create this enemy, this evil enemy. There's racism out there. There's wealth inequality. There's terrorism. There's Nazis behind everywhere. There's fascism. There's communism. The belief that all of these things can be solved by the state, it's assuming that just because something bad happens, the state is justified. Half of marriages end in divorce. That doesn't justify the state prearranging marriages. Half of businesses fail. That doesn't justify the state monopolizing all business. So those are a few of the — The gender pay gap is another one. We need to equal things out; therefore, give us a ton of

power, even though in 1963 they passed the Equal Pay Act. So again and again, you see this example of the state is justified to fight this evil tyranny. That's why you have to give it all this power: because that tyranny is so great.

WOODS: What was the argument that in your personal case suddenly made you think, *Hmm, I haven't really been thinking about this in quite the right way?*

KNIGHT: As far as —

WOODS: Well, in other words, in the old days, you told me you were a pretty standard conservative, and conservatives don't say that the state is per se a problem; it's just that it's abused or there are the wrong people in charge. At what point did you say this goes way beyond abuse or the wrong people are in charge?

KNIGHT: So I was actually hit on both ends with this one. So I liked listening to Stefan Molyneux, thought he had great reasoning behind a lot of his arguments. Still does. And so he was really making the logical case, and then when something like Bradley Manning, the soldier formerly known as Bradley Manning releases "Collateral Murder," the name of the whistleblower footage, and seeing that, my mind went from, *War happens; there is collateral damage*, to, *Those innocent people were just murdered. Am I going to defend that?* And seeing it really made it real to me, and that's of course why you get — I believe Anthony Gregory cited Barack Obama having gone after more whistleblowers than all previous presidents combined. Once that's real to you and you see it, then it just strikes this motivation in you and that's what really made me switch on something like foreign policy.

With things like taxation or regulation or — here's a great example. I was a conservative and I'm listening to Ron Paul, and in the debates, they said, "Should there be a minimum wage?" And he basically said no. And I said, *All right, forget these people. They're lunatics. They don't even believe in a minimum wage.* I then came across an article that just came out and said the minimum wage hurts the people with the fewest amount of skills, the least amount of experience. It also hurts smaller businesses that can't afford to comply with regulations along with the minimum wage, helping bigger business. It gives consumers less choice now that there's fewer businesses. It gives employees less choice, makes the markets less competitive. And the real reason we're against the minimum wage: it's immoral to force people to contract a certain way when they're voluntarily engaging in an exchange.

So it was the logical arguments for economics, holding people to the same standards. If I don't have the right to tax, I don't have the right to vote for John McCain to issue taxes on my behalf. And really seeing the atrocities of U.S. foreign intervention.

WOODS: Wow, geez, and to have this all figured out by your age, man, I would have killed for that. Took me a long time to put all those pieces together. I'd get one piece, and then I'd lose another piece, and then I'd get that piece back, and then the first one — but I would say, in my defense, I didn't have the Internet in my day. I had to go back and read physical magazines. I had to go to the library and order books through interlibrary loan. Oh, geez, you young whipper snappers. But good, I'm glad. I'm glad the thing is getting out there.

So have you had any response to your video?

KNIGHT: You know what? I've gotten very good responses, the main criticism being that it is very long. Also some voluntarists have said — Well, first of all, to address the long part, yes, it is long, but the goal is to give you one day of anarchocapitalist schooling to combat the 12 years of statism that we get. So that has been a criticism, but that is the foundation and purpose of the movie. A lot of people have really liked it, and maybe the only ones who direct message me are the ones who are my friends who are going to say it's good anyways. But I really put a lot of thought into this. I really feel like it's valuable. I got guys like Adam Kokesh doing man-on-the-street interviews. So yeah, overall, it's been very positive. I think I'm at like 2,000 views right now, but either way, I'm very happy with the response overall.

WOODS: Yeah, it needed to be done. It needed to be done. And by the way, those man-on-the-street interviews are really Adam at his best, if you ask me. He just lets people talk and then let's see where their answers wind up taking them, because a lot of people are asking questions that they haven't really thought about or that haven't — In fact, I remember there was one interview he did; he was talking to a huge guy who had been in the military who had overheard Adam saying something negative about the military and he was going to go let Adam have it. And, now, Adam's a big guy, but this guy was like two Adams if I remember correctly, and Adam just kept his cool, just talked him through it, asked questions. And by the end, the guy said, "You know, we're cool. Yeah, it's fine. No problem with what you're saying." I'm not sure I could have done that, so you know, hats off to people who have particular skills, and man, does he have a particular skill.

What's your next project now that you've done this? Retire?

KNIGHT: [laughing] No, you know what? I was just thinking about that yesterday. The next thing I really want to work on is sort of understanding critical theory and political correctness. I think these are two very big ones. I also want to go make a documentary on just a collection of lies told to us by the mainstream media and basically government —

WOODS: Yeah, boy, why has this not been done? I mean, yeah, I'm sure you can find little examples here and there, but no systematically. This is very important. It's great.

KNIGHT: But I think a great way to sort of attack the state is to attack the high priests of statism, so showing the politicians themselves saying one thing and doing another. You can obviously find those examples in one or two, but if I put together another six-hour compilation or something about that, then it might really sink in that the belief that without these people, bad things might happen — well, as a causal result of these people, a lot of things happen. And who do you think is attracted to this sort of position of power? People come from all over the world to get a slice of this U.S. government — Madeleine Albright, Soros, Brzezinski, Kissinger. People come from all over the world to get a piece of this because they know, once they're in, they can lie to the public, do whatever they want, loot the treasury, lie about wars — Bill Kristol, what did he say? The Iraq War would last two months; it's not going to be a Vietnam? And he's verified on Twitter, still gets a slot on Bill Maher, Ellen DeGeneres smiling with George W. Bush — just mass murderers that people will forgive so long as they do it under this guise of statism. So my next project is going to be really attacking the halo of legitimacy that the state has.

WOODS: Al right, well, listen, that's such a great project and this is a great project, and I think — I want to see if it works. I want to see if you can send it to your friends, will they just — maybe they won't necessarily watch it — how many hours long is it? It's long. It's crazy long.

KNIGHT: It's 5 hours and 10 minutes.

WOODS: 5 hours and 10 minutes [laughing].

KNIGHT: But again, compared to what? An episode of *Family Guy*? Okay, it's very long. But not compared to the amount of time we spend at government schools doing busywork.

WOODS: Oh, absolutely right. No, I love that it's comparable to that. That's absolutely right. And then secondly, think about that moment when everything hit you and you decided: I have to watch every video I can on this. Well, now you don't have to scramble around looking. You've got it all there. Or when your friend writes you and says, "Okay, wait a minute. I think you might be right." Well, instead of your friend having to scrounge around YouTube, it's all there in this one convenient spot.

So it's terrific, and I love the fact that you have the — I don't mean to be condescending, but now that I'm 45 I can talk like this about youngsters — that you have the youthful exuberance and energy, because we sure need that. I want more — we need more people in their 20s that I've heard of that are out there doing important work. There are some, but we need way, way more, because we've got so many Bernie people out there. So I'm really glad that you're doing what you're doing, and I do want people to check out that video and your YouTube channel, both of which I will link to at TomWoods.com/1169. If you're not salivating at the prospect — I mean, look. Also, while you're eating lunch at work and maybe you're eating by yourself in your cubicle or something, ten minutes a day you can watch a little bit of this and you'll learn a little bit each time and you'll be able to anticipate and respond to arguments more effectively.

Anyway, I think I've sold it pretty well, so TomWoods.com/1169 is where to go for it. And Keith, thanks so much for what you've done.

KNIGHT: Tom, really appreciate your time.