



**Episode 1,431: The Mises Caucus and the Tenth Amendment Center, Teaming Up Against the Bad Guys**

**Guest: Michael Boldin & Michael Heise**

**WOODS:** Michael Heise, let's start with you. You've been doing an awful lot of work with the Mises Caucus and the Libertarian Party, and I'd like you to describe exactly what it is you've been doing, because we talked about this many an episode ago, and since that time, you've been putting in a lot of effort – but to do precisely what? And then we'll tell people all about the Mises Caucus, but for those people who are already in the know, I want them to know what's been going on and what are the new developments.

**HEISE:** Well, we had a very, very productive convention in 2018, and a lot of good came out of that. I mean, we didn't win the chair race, but our candidate, Josh Smith, got on to the Libertarian National Convention, and then we got endorsed by Ron Paul. And shortly after podcasters, such as yourself and Jason Stapleton and Pete Raymond and others, joined the Libertarian Party and cited us as the reason. But like I said, we didn't win the chair race, and we can't run an organization on being a He-Man Sarwark Haters Club. So we had to go back to the drawing board, and figure out what the best way we could utilize all these people that we brought together in and who said that they believed in what we were doing and the message that we were pushing.

So what I started doing immediately after the convention was all the grinding work of making spreadsheets and contact lists and coming up with organizational plans and workflows and roles and all that kind of thing, with the main goal being to make what's called a hybrid PAC. And we have done that now, and a hybrid PAC meaning that there is one committee, two bank accounts that serve two different distinct functions. And the one bank account operates as what's called a federal traditional PAC, and the other is a super PAC. So we launched that, and that's been a lot of work, a lot of research on getting the basics of the FEC rules; getting lawyered up; making contacts to make this a viable effort; building the grassroots to make this a viable effort, because as everybody knows, with an effort like this, we're going to have to start raising money.

**WOODS:** Right, right, right. And so you have the infrastructure in place now, even to take recurring donations.

**HEISE:** Yeah, and not only that, but I think the most exciting infrastructure that we've built that we were also doing in that timeframe is we've recruited over 40 organizers around the country to work in the various states and can carry out our mission.

**WOODS:** And so now let's get to that. How would you describe the mission of the Mises Caucus?

**HEISE:** So the mission of the Mises Caucus is a decentralized revolution. It's what everybody in the Libertarian Party says they want when you talk to them: it's a bottom-up revolution, so focusing our efforts on viable races at the local and county level, so sheriffs, judges, city councils, county commissioners, that sort of thing. And the big picture that we're looking at here is it's almost like a complimentary effort or a supplementary effort to Young Americans for Liberty. So what Young Americans for Liberty is doing is they are focusing on getting people elected to state house. And in 2018, they got 38 people elected to state house, liberty Republicans, all of them. I mean, they tried to help three Libertarians, but they didn't win. So what I see here is we project out that Young Americans for Liberty continues to grow and continues to be successful at the state level, and then we come up behind them through the LP and start to take over the local level. Then the long-term picture is you're creating a pathway for larger scale nullification efforts down the line. And nullification and decentralization, I would say, are the main political principles that we're after.

**WOODS:** All right, so that – well, you know what? I was going to bring Michael Bolton in, but Michael, hang on a minute. Just keep – you're probably doing some work while we're having this conversation. I do want to pursue this a little further. Why is the Mises Caucus necessary?

**HEISE:** Well, another thing that you'll hear from most members of the Libertarian Party, and rightfully so, is that there's no infrastructure in the party. So now as a hybrid PAC, we can provide some of that infrastructure. As we make money, we can target candidates that are principled and viable and get them to win and start to build up our bench. And that's what we need to do.

But it's also needed because, as you know, there are divisions that go back very far between the Cato and Mises side of things. And I feel that the Libertarian Party in some ways, at least nationally, has lost its way with its message and has tried to make appeals to – I don't mind making appeals to the left, but I think there's a legitimate and illegitimate way to do it. So a legitimate way to do it, in my opinion, would be leading off with ending subsidies, the wars, those sorts of things. What I would view as illegitimate is, say, identity politics. I think that's some of the most toxic elements of the left, and I feel like some elements of national have tried to appeal to those parts of the left.

So basically, I'm trying to create a space within the Libertarian Party to give voice to the Austro-libertarian position, the Ron Paul revolution. And that was a big part of my reasoning for doing this to begin with, is to kind of blow on the embers of the Ron Paul revolution, because what I observed was that, when we the 2008 and 2012 campaigns were going on, everybody was unified. We didn't have these things that we have now, where it's like, "Oh, did you come for the Republicans or the Democrats?" and everybody was on the same page. And every time you met Ron Paul supporters, it was like you met a new best friend. The environment in that time, the cohesion has been completely lost. But if we can ever recreate the positive feedback loop that Ron created by going out there and being courageous with the truth, and everybody on those debate stage is being afraid of his intelligence, if we could ever recreate that in the form of an organization as opposed to a single campaign, well, then theoretically, it never has to die, and the revolution can continue to go on until we achieve complete decentralization of the government.

**WOODS:** Well, as long as you mentioned Ron Paul, I'd like you to say a little something about when he spoke at the Mises Caucus event that was held concurrently with the Libertarian convention last year. He said some very favorable things about the Mises Caucus. Can you recall what maybe one of those might have been?

**HEISE:** Well, he said that we were the libertarian wing of the Libertarian Party, which got a good rise out of everybody.

**WOODS:** Yeah, yeah.

**HEISE:** And honestly, getting the Ron Paul endorsement is one of the great honors of my life. The joke I like to say is that my life, in a way, ended that day, because I have no choice but to make this work now. This has to work now, because it's not just about me or this group; in some ways, I almost view it as like Ron Paul's legacy, and we have to do right by it, and we have to carry on that revolution. We have to carry on that energy.

**WOODS:** Well, tell me about maybe some specific examples, just in very brief so I can bring Michael in, of the kinds of issues where you see the possibility for collaboration with the Tenth Amendment Center, and then we'll have Michael give some details for us.

**HEISE:** So to go back a little bit, like I said, there's two bank accounts, and we're going to use them to two completely different ends. So the traditional federal PAC, what we're going to use that for is to raise money and give direct financial assistance to local- and county-level candidates across the country. And the super PAC account, what we want to do with that, now, first of all, that's where our operations budget is going to come from. But politically, what we want to do with that is, in a way, emulate what Young Americans for Liberty does with what they call Operation Win at the Door, where they essentially pay the way for a bunch of students to go and support a candidate that they've picked out to knock on doors — it could be 30,000 doors three times — and this is how they've had their success. So I kind of want to emulate something like that.

But because we are focusing on local and county, I don't think it's going to make sense, because of the scale of a lot of these races, to do it for campaigns. So more than campaigns, what I want to do is get out there for issues, get people out there for ballot initiative efforts, lobbying efforts, for liberty-related causes. And we have a page on the website called Our Actions that lays out what these actions are, with sample legislation that people can look at download. And much of them, we did get from the Tenth Amendment Center. So there's people out there who are working on gold and silver legalization in one state. We supported the psilocybin initiative to decriminalize psilocybin mushrooms, psychedelic mushrooms, in Denver, Colorado. And you had the executive director, that effort on, and that passed by less than 2,000 votes, and I know for a fact that he was able to get Libertarians out knocking on doors for that effort and supporting that effort. So with that slim of a margin, you've got to think that we had an effect.

**WOODS:** Yeah, it seems quite likely. In fact, it was so slim that it was the absentee ballots that ended up deciding it. And the last I saw of it, I thought that our side lost, so I was shocked the next day to see that it had carried. So all right, let's talk — it helps that we have two Michaels here — Boldin. All right, we're recruiting you into this episode now. All right, so talk to me about stuff you guys are up to and how this dovetails with our friends at the Mises Caucus.

**BOLDIN:** Well, we're the same racist hate organization as the Southern Poverty Law Center has us listed since back in 2012.

**WOODS:** [laughing]

**BOLDIN:** We actually are celebrating our 13-year anniversary on June 25th, so we're doing the exact same thing we've always done. We want to nullify war, the drug war, surveillance, asset forfeiture, gun control, government control over health care, all that good stuff that we've been doing now for 13 years. And you've often talked about how we built all these state-level chapters, and we had really focused a lot of our energy on that years ago, but recently actually stopped doing that, because it takes an organization in and of itself to build a grassroots network of people willing to go out and do the stuff needed to get nullification efforts to pass, whether it's on a city level, a county level, a state level, or just businesses. If you look at, for example, the CBD market, it's a projected \$20 billion-a-year market for cannabidiol products: oils, foods, all this stuff. And the FDA says this is illegal to this day, so I have people telling me, like, this can't be illegal, because it's all over the place. But it's a market-based response. So it takes a lot of people willing to put in a lot of effort, educating people on doing the right thing to move forward.

So when Michael hit me up, and he's like, *Hey, man, we want to focus not just on party politics and electing politicians for the LP* – I'm not even a member of the LP. I've never voted. I tried to vote for Ron Paul back in 2008, but I got a letter from the California Secretary of State a few months later to say that it didn't count, because I supposedly wasn't on the roll. So someone like me who's never voted, who might someday in the future, but isn't a member of a party, can recognize the importance of the Libertarian Party Mises Caucus doing the organization to decentralize and resist and reject and nullify all kinds of federal acts.

Now, Michael and you, you guys were talking about this effort in Denver to decriminalize mushrooms. Well, just a few weeks later, the same thing happened in Oakland, and we can see this same kind of thing pick up steam on various other issues. So we've been working, for example, to ban the use of facial recognition surveillance. The first city to pass an ordinance to do that was San Francisco here in California. There are now efforts to do so – I can't remember the city, but there's maybe Somerville in Massachusetts. I can't think of the town in Massachusetts. There's a bill here in California legislature to ban police from putting facial recognition in body cameras. There's a bill in Michigan to do the same. And we're finding that working with a grassroots, on-the-ground network of people actually helps push some of these things over the top. You talked about Denver, and certainly I would say Libertarian Party Mises Caucus, those 2,000 votes may not have been there without the effort of another organization. So they're basically acting like a front line for some of the things we do, and then some of the things that maybe we're not even working on, to actually put things into practice and advance liberty for real; rather than just talking about it, actually get the job done.

**HEISE:** If I can add to that, so if there's one thing that the party has been somewhat successful in is there is an infrastructure of hundreds of Libertarians who are elected at the local level, and we can hand these pieces of legislation off to them if they don't know that they exist, or if they're too tied up to write something themselves or whatever. I mean, you've got to make it as easy as possible for them.

But to also add to the Denver thing, it was actually more than just psilocybin. So in Oakland, Oakland upped the ante and said we're not just going to decriminalize psilocybin; we're going to decriminalize all natural psychedelics. So that's psilocybin, that's ibogaine, that's iowaska, and dimethyltryptamine, DMT. And there's not as much as the psilocybin, but there's research for all of these to show that there's positive mental health benefits when used with therapy or for addiction and things like that. And in the aftermath of that, I just read an article the other day that there are now 80 organizations that have reached out since the passage of that ordinance in Oakland to get details and to get the language and to spread this thing. And on top of that, in my last phone call with the executive director of the psilocybin effort, he told me that he now considers himself a libertarian. So these things have ripple effects that are very important.

**WOODS:** All right, I want to jump in with a question for both of you, which has to do with what it's like to be pursuing your mission specifically in the age of Trump. Now, it's important to remember that the Tenth Amendment Center began in 2006, which is the George W. Bush days. And it was interesting during the Obama years to hear somebody progressives saying, "Oh, yeah, if you cared so much about these issues, where were you under George W. Bush?" And the answer was, "Well, I was running the Tenth Amendment Center, as a matter of fact, now that you ask." But the fact is, even though we did run into a lot of good people who came to Nullify Now events held by the Tenth Amendment Center, and we met a lot of people who were very principled, it seems to me that, now that it's Trump, they're just not that interested in this anymore.

And so in other words, challenging the federal government, they're not as interested in anymore. So what is it like, first of all, for Michael Boldin to run the Tenth Amendment Center, when — I don't want to say the natural constituency of the Tenth Amendment Center is conservatives, but constitutionalists, well, naturally, they are going to like nullification — when those people, some of them have drifted away. So first, that's a question for Michael Boldin. And then from Michael Heise, it's hard to get so-called small government conservatives on board when they feel like the Democrats have become so left wing, that they just can't afford not to vote Republican. What's it been like during this particular moment in history to be doing what you're doing? Michael Boldin first.

**BOLDIN:** For me, it's as exciting as it always has been, and I think particularly, it's because of the strategy approach that we take. We know that we're going to convince very few people to be with us on everything: to be with us to oppose the wars, to oppose gun control, to oppose marijuana prohibition, to support decriminalization, end mass surveillance. At the same time, we focus on single-issue coalitions all the time. So no matter who's in power — when Obama was in power, we found really good coalitions to nullify gun control. Now that Trump is in power, we're finding good coalitions to oppose mass surveillance or asset forfeiture. So if we continue educating people issue by issue, it doesn't matter who's in power in Washington, D.C.; you're always going to find new people who are interested in a particular single issue.

So we're actually growing, surprisingly. I thought we were going to take a big hit, and I actually have seen a lot of the people like you described, people that were very interested, just not around anymore. And if we talk about something being unconstitutional, we talk about a \$23 trillion national debt, they say, "Why aren't you with our guy?" Well, I was prepped for that from the Bush years, because any time we oppose the Patriot Act, the drug war, REAL ID Act, foreign policy, we'd hear from people, "Move to Cuba, you communist." So I'm used to this, personally, and I think it can be a shock for people coming into it, new, that

have kind of shifted from administration to administration, but we're ready for it, and we're going to continue pushing for liberty and the Constitution, no matter who's around. And I think people recognize that, after 13 years, we're pretty darn consistent with that, too.

**WOODS:** All right, Michael Heise, how do you answer this?

**HEISE:** So I would say that there's two sides of the answer, because there's almost two efforts that's going on for our organization: there's our efforts to recruit libertarians, and there's our efforts to work with outside groups. So as far as the working with libertarians, I think it's getting easier, actually, because there was a libertarian contingent that supported Trump. I wasn't one of them, but at the beginning of his presidency, he did have some positive things that were going on that maybe made you think like, *Hmm, maybe this won't be too, too, too, too bad*, like the hiring freeze, regulation reduction. But now as time is going on and the spending is out of control, he's saber-rattling with Iran, people are having to pay more because of the trade war, so I think there's some disillusionment going on within the libertarian sphere because of those things. So to that extent, I think our recruiting efforts are getting a little bit easier.

But on the other end, because we're working not just with candidates and we're working with issues, if you go to an outside group and say, "Hey, we want to work together on an issue," it creates an overlap of trust, because if you can come to the table and say, "Hey, look, we're not going to talk about economics. You're not going to convince me on that; I'm not going to convince you on that. But we're going to work here on this, say, decriminalization effort or this gun effort to maybe have your local cops banned from enforcing federal gun control laws," something like that, it takes our ideas, at least in the minds of the people that we're dealing with, it takes our ideas out of the realm of the theoretical and the fringe third party, and it puts them into practice in real life, and you start to earn trust. Because as we all know, it's one thing to win all the arguments, and God knows that libertarians are good at winning arguments, but in the real world, that has to translate to earning trust. And I think through these issue coalitions is how we how we build those bridges.

**WOODS:** All right, Michael Boldin, I want to ask you, as long as we have you here – and we haven't done a Tenth Tuesday, shame on me, in quite a while – can you bring us up to date on how the Tenth Amendment Center is doing, and more specifically, how the nullification, Tenth Amendment movement in general, in terms of state legislatures and bills and stuff, is doing?

**BOLDIN:** Tom, every Tuesday is a Tenth Tuesday at heart, right?

**WOODS:** In my heart it is, Michael.

**BOLDIN:** [laughing] Absolutely. So things are moving forward all over the place. I mean, we've covered over the years efforts to pass these right-to-try laws, and I think if you talk about what Michael, the other Michael, is saying, this bottom-up effort, the more that we focus on putting this into practice, the more we can actually get things done. So the right-to-try effort that you and I talked about a few years ago after it first passed in Arizona, for example, to legalize some experimental treatments for terminal patients, passed in over 35 states. And then eventually, Congress says, "Well, we better do this too." The same thing is happening on CBD. There are 47 states that have legalized or decriminalized CBD, even though the DEA

before and now the FDA says it's illegal. And now they're going to start saying, well, maybe we need to create an exception to the federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

I had briefly mentioned efforts to ban facial recognition surveillance. We know there are pilot programs in partnership with Amazon to implement this in Orlando, Florida, in Chicago, in New York, in D.C., and I'm not sure, maybe Detroit as well. So efforts to ban this on a local level will prevent the use of this mass warrantless surveillance tool on a city-by-city basis. And then we also see a number of localities in Illinois and Colorado and Oregon and elsewhere trying to take a very local effort to nullify gun control on both the state and federal level, basically saying we're going to create a gun rights sanctuary. I think there's a lot of work to be done in that area.

And so when Michael called and said, "Look, man, we want to put troops on the ground and actually do organizing," I think that's where kind of the symbiotic nature between the two organizations really kind of comes to a head, because we can talk about the philosophy, we can send out email alerts and say, "This is what you need to do to get it passed," but when it gets down to actually knocking on doors, talking to your neighbors, going to visit legislators, city council people, things like that, without the local organization to get that done, it doesn't really happen. So we worked for years, for example, to remove taxes, use taxes on gold and silver, that were a roadblock to using it as money in Arizona. But until there was Ron Paul supporting it personally and his campaign for liberty on the ground doing the organizing, it got vetoed or it got killed three, four years in a row. But once you get the local organization, then you can actually get it passed. And that's what I see as great potential for working with LPMC on these various issues, is actually pushing things from the theory, from the idea to over the top, far more often than what we've been able to do in the past.

**HEISE:** Yeah –

**WOODS:** Michael Heise, yeah.

**HEISE:** So for example, I'm trying to lead by example here where I live. I live in Norristown, Pennsylvania, and here, 70% of the voting population is Democrat. Every single member of the municipal board is Democrat. So I'm going to have more luck getting my foot in the door with issues of overlap with the left. So what I've done is I've taken the – so here in Pennsylvania, as far as marijuana, we have a medical program, but both houses are controlled by Republicans and not a single one will vote for legalization. So what's been done is there's been decriminalization efforts all over the state. So like the capital is decriminalized, Philadelphia's decriminalized, U. Penn is decriminalized.

And so I'm trying to take action here at home and take – I took the decriminalization effort in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, which was the least restrictive ordinance that I could find, and took that language and repurposed it from "city of Lancaster" to "municipality of Norristown," and then I just started going to city council meetings. And I got incredibly lucky that I brought it up to the chief of police, who attends the meetings, and said, "Hey, what's the state of decriminalization around here?" And he immediately got into it, you know, "I don't know, but it's time. We've got to stop doing this to people. No one's done the work, but if somebody were to do the work, I would support it." And so that gave me a very clear path to where I started following up with the board in emails and attending the meetings. I spoke to it on two occasions. And now it looks like they're actually going to add language to expunge people's records that are charged with marijuana-related offenses here in Norristown, which would

make it the best decriminalization ordinance in the entire state. So I mean, you never know what could happen until you get out there.

**WOODS:** That is really great to hear. Okay, that's — Michael is a doer. And when I say "Michael," I mean both of you, right? I don't want to single anybody out.

**HEISE:** [laughing] Michaels.

**WOODS:** Right. You guys are both doers. I mean, there was no Tenth Amendment Center until Michael Boldin came along, and there was no —

**BOLDIN:** You know, Tom —

**WOODS:** Yeah, go ahead.

**BOLDIN:** 'm sorry, and I know I've mentioned this when you and I have talked before, but really, this is implementing Hoppe's strategy that he mentioned in his great speech back in 1997 for me Mises in Southern California. He basically said, how to fight the modern state, you have to think of the status quo. What are we facing right now? We're not going to go from point A to a libertarian or an ancap paradise in one step. So he said at the time in '97 — and I think his advice strategically is just as brilliant now as it was then. He said: work with localities and stop enforcing each and every federal law, because "without local enforcement" — and this is Hoppe's words — "without local enforcement by compliant local authorities, the will of the central government is not much more than hot air." To me, that strikes out more than anything. So activism on a local level, what Michael was talking about, what we're doing here and even on a state level too, this is the path to liberty strategically, and we just need to implement it on a wider scale, I think.

**HEISE:** The great irony in that is that Hoppe is somewhat of a controversial figure in some LP circles. But like I said earlier, this is what everybody wants. Everybody wants the Hoppe strategy, but I guess people don't attribute it to him. Another thing that Hoppe said would be a good measure to take — and I agree, so if there's anybody out there that has a sample legislation for this, please email it to [LPMisesCaucus@gmail.com](mailto:LPMisesCaucus@gmail.com) — but passing an ordinance so that anybody in your area that is paid for by taxes should not have the right to vote on what happens with those taxes. Now, you're not going to pass that in every single town, but I'll bet you there's some conservative- or constitutional-conservative-leaning areas where you could.

**WOODS:** Yeah, yeah, maybe so. That's fairly hardcore stuff. All right, let's get some websites. [TenthAmendmentCenter.com](http://TenthAmendmentCenter.com) for Michael Boldin, which I support myself, and I can't endorse more strongly.

**BOLDIN:** Thank you, Tom.

**WOODS:** And then the Mises Caucus, what is your website, Michael Heise?

**HEISE:** So we have [LPMisesCaucus.com](http://LPMisesCaucus.com).

**WOODS:** Which, let me just spell that out: [LPMisesCaucus.com](http://LPMisesCaucus.com). Okay.

**HEISE:** And we're using that to produce content and build up our email list. And there's several resources there. I would advise people to go to the Our Actions page to see what all actions we're taking. If you're interested in joining, we also have another page called The Beginner's Guide to the LP, which if you're new to party politics, you've never been politically active, there's going to be a lot of good information there to make it seem a little less daunting. And then lastly, I would say, MisesPAC.com. That's the hybrid PAC that we've launched, and that's where all of our efforts to support candidates and support the issues are. So we're going to need as many people as possible to go there. You can start a recurring donation for as little as \$5 a month.

**WOODS:** All right, so I'm going to have those links up at [TomWoods.com/1431](http://TomWoods.com/1431). I endorse both of these men and what they're up to 100%, so if that's a good thing for people listening, then go ahead and support them. And I'm always glad to have a chance to catch up with them and see what they've been doing.

I have a friend who says something interesting about the kind of people he enjoys getting to know, the kind of people he wants to have as friends. Because there are billions of people in the world, but which are the types of people you want to have as friends? And he says, I want to have as my friends the kind of person who, if I haven't seen that person for two or three months, and I say, "What have you been up to?" the person's been up to something. The person has done something. There's something new in that person's life since I last talked to them. The sort of person I'm not interested in, it's just the same damn thing, over and over and over, usually laced with complaints. I have no interest in that. And the two Michaels, they are the sorts of people I like to have as friends, because they are never standing still. It is always something new. So best of luck to both you guys. Congratulations on the fruits of your hard work, and I hope people will support both of you.

**BOLDIN:** Tom, you rule. Thank you so much.

**HEISE:** Very much appreciated, Tom. That means a lot. And if I could make a closing statement, I again have to appeal to the Ron Paul revolution. And so anybody who's familiar with Mises and his writings, our tagline, "Take human action," action being purposeful behavior. That's what we have to do as libertarians, because our freedoms are our responsibilities, and we can't shove that off to anybody else, and we can't let the fact that what we think and know isn't popular stop us, because what we believe in is right and true and it's worth fighting for, and we have to fight for it. So we have to keep that spirit alive. We have to keep that positive feedback loop alive, or else there's going to be nothing standing in the way of the state, and who knows how far that could go?

**WOODS:** All right, with that, thank you, gentlemen, and we'll talk again soon.