



Episode 1,473: Are People Naturally Libertarian? and Other Questions With the LP's Executive Director

Guest: Dan Fishman

WOODS: So you've just become executive director of the Libertarian Party. Before that, you were in an interesting race in Massachusetts, where you got major endorsements, including from the *Boston Globe*, because the nature of the office you were seeking made it seem sensible that even regular people might vote for a libertarian.

FISHMAN: Yep, I was running for state auditor in Massachusetts in 2018. And my campaign slogan was, "Why would you elect a Republican or a Democrat to audit Republicans and Democrats?"

WOODS: Makes sense to me.

FISHMAN: Yeah, it resonated with a lot of people. We had a television ad that was voted best ad in the political cycle in Massachusetts, where we start off with a tight zoom on a person's chest and it says "Number 1 Colts fan." And then it zooms out, and that person is putting on a referee's jersey, and then they walk out onto Foxboro, and they pick up a football and they say, "Stop the game. These balls are under inflated." And I walk out and I say, "That's not right. Republicans and Democrats have been playing political football with our taxpayers' money, and the referee is supposed to be the auditor, and the referee shouldn't be wearing a jersey of one of the two teams." So that resonated. I should point out to some of your listeners that, in Massachusetts, we think differently about Tom Brady than everybody else does. We're convinced that he wasn't cheating, and the balls were fully inflated.

WOODS: [laughing] Right.

FISHMAN: But in Massachusetts, that went over very well. But a week before the election, I was speaking to League of Women Voters in Wellesley, Massachusetts, which, for people who aren't from there, that's Democrat squared. But in Massachusetts, you're not going to win if you don't get Democrats to vote for you.

WOODS: Yeah.

FISHMAN: So I was speaking to everybody. I gave them the whole speech. I could tell them what I was saying was resonating with the crowd, and at the end, a woman stood up and she said, "Dan, I love everything that you had to say. I think you'd be an amazing auditor, but the party has told me that if I don't vote blue all the way down the ticket, that shows weakness in the Democratic Party, and that allows Donald Trump to build the wall. And I cannot have

that." And everybody in the room started clapping. And I thought, we are going to get crushed.

WOODS: Oh, my gosh, what a stretch.

FISHMAN: Yep.

WOODS: Yeah.

FISHMAN: Well, it really was. And the thing about it was, that actually had a lot to do with me deciding to take this job. I was a software engineer in Massachusetts. It's a great place to be a software engineer. I was pretty content to go back to doing what I had done. But when I heard her say that and I saw the reaction, I realized that there is the greatest marketing force ever assembled. The greatest minds in marketing are working to divide us as a people. And that's not what we're supposed to be. We're not supposed to be tribal red and blue, R and D, anything like that. The promise of our country is no more princes, no more peasants: citizens, all us working together, the idea that we are America's — I probably shouldn't say citizens united, but united together as citizens, working towards something. And the Republicans and Democrats, to me, it feels like they're deliberately trying to split us.

And seeing that happen and being in that room, where every person that I made the pitch to — I said, why would you elect a Republican or a Democrat to audit the Republicans and Democrats — and, you know, Massachusetts, we have spending problems all over the place. Everybody, Republican and Democrats, agree on that. The idea of electing an independent auditor made sense to everybody on paper, but when they got in the ballot box, what happened, right?

WOODS: R and D.

FISHMAN: Exactly right. *Boston Globe*, *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*, I have all this wonderful momentum going for me. 4.5% for a Libertarian running for auditor in the state of Massachusetts. And that's when I realized I can do more. And so I have been successful in the past as a software guy. I know how to make businesses run. I know how to get tasks done. And so when the Libertarian Party said they were hiring an executive director, I said I can do that. I can help make the party better at getting things done. And that's what we have to do.

WOODS: Let's talk a bit about your background. I've brought up in recent episodes my own moment when I became politically aware. I was probably — well, actually, I think it was when Reagan got elected and the hostages came back from Iran, because the hostage crisis was all over the place. I was eight years old in 1980, and you just couldn't escape that news item. But really, it was 1984. I watched the Republican convention in its entirety, at least what was televised, and I watched the Democratic convention in its entirety. This is not what a normal 12-year-old does, but I was very interested in this, because I thought, well, the welfare of the country is at stake here. I should be informed. I mean, I was a nerd. Let's face it.

FISHMAN: Sure [laughing].

WOODS: I know that comes as a big surprise to you. But what was your similar moment? And I wasn't a libertarian in those days, but I was interested in politics. When did that first hit you?

FISHMAN: So I had two similar experiences. So my parents are both academics. My dad's a scientist; my mom's a librarian. I grew up in a strong blue house. Just out of rebellion as much as anything else, I got really excited for the Reagan campaign in 1980. The "morning in America," you know, I remember the Iranian hostage crisis, too, and sort of feeling down about the country, and Reagan sort of restored to me that idea that liberty is the thing that redeems us, and we are the best representation of liberty. So I got really excited for Ronald Reagan. And then '82, with the rise of the Moral Majority, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, those guys, I began to feel like this is not the party for me. So although I was a small-government guy, I wasn't really a Republican anymore at that point in time.

And I became a member of the Libertarian Party, but where I became active was 2011, Barack Obama signs the National Defense Authorization Act that essentially suspends habeas corpus for a little while. It says that under suspicion of terrorism, the police can come and take you downtown, hold you without right to a speedy trial, without the right to consult to an attorney, just ask you a few questions.

And that spoke to my personal history. I'm second generation American. My family came over from Russia to the North Shore of Massachusetts, specifically because my great grandmother — my grandmother was one of nine daughters. She came home with her mom one day in the Ukraine, and their father was gone. They asked neighbors what happened. They said the police came and took him away. They went down to the police station. They said, "Where's our husband? Where's our father?" No idea. The police said, yeah, we don't know where he is. He's gone. And they never saw him again. And that made my great grandmother say, we've got to get out of here. We've got to go to a country where you are protected, where you have equal protection under the law, where the police can't take you away just for no reason, where there has to be probable cause, where there is a rule of law. And so they came here.

And so when the president, Obama at the time, suspended that, that spoke to my personal history. And I said, I have to do more. And so I ended up running for Congress in 2012. It was a fascinating race. Massachusetts politics is different from everywhere else. The Republican I ran against is an out, married, gay man who is pro-choice. The Democrat, John Tierney, you might remember him, he was eight-term Democrat. His wife had gone to jail for money laundering, which is a badge of honor in Massachusetts. And so I got to be in the debate with those guys. And everywhere I went afterwards, people came up and said, "Oh, yeah, you were the best guy in the debate. You were smarter." And I think that, really, the bar is not that high when you're competing with professional politicians, to be better informed about the issues that address you and me and our individual liberties. So that was sort of the beginning of it.

And then I thought I would go away. I thought I'd run and I'd talked about my issue. But then in my town of Beverly, Massachusetts, there's a small college there, and a couple of kids from the college, using really good fake IDs, came into the town of Beverly and bought alcohol and went back and trashed the campus. And the college complained to Beverly, and the Beverly liquor board said, you know what? We're going to change the liquor laws in Beverly, and we're going to say that, in order to buy alcohol in Beverly, you have to have a Massachusetts state driver's license or your passport. And that's it. Those are the only forms of ID we can take.

At the time, Beverly had I think 15 liquor licenses. And so a friend of mine who owned a restaurant, he's like, "Dan, I had to turn away a serviceman in uniform with his military ID, because the town has said that I can't accept that as a valid form of identification. He had his

Virginia state driver's license, he had his military ID, but that's not right. He's like, "Can you help me?" I'm like, well, can't you complain to the liquor board? He's like, there's only 15 liquor licenses. If I complain, if I get in trouble with the liquor board, it's not going to make a difference.

So I ended up running for city council on that one issue. And I was never going to win a city council race. City council is about, you know, do your kids play with my kids? Do we go to PTA meetings together? Did you grow up in the town? Which, I did not. I moved to Beverly in 2003. So I wasn't going to win, but just talking about the issue really changed things. And in fact, three months into my campaign, where I got some press because I'd run for Congress and I talked about this law, they changed the law, just because they were tired of all the complaints and the bad press they were getting about it. So I began to realize there is power in running good campaigns. Even if you don't win, when you start talking about the issues, we change the way government works.

And I believe the Libertarian Party has a critical role to play at this point in time, because you see the expansion of the power of government. And this most recent ending of the spending caps, it's horrifying to me. The idea that we're going to have this unlimited accumulation of debt for a short period of time, they thought about this in the beginning. The founders thought about it, and they said, you know, the debt can't be challenged, but they also said, you know what? We need to have a ceiling on the debt so that we're not going to keep borrowing money in perpetuity. And what's happened? The debt ceiling keeps getting raised and keeps getting raised and keeps getting raised. For me, that is the greatest threat to our personal liberty right now. Gary Johnson, one of his quotes that I really liked was: we're being kept in a state of perpetual debt and unending war to justify increases in the power of government.

And it continues to happen, and so anything I can do at this point in time to try to especially fight the debt – that's one of my biggest issues, one of the party's biggest issues – I want to do that. That's how I came here. So that's a long way to answer what was my come-to-libertarianism moment, but that was essentially it, it started in 2012, and I've just increased in activity since then.

WOODS: Can you just tell me what the difference is between the role of the executive director of the party and the chairman of the Libertarian National Committee?

FISHMAN: I like to say that the chair is the head of the party, the LNC is the heart of the party, and I'm the legs. I'm the one who makes sure that we can get from point A to point B in a corporate environment, which is more sort of where I'm coming from. You would call me a chief operating officer. I'm the guy who makes sure that the bills get paid. I make sure that membership gets taken care of. As an example, one of the things I did was that I called you, and you were gracious enough to renew your membership in the Libertarian Party, and I'm very appreciative of that. But that's the sort of thing that I do, is I make sure membership's up to date. I make sure the website is running. I make sure the mechanics of the party, the business side of the party, that's what gets done. And in doing that, obviously I'm involved in a lot of the policy stuff that happens, but the LNC is our governing body, and the chair is the head of the LNC.

WOODS: Okay, got it. So you're not a guy, let's say, who's formulating strategy or message?

FISHMAN: Yeah, so certainly in terms of messaging and stuff like that, I am involved at the highest level, in that I am the guy who knows what our capabilities are. And the LNC, we're a collaborative effort. I mean, pretty much anytime you get a group of libertarians together, we're going to be sort of collaborative in terms of how we do things. And so at the last LNC meeting in Austin, we talked about things going forward in the future, what we're trying to do. We have this campaign that's going on right now; we have we have three individual issue-based campaigns: one about the national debt that I talked about — and we put up a website for that, 22trillion.org. Sadly, when we did that, I realized I should probably by 23trillion.org and 24- and 25-trillion.org, as well. But so we put that up. We put up America at Peace. And we have another single issue, that we're promoting, tariffs are taxes that Americans pay.

So the LNC consults with me saying, this is some of the stuff that we want to do; I say, these are the things that I think are in our capability right now. The LNC can say, we'd like to have the capability to do this, that, or the other thing, and I tell them how we can get that done.

And then in general, in terms of saying, this is what our platform position is, I have nothing to do with that. The platform is written by the delegates in terms of what are the messages that get sent out, although I control the social media team, and everything that gets posted originates through here. There's a group that's called the APRC that is run by the LNC that approves all of our communications. So I am involved in some of the formulation of strategy. But 80% of my job is mechanics, and 20% is trying to plan what we're going to do for the future. And in general, the LNC is my boss. The LNC is my direct boss, and then the chair is the person who hired me. So I report back to them in terms of all the stuff that we're doing. I'm the guy who executes everything.

WOODS: Talk to me about this America at Peace initiative.

FISHMAN: So one of the big things about it is that we've been for a long time talking about the idea of the peace dividend. Ever since the end of the Cold War, I remember we started talking about it. And the fact of the matter is, is that we haven't seen it. We are spending such an enormous amount of money in bases overseas, right? We still have this enormous base in Germany, through which we contribute billions of dollars directly into the German economy. I don't think that that's something that we should be doing at this point in time. I mean, I'm against all unnecessary federal spending, but in particular, in the case of the military, where it's essentially an expansion of force, you know, why do we have military bases abroad? We have military bases abroad, as an understood threat, that we have capacity to act if we're angered. I don't like that message. I especially don't like the money that we're spending behind that.

And finally, the draft is still legal the way that it stands right now. We haven't activated the draft in a while, but the president with an executive order could fire up the draft again. And I can think of no greater imposition on your liberty that the government could impose than to say, you know what? We're going to war with Iran, and all you guys who registered with Selective Service, which people still have to do, we're firing up the draft. And if your number comes up, we're going to draft you into the Army, and we're going to send you to Iran or wherever there's a conflict going on. That is the greatest violation that I can think of your personal liberty. I don't want to see us engaging in that sort of thing anymore. So I'd rather that we talk about dialing down what we do.

And like Gary Johnson said, I'm in favor of defense. I don't believe that a base in Germany makes us any safer. I don't believe that bases in Japan or other places really do anything to protect Americans. The thing that's authorized by the Constitution, the thing that makes sense is the idea that we defend ourselves. That's what we should be doing. The idea that we are protecting other countries in the world and allowing them to not have to spend on their own safety, that doesn't make any sense to me. And so AmericanAtPeace.com is the website behind that.

And we're trying to get single-issue people there, and we think that there's an intersectionality there. You're a little bit younger than me, but you probably remember the hippie generation, the really antiwar people. We want to get those people involved in what's happening right now, because the justification of a lot of the excesses of the powers of government have to do with this idea that we are at war. And we're not at war right now. And we use the terminology war to justify all sorts of excesses in what we do in terms of the government.

And so America at Peace is meant to say, it's time for us to stop this. It's time for us to stop sort of the casual connection between the military industrial complex — and that phrase is overused, but you look at a lot of the stuff that we do in terms of the way our foreign policy is driven, if the Saudis didn't have the capacity to pay us, would we be great friends with them? Is there anything about their regime that we think, oh, yeah, they're real natural allies of America? They're liberty guys. Or is it the fact that they're able to spend \$62 billion and buy weapons from some of our biggest companies that gave huge donations to Congresspeople across the way? Recognizing that part of it, recognizing the fact that we shouldn't be involved in that sort of thing, that's what America at Peace is about. It's saying it's time that our relationship with the world not be predicated on the idea that A) we are the policeman of the world, B) we are going to go out there and take what we think should be ours. That's not what most Americans think, and it's time that the American government reflect that.

WOODS: Let's talk for a minute about 22trillion.org, which is another site. Now right now, obviously, that's about the debt, the national debt. Right now, this is a squeeze page to collect email addresses and keep people in the loop on this issue. Do you have any further ambitions for the site?

FISHMAN: We do, very much so. One of the things that I'm doing, coming in as a software guy, is I'm very much into A/B testing. I want to find out what messaging works, what appeals to people. 22 Trillion has really resonated with people, and so that's the way that we want to talk to people about the debt. And we know that based on the first part, where we put this site up, people came in and a lot of people are signing up on it. So we are going to expand this. It's going to become an issues-based page. And we mean it to be nondenominational, because you can find writers on both sides who recognize the fact that the debt is a real threat to the American way of life. So I want to start putting up articles talking about how the debt makes a difference.

There was a wonderful article on NPR, who I certainly don't think of a bastion of libertarian thought, but they talked about the fact that we spend \$500 billion dollars a year in interest on the debt, and we spend \$50 billion a year on maintaining the interstate highway system. Okay, you think about all the federal construction that you see, and that's one-tenth of interest on the debt. And right, we don't have a balanced budget, so the debt's going to go up, so interest on the debt is going to go up. The projection that I've seen is that in four

years, interest on the debt is going to be more than we spend on military, and in eight years, it's going to be more than we spend on entitlements, on Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, etc. That's colossal.

The idea that we have this enormous amount of debt and that the only way we can justify what's going to happen, how we can pay for that debt, is they're going to have to make changes in tax law. Like I don't know if you saw the changes that they're proposing over the IRAs. It used to be that IRAs was something that you could put retirement money into it, and you could pass it on to your children, and then they would have the benefit of getting that money tax-free out of the IRA. They could stretch it out. They just proposed a big change to the law in the IRA that says, when you pass an IRA on to your children, they have to take all the money out in ten years, which means that's going to be a big tax burden. There's going to be a lot more taxes on it. They're doing that because they're going to need more money, because they haven't balanced the budget, because we have this growing interest. It's exactly the thing that we're worried about, that expansion of debt leads to expansion of government.

And so 22trillion.org is the first site that we put out there to say, is this the message that resonates with people when we talk about the debt? And the answer is, yes, it is. So the next step is we're going to start blowing that up into a full-fledged site, where we're going to talk about the debt, inform people. But a lot of people, when we talk about the debt, they don't realize how big it is. They don't realize how long it's been since we have actually had a balanced budget. And they really don't understand how much different the debt is now than 100 years ago. And I've heard you talk about it at length on the show. You're very aware, but a lot of people don't realize how different the debt is now and just 50 years ago. You look at the debt that we had now and you look at the spending that really started, really under the Reagan administration, but then has just bloomed since then, and now, 22 trillion, I wish I could say that I thought we would be successful before we get to 23trillion.org. But when that time comes, we're going to put that site online too.

And hopefully, we can get some people thinking about the fact — we used to talk about the fact that we would send \$1 in taxes to Washington and only get 90 cents back. We didn't realize how good we had it, because now we send \$1 to Washington, we get a buck-25 back in services, but that extra 25 cents is going to be paid for by our children and our grandchildren, and they have to pay interest on that. That's terrible. At no point in time does it make sense to anybody that I'm going to borrow money so that my children have to pay off my lifestyle right now. That's just common sense.

Getting the debt under control is a simple thing to do, and if we could do a very simple thing — you know, right now, the way the government does their budgeting, if you don't have a 5% increase every year, they consider that a cut for your department. That's crazy. I don't think about that in my house. I don't think that, oh, if I didn't get a 5% raise, that I've had a salary cut. I think my salary stayed the same that time. We need to find a way to get government to think about the way it spends money the way you and I think about spending money. Balance our books. Don't buy things that we can't afford. Don't assume that we're going to be able to afford things in the future that don't make any sense. Just common-sense rationality.

The problem is common sense requires common people, and we have this political class right now that's built on spending. Turning that off, and this is where the Libertarian Party comes in. Every time you vote for a Libertarian candidate, we represent — or every time you see a

Libertarian candidate running, they represent a very simple idea: government shouldn't be spending this much money.

WOODS: Let me ask you a question that I think the answer indirectly influences what you might think about the role of the Libertarian Party. So do you think Americans, or at least a substantial number of Americans, are libertarians without yet knowing it, like they're inchoate libertarians and it hasn't been drawn out of them? Or do you think that Americans, by and large, are resolutely non- or even anti-libertarian?

FISHMAN: Oh, I think that, without any question, we are libertarian. There's a libertarian book that I recommend that a lot of people haven't read called *Crazy Angry Libertarian* by a guy in Maine named Jim Bouchard. And in it he says, people don't become libertarian. You don't convert people to libertarianism. They discover that they've always been libertarian, and they didn't have the vocabulary to express it. I truly believe that's what most people are.

When we talk about the impositions that government puts on us, we have a — so here's a word that I want to steal back from the Democrats. They use intersectionality. They don't get the right to use that word, because they don't really have intersection with everybody. But libertarians? We do. Every person in the United States has had a situation where they think that's ridiculous that there's a law that does this or that the government has done that. If I get a speeding ticket for going 70 miles an hour when there's nobody else on the road, I'm not hurting anybody at that point in time. What's the point of that? That's just making money for the government. Or in Boston right now, there's a 25% tax on every Uber ride to modernize the taxi fleet, right? When has the new industry ever had to pay to modernize the old industry? That sort of thing, that's a libertarian concept, and everybody understands that.

The nice thing about the United States is that we all understand that our birthright is freedom. The Constitution was a novel document when it suggested that your rights are not given to you by the government. But in fact, the Bill of Rights says specifically government doesn't grant you your rights. It says "shall not infringe," "shall make no laws," you "shall be free from," all sorts of language that implies that your rights are — Jefferson had it right — inalienable. They are your rights. That's the thing that Americans understand, is that we have rights that belong to us. They're not granted to us by the government.

And when you wake people up to the idea, say, look, your rights are being impinged upon, that the government is making this law that restricts what you can do, sometimes people are comfortable. And one of the big difficulties we have is a lot of times, libertarians have in the past said, we want you to be free. That message doesn't necessarily resonate with Americans, because a lot of Americans will say, I am free.

But one of the campaigns that we're working on right now is this idea: you own yourself. And when we talk about that, we talk about self-ownership, we can ask people questions and say, do you really own yourself? One of the classic things that we can do is say, do you own yourself? Do you get to choose the medication that you want to take, or does the government get to control what medication you're allowed to take? Do you own yourself? If you go out and work, do you get to keep all the money that you earned, or does the government get to take some of that money that you earned? Do you own yourself? Do you get to choose the time and place of your death? Can you choose a death with dignity, or does the government actually get to control how long you have to live with terminal pain, how long you have to deal with an excruciating, agonizing end?

The question is: do you own yourself? And when we talk to people about that, in the beginning, they say yes. And we say, really? Can you do this? Can you do that? And people recognize the fact that there are things about our government right now, where you don't own yourself. The government owns you, and they own what you can do. And we think that if we talk about that, that's where people wake up to the fact that, yeah, we were really are all libertarians.

WOODS: Well, I'd love to believe that, and I think that there's something to it. Like for instance, when I used to be a college professor, I did not propagandize the students, because I always hated that when people do that to me. But if they asked me for my opinion, I would give it to them because they asked. Or if they came to my office, I would speak very frankly to them. And I had many people who looked at the world a different way, because for the first time, somebody had given them an alternative. It was the first time they'd ever been exposed to it. So if they had been exposed to it multiple times over the course of their lives, they may well already have been there, been at the same intellectual place that I was. So there is a part of me that agrees with you, because I've seen it. I've seen it in my own life.

And then on the other hand, I see how many Americans go for such destructive behavior and destructive policy, and it's very, very demoralizing. And it's hard for me to continue believing that secretly, deep down, I just need to pull out what's good. Maybe there's just too much bad in there. And I know obviously you're with a political party, you can't go around saying, "You people are all bunch of rotten jerks." You know, it's not a winning message.

FISHMAN: [laughing] Well, it's not a winning message, and I recognize the fact too, that in academia — so my second degree was in computer science. I did it at UMass Boston. And they made me take an anthropology course, and my professor was just a flat-out Marxist. And he went off on a couple things about how it was a human requirement for the government to this, that, and the other thing. And I kept objecting, and I was going back for a second bachelor's degree, so I was older than the average student. And at one point he said to me, he's like, "Look, Dan, I tell you what. If you don't come back to class anymore, and you don't keep raising these points and arguing with me, I'll give you a B+." And at the time, I wasn't politically involved, I was just trying to get a computer science degree, and so I took that. But I recognize the fact that there is an active force out there that is working to educate us against liberty.

So at one point in time, when I was teaching, I was working at a small school in Liberty — my first degree's in education. I was a special education teacher. And we had students come in who had been in a cult, and we had a cult deprogrammer come in and talk to us. And he said, you guys don't understand. These guys have been preconditioned against everything you're going to say. Let me give you this example:

Imagine that there's an arsonist, and what he likes to do is he likes to start a fire with people inside the building. So what he does is he dresses up like a police officer, and he knocks on the door, says, "Excuse me, I want to let you know that there's a sniper in the area, and if you come out of your house, he's going to shoot you. So please stay in your house, and be aware that he has a confederate in the area who might try to trick you into coming out of your house. Please stay in your house until another police officer comes and gives you the all clear." And then he goes around behind the house and he starts a fire.

Now, if you see that happening, how do you get that person to come out of the house? If you knock on the door and say, "Come on, get out of the house. Get out of the house. It's on fire," they're not going to come out of the house, because they've been conditioned against that. If you try to pull them out of the house, they're going to fight you. They're going to use force to resist you. So what you have to do is you have to say, "Excuse me, I was walking through the neighborhood, and I smell something. Do you do you smell something? I'm not sure what it is. Maybe it smells like smoke." And they're like, "Oh, maybe I do smell smoke." And you say, "And behind your house, there's this thing, and it's bright and it's hot and I touched it and it burned me, but I don't know what it is. Can you can you look at that?" And they'll go, "Oh, my God, the house is on fire," and then they'll come out. It's only by showing them how bad the problem is that you can overcome that conditioning.

And the Republicans and the Democrats have been burning down our collective house for the last hundred years. And they have been conditioning the electorate to not believe the simple fact that the house is on fire. So we have to do that. And we can't struggle. This is where we can't give in. We can't give up the fight that liberty is our birthright, and if we can just get that message, if we can get everybody to recognize that the house is on fire, we can save it.

And for me, I don't want to sound like I'm evangelizing, but I guess I am. What we have here is so special, this country. So I'm a person who, I had a weird background. My dad's a scientist, my mom's a librarian, and I grew up playing Dungeons and Dragons, but I was a good athlete, and so I played lacrosse in college. And then, you know, I went on to become a teacher, but then a computer scientist. I'm freaky in my own way. We're all freaky in our own way. We have something about us that is unique to us. Recognizing the fact that, in this country, we get to do what we want, we get to have the behaviors — and as much as I complain about some of the restrictions that are on there, we are dominantly the freest country. But you know what? I don't want freest. I want free, and I think that's a good aspiration for all of us.

WOODS: Well, with that, we'll wrap up for today. Of course, LP.org would be the website I guess we'd want to send people to.

FISHMAN: Yep, LP.org and LP.org/join. The one thing I'll tell people is that you can become a member of the National Libertarian Party without changing your voter registration or anything else. You can support us and help us be the party of opposition, because whether it's Republicans or Democrats in the White House or the Congress, we're always the one that opposes the expansion of government. And one of the weirdest things that's been happening this cycle is a lot of Democrats have been coming to us and saying, I'm so glad you guys have already dug out these fox holes to oppose the expansion of government. And we say, well, you know, we dug these foxholes out during the Obama administration. They're like, that's okay. We're just here to help you resist the expansion of government. There is a real role for the Libertarian Party as the party of opposition, and people who want to come and help us do that — you don't have to agree with us on everything, but at least to resist the expansion of the power of government, LP.org/join is the easiest way to get in that.

WOODS: All right well, that will also be linked to on our show notes page, TomWoods.com/1473, for Episode 1473. Well, Dan, good luck with what is not an easy task, but it sounds like you're the sort of person who's up to the challenge. And I love the campaign you ran in Massachusetts. It made perfect sense. The trouble is, as the Libertarian Party faces all over the place, you're up against entrenched forms of behavior. And they're entrenched forms of really destructive behavior, so it makes it all the more frustrating. But best of luck.

FISHMAN: Thank you, Tom. I appreciate it.