



WOODS: You know, people I've talked to say that I didn't even know there was a debate last night.

ROCKWELL: [laughing] I think we were the only people watching, in fact.

WOODS: I know. I know, honestly, especially with the impeachment stuff that's been taking up all the news, I think people just didn't hear about it. Not that they would have rushed to watch if they had, but I just — it's like the Afghanistan papers. You might think there'd be some curiosity about it, but there's no just been coverage.

ROCKWELL: Yeah.

WOODS: It's just crazy. So, all right, let's at least do a little bit of an episode here with our impressions. I copied and pasted a few passages. I got the transcript this morning from *The Washington Post*, and we'll talk about those. But does anything change for you in watching this debate in terms of relative strengths?

ROCKWELL: Well, I thought Biden had his best debate. He didn't stumble. He seemed to be much more in control of himself. And on the other hand, they didn't call on him, at least for the first part. Maybe he was barely there. So I guess that was intentional. And Amy Klobuchar was I guess the person who got the most time, and I must say I don't find her very interesting. But then Elizabeth Warren in the Drudge poll came in last, and I think that's probably correct. I mean, she's just, the more you see of her, it seems to me, the more she's just like a schoolmarm shaking her finger at you all evening. And she went after Mayor Pete because he'd held a fundraiser in a wine cave. I'm not sure what a wine cave is, but sounds interesting.

WOODS: Yeah. I would probably like to go to one. [laughing] I don't even know what it is, but it sounds good.

ROCKWELL: So yeah, he said that, you know, You're always talking about millionaires and billionaires and how terrible they are. You're a millionaire. And he said, I'm the only person on this stage who's not a millionaire. So among Democrats, I guess that saying that you don't have any money is a good thing.

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: So Andrew Yang came in first on the Drudge poll by a massive margin, and I think he did well. I mean, a lot of the stuff he says is terrible, but he always says it in an interesting and smart way. As you pointed out before, the rest of these people just seem like they're repeating talking points. He always seems like he's thinking and talking at the same time,, which the rest of them maybe can't do.

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: So you know, he's interesting, but the whole — he was interesting in the context of this debate, but I don't believe anybody — I frankly don't think anybody watched it. I mean, I'll be interested to see what the figures show, but I think that this was not a watched event. And even though Bernie again — Bernie's always Bernie. I mean, he's shouting and waving his arms, and he did go so far as to mention a forbidden word, "Palestinians." He said that he thought that the Palestinians have gotten a raw deal and that he was a proud Jew, but nevertheless, he thought that something should be done for the Palestinians. So that was

interesting. But when I say interesting, I mean interesting in the context of an extremely boring two and a half hours.

WOODS: Oh, yeah.

ROCKWELL: I mean, it was just — and I thought the moderators were terrible. The whole thing was terrible.

WOODS: Now, the point you make about Yang, which we've noted a number of times, just can't be denied. And I want to give an example of that in just a minute. But for some reason, there are people who, if I say something like I think Tulsi Gabbard, who was not in last night's debate —

ROCKWELL: Yes, afraid so.

WOODS: — makes some good points or is interesting candidate, I get people saying that I've endorsed Tulsi Gabbard, or don't I know she's not a libertarian? And it's like, these people are what Michael Malice called midwits. Like, they're not extremely stupid, but they're not bright and they don't I know that they're not bright, so they're midwits. I know Tulsi Gabbard is not a libertarian, but I can still say I think she made a good point or I'm glad she's there.

ROCKWELL: Yes.

WOODS: Well, likewise, I'm not endorsing Andrew Yang, and I think most of what he says is terrible. But I am capable, however, of saying that I think he is a thinker and I think he is trying to tease out real responses rather than just repeat talking points. And unfortunately, in this day and age, it's very hard even among libertarians to get people who are willing to say, *I disagree with so-and-so about these issues, but I like what he has to say about blah, blah, blah*. If only they could say things like that about Woods. That's all I'm asking. You don't have to like everything about me, but you could say he's half decent on some things. I can't seem to get that.

But anyway, Yang here's what — they were asking originally early on, why can't you seem to get more Americans on board with the impeachment? And they would not even try to answer that question. They were explaining why we needed the impeachment. That's not the question. Why have you failed to bring more people on board? So eventually, when it became clear that nobody was going to answer that question, then the moderators who are obviously in the tank for the Democrats, change the question to, well, what additional arguments could you offer in favor of the impeachment? Which is not what they were originally asking. They began to ask the question that the candidates had obviously decided to answer, so they just sort of switched the questions. But Yang really did answer the question, and he gave the most sensible remark, I thought, of the whole night. And so here's what he said:

"It's clear why Americans can't agree on impeachment. We're getting news from different sources, and it's making it hard for us even to agree on basic facts. Congressional approval rating, last I checked, was something like 17%, and Americans don't trust the media networks to tell them the truth.

"The media networks didn't do us any favors by missing a reason why Donald Trump became our president in the first place. If you turn on cable network news today, you would think he's our president because of some combination of Russia, racism, Facebook, Hillary Clinton, and emails all mixed together.

"But Americans all around the country know different. We blasted away 4 million manufacturing jobs that were primarily based in Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Missouri. I just left Iowa. We blasted 40,000 manufacturing jobs there. The more we act like Donald Trump is the cause of all our problems, the more Americans lose trust that we can actually see what's going on in our communities and solve these problems.

"What we have to do is stop being obsessed over impeachment, which unfortunately strikes many Americans like a ball game where you know what the score is going to be, and actually

start digging in and solving the problems that got Donald Trump elected in the first place. We have to take every opportunity to present a new positive vision for the country, a new way forward to help beat him in 2020, because make no mistake, he'll be there at the ballot box for us to defeat."

Wow. Not bad.

ROCKWELL: Well, also, he speaks in sentences and paragraphs

WOODS: He does. I was able to read that, and it sounded like an essay.

ROCKWELL: Yeah, he's very smart.

WOODS: So he has that going for him, I'll say.

ROCKWELL: And as I say, I think he got 44% of the Drudge poll as number one. And Elizabeth Warren got 4%, or actually less than 4%.

WOODS: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, so that does tell you something, but in a way it does, in the same way with Tulsi Gabbard, remind you a little bit about the Ron Paul years. He had a lot of enthusiasm, but the people who decide these things are old people who don't know how to vote in online polls, but who show up at those polling places if it's the last thing — they are going to vote for more war and more slavery if it's the last thing they do, these people. They're the ones who vote. Lew, present company excepted.

ROCKWELL: [laughing] I don't vote.

WOODS: [laughing] Yeah, I know. All right, so let's get back into this. I've got a few little specifics. First thing, though, in looking at some of these, is to remind us about one particular feature of Elizabeth Warren, which is that you just can't get an answer out of her half the time. So for example, she was asked a simple question:

"You proposed free public college tuition and student loan forgiveness for most families. Why should wealthy families be able to send their kids to public college for free? Why not concentrate that government help on those most in need?"

And then she proceeded to give a speech about why she wanted to have her program. She never answered that question. She talked about, you know, we need education. Education is just so important. We really need to invest in it. But the question is not, is education important or not, because who would ask that question? You think a democrat would say that? *No, I think it's overrated.* So no one would ask that. They were asking specifically about this thing. No answer. And I bet if we went back and looked, I bet she probably didn't really answer half the questions she was asked.

ROCKWELL: I'm sure that's true. I mean, she's got a program she wants to discuss, always.

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: She's got 75 different programs, and it's interesting to me that still no Democrat has attacked her on her phony Indian business, nor have they attacked her on — there was a law professor from Cornell who was on Tucker Carlson the other night who said there were 50 examples of her making large amounts of money representing big corporations against their employees, including ones who were sick from job-related illnesses. And I'm not against her doing that, but seems to me that would be deadly if somebody would have mentioned that. But of course, nobody does mention it. But of course, it will be mentioned in the campaign if she were to be the nominee. I don't think she has a chance to be the nominee.

But should she be the nominee, she'd be dead because of the things — and also, of course, she's a liar. I mean, she lies about almost everything, and when she's not lying, as you say, she's not answering the question. So she's I think a very unpleasant person. And probably her best moment last night, although I didn't like it, was when they were asking both — she asked

Biden, Bernie, and Elizabeth Warren, saying, *Hey, you're so old, why should you be the nominee?* And she said, *Well, if I were the nominee, I'd be the oldest woman nominee.*

WOODS: No, she said, *I'd be the youngest woman nominee.*

ROCKWELL: Excuse, me the youngest woman.

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: So I mean, everybody laughed and applauded and so forth. But she never answered the question.

WOODS: Yeah, no, because the thing is, she's not a dumb person.

ROCKWELL: No, she's not.

WOODS: She's very a very intelligent person, so she is capable of speaking and formulating ideas, but they've all just been trained to be robots and repeat the speeches that we had you memorize in the debate prep.

ROCKWELL: And how often do we have to hear about the hundred thousand selfies that she's taken?

WOODS: Oh, for heaven's sake.

ROCKWELL: And all the stories that people have told her. Now, are we supposed to think that people are actually getting time to tell her a significant story about their troubles when she's got these vast numbers of people allegedly lining up for selfies? I mean, it's obviously a lie.

WOODS: Right, of course. How would that be possible?

ROCKWELL: No, it's another lie.

WOODS: Right, and then Joe Biden is talking about people saying, "Joe, I just lost my job. Can you help me? Joe, I need to get this medicine. Can you help me?" I mean, there's something —

ROCKWELL: Yeah, between 50 and 100 phone calls, he calls people once a week or maybe once a month and listens to their problems and then hangs up.

WOODS: Yeah. Yeah, I mean, apparently that's what's going on. *And I just say to them, "Well" — like what is he telling them? There's something deeply pathetic about that, that that you would think, Well, something has happened to me. Let me go ask a federal employee what they can do for me.* I mean, first of all, I hate to be old-fashioned about this, but there was originally the idea that the federal government was not supposed to really be where you would look to for the solution to your problems. You really weren't supposed to look to any level of government, but the last level you would look to is the federal government in Washington, D.C.?

ROCKWELL: Yes.

WOODS: Because of your broken leg or whatever it is? I mean, it would be nice if somebody would say that's screwed up. We've got our priorities all wrong, and we've got the pecking order all wrong. You know, you do have families and neighbors and local institutions that presumably can help you without sitting there waiting for the US Senate to help you with this. I mean, it's like people have become helpless or something.

ROCKWELL: Klobuchar had a recipe for solving our problems, which is to let the entire world come into this country. She said that our economy wouldn't succeed if we didn't bring in everybody who wanted to come. And is that half a million? Is that half a billion? I mean, I don't know. But she said that we want to have a more perfect union, and that's why we should bring everybody in. And I think it was Steve Sailor this morning who said the rest of that line has to do with *for our posterity's sake*, which he said you can't say that, of course, because it's racist. But again, I think the rest of them were pro-immigration, but nobody actually

talked about health care for all illegals and that sort of thing anymore. But she was saying bring everybody in.

WOODS: I'm quite certain that the feedback they got was not good on — this is going to be another — basically, we're going to increase one of the protected classes, and we're going to increase the amount of money that needs to be spent on all these public services. That's probably not going over well, but that is obviously a major part of all that.

ROCKWELL: Yes.

WOODS: I want to ask a somewhat unrelated question, but because we've, in every one of these debate episodes, had something to say about Tulsi Gabbard, we should make note of why we're not mentioning her. I assume most people will know that she declared in advance that even if she qualified for the debate, she was going to sit it out. Now, I actually don't know, in fact, by whatever metrics they're using these days, if she did quality.

ROCKWELL: No, she did not.

WOODS: She did not. But even if she had, she said she was going to sit the debate out. Do you know why, what her thinking behind that was?

ROCKWELL: Well, this is just a guess, and it's maybe not a very flattering one, but I think because she thought that she was not going to vote for impeachment, she'd be the target of the whole debate.

WOODS: Oh, that's a good point.

ROCKWELL: And so that is maybe why — she said that regardless of whether she qualified or not, she was going to be in New Hampshire and Iowa campaigning. Well, that's not a believable excuse. But my guess is, again, because she voted "present," which I think is an unfortunate vote. I mean, it seems to be she should have voted yes or no, but because they all would have wanted to kill her, including the moderators, of course.

WOODS: Right, right, right. And I mean, I wonder what's going through her mind right now, what she's been through, because she's had people accusing her, preposterously, of being a Russian asset. Why? Because she doesn't toe the US regime's line on everything?

ROCKWELL: Yeah.

WOODS: And then, of course, if she doesn't vote to get rid of Trump — or I beg your pardon, doesn't vote to doesn't vote to impeach Trump, then of course, that would be further evidence, because we all know that Trump is pushing the Russian line, even though the Trump administration policy toward Russia has been quite bellicose.

ROCKWELL: It's horrendous, horrendous.

WOODS: Yeah. So the idea that — the whole thing is just a derangement. Now, I get that the deep state, they all know this is a lie, because they're just pulling a con on the public. But the average person who has the Trump derangement syndrome really does believe this stuff. As I said, the people who are pushing it obviously don't because they have IQs higher than 50, but you do run into people who, honest to goodness, seem to believe this. So Tulsi, therefore, I mean, what she must be confronting in terms of low-IQ, knuckle-dragging responses to her positions must be impossible to navigate by now.

ROCKWELL: Must be very tough. On the other hand, Ron Paul did it, and my guess is that she's going to keep — she's not changing your position on war. And in fact, I thought it was interesting last night that Bernie actually said that the US has to immediately get out of Afghanistan.

WOODS: And he admitted that he was wrong to have voted for that war, which is something.

ROCKWELL: Yes.

WOODS: I mean, it's easy to say you were wrong to vote for the Iraq War, because that's the fashionable thing to say nowadays, but to say Barbara Lee, who cast the lone No vote, was the one who was right, well, I mean, I think that does take some — I mean, it does take some guts to say that.

ROCKWELL: Even Buttigieg said that we have to end the forever wars. I don't think he means it, although who knows?

WOODS: Who knows?

ROCKWELL: Maybe Bernie doesn't mean it either, but at least he said it.

WOODS: Yes. Yes. Yes. I had not thought of that obvious — now that you say it to me, of course that's why she chose to sit it out, because of what was obviously going to happen to her. By the way, I liked that Yang formulation, that most Americans look at the impeachment as a baseball game where the score is already determined.

ROCKWELL: [laughing] Very funny, no, and exactly correct.

WOODS: That is exactly. Of course that's what it is. It's just crazy. Now, also, the wealth tax thing that Elizabeth Warren is pushing, every time I hear her say "two cent, two-cent tax," I think of you, Lew.

ROCKWELL: The lying creep, yeah.

WOODS: Right, from a previous episode, because of course, if it were two cents, nobody would — I mean, even I probably wouldn't care [laughing]. But it's not two cents; is 2%, which is a pretty big deal.

ROCKWELL: As a start.

WOODS: Yes, as a start. And, of course, obviously what this does is inhibits capital formation, which as Mises explain, is literally the only way to improve the standard of living of all the people. Logically, there is no other way to do it. And yet she had the nerve to say in the midst of a speech about her wealth tax, "We can increase productivity in this country." Yes, we can, but by not doing what you want to do, because productivity increases come through capital accumulation, which occurs when the money to fund it is not taxed away.

ROCKWELL: That's right.

WOODS: But there's nobody really — I mean, I will say that Buttigieg, I mean, again, at least when you hear a fleeting bit of common sense on one of these, you have to appreciate it. He did say we have to be reasonable and we should listen when there are tax proposals put forward that most economists tell us will be a drag on the economy. So there was some acknowledgement by somebody that was — because they were asking Elizabeth Warren, well, don't you think you should listen to these economists who say that these taxes you're proposing are going to be bad for the economy? She goes, *Oh, they're wrong*. Oh, are they?

ROCKWELL: [laughing] Yeah.

WOODS: So you just seize wealth from people and devote it to economically arbitrary projects, and this is a net plus for you somehow?

ROCKWELL: Yeah.

WOODS: So there's that. So I didn't actually — by the time they got to the closing statements, I kind of drifted off, I'll be honest with you. So I don't know if anybody said anything noteworthy. Those must be the most canned parts of all.

ROCKWELL: Oh, yeah, I know, horrible.

WOODS: So I don't know if there was anything there that I missed.

ROCKWELL: No, you missed nothing.

WOODS: [laughing] I strongly suspected as much. Oh, gosh. So I don't even know. I mean, do you have anything left over you want to say?

ROCKWELL: Is there another one of these next year?

WOODS: [laughing] Yeah, there probably is. I feel like on these days, we should do something else. Until it becomes time for the Democrat to debate Trump and then it becomes kind of interesting again, maybe you and I will do some kind of walk down memory lane and talk about some something important in the history of libertarianism or something. Just anything other than making people endure this.

ROCKWELL: No, that'd would be fun. And by the way, I think it's very interesting and correct that Trump is saying that he's not going to go along with the Presidential Commission on Debates because he won't trust who they'd pick for the moderators, which of course is exactly right. My own view is that they ought to bring back the League of Women Voters.

WOODS: I remember that, in the '80s.

ROCKWELL: No, and you could trust them, so they tried to be objective. But this Presidential Commission, of course, would be very anti-Trump. And he's already said that he thinks he's not going to do it, so there'll have to be another organization running it. And I suppose that means, if it's not another organization, then he won't participate in the debates, and it'll just be Hillary or whomever doing their single performance.

WOODS: I just want to mention, not connected to anything really, but I was talking to David Stockman recently on this show, and then before that I found out about this actually in person with him. I had not realized that Stockman helped to train Reagan for the 1980 and 1984 debates.

ROCKWELL: That's right.

WOODS: He stood in as John Anderson, the Independent candidate, and then he stood in as both Carter and Mondale. And so he would give the strongest arguments that those people might make. And I just thought, I can't believe I know this guy so well and I can talk to him about this. And I asked him, so how did Reagan get better? Like, did he start out — He said, yeah, early on, we would do these mock debates, and I would make a point, and Reagan would say, *All right, what's the answer?* And so we would give him the answer. But by the end of the week, he knew everything. He had it absolutely down.

But then there was a bit of a scandal, because apparently somebody, unknown to this day who, managed to get their hands on a copy of the prep papers for the debate that the Carter campaign had. I can't remember if it was Carter or Mondale. I think it was Carter. And it was like 800 pages, and it was delivered anonymously to Stockman's doorstep. So I said, *Well, is there an ethical problem related to this?* And he said, *Well, look somebody gave it to me, so I looked at it.* But the interesting thing about that is I highly doubt anybody today, any of these candidates, has is an 800-page prep book.

ROCKWELL: No.

WOODS: They have five canned speeches and that's the end of it.

ROCKWELL: No, and Carter is a smart guy.

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: Whatever else you may think about him.

WOODS: Sure, sure. Okay, well listen, everybody. Check out LewRockwell.com regularly the way I do, and you'll get some great content. And then not only the Lew Rockwell blog, but you've got to go to the menu at LewRockwell.com and find the Political Theatre blog. Man, do I live for that thing. And I love reading the stuff Lew manages to find. It's always interesting

and worthwhile. So go do that. I'll link to these things at TomWoods.com/1559. And Lew, thanks again.

ROCKWELL: Tom, thank you.