



WOODS: It's been a long time, and that's partly because the world ended a few months ago, and all of a sudden, it just went to show how little people really, frankly, care about democracy in Uzbekistan or whatever. They really don't. They care about what's going on in their own backyards. But there's so much more we can talk to Scott Horton about, by the way. I heard your interview on the police with Pete Quinones. Scott Horton's got a lot up his sleeve, no doubt. But I did want to have you on to talk about some recent news, recentish, pertaining to Russia. We'll get to that in a minute. But first, you're in Austin, Texas?

HORTON: Yeah.

WOODS: Just fill us in. How is Scott Horton holding up through all the craziness?

HORTON: Well, everything's fine here. My wife has lupus, so we're being extra careful in trying not to get the germ. Let everybody else get it and let it burn itself out without us is the strategy. But I don't think we're really worried about it or anything like that, just being careful. And I was really hoping that the Texas sun would have come and beat the thing down by now, but if you look at the curve, it's sort of a slow and steady increase here, which is I guess better than people being triaged in the parking lots and so forth, but they're pretty full right now.

WOODS: Yeah.

HORTON: And hospitalization rates are up, not just positives. But still, the numbers are relatively low in Texas. It's about 3,000 dead, which is about a year worth of cars wrecks, so pretty bad.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I hear you. Well, of course, obviously this isn't the most important thing in the world, but to me, the most important thing in my world was you debating Bill Kristol in New York City. And to think that the guy had to fashion a pandemic to weasel his way out of that one.

HORTON: I know, I was thinking, I actually admit that I was breaking my rule and trolling around a little bit on Twitter. And I saw where people were accusing him, and there are a lot of people who came up with the same idea that Kristol was behind this entire pandemic just to chicken out.

WOODS: [laughing] But obviously we're only joking, but geez, if he had those kind of powers, you'd think he'd use them toward being right sometimes, predicting the future even within anywhere near a million miles of the right answer.

HORTON: Right. Well, right or wrong, he's not worried about me. That's the reality.

WOODS: And by the way, that's just the way we want it. Let's leave him not worried about Scott Horton. Before we talk about our topic today, update us on where things are with your book, because of course, you wrote the book *Fool's Errand* on the war in Afghanistan, and that initially was going to be like chapter one of a larger book, but the chapter one became a book of its own. Now you're writing that larger book about the war on terror. It's a massive undertaking, so just give us an update on it.

HORTON: Yeah, and I really owe your people especially an update on it, because it's been a year and I really hoped to have it out by the end of last year, and that didn't happen. So I'm

happy to update. And essentially, well, the story goes, you came to me in like 2015 or something and said let's write a book about the terror wars together. And I said, okay, yeah, perfect, one chapter per war and here's the outline. I think I sent you the outline in about 45 minutes. Here's what it'll be, and all this. And then I was waiting for you, and then you were busy, and so then I started to write it, and as you said, chapter two on Afghanistan ended up becoming an entire book on Afghanistan.

WOODS: That's what it is. Yeah, chapter one was the background.

HORTON: Yeah, chapter one is like Carter through Clinton.

WOODS: Right.

HORTON: But then I wanted to do the original book which is supposed to be kind of all you need to know but nothing more than that about each one of the wars, the absolute necessary part of it. And then what happened was I started making the same mistake I made with Afghanistan, where chapter one ended up becoming 87 pages long.

WOODS: [laughing] No, Scott.

HORTON: Well, that's Carter through Clinton. It's a lot of wars. I had to restore the whole part about of through cleanse a lot of words I had to restore. There's the Iranian Revolution, the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq War I, and then I had to elaborate on a couple of things.

WOODS: All right, hold on. I'm going to interrupt here. Okay, so you know how your favorite band when they split up and each one does a solo album, almost never are the solo albums as good as when the band was together, because they need that cohesion. They need that one guy to say to the other guy: nope, that's just self-indulgence, we're not doing that song. Okay, maybe this is why the Scott Horton solo album takes so damn long to come out.

HORTON: This is exactly the thing. When I was in junior high and I would doodle on the back of my homework assignments and so forth, I would always get bogged down in the details and kind of neglect the big picture, sort of like with this explanation about what happened with the book right now.

WOODS: [laughing]

HORTON: I tend to over explain a little bit. And so what happened was, when I finished chapter one, I just skipped Afghanistan. I said, well, I'll figure out what to do with Afghanistan in a minute. Let me go ahead and get to Iraq War II, and then Iraq War II, there's so much there about the neocons and their loyalty to Israel and the role that that played in lying us into war, and all the weapons of mass destruction and CIA torturing people and accusing Saddam of backing al-Qaeda and all of this stuff. And I realized I'm like 20 pages into chapter two, and I'm not even at the invasion yet; I'm just at why Richard Perle did it. And I realized that this just isn't going to work. It's not going to work.

So this was about six weeks ago, I threw out the last year's worth of work, and I went back to the original transcript of that presentation that I'd given that had served as the real rough draft of the thing. And I decided no footnotes, because that's what happens, is once I start the rabbit trail and the footnotes, it leads to whole books and 100 new assertions and 100 new footnotes I've got to hunt down and just madness. So I just decided no footnotes. It's just Scott Horton telling you, and the whole thing should be right around just 100 pages. And if you don't like it that I don't prove my claims, tough. This is just me trying to, if you'll take my word for it, hear me now, know it later when you Google it, this is what happened, this is why it is the way it is. Nice and easy, not just for my people and your people, but for them to give to their people. That's what it was supposed to be in the first place when you called me about it. That was the idea, was this was for everybody's brother-in-law kind of thing, right?

WOODS: Yeah, yeah, exactly. Now, I would maybe consider — although I don't want to say anything; it's going to make this take longer — but maybe a bibliographical essay at the end, but that's divided by chapter. So chapter one, here are the sources, so the basic gist of what I

was saying here, you can get more information there. So it's not footnotes, but it's not nothing either, so you can still feel like you have sources.

HORTON: Yeah, I don't want people to think I'm plagiarizing them or anything. I'm happy to give credit where it's due, but at some point — I mean, you saw what happened with *Fool's Errand*, where the thing turns out, it's like a PhD thesis or whatever, but it's not supposed to read that way, you know?

WOODS: Yeah, no, you don't want that. I mean, you could write that book someday if you want to when you're 87, but that's not the book the world needs right now.

HORTON: When you're just writing a book and you don't have to document every fact, it's so easy to write. I'm just blazing through, this thing.

WOODS: That's good.

HORTON: So I'm making real progress on some of it. Sorry for the delay. And I did show the 87-page chapter one to Jim Bovard, and he said, well, listen, when you're done with the short version, you need to get back to this and do the director's cut. And even if the whole thing does turn out to be 600 pages or whatever it is, at least you have it.

WOODS: Yeah, and it will be *the* definitive thing that all our people will consult. Now obviously, we want a lot of people to look at it, but you know for absolutely certain nobody else in our court is going to do it. That's just without a doubt, nobody will do it. The Scott Horton book will be *the* book that people will be looking back on forever. It'll be the iconic book. So no pressure, but that's what's going to happen.

HORTON: We'll see. But the original mission, though, was to get this out to the broadest audience possible. Nice and easy for everybody.

WOODS: Yes. Yes, yes, that's what you're doing.

HORTON: And it may be some younger people's first book about the wars, and they just go, wow, so everything they did from Carter through Reagan caused everything that came next, and none of it was any good at all, and we never had to do any of it in the first place. So there, okay.

WOODS: Yeah, I can't wait to see — I want to see you back on C-SPAN Book TV for this book.

HORTON: That'd be fun.

WOODS: Yeah, that'd be fun. All right, let's turn to this now. I want to start by talking about this claim that we've heard about Russian bounties on the heads of American troops in Afghanistan. This is being reported — now, if you look at the articles closely, as you point out, they're not actually saying we have direct evidence of this happening. It's very, very circuitous where the sources are coming from. So I want to talk about, first of all, what are they claiming? On what grounds are they claiming it? And if you think this is untrue, who stands to benefit from a story like this?

HORTON: Yeah, well, there you go. So yeah, I mean, first of all, I doubt it completely. The claims are coming from supposedly militants linked to al-Qaeda, who were interrogated by Afghan security forces, who are notorious, of course, for continuing to use torture. There was just an HRW report about that recently. And I don't know whether these guys were tortured or not, but certainly, they had every incentive to please their interrogator. And the Afghan government has every incentive in the world to try to disrupt America's negotiated exit from that war, which has been waged to prop them up in power, of course. So it's a huge conflict of interest.

And then the claim is that the Russians gave this guy some money, and then he gave the money to some Taliban guys to kill some Americans. But there are nothing but breaks at every single place in the chain. All of it is just, *well, it would be interesting if it was confirmed, and it seemed like it could be, and we don't really know what happened here or there.* And

when you add it all up, it equals zero, just like, Tom — and it's not an exact direct connection, but pretty much it's just like all of the rest of the Russiagate stories. Remember, some of the Russiagate stories were kind of side-project stories, like, *Oh, they hacked the Vermont power grid so they could freeze all the Americans in the wintertime* and this kind of thing, where it didn't have a direct connection to Trump, but it's just kind of thrown in to the whole narrative, that he's compromised by the Russians, that he defers to the Russians, and all these kinds of things. And so this is just another one of those.

And just like 100% of them, it doesn't hold up. I mean, the real question is why we're even talking about this, because as you put it, in the original stories that came out, they don't even claim it's true in the story. All they claim in the story — and this is *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post* — all they claim is that there's a rumor going around. Tom, I can confirm to you there is a rumor going around. Okay, that's the story that they had. But not that the rumor was true, just that somewhere there's an intelligence report that says this. *We are reliably informed by anonymous intelligence sources*. Uh huh.

WOODS: Let me jump in for a second. You say in an article — I'll post it on the show notes page, and that's TomWoods.com/1689 — that you can think of a plausible reason that Afghanistan itself might want to promote a story like this, but isn't there also a possibility that, I hate to sound conspiratorial, let's say, but that the deep state would like to promote this? Because it puts Trump in an impossible bind. If he's to deal with a story like this, what's he going to do other than take a harder line against Russia, which is what they want to box him into doing?

HORTON: Right, well, and so that goes to the story. So first of all, we have the thinness of the reports. And then as it develops, and we can get into more detail on this if you want, but as it develops, it turns out there really is nothing to the story at all. No reliable evidence. And well, what the hell? I'll go ahead and get to this part. The CIA, who are out front on this, they only give it moderate confidence, meaning plausible, but not confirmed. Okay, so that's it. It's an unconfirmed story about an unconfirmed intelligence report. That's all they have.

So now, to your point, well, how come they're using this to beat the president over the head then? And they're saying, oh, he's refusing to do anything about what the Russians have done to us here, when all he has is an unconfirmed report. What's he supposed to do to Russia based on an unconfirmed report? And then when you go back and look at the timeline, it turns out they first tried to come at him with this story last fall, right when they were working on signing the peace deal with the Taliban. And I'm not exactly sure the cause and effect here if there is any, but right around that time, Trump overreached and invited the Taliban and the Afghan government to Camp David, which is a huge miscalculation, and ended up with Bolton threatening to resign over it and they canceled the whole thing. And then they had to kick the can down the road till February. Well, guess what: at the very end of February, they signed the deal.

Well, just before that, they brought it up again. The CIA guys brought it up again. And this is the part of the story I've looked into the least because I care about it the least, but it really is important because it goes to show the motive of what they were doing there, that they tried to get this in front of Trump. And they ended up getting it only into the briefing materials for his briefers and for his National Security Council staff, but apparently, he was not told about these accusations. And for good reason. Again, they were unconfirmed. So what's the point in telling the president, *Uh oh, we got the Russians paying the Taliban to kill our guys, right when you're trying to sign a deal with the Taliban*, when they can't prove that it's true. They don't know that it's true. And so that's the first two times they brought it up.

And now when they brought it up, look at the forum in which they brought it up. They gave it to *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Washington Post*, the three most important newspapers in the country, all at once. And then they provided confirmation leaks and expert analysis for all the TV news networks and everything. They made a whole week

out of it, five days out of it, and better than that, turned the whole narrative to, again, Trump's treason and subversion of America's interests in favor of Russia.

And right when Donald Trump was ordering the military to look at plans or to begin drawing up plans, he didn't give them an order to carry it out, but to order them to draw plans to go ahead and get all American troops out of the country before election day, rather than by the end of next May, which is in the deal that he did sign with the Taliban. And then so once it comes out that Trump is ordering the military to try to draw plans to leave early, then this story comes out. And then those plans are immediately quashed, and they're going to pull out 4,000, but they're going to leave 4,000. And so there's, whatever, a 50% chance or so that Joe Biden will be the president, and he's already vowed to keep our troops there, and in fact, send some off to Pakistan as well, because he's stuck in 2009, he thinks.

WOODS: All right, it's just unbelievable.

HORTON: Which by the way, the military doesn't stand by this story. It's the CIA's story. So maybe the CIA is doing a favor for the military here, or maybe the military finally is ready to give up the Bagram Air Base. I think that's the biggest interest here, is they just do not want to give up Bagram. It could be that there's just a couple of CIA employees with a really good heroin cash flow connection going on and they don't want to lose it. But look, there was a story here, but they're just pretending to believe it. You know what I mean? They're running with something that is not something that is worth running with. But it's enough to make a —

WOODS: But yet, doesn't that seem like the story of kind of like the past four years? It's that some of this stuff, maybe some of it they truly believe. I think there were some people who truly believed there was something to Russiagate, but by and large, half the stuff they have to know, all right, well, we're just throwing anything against the wall to see if it sticks. Some of it has to be like that.

HORTON: Yep. Yeah, I certainly think so. First of all, I wanted to mention that the Congress, that this worked essentially, that Liz Cheney and the Democrats in the House teamed up on the Armed Services Committee to pass an amendment for the NDAA to forbid Trump from pulling out without passing the following 15 qualifications, which are total victory, or else we can't leave. And it hasn't got Nancy Pelosi and the full Democratic support in the House yet, but that's where they're going with it, where they're openly teaming up with Liz Cheney to keep us there.

And then in the Senate, Rand Paul introduced a measure saying let's get out of Afghanistan and was voted down. Only four Republicans, three or four Republicans voted with him and then about 30 Democrats, but meaning about 10 Democrats joined the Republicans then, something like that, to vote no on that. Although if Obama can start two wars without asking Congress at all, then certainly Donald Trump can end one without their permission. If they want to impeach him for pulling troops out of Afghanistan, that'd be a fun holiday. We can do that. And I think he might back down, by the way. If he's reelected, then his whole narrative that he's the guy who got us out of Afghanistan becomes much less important, and so he might just back down the day after Election Day. I wouldn't be surprised.

But one more thing, too. I'm sorry, because I'm out of order here. But there's a lady, I'm sorry, I forget how to pronounce her name, so it's hard to memorize, but it's one of the *New York Times* reporters was interviewed on MSNBC, and she admitted, she said that the funds that were being sent from Russia, regardless of whether the Taliban followed through with killing the soldiers or not, there was no report back to the GRU about casualties. The money continued to flow. So as Scott Ritter pointed out, yeah, well, then that's not a bounty then. The money was going to the Taliban, and it was not connected to the deaths of any Americans, is essentially what she's admitting there, just like they're admitting that they only had medium confidence in the story at all.

And let me explain why the Russians would be paying the Taliban. Remember, America's the ones who switched sides in the war, not them. They've been backing the guys that we've been backing for the last 10 years for 30 years, 40. These are the guys that were supporting the same ones as them. But then they see that we're finally leaving, so now they're hedging their bets, because the Taliban won. America lost the war. And so the Afghan government is not reliable for keeping real bin Ladenite radicals down. And so they're hedging their bets. And this is, frankly, the same policy that America has. Even if we're not paying the Taliban directly, we've signed a peace deal with them saying we're counting on you to keep al-Qaeda and ISIS down and out. Well, that's the same strategy as the Russians. Just like in Iraq, they called it the Awakening. Okay, we'll pay the local Sunni insurgents to kill the foreigner Sunni insurgents and keep them marginalized and out, the more bin Ladenite radicals.

And so the Russians have openly been talking with the Taliban and offering financial support for the Taliban for their effort against ISIS. And the Americans have begrudgingly accepted this. In 2017, General Nicholson tried to say, oh, yeah, they're doing this in order to hurt America and giving them weapons, and then one of his lower-down generals, under oath before the Senate, had to admit that, actually, we don't have any evidence of that, that that's true at all. So we know what Russia's entire interest in Afghanistan is, and it's, one, to support the Afghan government, and two, if they've got to support the Taliban at all, it's to protect them from the ISIS fighters, the new ISIS-K movement, which is a more radical bin-Ladenite, expansionist type of a movement, and which the Taliban represent the one and only real balance to in the region. And so that's what's really going on with Russian intervention in Afghanistan. It's not a mystery at all.

WOODS: All right, well, here's where I want to switch gears to, is I want to stay on Russia, but move away from Afghanistan and talk more generally about the US relationship with Russia. And in particular, let's say something about Trump and Russia in terms of what his actual policies have been, because the general public has been led to understand that Trump, as you know, he's just a Russian stooge and he does their bidding and this and that. And the thing is, in his heart, I think he may in fact want or have wanted to bring about some kind of reconciliation with Russia. But the way the policies have actually been carried out, if you don't listen to what he says, but you look at what the administration does, it's not obvious that the US administration is just a lackey for the Russians at all. So can you make sense of this? What has been US policy toward Russia? What has that been like over the past few years?

HORTON: Yeah. Well, I think you're onto something there, that essentially Russiagate worked. And I don't know exactly what he feels about this stuff. He used to talk about he wanted to be Ronald Reagan's special envoy to Russia back in the Soviet days to negotiate nukes and this and that, so he's kind of thought along those lines for a long time. And I think that there's what's now a much smaller and not dominant faction inside the establishment, but as represented by Henry Kissinger — you can't get more official than that — who think that we ought to befriend Russia and work with Russia in order to hem in China, in order to kind of reverse the Nixon policy of working with China to hem in the Soviet and this kind of thing, to exploit the Sino-Soviet split the other direction there.

But there are interests in America who are too bent on a cold war with Russia who won't tolerate that. But Trump did talk to Kissinger before. I mean, this is really the explanation for his slight pro-Russia tilt, at least in his kind of sentiment, is he thinks that this makes sense as a strategy. And that feeling, that point of view was ratified to him by the Grand Poohbah, gray beard Council on Foreign Relations, former Secretary of State, etc., etc., etc., who told him, yeah, you're onto something there; that's what we should be doing. So it's kind of a faction fight inside the government.

And the reason that they launched the entire Russiagate putsch, which I think the entire thing should be understood as a co-intel op against the Republican Party candidate for president in 2016, and then the president-elect and then the sworn-in President of the United States by

the FBI counterintelligence division in the CIA, in order to, as they put it, as they told CNN, to hem him in. If we can't invoke the 25th Amendment and overthrow him, at least we can launch this Russiagate investigation in order to hem him in, to prevent him from pursuing his policy that they simply disagree with. And you listen to it in the language of his impeachment, as well, where Lieutenant Colonel Vindman is saying, *Well, look, the inter-agency decided that this is what we're going to do. And then here's the President of the United States who's trying to overrule us and change the policy? Essentially, he has no right to do that.* Those aren't the exact words, but it was basically: who does this president think he is to tell us what our Ukraine policy should be?

WOODS: Okay, let me ask you this. Can you in, let's say, 60 seconds or less —

HORTON: Oh, no.

WOODS: Yeah, I know, that's a rhetorical question. But can you make the case that they would make, that, let's say, the people who don't favor overtures to Russia, what would be the case they would make for why Russia would not be bargaining with us in good faith, and Russia can't be trusted, and Russia has been aggressive — what exactly is the case that they are making? And then tell us what's wrong with that.

HORTON: Okay, well, yeah, their case that they're making is that this is revanchist Russia. This is the return of the Russian Empire, if not the USSR, that Putin is the Tsar and he wants to essentially reconquer all of Eastern Europe if we don't stop him. And so everything that Russia does is Russian aggression, and everything that America does is defense of democracy and purity and freedom and loveliness and probably Jesus and other things that you like.

And of course, it's just nonsense. I mean, it's true that Vladimir Putin is a strongman inside Russia. He does stand for election from time to time, but he's basically like FDR, president for life in a way. No denying that. But Hillary Clinton compared him to Adolf Hitler, but I think a more apt comparison would be Hindenburg, and that we'll be sad when he's gone, and that we don't know how good we've got it, that we've got essentially a very stern, right-wing Republican in charge. I mean, he's not a complete anti-Democrat. Again, he is a strongman, but he has a parliament and regular elections and he's not completely overthrowing the ideas. He's not naming himself tsar and this kind of thing like in the fantasies. And it could be much worse. There are far more reactionary forces than Vladimir Putin in that country who could be far more dangerous to the American order in Europe, which is such an oxymoron. It's amazing to think that that's even a thing, but it is, of course.

And the reality is that everything that Russia has done that has driven the American foreign policy establishment into such a rage have all been defensive moves at American provocations. And look, I'm a Texan, Tom. I don't care about Russia. I'm not taking their side. I'm just telling you the truth.

The reality is that H.W. Bush, when he presided over the disillusion of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, made a deal with Mikhail Gorbachev. He said, we promise we will not expand our NATO military alliance one inch east of Germany if you withdraw your troops and allow the reunification of Germany. And they didn't just withdraw from Germany; they withdrew back behind the Ural Mountains. They canceled the whole empire. Just got rid of it.

And the Americans, then, under Bill Clinton immediately broke the deal, and started expanding eastward and immediately brought in Poland and the Baltic states in 1996, right up to Russia's doorstep, and then they've continued to bring them on through the years. Of course, Bill Clinton fought two wars in Bosnia and Kosovo that were against the Serbs, the Russians' close allies. And in 1999, when they fought the Kosovo War to break off Kosovo, that was the final straw, really, for American relations with Russia right there.

And then when Bush came in, he expanded NATO even further, brought in Hungary and some of the Balkans and I forget which all countries and repeatedly threatened to bring Georgia and Ukraine into NATO. And Bill Clinton actually started this with the color-coded revolutions

in Serbia and Georgia. But then Bush did the color-coded revolutions in Ukraine in '04, in Belarus, Tajikistan, and Lebanon all in 2005, and also pulled us out of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which was the Star Wars anti-ballistic missiles stuff, which is to improve America's ability to launch a first strike so we can shoot down any retaliatory – which is a fantasy and a deadly one. They claimed that they were building it to protect Poland from Iran. But yeah, everybody laughed at that when Bush said it. People took it seriously when Obama said it for some reason. They laughed out loud when Bush claimed that that was what it was all for. But anyway, not that it's any real protection. It just increases the threat.

And then Obama brought in more countries into NATO, did the war in Libya, which directly broke the deal with the Russians. They voted for the Libya war on the UN Security Council, but *just for a no-fly zone to protect Benghazi from the impending genocide*. Yeah, right. And then, of course, the West immediately turned the thing into a regime change in Tripoli and embarrassed and weakened Medvedev, the Russian president while Putin was in the parliament as prime minister for the time, and angered Putin and had Putin come back a term early. He was going to let Medvedev do two.; instead, he came back early. After that, disaster.

And also the parliamentary elections of 2011, Hillary Clinton and the State Department and the NED dumped a bunch of money into anti-Putin NGOs and pro-democracy groups, they call them, and whatever, who held massive protests and all of this interfering. Imagine the Russians, how upset we might be, Tom, if they meddled in one of our elections, you know?

And then the all-important Ukraine coup of 2014, which led of course to the Russian seizure of the Crimean peninsula, and then the war in the east of the country. And also, Obama launched a massive new nuke project to overhaul and replace every single nuke in the American arsenal and overhaul the entire industry and all the national laboratories and everything, \$2 trillion and counting. It was a trillion when they announced. It's at 2 trillion now.

And he did that in compromise with the Republican senators – get this, Tom. They actually have the nuclear caucus. That's the Republican senators from the nuclear weapons-producing states who lobby like any other lobbying group in DC to keep those H-bomb sales high. So Obama compromised with them. If they'll vote for the New START Treaty, they'll give them all this money. Well, no, Trump's come in and pulling out of the New START Treaty, so they got their gigantic \$2 trillion welfare check for the H-bomb makers, for the sword of Damocles manufacturers for all of mankind, so that they can get by in these recessionary times.

And then he sent arms to Ukraine. Obama backed these Nazis overthrowing the government in Kiev in 2014, but then he was afraid to send them weapons. Donald Trump armed them. And then you might remember, Tom, hilariously, unbelievably, for the third time in history, an American president was impeached, this time because Trump held up an arms deal to Ukraine for a little while before it went through anyway, to these Nazi-infested forces, the proud grandsons of the Galatian SS, who worship Stepan Bandera, who helped perpetrate the Holocaust in Ukraine during World War II against Jews and Poles there. And, oh, well, as long as they're killing pro-Russian forces in the east, then that's perfectly fine for the first black president to back them in power. Trump has sent them weapons. The Democrats only complained when he held it up again.

And he's also increased our naval presence in the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea. He's had American troops, he's increased their presence in Poland and in the Baltics, where they held a giant parade just 100 yards from the Russian border. And he has already withdrawn from the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty and is withdrawing from New START, which is the last one limiting the total number of deployed nuclear missiles. The INF Treaty is the one, Reagan's greatest legacy, that kept the medium-range missiles out of Europe for 30 years there. And then the Open Skies Treaty, which was meant to reassure both sides that they're not

mobilizing for war, And he's already deployed the new low-yield nukes on cruise missiles, the usable tactical nukes on cruise missiles on destroyers in the Baltic and Black Seas there.

And so I think it's almost certain that, as a reaction, just like with announcing, okay, we'll only pull out 4,000 and not 8,000 troops from Afghanistan, that this Russiagate stuff works, that they accuse Trump of being a pro-Russian traitor, and then he reacts just the way probably most people would react, which is, well, I'll prove to you I'm not by being a hawk on Russia issues. And so here you go. And of course, for them, it's never enough. They'll continually accuse him. It's not like you'll hear Chuck Schumer say we praise Donald Trump for pulling us out of the INF Treaty and all this. Well, isn't this what you wanted? But in fact, if you hear the Senate Democrats talk about the treaties, they go, well, geez, we liked that treaty. Yeah, well, stop accusing the president of being a traitor under the control of the Kremlin, and maybe he'll stop pulling us out of treaties with the Kremlin to prove what a traitor he's not. You ever think of that?

And meanwhile, I'm not saying I think there's going to be a nuclear war or whatever, but they are increasing the danger to all of us. And a nuclear war between America and Russia, if one ever really did break out, would mean setting back human civilization 1,000 years. It would be the end of many good things.

WOODS: All right, I want to ask you this. And here, we want to wrap up for the for today, because you've given us plenty to think about on this. But I want to know, when we're looking at people who disagree with your perspective on Russia and they view Trump as dangerous because he can't be controlled, at least as well as they want, on Russia, what do they want? I mean, I know some people are just venal and they want military contracts and stuff, and he's going to interfere with that in one way or another. I get that. So I get there are going to be people with monetary interests at stake. What else is fueling it? I mean, it's possible that in cases with some people, it's a good-faith difference of opinion with you. But what else do you think is motivating it?

HORTON: It's the doctrine since the end of the Cold War, Tom, is American permanent military hegemony over the planet. And Russia and China's independence from the American imperial project is intolerable. And that's why, just before the coup in Ukraine in 2014, if you go and look in October of 2013, right before they started launching the protest movement on the Maidan there, Carl Gershman from the National Endowment for Democracy wrote a thing about how we're taking Ukraine away from Russia, and if Putin doesn't like it, he might find himself on the receiving end of one of these operations inside Russia here soon. A direct threat of regime change in Moscow. And that's the deal. Just like for George III, it was intolerable for the Americans to be independent from the empire, that's exactly the point of view of the Americans. How dare they ever tell us no? And I think that the ideology of American benevolence and exceptionalism and all of that, I think it counts for a lot. I think people make a big mistake when they reduce it all down to financial interests, and of course, there are —

WOODS: Thank you. I'm glad to hear you say that. Yeah, it's a mentality.

HORTON: Of course. Look, I mean, we all learn in school, Manifest Destiny. That wasn't just about the money. Like yeah, hey, look, land. I'd like some land. But there was a whole ideology here that says we can do this if we want to. And they call it exceptionalism now. And what's funny, of course, is what's supposed to be exceptional about us is how good we are and how much respect we have for other people's rights, just like we have. And exceptional doesn't mean we get to break all the rules, and we're still good no matter what sins we commit and no matter how deliberately we do so. But that's just the way that they twist it. Perfect example, of course: America's backyard is the entire circumference of the planet Earth. The entire Pacific Ocean is an American lake. All of Eurasia is for America to dominate.

And yet Russia can't even be the dominant neighboring influence in Ukraine, which is their little Canada, their Russia, Jr., which the Americans make clear that's why they wanted to

take it away from them, because it was so important to them. And that's why, as Gideon Rose, the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, put it on the old Colbert show, he compared Ukraine, he said, this is Robin to their Batman. This is the girlfriend to their high school senior here, and we're trying to steal her away in a way that they can't do anything about it.

Look, there's no question. If you don't have a dog in the fight, and you're willing to put your tiny little emotions aside of, *But I love the flag*. Okay, Americans picked this fight. Just pretend that your least favorite politicians were in charge of this the whole time. It was Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama did all this. Now can you apologize for a single bit of it? Of course not. And then is George W. Bush really an improvement on the policies of Clinton and Obama when he did the exact same horrible things? Of course not. Come on.

And seriously just put the shoe on the other foot for a moment and think, if Reagan had bankrupted us all buying MX missiles in the '80s and the Soviets had come out ahead in the Cold War and consolidated Western Europe, and then they expanded the Warsaw Pact to the Caribbean and to Latin America, to Mexico, and then they hired a bunch of Hitler-loving Nazis to overthrow the government in Ottawa and install a pro-Russian government to rule Canada, and then when people in Britain Colombia revolted and said we won't respect the new coup government, then they launched a war on terrorism against there and slaughtered tens of thousands of them, what would America do? We'd nuke Moscow. That's what we'd do. We go to full nuclear war before we let one half of that story play out. And yet, of course they have no choice but to just sit there and take it. What are they going to do about it?

And I mean, you listen to the way they talk about it too. John McCain and Barack Obama both were famous for just ridiculing Russia. It's a gas station with a border. It's not even a country. It's pathetic. They're not a world power. They're not even a regional power. All this. Dick Cheney, too, went to Tbilisi and gave a big speech threatening the Russians. They better stay in their place, and all this.

And this is when Putin was the first president on the planet to call George Bush on September 11th and say we're at your service, open up the pathway to invade Afghanistan, and all of this stuff. And in fact, when the Pakistanis closed the route in Afghanistan in 2012, the Russians opened the northern route right back up for Barack Obama in his surge. No problem, whatever you guys want. And by the way, twisted the ayatollah's arm and said, I really wish you'd sign this nuclear deal with Obama in 2015. Oh, and by the way, saved Obama from getting us into a war with Syria over an al-Qaeda false flag sarin attack in the summer of 2013. And Putin came and told Assad: hey, listen, you give up what chemical weapons you do have, and I'll make sure the Americans don't attack. Good enough for you, Obama? And saved his bacon there. In fact, the great journalist Robert Perry believed that the reason that the neocons launched the coup in Ukraine was just out of anger and spite for Obama getting along so well with Putin on practical matters, and they had to figure out a way to sabotage it.

WOODS: Ah, well, the thing is I have a few more follow-ups, but I want to stick to a reasonable timeframe for this particular episode.

HORTON: I'm sorry. You know how it is.

WOODS: No, no. It was good, good, good. It was absolutely fine. I want you to just tell people for a minute about *The Scott Horton Show*. What's been the schedule of *The Scott Horton Show*? In the midst of working on this major project, have you scaled back on it, or are you still doing as much as ever?

HORTON: I have a bit. I would say it's between five and ten a week, but I try to just do them all day Friday. That's what I do. I just stack them all on Friday.

WOODS: It's between what? What did you just say?

HORTON: Yeah, sometimes I do ten interviews in a day. I just drink a lot of Dr. Pepper, man, and keep it going.

WOODS: [laughing] Yeah, I guess so.

HORTON: But yeah, I just passed a 5,300 interviews there.

WOODS: That's ridiculous.

HORTON: All of which are posted, because I'm proud of all of them, because I've been right about everything the whole time and all of my great guests too, going back to 2003, there for you all at ScottHorton.org. And hopefully should be, it's available to sign up for whichever feed is your favorite, including YouTube and the different thingamajigs. I got a new project to put them all on Soundcloud now, I guess. So I've been doing this longer than everyone, but I'm behind the curve on the technology, always have been.

WOODS: Well, great, great, good for you. I mean, that's a ridiculous number, and as I said to you before we started recording this, it's very rare that I'm in a situation where I'm speaking to a senior podcaster, having done close to 1,700 episodes myself. But if I were to triple that, I'd get somewhere in the ballpark of Scott Horton. So ScottHorton.org is where you're —

HORTON: 1,700's a lot, though. You should be proud.

WOODS: Oh, yeah. Yeah, there's no getting around that. That is [laughing]. But anyway, check out TomWoods.com/1689 for a couple of links related to what we talked about today, and I'll also link to ScottHorton.org and the Libertarian Institute. All the stuff about Scott Horton, we'll have it all up for you at TomWoods.com/1689. All right, thanks a lot, Scott. I appreciate it.

HORTON: Thank you, sir. I appreciate it.