



Episode 1,730: Jeff Deist on Silver Linings from the COVID Dystopia

Guest: Jeff Deist

WOODS: I just watched your YouTube video from the event you did in Orlando, and I thought that was very interesting. Anytime I see — this is true. Any time I see a new Jeff Deist video, I think, all right, he's going to be just talking about what's on his mind, and whatever's on his mind is always interesting, and it always makes me think in a new way. In a way, it reminds me of when I first discovered Lew Rockwell. Something would happen in the world and I would say, I wonder what Lew's take is, and then I would find out Lew's take, and it would always be something fresh and new and make me think. And so I'm seeing that in your stuff too. And I'm not saying that to butter you up. I'm already a senior fellow at the Mises Institute. There's nowhere to go but down. So I'm just telling you, that's how I feel.

DEIST: Well, I'm reminded of the late Christopher Hitchens. Didn't he say something like his mother's admonition to him was that the worst thing you can do is bore people? And so regardless of the setting, any public speaker I think should take that to heart.

WOODS: Yeah, I've never heard you bore anybody. So all right, on that note, there is a piece of yours that I'd like to get into and discuss for the bulk of the time. But at the same time, I want to maybe skim the surface of some of the remarks that you made in Orlando recently, just because I look around at what's happening in the world, and it makes me long for a year ago. And a year ago, I longed for the Clinton years. Really, if I had the Clinton years back, I would almost not complain anymore. Now that I've seen how much worse things can be, I would almost not complain. So when you, in talking about this, said that maybe we're looking at this wrong and maybe there's something very positive in the long run that comes out of this, well, that made me think about it. So what is the way you're looking at our present situation?

DEIST: Well, sure, it's tough, and as you say, even a year ago seems quaint now when all we had to worry about was hating Trump or liking Trump or whatever the country was fixated on. But I think there are huge decentralizing impulses which are sweeping the world and they're sweeping the United States. And I think these are the kinds of forces which really can't be stopped. They're almost like a tidal wave. They're inexorable. So it's more important that you observe them and diagnose them correctly than it is that you have some sort of desire to fight back or try to make sure your ideology prevails or vote for this candidate or that candidate. I think sometimes it's important to take heart from macro trends, I guess we could call them, which I think, anyway, bowed in our favor. When I say *our*, I mean people who believe in political liberty, people who think that a flourishing or healthy or peaceful or wealthy society requires a good deal of restraint by the state, or no state.

And really, these impulses, these decentralizing forces I think are happening in migration patterns. I think they're happening in education. And they may even begin to happen in governance, because the center can't hold. There's sort of a centrifugal force at work here, and when the center can't hold, then maybe new arrangements crop up. And that's an opportunity for those of us who are not so happy with the old arrangement. People like us, Tom, have been talking about the Catholic principle of subsidiarity, about secession and nullification and decentralization and federalism and the Swiss model of governance and these kinds of things for a long time, because we've felt that the United States in particular is too large and unwieldy as a political entity. It doesn't work to have 330 million terribly diverse people, all yoked not just under the thumb of a few thousand bureaucrats or politicians in Washington, but increasingly under five or six Supreme Court justices who decide huge things.

But if you just look at how people are moving, at the response I would say not so much to the COVID virus, but to the governmental responses to that virus, that's really amazing to me. People are leaving cities in a way that we haven't seen really ever, at least in American history, because America really started as an agrarian nation, and agrarianism involved very few people in very large areas cultivating soil.

And so when we had an industrial revolution and people moved into cities, that was an enormous cultural shift in America. Not just a political shift, not just an economic shift, but the way people lived, what kind of houses they had, how big their families were, how they spent their free time, how they spent their money. All this changed radically. And basically, the 20th century was a story of migration patterns in the United States where people were moving towards centralized cities. Now, yes, as people become older and elderly, they do sort of spill out into the suburbs, and sometimes they move to Florida for the weather, that sort of thing. But for the most part, the percentage of Americans who lived in or around larger metropolitan areas grew and grew and grew.

And we were especially told that with younger generations, Millennials and younger — so let's say anybody about 40 and younger now — that this was even accelerating. There was an interesting study, I think it just came out 2019, actually, in the *Journal of Regional Science*, and it studied younger people from 1980 to 2010. And the study said, well, okay, sort of the younger Gen X and the older Millennials, first when they still could, they all wanted to go to hip places like San Francisco and New York City, and they really flocked to those places. And then when those got to be difficult and expensive, they sort of found these newer areas like Washington, DC, which has grown a lot, and Miami.

And then just the most recent trend was to places like San Francisco and Seattle, and that these Millennials would perhaps not marry or marry much older, so they don't need to be out in the suburbs with kids in school districts. They aren't interested in big houses like their parents. They don't want yards to keep up. They don't want to have a long commute in from the suburbs. They might not even have a car at all, but prefer public transportation in a big city. They're never going to have a McMansion. They don't want to have a Lexus and three jet skis in some garage somewhere.

And so, you know, watch out, bumpkins. You guys out there in the hinterlands and flyover country are going to become more and more irrelevant, because you cannot offer these Millennials what they so desire, which is to go live in Seattle and have five roommates even though they're 35 years old or 40 years old, and not be married, and have that avocado toast.

And so this is what everyone was telling us a year ago. And now it seems very much in question. Now if that's true, Tom, just on the migration side, the relocation side, that seems to me a form of de facto secession, because cities dominate the political landscape. Atlanta dominates Georgia politics; Nashville dominates Tennessee politics; New York City dominates the resentful upstate New Yorkers; Chicago dominates Illinois, and so on and so on. And so there's two ways to look at this. One is to say, well, as you spread all these people out more, they're going to take those same I guess blue-state voting patterns and attitudes and opinions and go infect the red areas. But the flip side is you could say that the very reasons they're moving call into question the vitality of those blue-state ideas. And so I think this is something that we're kind of sleeping on. I think this is huge, Tom.

WOODS: Well, I am not entirely convinced that they will necessarily be bringing those bad ideas, because I think the people who really, really have bought into the whole propaganda about the new normal and we have to live like this and all the absurdity, I think they believe it with a religious fervor. And I don't think these are the types of people who are going to take up roots and move, because how would they explain that to all their blue-pilled friends? They'd be pariahs. Right, don't you believe in science? How could you be moving to Florida at a time like this? So I think it will be a self-selected group.

And incidentally, by the way, I hate talking about Dr. Fauci. I think he's one of the most vile people I've ever seen in public life, particularly now that we've seen with his recent speculations about the COVID age now maybe being an opportunity for us to usher in what in effect would be a Green New Deal. I mean, the guy is not scientific. He is as political as can be. But he said recently, or maybe I don't know, a month or two ago, he said that if we really want to have full protection, we really should wear goggles out in public. Remember, he said that? He said we should wear goggles. No one did. As far as I can see, not one person wore goggles, even though they're willing to follow him on almost everything. Masks, they'll shame you about wearing masks, but if I say, "But look, you'd be doing an even better job if you wore goggles," I think they'd say, "Well, that's ridiculous, and I don't think I need to go that far." All right, so you're admitting that on some level, we ought to be able to make our own decisions about risk assessment, stuff like that.

But anyway, so there is a limit that even the blue-pill people won't go to. But I think in general, my feeling is most of them are going to stay put. I mean, most of them think that they're safer in their state. I can't believe I'm saying this. I thought that by now, more and more people would say this is ridiculous and absurd and inhuman what they're asking of us, and it's obviously going to cause a lot of deaths on the other side, a lot of collateral damage caused. I thought there would be more of these people. I think they're generally going to stay put.

And one other thing, I think that's why it was very wise of Kristi Noem in South Dakota when she made her recruitment video to try to get people to move to South Dakota. She didn't just generally say South Dakota has some wide open spaces and beautiful sights and vibrant economy and whatever. She specifically said over and over and over: if you believe in limited government and if you believe in our principles, then you should think about coming here. Very deliberate attempt to make sure that she gets the right people. I don't know if that succeeds, but I don't think that was an accident.

DEIST: Well, if you believe that the future or at least the near future is going to be filled with these infectious disease crises, these pandemics, then it stands to reason fewer people are

going to want to be in big crowded cities. Almost by definition, if you're worried about virality, then you want to be more spread out. And if we look at the responses to COVID, they have very much mirrored the population density across the country. In places like Wyoming for a lot of folks, life has been almost completely unchanged. They drive their pickup around and they go where they go, they go to the feed store or whatever in some really rural area, and that's pretty much it. If you're in Manhattan, it's as though somebody set off a nuclear bomb.

So when you start to think, hey, we've accepted at least in part this new normal of I can work from home – and I posed this to my brother, who's a software engineer for Google. I said if you can work from home for that long – because now they're telling him he's not going back into his physical office until January at the earliest. His office is locked down. I mean, his key card doesn't work to enter the building. If he can just do that until January, why can't he do that another year? And if he can do that, why can't he do that from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, or someplace else? And then you extend that to education. You say your kid doesn't need to learn from the kind of mediocre eighth grade social studies teachers who happens to be assigned to that class in your town. He can just stare at a computer screen and then he can have the best damn social studies teacher in the country, who can teach all the kids or something, most of them, or economies of scale made possible by digital world.

Then I think what fascinates me is you've got a lot of people on the left now, who in the past looked at homeschooling as kind of something for Christians, something for weirdos, something for people who wanted their kids to accept their blinkered, deplorable views and not be exposed to what we all know is good and just: to multiculturalism and sexual diversity and all the things that public schools ought to expose kids to so that they can grow up and be respectful members of society. So the left used to have a very jaundiced view towards homeschooling.

But in the era of COVID, there are plenty people on the left who are worried, I think unjustly – I don't think kids are at any risk whatsoever for either getting or transmitting COVID, but that's an opinion. A lot of people on the left are worried about sending their kids to the physical environment of school. So they're looking for the first time and thinking for the first time about the options available to them, like, well, if Johnny could just sit at home with us, then every Friday, we could just go on a three-day family trip, or on Fridays, he could just work on his trumpet, or improve at a sport or a foreign language, or we could do more family things together. Or if he's going to do that class every morning at eight, but that was always kind of tough because my husband needs to leave for work early at seven, and so that always created tensions in our household, now Johnny can just take that class anytime. Why don't we just compress all the classes into one or two days and then do some other things?

I mean, once you start to give people options and flexibility and new ways of looking at education and how that's delivered, I think that can open up huge opportunities, because I think that the education cartel is overplayed its hand here. I think colleges and especially public school teacher unions have just sat back on their hands and said, *Oh, it's COVID. We can't be teaching classes, and they need us. We going to have a paycheck. We can't be fired. Everyone's going to come back to us, no matter what, when this is over.* What if some of them don't come back when all of this is over? To me, again, a hugely decentralizing trend.

WOODS: All right, so let's unpack some of this here. And by the way, I think I'm just going to keep on this line of discussion, and maybe someday I'll bring you back on to discuss the article

I want to discuss, because there's just too much I want to talk to you about, and I want to know the way you think.

With the schooling thing, we all know the real function that so-called public schools play. We know that. I mean it, it clearly leads to a more compliant public that's more or less inclined to believe the government line on things, because it starts with the claim that a major good that's of importance to society cannot be voluntarily provided, namely, the classroom you're sitting in. So right from the start, they get taught the wrong way to look at the world. So that generates the kind of citizens these people want.

So they had to know that these crazy requirements for getting kids back to school were going to decrease the number of people going and the crazy panic that they've induced that is fact-free. Sweden kept schools open the whole time, and teachers are not dropping dead at any higher rate than any other profession. I mean, all this stuff, we know it's replicated all over the world. But they fostered this kind of atmosphere in which people are panicked. And so they have to know that the combination of these factors is going to mean fewer people in the public schools. That can't be good for them, given what they expect public schools to do. So I would have thought that they would by now have come up with some face-saving way to just say, all right, forget it. Let's remove the restrictions on kids and let them have normal school so that people will send them to the schools, and let's dial down the panic now that we know that obviously this thing is not nearly as bad as we thought it was, and we can pinpoint the vulnerable people much more easily than we thought. Maybe we'll dial it back. They haven't done that. Is it because they honestly and truly are terrified of this virus? Even now, even in September 2020, they're still terrified of this thing? What could be the agenda here?

DEIST: Right, and they're terrified of a bunch of 14-year-olds giving it to them? Hmm, I don't know. It strikes me – I mean, first of all, you've got the kind of solipsism that always accompanies public sector unions, that they are basically on the front lines of whatever, and they are akin to our great grandfathers storming the beaches of Normandy in their courage and bravery, and they are absolutely indispensable to society, and there is no conceivable way that we could live without them, and you ought to show a little more respect and continue to pay them while they don't work. So I think they've overplayed their hand. And I think that the sheer weight of online education is eventually going to swamp them and break their chokehold, just like Uber's obvious superiority eventually broke the taxicab medallion system. I think it's just one of those things. So that's encouraging.

I don't necessarily know whether they believe it or not. I think you have a lot of really deep left-wing people within teachers unions. I think a lot of people don't understand just how left these people are who are teaching your kids. There are deep pro-Antifa, pro-BLM people just in places like Auburn, Alabama teaching middle school. I mean, they aren't outliers. I mean, most teachers are hugely sympathetic to the left. It's just a fact, and I think that's just something you have to understand.

But once you create an environment where it's okay to pull your kids out of school because of COVID ostensibly, that's pretty fascinating to me, because I think the education model is so decrepit. Boy, it's going to have a hard time standing up to the marketplace, because I'm just thinking of my own kid. I mean, if he could just devote two afternoons a week to a part-time job and all that entails – being on time, being on his feet all day, some kind of job, working at a grocery or fast food or something, not a high-end job – boy, would there be a better education for a teenager or a better use of time? I think that's coming.

WOODS: Let me ask you a related question, and I just cannot get the answer to it. Now, I know I'll get some people writing to me saying, *Woods, you're so naive. This is part of a global campaign to* – Okay, maybe it is. But I want to know, why is it that people running major cities, particularly New York, cities where there are many wonderful features. And there are great reasons to visit New York. I have no patience for people who say New York is a cesspool with no redeeming qualities. Politically, yes, but culturally, I love that place, and it's breaking my heart what they've done to it. Without the things that make New York worth visiting, it is just a smelly, overcrowded, overpriced place. That is all it is. So eventually, even people who dig in their heels eventually have to decide, I can't justify this anymore.

So my question is: the tax base is what these people want. It's what Cuomo wants and it's what de Blasio wants. They need that tax base. The tax base is what they care about. Not lives, not – it's the tax base. If that tax base goes away because they're making life unlivable there, that clearly damages them. Otherwise, why would they have done everything otherwise up to this point to increase the tax base? So how do we account for why they're doing this? Because I know there are people who will say I'm naive to ask the question, but it's a legitimate question. Doesn't it seem against their own interests to drive taxpayers away? Just recently, Andrew Cuomo was reduced to begging rich New Yorkers to come back, even though he had nothing to offer them.

DEIST: Well, people like de Blasio and Mayor Lori Lightfoot in Chicago, they may actually just think that this will go on forever, and people will always want to live in New York City and Chicago, no matter what. I mean, let's face it. A lot of people on the left just don't think incentives much matter. I mean, they've proven that at least in their policy prescriptions, I suppose. So there's probably a little bit of that. There's probably some inertia involved. Someone like it de Blasio will say, Oh, New York's been through hard times before like the '70s, and *Fort Apache, the Bronx* with Paul Newman, if people have seen that movie. People remember *The Warriors*, of course, a great cult film. You can go back to the 1800s, the Five Points, *Gangs of New York* with Daniel Day Lewis. I mean, clearly there were times when New York City was plenty rough and tumble. Ask our friend Pete Quinones, for example. But so there's probably a little bit of that hubris involved here.

But here's what's so fascinating, is when I say they don't think incentives matter, California, for example, already has a very high state income tax rate, approaching 10%. A few years ago, they passed what was called a millionaire surcharge, an additional 3.3% income tax on income above a certain amount, over some certain annual threshold. And now they want to add a billionaire surtax on top of that, which is more of a net worth or a wealth tax, which Florida dabbled in for a while and then repealed. So the annual tax burden of a wealthy Californian is going to rise to about 15%, and then add that to Biden's proposed increases on the marginal rates for federal income taxes, and you get to a combined federal and state tax rate for wealthy Californians which is getting way, way, way over 40%, approaching half.

And they're doing this in the midst of a huge exodus by the most productive people out of California. Even if you're rich, it's not that hard just to go to Incline Village, Nevada, three hours from San Francisco, for example, Lake Tahoe; it's not that hard to go to Phoenix or Las Vegas, places like that, and pay a lot less money. So it's interesting that they're doing this kind of in the teeth of the wind.

But the opportunity here, the decentralizing benefit to this, of course, is that people are voting with their feet. And one thing we know about the left is that they believe in equality

for thee, but not for me. So they tend to organize their own lives, their own affairs in ways that benefit them, like sending their kids to private school, minimizing their own taxes, this sort of thing. And I think we're going to see this. And so regardless of what sort of philosophy they might hew to, when people start leaving these states, that's a political statement of sorts. And that's a much stronger statement by their actions than anything they say or even how they vote.

So when a Kristi Noem says, *Come to South Dakota. We're wide open. We have limited government here, we take the Constitution seriously. We didn't close down because of this pandemic* – wow, that's pretty powerful. I mean, right now, the federal government is operating using debt financing. So about half of the fiscal year 2020 federal budget – fiscal year goes October to October, or September 30 to September 30. It's coming up on the end here – the budget that Congress passed for the year 2020 was something over 5 trillion. The projected tax revenue was going to be about a trillion less, 4 trillion-something. So there was projected to be an annual deficit of \$1 trillion.

Well, instead, nobody knew that COVID was going to come and we were going to have the shutdowns. So instead, with the CARES Act and all the federal unemployment benefits and potentially some more money that Trump is still going to spend between now and the election or now and the end of the month, federal spending is going to go up somewhere in that 7, 8 trillion range, so much higher than projected. And of course, tax revenues have plummeted. And so they're going to be probably south of 4 trillion, but somewhere around 4 trillion. So as a result, for the first time in its history, the US government is going to have a single-year deficit as large as tax receipts, if not larger. So half of everything the federal government does in 2020 will have effectively been debt financed.

And so the government doesn't just print money. There's a little bit of a circuitous approach, whereby Treasury issues new Treasury debt, and that does have a market out there worldwide, even paying exceedingly low interest. But that market is effectively backstopped by the Fed, because they have this sort of wink, wink, nod, de facto promise to buy up Treasury debt so that people feel comfortable buying it. So in a circuitous way, we debt finance about half of all federal expenditures. So if we can do half, why can't we do 60% or 70%, or 80% or 90%? Well, that's a fair question.

And you and I would argue about the long-term consequences of this, of course, but if you're an MMTer, then you would say, yeah. In fact, you don't even need the circuitous process by which the Fed effectively monetizes debt. You can just have the Treasury print, and it can print as much as it wants, as much as it needs, spend as much as it wants, have a huge federal hiring program, and no problem. And the only time you ever need to even have taxes or raise taxes is if inflation gets too high and we need to pull some money out of the private economy.

Okay, well, I think that's insane. I think that's wrong. I've written a couple articles about it. Mark Thornton has, David Gordon has, Saifedean Ammous has, but that's a different discussion. But nonetheless, once you start to accept that, the idea that the federal government doesn't really need our income taxes to do what it does, wow, man, does that open the door to a new political arrangement. Because if you look at Switzerland, I mentioned earlier, about 80% of your total tax burden goes to your local commune or your canton, which is the equivalent of your state. And only about 20% of it goes to the federal Swiss government, which just uses it for military and a few really delineated, limited federal

functions. So if Washington, DC doesn't really need our taxes, I mean, why is South Dakota, why is Kristi Noem, why are businesses there remitting taxes to the federal government at all? I mean, at some point it becomes almost funny money.

And states and cities can't print money under the current system. Our money comes from the federal government. And so it's very difficult for them to raise taxes. It's very difficult to issue bond debt and raise money that way at the state and local level, because bond debt is usually for big projects – municipal debt, for example, tax-free munities. It's not for day-to-day operations. But if you look at your town, wherever you happen to be listening the show, I mean, your town really requires local revenues to make sure that that grass by the side of the road is mowed, that the freeway overpass is clear, that the local cops are getting a paycheck so that they even respond to 911, so the local fire department's getting a paycheck, these kinds of basic things, so that if there's a sinkhole in a street that totally blocks traffic, someone comes and fixes it. I mean, that's not federal money, generally.

So because their tax revenues down so far and so deeply – the restaurants are closed, no one's buying anything – they're all going to be looking to Uncle Sam for a bailout, especially when the federal unemployment benefit dance comes to an end, especially when the PPP loans – with which a lot of businesses are making payroll, I might add, and so the unemployment numbers look better than they otherwise would. When that PPP money runs out, I mean, you are going to have states that are so strapped because their local tax revenue has just fallen through the floor, I just wonder, I wonder if that won't produce a sort of day of reckoning, a really federalist experiment, which has already started by virtue of the differing responses to COVID.

But when that gets down to dollars and cents, to really brass tacks, I bet you Kristi Noem's going to be looking a lot better than Andrew Cuomo in terms of her state's taxes. And then you really start to wonder: could there be a federal tax moratorium? Could things ever get weird enough that businesses just stop remitting to Uncle Sam? Could things ever get weird enough that the IRS is not really effectively conducting audits?

Well, I think yes is the answer. I mean, as weird as that sounds, things are awfully weird compared to what we thought they might be a year ago. So if you take that degree of weirdness and extrapolate it into another year, not that far-fetched. I mean, let's press this. If the federal government doesn't need our taxes, well, then why can't Kristi Noem be a canton, a Swiss canton of her own? And if Kristi Noem can be a canton of her own when it comes to fiscal policy, why can't that apply to gun rules? Why can't that apply to abortion? Why can't that apply to a host of unfortunately politicized issues? I mean, it's a really fascinating thing to think about it. And to the extent any of us can nudge this, we ought to.

WOODS: I had not thought of that, but see, that's why I had you on. The way I thought of it was much more pessimistic. I was thinking in terms of the ideological repercussions of the federal government doing all the things that it's been doing, in terms of basically helping pay people's wages and protecting people from eviction, just huge, sweeping, unprecedented actions. I mean, we remember that when we got the New Deal, the New Deal was based in part on ideological leftovers from World War I. We planned the economy during wartime. Why can't we plan it during peacetime? So I thought to myself, oh my gosh, what's going to happen is they'll say, look, when there was a pandemic, the government did all these things. Well, that was just to keep us from all dying. Why can't we summon the same energy not just for

the defensive purpose of preventing death, but to build the great new world that we want in the future? That was my concern. Is there anything to that?

DEIST: Well, yes, there's something to that, of course. All crises contain the seeds of centralizing authority, no question about it. But I guess what it boils down to is maybe I'm a big, fat hypocrite in this sense: I've become an accelerationist of sorts, which I always decried. I always said, oh my God, these libertarians will say, "I can't wait until Social Security collapses." I'd say no, no, no, if we can even buy another 20 or 30 years of peace and harmony, that's worthwhile in and of itself. But now, I don't know, maybe the last 12 months or so, when — I will say this. The left has shown us who they are, and — I said this the other week in Orlando — we ought to believe them. So there's that.

We can't have a country with these people. We shouldn't want to have a country with these people, nor should we wish them ill. nor should we want a civil war or boogaloo or whatever we're calling it. Those are the last things we should want. And honestly, most Americans cannot run from here to the end of the block, much less go through any kind of material hardship whatsoever. So let's be a little circumspect when we make wild-eyed talk about civil wars.

What we need to do, what every person of goodwill has staring them in the face — I think that's sort of what you titled something on secession in Houston years ago, that the obviously peaceful solution is staring us all the face — is some measure of breakup. It's just so obvious. And maybe that's going to be very difficult at the federal level because of Social Security benefits and military and the dollar. Okay, so maybe at least for starters, it's going to just have to be more things like COVID response and pot holes and fiscal matters and abortion and guns and that sort of thing. But I certainly don't see why we can't get Americans to say, we're all this unhappy, we're all this scared and worried about what's going to happen.

And people on the left really think that Donald Trump is a fascist in a way that Obama wasn't or W. wasn't. I think that's absurd, but they really do think that. And so if you really, truly believe — and you've been taught nothing else, by the way, for 20 years, so it stands to reason you do believe it. If you really believe that America is this deeply racist, fascist, transphobic, homophobic country with a history rooted in slavery and genocide — as a matter of fact, slaves built America — if you really believe that every all of our material prosperity was stolen, that our history is a lie, that this country is full — this is just absurd and laughable — that this country is full of white nationalists and white supremacy — I mean, if you really believe all that stuff, maybe you would be out there busting up people's dinner at some cafe in your town. I mean, this worldview is just not reconcilable right now.

And so this isn't about policy anymore. This isn't about tax cuts or Social Security or that kind of thing. It's about who is on whose side? That's the old Stalinesque composition of the question. And do people really want bloodshed, or do they want to say maybe Kristi Noem's onto something, and maybe Gavin Newsom is onto something when he calls California a — what was the term he used? — a native state. [laughing] I thought that was interesting. California is big enough, way bigger than Sweden or Norway or all kinds of social democracies in Europe. California is big enough. Have your own socialized health care system. Have your own progressive income taxes. Have your own abortion and gun rules. That's fine. Give it a try. Wish you well. Have passports, for all I care. Make Berkeley free. No problem. So that's where I think we are. And I guess that makes me accelerationist.

WOODS: Well, let's wrap up with a word about an upcoming event, because I have been to — even with all the craziness going on, I've been to a Mises Institute event, namely the Mises University program in July. We're all still alive, as far as I know. No deaths reported from that event. It was wonderful to be sort of normal for a while. And the Institute Supporter Summit is going forward October 8th through the 10th at the Jekyll Island Club Resort on Jekyll Island, Georgia. And obviously, again, if you've been listening to *The Tom Woods Show* for a while or any other libertarian source, you know the significance historically of Jekyll Island with the Federal Reserve. I'll post a link to that event at TomWoods.com/1730 for anybody who might want to attend, because I'll be speaking there and a bunch of other folks. But do you want to say a word about it?

DEIST: Well, I'm pleased recently to have struck up a friendship of sorts with Amity Shlaes, the great historian, so she's going to be one of our keynote speakers. She is of course the great Coolidge historian, and her book *Coolidge* was really fascinating. I just finished it. She's got a new book, newish, came out in 2019, I believe, basically on the Great Society of the 1960s. And she analogizes what's happening right now with the Bernie progressive end of things, more with the 1960s than with the Roosevelt New Deal. She thinks in many ways, the Great Society programs and especially what happened in with Supreme Court jurisprudence around that era, was far more impactful and lasting than the Roosevelt era of the '30s in the New Deal. So she likens where we are today to the Great Society of the '60s. So I'm fascinated to listen to her.

And honestly, I'm interested in the idea of finding the same people out there who are not in our camp necessarily, but the Amity Shlaes of the world, the Bradley Birzers of the world, whom you had on recently, the Dan McCarthys of the world. I mean, there's a potential out there for a new kind of fusionism, I think, that is rooted at least in some respect to property versus mobs smashing things and looting and burning things. And so it's important that we're talking to people, hearing from different voices.

But in the midst of it all, and I heard Lew Rockwell say this the other day, it sounds almost silly in some ways to be even thinking in educational terms, because it feels like it's just time to man the barricades or whatever and that things are so far gone. But the flip side is that there's always going to be another side. We're always going to emerge on the other side of things, and we have to make sure that we emerge with the right ideas and principles still alive.

I mean, the Austrian school, for example, its voices could have been quashed, could have very easily been quashed in the second half of the 20th century, never really to have reemerged. And so because of the efforts of some people, those voices are still alive, and the old Viennese influence on the world is still there. And I think that's important and worthwhile. So even as we all enjoy, I guess — well, I don't know if he *enjoy's* the word — even as we all engage in the rough and tumble, the sharp elbows of social media and that sort of thing, and damning people who don't see things our way, we have to remember that there still needs to be an ideological and intellectual component to what we do.

And I think someone like Amity Shlaes might be a kind crossover figure that a lot of your listeners might find really interesting. Her books, I can vouch for. I've read three of them and they are fantastic. So it is fun just to get together and hear from some smart people and get away from just the white noise of our day-to-day lives, so I can't wait.

WOODS: I've had Amity Shlaes on my show couple of times, and I like her very much as well, so that's definitely a very nice feature of the event. So TomWoods.com/1730 will have a link to that. And Jeff, I'm going to let you run. Thanks so much for your time today.

DEIST: You bet. Thank you.