



Episode 1,774: Maybe Libertarians Have to Be Political After All

Guest: Tho Bishop

WOODS: I'm going to be doing some thinking out loud with you in this episode. And some of what I say might contradict things I've said in the past,, so if people want to write to me and say, "But woods on Episode 537, you said such-and-such," I agree with you. I did say those things. But it's a sign of health that sometimes your thought evolves or you're willing to look at new evidence and think differently. I'm just thinking out loud. I haven't arrived at a final, definitive conclusion, but I just want to think. And if people think I'm wrong, then they should certainly go to the comments section of the post, TomWoods.com/1774, and politely tell me why I'm wrong. If you think I'm right, do the same. Well, if think I'm right, tell me that I'm right. That's my point.

Anyway, so Tho, you wrote to me to say that you were interested to hear something I said on the panel that we had at the Mises Institute event last weekend with Ron Paul. We had a panel with Jeff Deist, Daniel McAdams, and me. And I'm actually thinking of making that panel into an episode of the show, because it was such a good panel. So not everybody – in fact, probably a small handful of listeners have heard that panel. But the point was, that I started to wonder if maybe it's not such a stupid idea to be involved in politics after all. Now, obviously, I've been associated with the LP for at least a little while, but I'm going beyond that. I'm saying that – well, actually, I don't even want to tell you necessarily what I'm saying. I want to feel out your thoughts first, and then I'm going to tell you where I've been trending in my own thinking. So what's your perspective on what role politics needs to play at this moment in history for our side?

BISHOP: Well, again, it wasn't just you that had the comment, because I mean, obviously with some of the LP stuff, itself is kind of dipping the toe into political parties, but even Daniel McAdams, who is one of the most staunch kind of anti-political people that I've known for a very long time, whose opinions I think a great deal of, and he was even saying that what he's seen over the last few years is maybe forcing him to question some things. And I think this is a very interesting phenomenon that I've seen play out with friends in the movement, so to speak, over the last few years. The number of people who have never voted in their life that were coming to me in the past few months saying that, yeah, like, I'm actually voting this time. I'm so terrified to the left, what they're seeing out there. As someone who's always kind of been a little bit more politically active than most good Rothbardians out there, I was always kind of concerned. Is this just me kind of selling out principles because I find this stuff interesting? Am I not being a good, pure libertarian?

But no, I think that people are just recognizing that a lot of the conversations with normal people, they come in a political context. When I when I talk to people about economics,

about even money, things like this, usually it is with some sort of connection to a political topic, because politics then becomes one of the most narrow, small ways of expressing your opinions there. But it's something that a lot of people that don't read 600- or 800-page books, it's something that they can get their hands around.

And I think that one of the interesting things, some of the work that Rothbard wrote that I've always found so interesting was his stuff in the '90s, where he starts transitioning to strategies for living from liberty, right? You know, he's written tremendous amount of works about libertarian political theory, libertarian history, economics, all of that sort of stuff, but then in the '90s, he was really kind of looking around and saying, like, how do we get to this sort of society that we all want in this free, voluntarist world? And a lot of that came from understanding that the people that can really get behind this message, it's not ivory tower think-tanks, it's not universities, it's not people that are benefiting from the current status quo. It's from the masses getting angry. So his work on populism and things like that, I think that is a way of distributing these ideas of liberty in a way that a lot of normal people can digest.

And I think if we simply recognize that politics in and of itself, it's not salvation, right? Democracy is not a god that we should worship. It doesn't change our view of the state at all. It's simply acknowledgement that politics is a weapon for communicating our ideas that shouldn't be completely dismissed out of hand.

WOODS: All right, I'm going to go even farther than you, then. I thought you were farther than I am. I'm out there now, Tho. I'm out there. I'm far out there now. I'm in a place that I'm not sure I ever expected myself to be back in. I used to be very, very interested in politics. I started off my kind of education, let's say, in politics and all these sorts of issues that we care about as a young kid. I saw Ronald Reagan get elected in 1980, and I watched a little bit of the news at that time. But then in 1984, I watched all the presidential debates. I watched the debates — I watched everything. I watched Geraldine Ferraro debate George Bush, and I watched the Democratic and Republican conventions.

And I didn't know there were any other options, any other ways of thinking. I thought there are two ways of thinking: the way promoted by the Democrats and the way promoted by the Republicans. Okay, I get that that's a little bit constraining to think that way. But my point is, I was very interested in this. I followed races. I stopped following politics in 1996 because Bob Dole versus Bill Clinton was just too much even for me to take. And I dropped out of it, and I thought it was pointless.

But I do think things have changed. And here's where I may be right now. And I hope people who have followed me for a long time aren't going to say, well, maybe I disagree with Woods on this, so I'd better stop listening to this program. I mean, I can't stop people from listening, but maybe we don't agree on everything. And the way I'm thinking now is, I think it's silly these days to say, oh, the two parties are just the same. They're not. That might have made sense in 1996. It does not make sense today. They're not.

Now, a lot of Republicans are absolutely terrible and useless. Useless more than terrible, really. They're useless and terrible. But think about it. Which network invites more of our people to be on its programs? It's not MSNBC. Which newspapers are most likely to publish our people? You know which ones. It's always the right-leaning ones. Why should that be? Now, I

don't want to get into too philosophical a discussion as to why we might have more of a kinship with the right – I'm not interested in that.

The way I'm thinking is this. I think there are, as the lockdowns have shown, people in our society who are salivating at the prospect of the types of powers they could have now that they've seen how easily they snooker people into handing over their livelihoods, savings accounts, dreams, hopes. And I think with climate change and all these drastic, radical remakings of society they have in mind, that these people, by which I mean interventionists, are more dangerous than ever. And since they're not even that good on war, most of them – they're really not. They don't even care. Honestly, they do not care. It goes to show they don't care about the collateral damage in the third world with the lockdowns they're doing. They certainly don't care about bombs being dropped on these people. So it's not even like you can say, well, they're sort of going on – no, they're not good on civil liberties. They're not good on Snowden. They're not good on anything.

So I feel like maybe we've reached a point, and I want you to critique this, but maybe we've reached a point where sometimes we hold our noses and vote for people who are bad on 80% of things, but who number one, can stand the sight of us, and number two, aren't going to destroy our society completely. That's as far as I'm willing to expect I could get from politics. I don't think I'm going to see the welfare state repealed. There's no constituency for that. That's never going to happen. No matter which politician gets in, there's going to be a lot of spending and a lot of debt. There's nothing we can do about that at this point. We've made all the arguments. They fall on deaf ears. Nothing is going to happen with that. But there are issues of tremendous importance apart from that, where I do think there are major differences between the parties in terms of how much damage they want to do to the lives of normal people. And for that reason, I think for me to say, *Oh, it's all the same. I'm too good and too pure for this*, I think that's suicide. Now, what do you think?

BISHOP: I agree entirely. Again, I think I've come out there publicly as a Donald Trump voter. I have no problems admitting that. And I did so mainly because, to me, a lot of people focus on the sins of the politician, which is totally fine. Donald Trump has done plenty of things wrong. There's plenty of articles at Mises.org that you'll find with me criticizing Fed appointments and spending policies, etc., etc. When it comes to that question, Donald Trump is not a libertarian.

The issue, though, is that simply focusing on the politicians themselves I think also misses a larger point, and that's that the voting base matters. The base of the Trump party were the people that rejected – I mean, Donald Trump went in front of a South Carolina debate stage and said basically that Bush did 9/11, and he still went away with the state. And that's something that you couldn't have conceived four years prior. The base of the Trump people, the "drain the swamp," "America First," the genuinely committed ones, not the ones that kind of held their nose and voted for Trump because they didn't want higher taxes or whatever – the genuinely committed Trump people that are out there doing the Trump parades and the cars and all that sort of stuff, their loyalty is to Donald Trump. It's not to the Republican Party.

And their loyalty to Donald Trump is because they understand – they don't understand the finer details of philosophy, but they understand that the system of power in place right now is corrupt. . They question the holiness of Dr. Fauci. They question the generals and whether we should have prolonged forever wars. They question think-tanks and all of that. And even if

they don't have all the answers, if they're not willing to go out there and advocate for abolishing all public schools, they have that sense of distrust of the state as it currently exists. And those are our allies.

You talked about how you won't see our side represented outside of Fox News. The one exception to that is when libertarians are willing to go out there and promote a message that the left likes. Justin Amash was able to get all the screen time the world that he wanted, when he was wanting to go along with Democrats trying to impeach Trump over a narrative put out there by the national security state. It's that skepticism of Washington, which I think is genuine, even if they don't have the right answers, that's something that we should not dismiss.

And so this entire idea that we can create this perfect third way that will transcend all the issues on the left and right, if we simply appeal to people's higher reasoning ability, and we can just create all these think-tanks and it's going to trickle down, that's not the way people are motivated. People have emotional appeals to these sort of things, and we should not be aloof to the tribal aspects of politics. Because again, it's people that really push ideas forward. And I think a lot of libertarians out there, if your grasp of politics, if your self-esteem is built on purity, rather than — I think you can over-evaluate that to the expense of persuading others to your political opinions. I think that's one of the biggest things out there that hinders this movement, whatever it is, and that's something that I think — acknowledging who our bigger enemies are is valuable.

WOODS: In 2010, I wrote a book called *Nullification* about states refusing to enforce or actively preventing the enforcement of unconstitutional federal laws. Now, there is a very, very strong historical, constitutional, strategic, and moral argument for that position. But even though I got a surprising amount of media for my book the previous year, *Meltdown*, even though it went right after the Federal Reserve, which was not, other than Ron Paul, the kind of thing very many people were talking about in those days, I did get a lot of major media for that, including, of course, so-called right-wing media. But then when *Nullification* came out, well, *The New York Times* has not approved this point of view, and they certainly don't think we are allowed to resist our betters. So suddenly, this became *it can't be mentioned*. So the same outlets that would have had me on the previous year pretended they didn't know who I was.

But I would go to Tea Party events, and those people were all fascinated, very interested. Now, that is more than I can say for progressives, who are very, very careful to make sure that they have entirely predictable political opinions on everything. They do not step beyond a certain boundary. So in other words, I got the impression that the mainstream, respectable so-called conservative voices, well, they didn't want to have anything to do with *Nullification*, because the Heritage Foundation doesn't recommend that. But the grassroots people were open-minded enough to listen to me, even though some of it involved talking about medical marijuana, recreational use of it as well. They didn't care. They thought maybe this is a constitutional mechanism that we can use. So I found them to be far more open-minded than you would think. And because they're open-minded and because they have a skepticism of authority, I can reach them on things where they're bad. And that's why I think that I have some success in that area.

BISHOP: Yeah, and what's interesting about that is, again, I think this goes to that point about the differences between the politicians and the base itself, because the Tea Party base, the

Republican Tea Party base was so much better than Paul Ryan and Mitt Romney and the politicians that you got in 2012. Of course, I think that if he wasn't taking down the — really, the proto-Trump candidate was actually Herman Cain, who had some kind of interesting sort of things in his own right. But again, if he wasn't taken down because of some allegations out there, I think that — yeah, I don't think he had any interest in actually being president; I think he ran for a shot for a radio gig. And then all of a sudden, the people wanted a non-politician.

Again, that was that populist sentiment that had been boiling up since 2010, which made the base interested in things like nullification, things like constitutional sheriffs and the way that constitutional office can be used as a check on federal power. I remember the sheriff here in Bay County would go around and proudly talk about how, if Obama passed gun control laws, then he'd be out there trying to hold off federal authorities. Whether that would have actually happened, I don't know, but at least he was talking about it. That's a starting point.

What's interesting, though, is that in the past four years under Trump, the left has actually been a lot more receptive to some of that nullification, states' rights sort of approaches, whether it's your sanctuary cities with immigration, whether it was some of the stuff that they tried to do on COVID in terms of leading the way in an interventionist sort of point of view, rather than waiting for the Trump administration to lay down guidelines. The left has been a lot more interested in actually utilizing some of that state power. And so that's one of the things that will be interesting, assuming that we have a Joe Biden presidency the next four years, whether the Trump dynamic carries over to state governance in a way that Republicans are going to actually be interested in doing the things that you were talking about back in the Tea Party days. It's quite possible that with some of these red state governments — you know, we're both Floridians right now. DeSantis could be much more Tom Woods in nature than most Republican politicians probably were back in 2010.

WOODS: And I raised that not because *Nullification* is necessarily at the forefront of my mind all the time, but that I thought it was an example of something that even though the people they themselves admire and listen to on a regular basis wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole, they themselves were willing to listen. And because they were willing to listen on that, I was able to talk to them about other things. I mean, I was invited by the Iowa Republican Party to come give a series of lectures on various topics to just the grassroots people. So after I got them all on my side, because they loved what I had to say about A, B, and C, then I did one on foreign policy. And I told them they were all wrong. Now, I was able to do that because they were willing to listen to me because of the other things I had to say. And second, because in my experience, they're just, in principle, more willing to listen. They don't as often come to the belief that their opponents are all subhuman, or they don't deserve to be responded to because they're not respectable or whatever. You don't get that from these people.

So anyway, this is the way I'm thinking, that sure, I'm probably going to wind up being as angry and frustrated as I have ever been with politicians. I don't think that's going to change. But the level of evil, of what the most evil people are planning to do is so over the top at this point, that I just can't imagine myself saying, Yeah, everybody's the same, and nothing matters, and you shouldn't bother, and it's better to just read *Human Action*. Nothing wrong with reading *Human Action*. I want everybody to read it. But it just seems like if politics weren't important, the left wouldn't be bothering with it.

BISHOP: You're absolutely correct in that. And Murray Rothbard, he had this wonderful article. I think we have an excerpt from a larger piece on *The Mises Wire*; it's "The Fight for Liberty and the Beltway Barbarians," and then he critiques the idea that some libertarians have of kind of retreatism, of ignoring politics. And he also criticizes the obvious sellouts, that you're willing to sell out any sort of policy view in exchange for a good political gig. I mean, both of those strategies are wrong.

But there is a middle ground there, where being a persuasive advocate for these ideas and leaning into that skepticism of government. And I think one of the really exciting things that's going on right now is that a couple weeks ago on the *Wire*, I had an article about questioning — because in the lead-up to last Tuesday, all the conversation was, Oh, look how high the turnout is. And the turnout was extremely high. It was I think the highest turnout election since 1908. And the idea there was, oh, high turnout elections necessarily benefit Democrats, because oh, that means that you have young people are showing up to vote, and they normally don't, and other things like that.

Well, again, it looks like Trump's not going to be president, but if you look down ballot, the left was strongly pushed back. And I mean, the Democrats lost House seats they never expected to be competitive on. They did not take the Senate like they wanted to. There was a lot of money pumped into state house races that they did not flip. And I think that what we're seeing is that the left's nature, to try to politicize everything — you can't watch a football game without getting a political lecture. You know, we can laugh, and I know libertarians like the sheeple that just want their bread and circuses. But if it's bread and circuses that is all it takes to keep people tame, and you take away those bread and circuses and replace it with soy and political lectures, well, the people are going to be mad at that.

And it's precisely trying to harness that frustration against the left that is — if we don't do it with our ideas of what it really means to have a peaceful society and social cooperation and building a civilization that can be prosperous and thriving for the future, somebody else is going to. I'd much rather have the Rothbardian brand of populism out there in the political mainstream than to have some other forms that do not accept the lessons that economics teaches us and does not believe that social cooperation can be peaceful on democratic- and market-based grounds. We should not be hiding from these very difficult and serious questions, and this is the landscape that we find ourselves in.

WOODS: There are some left-libertarians who supported Bill Weld, like not just as the VP in 2016, but Bill Weld for president in 2020. And oh, they would be so impatient with people who were perfectionists, and yeah, Bill Weld isn't perfect, but blah, blah, blah. So it may sound like I'm just echoing them, saying, well, I may support somebody who's not perfect because I like where he stands on some things. But the difference is Weld was terrible on all the major things that really matter. I mean, yeah, he could probably give a cute little speech for free trade, all sorts of inoffensive issues that won't displease *The New York Times*. I'm sure he could. But for the most part, he's going to repeat the conventional narrative on pretty much everything.

So the fact that he supported Joe Biden, when Biden is obviously the candidate of lockdowns, shows that he bought into that. I mean, obviously, a Bill Weld is going to buy into the whole establishment narrative on that. And I have left-libertarians I've muted on Twitter who've attacked me for this, and they think we ought to stay home to stop the spread and all this midwit stuff from eight months ago they're still talking about. It doesn't surprise me, because

these are people who, the thing that terrifies the most is the possibility that they could hold an opinion that *The New York Times* does not at least allow them to hold. So if it's lockdowns, they're in favor. If it's a — well, like the Iraq War, Bill Weld was bad on that. Well, they make excuses for that. *Oh, well, nobody's perfect.* Big mass murder, based on propaganda that would have insulted a second grader? Eh, no big deal. So those are big, big, big major, major things that involve standing up to the establishment. You can always count on Bill Weld in those situations to stand with the establishment. Every single time.

So those sorts of people are dealing with politics in exactly the wrong way. I mean, yeah, if you're involved in politics, you have to understand that you won't always get everything you want. But geez, the list of demands they have for what they want is so pathetic, it's all things the Democratic party would give them, so they should just switch to that party. But they also want free trade, but so sort of does Joe Biden, in a way. So I don't really get these people. But the key thing is, the folks that they always choose, on the major issues that will go in the history books, they are on the side of Mitt Romney, and Hillary Clinton and Joe Lieberman. Every time.

BISHOP: Brian Doherty has talked about how there's an element, the class libertarians that you could call the nicearians, right? Their real motivating ideology is about using the state to create a more tolerant society, which was always — you actually see them when interact with people they disagree with, they're not particularly tolerant of red cap-wearing Republicans out in the hills of Arkansas, right? I mean, it's a very particular certain sort of groups that they think have been oppressed for so long, and so therefore, it's okay to use the state to try to make the rest of the people that have — wrongly, of course, but have been looked down upon, enforced a certain discrimination laws and things like that, because what they really want is this kind of urban — it's a cosmopolitan sort of city culture that just is very different than the way that a lot of people in middle America think. And I think that plays at the respectability aspect of it all.

The problem is that Bill Weld and people like that, I mean, at the end of the day, they're not particularly hostile to the American empire, right? They think that Trump's greatest sins are insulting proud, patriotic members of the civil service. And they say that, and no, the American empire itself is the problem. And I've been enjoying recently reading, going through like Gore Vidal's series on the American Empire and his novels in American history and some of his interviews and some of the works by Bill Kaufman. I'm reading his *America First*, was a collection of essays published, —

WOODS: Oh, I love that book.

BISHOP: Oh, it's great. And so part of this I think is why Ryan McMaken and I on the *Rothbard* podcast, we did a series on democracy and kind of pushing back on some of the objections out there. And some of that has kind of sparked this sort of romantic notion, that again, there's something to be said about being able to tap into that sort of Jeffersonian tradition of just wanting to be left alone. And these left-libertarians, they don't want to leave people alone; they want to make everyone share what they think are libertarian values. And I don't think that's a way of getting to that sort of peaceful social cooperation that we should really be aspiring to.

WOODS: So what does this mean for us in practical terms, what we should be doing? Obviously, you do have to educate the general public, but still, that's all I do. That really is

all I do. I don't do anything else, and I'm not going to be running for office or working on campaigns or anything like that. I'm just talking about an orientation, the way I look at the world and relative importance of things. I've spent an awful long time trying to explain to people why the Fed manipulating interest rates is a bad thing. And we still need to do that, because otherwise people will continue to think that the free market causes recessions and government fixes them. And it's important to — but at this point in time, I wonder if giving the public more lectures on interest rates is really the most urgently necessary thing. So what do you think?

BISHOP: So I can talk about what I've been doing. I've been very fortunate; my wife and I were able to move back to Bay County, Florida. Still working with the Mises Institute, doing events, things like that, but a lot of my work I'm doing remotely. And so what I've been trying to do is taking advantage of now being physically in my hometown, is that I think there's something to be learned, again, from the populist element of Trump, which goes to this inherent sense the public has that there's corruption and something foul with political power as it exists now.

I think what's interesting here is that if we're looking for historic historical episodes that we can learn lessons from — because this is one of the pessimistic takes out there, right, is that, oh, populism ends up devolving into bribing a population. And this is very clear in Latin America, right? If you go to a Latin American country and you talk about populism, libertarians are going to be terrified, because populism tends to be like in Chavez in Venezuela, right? Well, America actually has a very interesting different tradition there. Ryan McMaken has written some articles on it.

We're both reading a book right now called *The Transatlantic Persuasion*, which is about the democratic liberal parties of both the UK, Canada, and the US after the second half of the 1800s. And it's fascinating because, like Samuel Tilden, which his name's brought up a lot because it's an example as a presidential candidate — you know, history shows he definitely won the election, but we do not talk about President Tilden, because it was a backroom deal. Republicans got the White House in exchange for the Democrats getting the post-Civil War Reconstructionist laws taken off, the way it worked. But Tilden was a politician who combined a really strong understanding of like the virtues of sound money with a critique of political privilege and its corruption in markets and in economies. And with a strong anti — and he applied that within New York on cleaning up a lot of the corruption there.

So what I would suggest for libertarians, if you're interested in politics, I would not try to focus on these broad-scale, like libertarian purity, universal sort of things. Look locally, right? And stop talking about national politics and pontificating on that. Look at the way that you can apply these ideas locally, because you're living in a community with a municipal government. Within that municipal government, you can get up there and you can you can rail against mask requirements. You can rail against businesses being closed. You can rail against a bad contract. Here in Bay County, we actually have a very active FBI investigation. We've had multiple politicians indicted in the past year for misuse of Hurricane Michael funds and some stuff like that. I think libertarians should be embracing an explicitly anti-corruption sort of narrative that can be applied at any level of government if you simply pay enough attention.

The other side of it is that one of the things that this past year has really highlighted, I think, conservatives, normie, Boomer Republicans, right, they're now really getting serious I think

about the education issue. And so this is another thing that I'm currently in the process of trying to get — the Mises Institute is giving away copies of *Economics In One Lesson*, free. Anyone out there that needs a copy — you know, Christmas coming up — Mises.org/OneLesson, you can get a copy there for yourself. So what I'm trying to do is to use our actual high schools to distribute *Economics In One Lesson* to all the seniors here, because that's the year that you take economics. And simply by engaging with the school board, I had to do an email highlighting what state educational standards Hazlitt touches on and had to give them a copy of the book to review. But if this is successful — I'm going through the process — that's a way of touching people, engaging with political bodies locally, to even help on the education side, without any sort of having to feel that you're getting your hands dirty or trying to get involved in a campaign or something like that.

I think that in general, though, just recognizing that there are political narratives out there, that we don't have to act like we're above our neighbors. Just simply the fact that we understand a very niche brand of economics, that is obviously right, but they don't get it, that doesn't make them inferior to us; it means that we should engage them on their level. And I think that thinking locally and building upwards, we can do a lot more in our community rather than using politics as a way of highlighting our own moral superiority in our own eyes.

WOODS: Well, I'm not really sure what I've resolved here, because I haven't been very specific as to exactly how my life is going to change, but I'm just telling you how my thoughts about how I'm planning to describe the right way forward might change a bit. I just can't imagine lecturing people that they're wasting their time being involved in politics. I don't think they're wasting their time. And yet, there are huge amounts of resources that are wasted, because maybe they're focusing on the wrong races, very, very expensive races, and that money could be put to better use. But certainly at the local level, there are a lot of local areas that have pushed back, that have been able to get some semblance of normality returned. At the local level, those are very cheap races, and you can accomplish something at the local level.

As you say, it's within the context of politics that people tend to hear about any of the issues you and I talk about. They're not as a matter of habit viewing Mises.org all the time. They find out about the debate over economic policy, foreign policy, whatever, only because they hear it debated within the political sphere. So if we choose not to be there, then our voice does not get heard. That's end of discussion. That's not debatable. You cannot debate this with me. If our voices aren't there, we don't get heard.

BISHOP: Right. What we're trying to do, the state is a very powerful enemy. We should not leave any weapon against it unused. It's interesting too, particularly even like state level politics? The quality of people that we have out there. I mean, South Carolina, for example, there's several members of state house that are big Mises.org fans. I know there's at least two state house members — one of them has actually written an article for us. There's a state senator named Tom Davis that actually has a — he took I think all of the online classes back in the day. He owns the Enemy of the State shirt, which is great. I was actually at Ron DeSantis' Christmas party last year, and I ran into a state rep named Anthony Sabatini. He represents Lake County, not far from your neck of the woods. And I mentioned the Mises Institute, and he started asking me about Murray Rothbard. And he's in his 30s. Like, this was great. I think that, again, at that state level, there's a lot of — our ideas especially I know a lot of the content on Mises.org recently has been about political decentralization and the way that states can react — and your work, and *Nullification* is something that every single Republican out there should be reading if we're looking at a Biden administration. And I think we

uniquely, by focusing on these sort of things, have something to provide normal Republicans in a way, that I think it would be a great disservice to ignore that medium entirely.

WOODS: All right, well, this has been therapeutic for me, just to say things that I've been thinking and especially, just 2020 has been so disorienting. I mean, this is a year when, in January, to think about the things I was complaining about in January, and now I look at the dystopia we live in, geez, it's amazing what can happen with political power in the hands of terrible people. I mean, it's things you couldn't even have imagined. And then that the public goes along with it, because — I don't know, there are a lot of reasons public goes along with it, but in part, we just haven't got smart, charismatic, well-spoken people out there who could just smash this. Now, I know that the media is not going to give them attention and all that, but I don't know, one way or another, that stuff has a way of making its way out. And we just don't, and I think we'd be better off if we did in so-called public life.

So let's see, what's this weekend coming up? I guess about a week and a half from now, I have this event where there are about 100 state legislators from around the country coming, and I'm going to be talking to them about what's happened in 2020, and what they ought to do, and how they ought to do what I'm suggesting, which is to become high-profile, outspoken, not just another state rep you've never heard of, but outspoken, on top of the data, getting the information out to the public, because the media does cover people like that. Even if it's unfair, the name gets out, people find out about what you're saying. All right, any final words before I let you go, Tho?

BISHOP: Well, one thing I know that — again, as a fan of Michael Malice, a frequent *Tom Woods Show* guest, one of the things, one of the really optimistic things — for all the bad that 2020 has brought on, the fact that the media's grasp on the narrative has never been looser than it is right now. In fact, I mean, you look at Donald Trump. I don't care what you think about the guy. You could think he's awful. What's undeniable is that for five years, you had a nonstop media narrative about how he's a sexist white supremacist, and yet on last Tuesday, even if it wasn't enough to win, he improved his standing with every single demographic besides white men. And again, that shows that the media is being less effective now than ever before, and this is precisely why —

And now, I mean, you add the illegitimacy of what's going on right now. I saw a poll, I think it was a Rasmussen poll that I think 70% of Republicans are significantly questioning the legitimacy of this election. I don't care if that's simply a their own bias working towards them, if it's simply a coping mechanism, the fact that you have 70% of Republicans actively starting to question the legitimacy of the government, again, you're going to have millions of Trump supporters that consider themselves enemies of the state underneath the Biden administration. That doesn't get them fully there, but that's something. There are some very interesting things going on, in spite of all the horrors of 2020, because obviously the electoral process is never going to solve all the problems. But starting to get cracks in the true power structures that have brought us to this point, that the progressive use so well, that could actually start providing subtle changes. So for all the negativity out there, it's important to feel like you're not losing, to stay optimistic. There are signs that we should be taking as good things going forward.

WOODS: Well, Tho Bishop with the Mises Institute, the website is Mises.org. I can't believe there's anybody listening who does not know that Mises Institute yet. But on the other hand, Tho, I have a lot of new listeners because of the COVID stuff, and if I send them over to the

Mises Institute, I may never get them back, because at Mises.org, you could spend the rest of ten lifetimes absorbing all the material that's available there. So I appreciate what you do over there and your time today. Thanks a lot.

BISHOP: Thank you, Tom.