



Episode 448: The Iran Deal and Rand Paul's Response

Guest: Scott Horton

WOODS: I think I just had you on like a week ago or something like that, but this situation screams out for Scott Horton. I'm sure I've got some listeners who, in the middle of the night are waking up, screaming, "Scott Horton!" They've got to know, what does Scott make of this whole situation, not only with Iran, but with Rand Paul's reaction, which will be of particular interest to our listeners here. Let's leave Rand Paul out of the picture for a minute. Why don't you tell us what the basic contours of the agreement with Iran look like?

HORTON: Okay, so first of all, yeah, you're right. Let's wait on the Rand bit. But for your more right-leaning audience members who've been subjected to a lifetime of anti-Iranian propaganda etc., let me just say that I hate Barack Obama more than all of you do, and ever since the very first day I ever heard his name when he was introduced to me on CNN as my new hero I'm supposed to worship, as some kind of rock star or whatever, I identified him as my enemy immediately, and I've been doing everything I can to oppose him on all 10 of his wars or whatever — I lost count — and every other one of his policies this entire time. So this is not — nothing you're hearing from me is coming from any kind of Democrat-leaning point of view at all. It's got nothing to do with that. I hated Bill Clinton before I hated George Bush before I hated Barack Obama. I'm completely non-partisan like that, and I'm 100% anti.

That being said, Obama gets to be Obama the Great for a week or two here for getting this deal done, because here's why: the Iranian nuclear program never was a weapons threat. It never was. That was all just hype from the American War Party based out of Tel Aviv. And the Israeli policy is an Iranian nuclear program at all is tantamount to a nuclear weapon, because it provides what they call a threat — what America calls a threat too. Anyone who can defend themselves, or anyone who threatens their hegemony, in their case, over the region, and in our case, over the world, they get turned a threat, as though they're an aggressive threat. When even Netanyahu himself and his former defense minister Ehud Barak, who is also the former prime minister of Israel, are both on the record saying they never did fear an Iranian first strike even if they had a nuke. They just feared it would limit their freedom of action in the region, meaning their ability to launch aggressive wars against the Palestinians, against the Lebanese, etc. And they explained that to Jeffrey Goldberg in *The Atlantic* for crying out loud. Do not fear first strike.

But the point is that America's had this cold war with Iran since 1979 when they overthrew America's sock puppet, fascist dictatorship, and then the hostages were taken, which is of course horrible PR for them. And so we've had this cold war, and the nuclear program has served as the single outstanding, gigantic, fake issue that divides our country from theirs, that prevents them from being treated like a normal country in the so-called international community with trade relations and etc. like that with the rest of the world, under all these layers of sanctions and repeatedly threatened with aggressive war. All options are on the table, even Rand Paul says, quote unquote. They all say.

And so now what's happened is Iran has taken their safeguarded – IAEA-safeguarded, civilian nuclear electricity program, and they have agreed to scale it way, way, way back to limit their enrichment percentage to a measly 3.67%, which is industrial electricity grade uranium-235, which cannot be used for a nuke, and very low levels of it – to not stockpile it, basically, but to use everything that they produce all the time, to shut down their secondary facility, where they had for a time enriched up to 20%, which is still short of bomb grade, but is scary and a great talking point. It's really just for their medical isotope reactor that Gerald Ford gave them back when their government belonged to ours when I was a baby.

But anyway, they've agreed to basically turn Fordow into nothing but a research facility with no nuclear material involved in it whatsoever, and they're going to with American engineers – not just, you know, Chinese ones or something – they're bringing in Americans to come in and help them completely reconfigure and really rebuild the Arak reactor – that's A-R-A-K – Arak facility, so it will not produce heavy water, not be reliant on heavy water, and it will produce – the plutonium waste that comes out of it will be so polluted with other isotopes and whatever it will be completely useless for bomb fuel. And even if it was sweet stuff, as good as you could get for bomb fuel, like what the Americans produce and use in our nuclear weapons, they don't have the reprocessing facility to get the actual usable plutonium out of there anyway.

But so Arak is going to be completely scaled back. They're going from 20,000 operating centrifuges down to six, and they're expanding their safeguards regime, their inspections regime beyond any regime in world history. They will be the most inspected nuclear program ever, from the mines to all the conversion facilities where they make the ore to the conversion facility where they turn the ore into uranium hexafluoride gas. The centrifuge factories, where there are no nuclear materials at all, but just this is where they're making the centrifuges; they're going to have the right to inspect those too.

So where they have already, Tom, been verified umpteen million times as having not diverted any uranium to any military or other special purpose, quote unquote, now they will be double, extra, super, happy, lucky wish verified to have not done so. It always was a safeguard program. Now it is safeguarded beyond all reason. And then in exchange for that, they're getting the sanctions lifted.

And so that's basically the deal is this could be the beginning of the end of America's cold war against Iran. Which after all has been waged against them mostly — other than for Israeli politics and Saudi politics — because so many in the American government resent them for overthrowing the government that our government had foisted on them. America overthrew their democratically elected prime minister in 1953 and installed the Shah Reza Pahlavi, right-wing, fascist dictator, who tortured his people to death. And they finally overthrew him. And we never quite got over that. How dare they defy and declare independence from the American empire, by overthrowing the Shah?

And at the time Jimmy Carter said, oh, 1953, that's ancient history. Well, 26 years ago — that was 26 years before when Jimmy Carter said that in '79 — 26 years ago, H.W. Bush was the president of the United States. If the Iranians had overthrown the American government and installed some ayatollah to rule over us back in the days of H.W. Bush in the early '90s, would we be over that by now and that would be ancient history to us and we would have forgiven the Iranians? Hell no, we haven't even forgiven them for overthrowing the government that we installed when we did that to them. So declaring independence from us is a sin almost worthy of getting nuked. Imagine if they had actually done to us what we had done to them.

So in other words, there never was a nuke threat, and now their nuclear program is more marginalized than anyone could have possibly hoped to get, really. And so what's to cry about? Everything's fine, other than a bunch of hype. And you'll notice in all the hype and all the crying about it, they don't ever get into the safeguards agreement; they don't ever get into what kind of waste the Arak reactor is going to be producing now. They just go, oh, the Iranians are evil. Oh they're Muslims. Oh, they're extremists. Oh, you can't believe them. Oh, their nuclear — you gave them a path to a bomb. Blah, blah, blah. A bunch of slogans and no details, because it's a bunch of bull.

WOODS: What about this argument that the agreement doesn't touch on the problem of the several hostages that the Iranian government is holding, the Americans who are being held in Iran. This is a talking point that is all over Drudge and all over right-wing radio. What is the story there?

HORTON: Okay, well there's a few things there. First of all, for them to say that they're hostages as though this is part of their negotiating position for the nuclear deal is just a lie. Now, I presume they're innocent because, hey, they're just accused by a government of doing something, so that doesn't mean anything to me, and they're Americans, so I'm on their side. So absolutely, the United States government has the mandate to negotiate their release, especially if they're being treated outside the law in anyway inside Iran. Fine.

But that's absolutely a red herring. It has nothing to do with the nuclear issue whatsoever. And if the people who are using that as a talking point to try to screw the nuclear deal really meant what they said, they would support the nuclear deal. Because again, this is the huge first step on beginning to end the cold war between us. So if you really want those four released instead of to try to beat peaceniks over the

head, truthniks over the head with, oh, there are four Americans being held in Iran, then you would want for America to cool off our high temperature relationship with them. I'm mixing all my metaphors up — I'm sorry — with temperatures here. But then so now that we have, in other words, now that we have a nuclear deal, it should be easier to negotiate their release.

But why in the world should anyone insist that that should have to be part of the nuclear deal? You know what? You know what else isn't part of the nuclear deal? Iran's relationship with the government in Kabul, in Afghanistan. And you know what else isn't in the nuclear deal? America's now 13-year-long alliance with Iran, fighting a war for them in Iraq against Saddam Hussein and the enemies who came after him and for the Iranian-backed Shiite parties there. And you know what also isn't in the deal? How much liquid water might be under the dark side of the moon. What does any of that have to do with scaling back Iran's nuclear program? Nothing. It's a red herring, Tom, because they've got no argument.

You notice the people who say that they're so terrified of an Iranian nuclear bomb are adamantly and absolutely opposed to doing anything to scale back their nuclear program? Their definition of a good deal is one where Iran just doesn't have a nuclear program at all anymore. Well, the problem there is there is no negotiation that could ever end in that conclusion ever, and they know that. The only way to prevent them from having a nuclear program is to invade their country. Because even if you bomb them with all your best bunker busters, then all you'd do is now give them a real reason to seek nuclear weapons, with the know-how and the material that they already have. They could start over and then begin seeking a nuclear weapon. That's what Saddam did after Israel bombed Iraq, the Osirak reactor in 1981, which was an IAEA-safeguarded facility. Then Saddam put his nuclear program in secret and underground and began to try to make nuclear weapons, which was discovered after the first Gulf War.

So that could happen if we bomb them. All we'd do is give them a reason to make nukes. The only way to stop them from making nukes is to send in the entire Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Navy, and fight a war against Iran that'll be double, triple, quadruple the size of Iraq and Afghanistan combined. If everybody's ready to give up their first and second born son for that, then go sign yourself up, I guess.

WOODS: Let's switch to Rand Paul now. I was reading on his Facebook page, he had a lot of criticism for his statement, but he did have some people who were supporting it. And I don't want to say that none of them sounded intelligent, but the opponents of the statement — because he came out against the deal — seem to me to be far more articulate — and now, again, maybe that could be my confirmation bias at work there. But a lot of it was just, "America, America, America," and you know, "Iran is a terrorist country," and, "They support terrorism," and it was all at that level. Not to say that I endorse any aspect of the Iranian government or its behavior.

But it was all at that kind of level. That was where his support was coming from. But he's got three reasons that he says that the deal is bad. I'd like to go through all three. I'll read them all, and we'll go one at a time.

He says, "The proposed agreement with Iran is unacceptable for the following reasons:

"1) Sanctions relief precedes evidence of compliance, 2) Iran is left with significant nuclear capacity, 3) it lifts the ban on selling advanced weapons to Iran.

And then he says, "I will, therefore, vote against the agreement. While I continue to believe that negotiations are preferable to war, I would prefer to keep the interim agreement in place instead of accepting a bad deal."

Meanwhile, his father seems to be in favor of the deal. So let's go one at a time — or do you have any overall reaction to this before we get into the details?

HORTON: Yeah, sure. I mean, all he's doing is playing politics. His reasons are a bunch of bogus crap, and we'll get to them in a second. But it's the disgrace of Rand choosing to do this, and how. You can picture him just as clearly as me with his thumbnail in his mouth, nervously asking, oh, what might be good for my ambitions, rather than what is good and true and best for the American people, for the future, and anything else, and it's just disgusting. It's worse than disappointing. It's just a catastrophe. And I say that as someone who can't get over the fact of just how much potential is there and how much good he could be doing right there.

And we can talk more about the politics of it in a second, I guess, but the second thing I would say is he's been good on Iran in the past. Now, if you confront him with that, he'll call you a liar and say that he never said that. But the truth is he used to say, come on, Iran's GDP is .3% of ours or whatever. They're nothing, and we can deal with them. It's okay. I mean, no they're not perfect — like you just said. No, it's a government and it's a theocracy, and we've got some difficulties with them and whatever. Nobody loves the government of Iran, but surely we can handle them.

Now he takes that back and pretends, oh yeah, they're this big threat. He also has a history of voting for sanctions, but saying to detractors, no, really, I support the president's negotiations here. The president wants these sanctions to give him a stronger hand in the negotiations to stave off war. So I'm sorry if you disagree with me, but I swear it's a means to an end, and it's a good end, and so trust me. And I disagreed with that. I thought he should have taken a principled stand. But at least he made a good case there, right? And then he also voted against some sanctions when they were deliberately obviously meant to sabotage Obama's negotiations. And they were sanctions that Obama was not asking for. And he said, no, and voted against them, and said come on, I support negotiations. We'll see the final settlement, but I support the president's attempt to negotiate this thing and to make it okay. So he has a history of — even though I disagree with him — being thoughtful and making thoughtful arguments about all this.

Now comes the actual nuclear deal, which is great, and which is far better than pretty much all of the wonks, the ones who aren't ideologically bent, you know, just against whatever Obama's doing or against Iran or whatever for Republican talking point reasons. But all of the nuclear wonks and the rest of that whole policy community, they all think that this is, wow, I can't believe they're going to completely give up the Fordow facility; they're going to scale back their centrifuges that much; they're going to allow that much inspection and whatever. Everybody's really pleased with it.

And then here comes his bogus reasons. "1) Sanctions relief precedes evidence of compliance." Well that's just not true. So I don't know whether that's a lie or whether he's playing dumb or how you people want to characterize that. I'll let your audience decide for themselves what that means. But it's just not true. They have to implement their end of the deal, and as they implement their end of the deal, America will implement the sanctions relief. And so will the European Union and the United Nations.

And it's actually impossible to just end sanctions by just snapping your fingers. That's not how it works anyway. You've got take down a whole bureaucracy and all that. So the great compromise — the Iranians said, you must end all sanctions immediately, and the Americans said, you must implement your entire agreement immediately, and they both said, well, that's impossible, so let's just do both at the same time. And then they shook on it. So it's just wrong, is the most charitable explanation there. Although when Justin Raimondo called his office and said, "Where's his statement?" when he hadn't given his statement yet, they said he's reading the entire document. So what's his excuse for misunderstanding when he read it himself?

WOODS: Ah, okay, that's a good point. That's a good point. And I might add, by the way, and you would know this as well as anyone, that that type of insistence, that the other side has to do everything before anything happens, is the way the U.S. government has tried to push countless so-called negotiations over the years. Like I'm pretty sure in the Balkans or with Milošević — who again, not anybody I'd want to invite to my home for dinner — but they would make these ridiculous requirements that of course no sovereign state is ever going to accede to. And these are all well educated diplomats; they know no sovereign state is going to accede to it. So apparently the neocons just expect every negotiation to go that way, that you do everything we say up front, and then maybe we'll think about doing something. No negotiation has ever — and I mean, it really never goes that way.

HORTON: Yeah, and again, we're talking about Ron Paul's son here. We're talking about a guy who — like I was just rehearsing the history here over the last few years — who has had nuanced positions on the Iran negotiations and the sanctions and all these things. He's not just your average ridiculous idiot Republican senator. He's something different than them in some ways. He certainly must know better than this. Absolutely.

And then, "Iran is left with significant nuclear capacity." As we just talked about? Yes, that's right. They still are spinning centrifuges and enriching uranium. It's their

unalienable right in the Non-Proliferation Treaty that they're signatories to — unlike Israel — that we're signatories to, and our government is bound to respect their right to peaceful nuclear technology. In fact, our government is mandated under that treaty to help them with their peaceful nuclear technology, as long as it remains all safeguarded, etc.

So yes, they'll still have a nuclear reactor that's putting out completely polluted crap that cannot be used for plutonium bombs, and they'll still be enriching very small amounts of uranium to far below weapons grade, and it will all be even more inspected and safeguarded and non-diverted than ever before, and boo hoo. What another lie, another fake excuse to pretend to be against this thing for political reasons. How disingenuous of Rand Paul, as though — I mean, this is the Benjamin Netanyahu line. The only definition of a good deal is one where their entire nuclear program ceases to exist.

Again, like exactly in your metaphor, it's a perfect one: the Rambouillet Accord to Milošević, the offer that he couldn't possibly accept, which is just sabotage in order to say, see, we tried to negotiate with them, but they only understand one thing. Force. That's how dishonest people create excuses for themselves to get into fights. It has nothing to do with real diplomacy or negotiation whatsoever.

And then, "3) Lifting the ban on selling advanced weapons to Iran." Well, all the sovereign nations all trade weapons with each other and allow selling weapons to each other. The ban against Iran doing that was all part of the sanctions from these negotiations. Now the truth is, they don't have much of a weapons budget. Saudi Arabia outspends them 25 to 1. They do not have much of a military budget at all. I mean, their air force is just left over F-14s from the '70s when our government owned theirs, and they hardly fly. And their navy is I think maybe two battleships; I think just one battleship and a bunch of motorboats, fiberglass motorboats. And then whatever missiles they have are mostly all domestically engineered. They've been on international sanctions for quite a while, and they have their own program.

And the other thing I would say about that is there's a report by Robert Perry — no, not Robert Perry — Mark Perry. There are so many journalists I can't keep straight. Mark Perry wrote a thing about how the arms dealers in America are now lining up — or at that point were lining up behind the deal, because instead of just arming up America under the excuse of having to bomb Iran one day, they want to arm Iran. The American companies want to sell weapons to Iran. They want access to those markets. And so we were joking about how, yeah, you got to get the military industrial complex behind the peace deal. It's the only way to move forward here. And it seems like maybe that's what worked. But anyway, if they're abiding by the deal, then who cares if they have weapons? I mean, people make such a big deal about how they give money and arms to Hezbollah and Hamas, but we're talking about very light arms. They have no interest, I don't believe, in giving Hamas heavy weapons. And what heavy weapons do they even really have or could afford?

And see here's the other thing too: all of this goes, and what Rand is pretending to accept here is this false premise that he now pretends he never knew better than, that ooh, those sneaky Iranians. They don't mean well. They're going to make a bomb anyway. They're out to get ya. Oh, Obama just gave them the store. Oh, he's been fooled. We've all been taken to the cleaners. Those dastardly Iranian, Persian rug dealer bargainers. They've got the best of us and whatever. When the truth of the matter is, ever since Bush called them the Axis of Evil, they put their hands up in the air – even before that, but especially then – they put their hands up; they opened all their books up, and they said, don't shoot! We're not making nukes. Look, look, look. And they've been doing their best to prove that all along.

Now they've finally got the sanctions relief that they've been promising the Iranian people, who are really angry about the economy, because as you might note – and this would be a different interview, Tom – but Ahmadinejad was a Keynesian, and he completely destroyed the Iranian economy. So the crippling, Democrat sanctions on top of that just put their economy in an absolute tailspin. And so the people, they're demanding relief. They are demanding a normalization of relations. They've got a majority population under the age of 30 who don't remember the revolution, who haven't been living under an American sock puppet dictatorship their whole lifetime like the rest of the region has. And so they want normalization. They want peace. There is very little motive for the Iranian government such as it is now anyway to violate this deal, to take advantage of the deal in a way to what? Arm up Hezbollah powerful enough that they would dare to try to invade northern Israel or something? I mean, give me a break. This is ridiculous.

Same thing with, oh, they're going to get away with secretly making nuclear weapons at their military bases. But every two weeks they're going to sneak all their research out the backdoor and move it to somewhere else in order to evade the inspectors and all this. There's just no reason to believe that. That's not the context of the deal here. The context of the deal here is that the Iranian government wants this deal and wants to be able to get along and normalize relations.

Let me say one more thing about that, too, because back to the hostages. Who benefits from the hostages in Iran? Their John McCains, right? Their neocon hawks in Iran who don't want peace. They're the ones who benefit from things like holding those hostages. Well, they're their hostages and not prisoners. So that is all the better reason to support them, because just like in America, in Iran, war and even cold war is the health of the state. And so when Iran is under sanctions, who benefits from that more than anyone else? The Iranian government. They get to say, look at what the great Satan is doing to us. This isn't Ahmadinejad and John Maynard Keynes' fault. This is America's fault for doing this to us. And they get to blame all their woes on us, and all their hawks get to – and they get to unite their people, like Americans united behind George W. Bush, around their horrible government in a way that they wouldn't.

And when we put all their oil on the black market by outlawing it under sanctions, well who do you think runs the black market in oil in Iran? Not just the right-wingers or

the fundamentalists or something, but the very, very worst. The Revolutionary Guard Corps, the Quds Force, their special forces and their highest tier kind of SS, you know, to compare to the regular army. Those are the guys who run the black market, and those are the guys who stand the most to lose by normalizing relations and putting Iranian oil back on the open market where regular businessmen are the ones doing the selling instead of the very worst part of the regime.

WOODS: Scott, let's talk about the political angle particularly for Rand. I read an article on the *American Conservative* website about this, and then also about the trouble this agreement causes for the eventual Republican nominee. Assuming the agreement goes through, that the eventual Republican nominee will be debating it in 2016, talking about it in 2016, and it will have been in effect for a year. And to be belligerently opposed to it after a year of its going into effect, when it looks like Americans by and large support the agreement, is going to make that nominee seem like he's in more of a time warp than the typical Republican candidate makes himself appear to be. That's a problem.

But it's much more of a problem for Rand. Now, I'll grant you that the agreement is a tricky political issue for him. I don't mean that the answer is tricky. The answer is you shouldn't pander to people who are always going to hate you and never give you a dime. That's not tricky. But nevertheless, I will concede that in the age of ISIS — that when Republican militarism, which had died down for about 10 seconds, has been revved up again — in that age it is hard to appear to be for diplomacy and solving problems in that sort of way. So I grant you that he has a difficult row to hoe in that sense.

But on the other hand, for people who say that you and I are naive to think that somebody like Rand should just take the Ron Paul position and speak his mind openly and just stick with it and be principled and be different from all the other candidates, I would say to the contrary, the really naive people are the ones who thought that by doing things like this, Rand will appease people who despise him. Or he's going to really win a whole lot of votes. These are people who will vote for Ted Cruz or Scott Walker or Mike Huckabee or even Marco Rubio. These people will vote for any of those people over Rand.

And I did, by the way, have somebody who is very, very, very loosely attached to Rand say, well, what they're trying to do is angle for those voters who would take Rand as their second choice, and you can't just totally alienate them by having such a radically different foreign policy. You've got to have Rand be viewed by those people as being at least somewhere in their same moral universe. How do you sort all this out?

HORTON: Man, well, listen. There's so much there, and I'm sorry if I repeat myself a little bit from last time, because a lot of it will be the same kind of stuff I have to say, I guess. But when you say it's the wrong thing to pander to people who are going to hate you anyway, you're right, but also, hey, it's the wrong thing to do the wrong thing.

WOODS: Period. Period.

HORTON: How about that? What the hell is he doing?

WOODS: Yeah, I'm just thinking in terms of sheer political —

HORTON: In terms of sheer political — okay.

WOODS: And the reason I do that is that I'm dealing a lot of times with people who will defend every single thing Rand does on the grounds that it makes good political sense, and I'm saying it doesn't even make good political sense.

HORTON: Right. No, I absolutely agree with you that it does not. Okay, so let me rewind a little bit to the Ron Paul campaign. When Ron would go on TV and talk, he was just perfect, man. 2008 and 2012, I mean, this is the greatest thing that ever happened to liberty in human history. And I'll fist fight anybody who wants to argue about it. But his campaign blew it, and we all know it. What happened was they ran him to the right like you do in a typical cookie cutter primary situation; you run your candidate to the right in the primary and then to the center in the general election.

And what they didn't understand was — his political people, they didn't have the vision to understand that what they should have been selling him as was changing the whole game. And you know what? It's true, I'm a Republican, but I'm not running as a Republican. I'm running just as an American. I'm running as peace and liberty versus death and taxes. I want all Republicans, all Democrats, all American Independents and non-voters, I want you all to change your priorities. We need to end the empire; we need to reinstate the Bill of Rights by repealing all of the emergency edicts of the 21st century, and we need to kick all of the banks off of welfare. This is our policy. This is what we agree on. It's the American people versus the establishment. I need all you people — you need to register Republican, bum rush these primaries, take this decision away from the Republican Party leadership. This is the Democratic Republican People of America versus the War Party. Let's do it.

That was the message, and he still would have lost anyway, but it would have been a lot clearer about what's going on here. He's better than the liberals on everything that they're actually good on, like, say, human rights issues and anti-war stuff, that kind of thing. He's better than the conservatives on anything they're actually good on, like the IRS or you know — I can't think of much else that they're good on. A couple of things. And yeah, I can't think of much for either side. But he's better than both on the things that they're actually good on and, yeah, so that's the message.

Now what's Rand Paul doing? What he's doing is, it's almost like he sort of kind of gets that, but he's got the palest imitation of it. Right, so he's going after criminal justice reform, which is great and is going to be a really great way to recruit millions and millions of black voters into the Republican Party, right? No. And it's going to be a great way to inspire Republican voters, rank and file right-wingers who are, you know, regular Huckabee voters, they're all going to rally around him for that, because of just

how much he cares about fairness for the poor black folk that are all sitting in prison, right? No. So he's kind of doing that bipartisan reach thing, but he's doing it in a way where he's like pandering — again, in this case, he's pandering doing the right thing — but he's pandering to all sides.

Whereas Ron had this purist libertarian position, or virtually purist libertarian position, where he's got something for everyone, and his mission is lead the American people. Change their mind. Argue with Giuliani if you've got to. Don't back down. And tell the American people the truth. Tell them what they don't want to know. No, the fundamentals of the economy are not sound. No, the empire is not making you safer. This is the truth. This is what's happening. And I really think Rand should be doing this as a senator, not a presidential candidate right now. He's too early. Just like when he endorsed Romney. He's premature all over the place here, trying to get Paul Ryan's losing spot on the Romney ticket. Oh, I'd be honored; here, let me stab my father in the back at the convention for a chance, for a missed chance at Paul Ryan's losing spot. He should be waiting; he should be taking these positions and leading the American people.

And here's where, this is the real strongest part of my argument. When it comes to foreign policy, when it comes to the Islamic State or Iran or Syria or Libya or anything else, guess what. Ron Paul is awesome on all this stuff. The Republican Party and the media, the people on TV, they want to pretend like crazy old Ron is the kook on all this? Ron is the one who's 100% right about this, has been all along. Where Rand agrees and parrots his father is where he's good. And two solid examples: Libya and Syria. He was against both interventions there, and when cornered, he says, oh yeah? Well all you right-wing hawks agree with Obama in Libya on that, and look how that turned out. And he scores points by taking the anti-interventionist position.

You just heard me talk about the Iran nuclear program, what it really is, what this nuclear deal does, and Ron Paul takes the same position. Rand Paul ought to be gleeful — or that's a horrible word; I don't know — he ought to be really happy for the opportunity to whoop the ass of all 20 other Republican candidates on all of these issues. Go out there like Jackie Chan and fight all of them at once, and just whoop 'em. And be like, you know what? Lindsey Graham's the best one y'all got, so you want him to go first? I'll let you swing first. Go ahead. And just whoop 'em. Rand, all he has to do is say, but Lindsey Graham, you're for fighting as Iran's air force in Iraq and have been for the last decade and a half, but you're for al Qaeda fighting against Iran's allies in Syria. How do you explain that? How's Lindsey Graham going to explain that? That his policy's on the side of al Qaeda, and Rand's is on the side of — not necessarily on the side of, but at least not against the secular, clean-shaven-chin-wearing dictator in the three-piece suit, you know?

The War Party, they're not just horrible, evil monsters; they're liars. And they're idiots. And their policies make no sense at all. Which is why when Ron Paul fought them, he made mincemeat out of them and won new acolytes by the millions. You know, he went from little old Ron, the best-kept secret among libertarians in the U.S. House

that nobody else ever heard of to a global phenomenon just by telling the truth and whooping these guys.

And Rand, you know — it's not that he's afraid of arguing with Lindsey Graham. It's he's afraid of Sheldon Adelson. He's afraid of the Israeli fifth column in America and its money. And he went and met Adelson at a restaurant, and I think it's pretty fair to assume — and I admit it's an assumption; it's not an accusation of a fact — but I think it's a pretty fair assumption that he agreed to quit being any good on Iran. And Adelson would agree to at least not target him for complete destruction. Some kind of compromise along those lines. And he's been willing to do that. And it's bad politics, again. Think of the debates. When he's trying to be just another Santorum, just another Huckabee, where's the advantage in that? Instead of being like Ron. When Ron took on Giuliani, he changed the world.

WOODS: Well, look at the Bernie Sanders phenomenon. Now, obviously Bernie Sanders is very different from Ron Paul. But he's obviously tapping into something similar, in that he is viewed rightly or wrongly as being an outsider who is fighting against the seemingly inevitable coronation of somebody that so few people really in their heart of hearts genuinely want, but feel like they may wind up having to pull the lever for. Now, Sanders himself will wind up endorsing Hilary Clinton anyway, so he won't be 1% of the man Ron Paul was. That's for sure. But the point is he's attracting gigantic crowds, because he's saying things that no one else will say. Most of them are very, very dumb and destructive things. But he's saying things that nobody else will say. He's not just getting up there and giving a canned Rick Santorum speech or a canned Hilary Clinton speech. He's saying the opposite of what a lot of these people say, and he's getting traction.

Donald Trump is the same way. Again, it's not to say that Donald Trump takes the right positions on things. But he is viewed as being somebody who speaks frankly. Even though his record is all over the place, he speaks frankly; he doesn't back track; he doesn't cow tow to anybody. That's what people like about him more than they like his particular positions. I bet the average person has no idea what Donald Trump's views on healthcare are, but they like the fact that they at least can pin him down, and he doesn't talk like a mealy mouthed politician.

HORTON: Yeah. No, I read this great article in *Politico*, where they had an Iowa caucus guy say, well, I supported Ron Paul in both of his previous ones, even though I'm really against his foreign policy, but at least I always knew he was telling me the truth. But with Rand, meh, I think I'll vote for Ted Cruz. And it's just like, ah, perfect, right? I could have written that line for a skit making fun of Rand, what a disaster he is, and there it is; it's just perfect.

WOODS: Yeah, hold on a minute; hold on a minute. Let me jump in here, because let's just say we're going to run a test here. We'll let the Rand Paul campaign, the way it's being run now, we'll let it be a test, because you and I are being lectured to that we're being unreasonable, and we want purity, and — (laughing) We want purity? Oh, that's

ridiculous. Ron Paul wasn't even completely "pure," so-called, from my point of view, but I loved him for the message that he was spreading.

But let's have this be a test. If Rand, let's say does 50% better — so let's say Ron did 20% in some state, and Rand gets 30, I'll admit that that strategy worked better. I still don't endorse it, but I'll admit that it worked better. But if he actually does worse than Ron did, then I think those people have to say, you know what? Instead of thinking that in 2016 Rand Paul was going to win the nomination, maybe we should have forgotten all these political calculations and instead said we had this huge momentum coming out of Ron Paul's campaigns. Let's try to duplicate that.

And even with — see, here's another thing. If Rand simply goes along to get along on these major issues, even on taxes — like, okay, I'm going to substitute for the income tax two other major kinds of annoying taxes — that's what he's going to convey to —

HORTON: Well —

WOODS: But the point is, if he's going to keep doing that, he's not going to raise money. That's the thing.

HORTON: Yeah.

WOODS: They say that if he acts like Ron Paul, then he won't get enough votes. But if he doesn't get any money, he's not going to be able to promote himself to get votes, and his money haul so far has been absolutely terrible given that he started off with Ron Paul's mailing list — which Campaign for Liberty has completely destroyed, I would say, by sending out 58 emails a day, begging us for money for heaven knows what. They've wrecked that list. But anyway, at least he's got something. And it has come through incredibly badly for him.

HORTON: Yeah.

WOODS: And by the way, I realize that we're not including just yet the huge haul that I'm sure that super duper competent Jesse Benton has doubtless gotten from the official super PAC, so let me amend my statement, because perhaps \$100 million has been raised.

HORTON: But you know what? Even if he does a bit better than Ron in this or that primary, I don't think that's really the measure. I mean, after all, he is a senator, and he does have that reputation —

WOODS: That is true. He's got a much higher profile and much higher name recognition. That is true.

HORTON: Yeah, always did, and does have that reputation as not so ideological, not so crazy among Republican rank and file types. But so the comparison really should be and I guess it's not falsifiable really, but what he actually could achieve if he would

get up there and be a man and try to lead the Republican Party and put it to them, frankly, do you want to fight on both sides of the Sunni-Shia civil war forever? You want to give another one of your sons for this thing? You want to drive the American nation, not just the government, but the entire country into complete bankruptcy and insolvency? You want to destroy the last vestiges of the Bill of Rights? Then go right ahead and vote for any of the other 20 Republican candidates for primary. You want the Constitution restored? Vote Paul.

Now, if he did that, the number of votes and how well he would do, if he acted that way, that's the real comparison. We'll never know, because he won't do that. We know he won't do that. But that should be the real comparison, how he ends up doing versus how well he would do if he would get up there and try to lead and change the country the way his father did. Because, you know, Ron went from nothing, right? He went from zero — like I said, he was the best-kept secret. If you weren't a libertarian, you never heard of Ron Paul in America before 2008. He went from zero to 600, you know? So Rand was starting at full speed up there.

WOODS: One last thing I want to say is, we get people saying, well, who else you gonna support? As if I'm obligated to support somebody. It would be like — I'm sure that very person if it were to come down to Jeb Bush and Hilary, are they really going to pull the, "Who else are you going to support if I don't support Jeb Bush?" So they don't really believe that argument themselves in their heart of hearts, but who else are you going to support — who's been better?

But there are some things that you just can't do. And one of the things you can't do is take a grotesquely wrong position on something of such incredible significance for the sake of appeasing people. I mean, I cannot imagine that this is his sincerely held belief. Or maybe at this point, it has become his sincerely held belief, because I don't want to accuse him of anything in that sense. But there are some things at which you just have to say, that's just too much. Like, I'm willing to say, all right. You've got to wink and nod on some issues and you know, it's politics, and there's nothing I can do about it. But everybody has to have a limit somewhere.

And I don't care that you've got a great record on this and that. And even then, I'm not sure how great the record is; I'm sure it's better than other senators, but what does that mean? But on something like this, where there's this incredible opportunity to in fact stand out and yes, yes, take some ridicule. You're darn right. But take it like a man for the sake of posterity, who will look back and say, well, how about that guy? He actually stood up to a party that had absolutely zero interest in hearing him, and he stood up, and he lost, but he stood up and said it. Maybe there's some hope that people might actually do things like that in this country.

HORTON: Right, and again, go back to the Ron Paul example. Ron would say, listen, we should abolish the empire completely, so that we can shore up Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid for the people who are dependent on it. And he did have a libertarian position on Social Security: I want to let the young people opt out of it eventually, this kind of thing. But this is a huge compromise for a libertarian, a

libertarian Republican that, hey, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, there are real people who have paid into this who are terribly dependent on it, and we absolutely have to phase it out. Whether you're a libertarian or not, the debt is going to force you to agree with me sooner or later that we have to phase it out.

But right now I'll tell you how we can shore it up in the short term. We'll just stop occupying the planet Earth. We'll stop torturing people. We'll stop paying the salaries of torturers and murderers and killers, and that way, we can spend the money on your grandma instead. Now there's the kind of compromise that I think a libertarian ought to be willing to accept. And I'm against the welfare state root and branch, absolutely.

And yes, look, we live in a so-called democracy, and politics in D.C., it's the art of compromise, it's the art of at least trying to find common ground on things. But so which things do you sacrifice? The possibility of war with Iran in order for a couple of political points, to suck up to people – to sell out to people who aren't buying and to backstab everybody who's dying to love you? That doesn't make sense.

WOODS: Yeah, that's just it. I mean, that's what it boils down to is, ugh, it would have been thrilling to be on board for this. It really would have. And at this point, I just – all the wind is out of the sails of all the young people who – Now, they're still going to do it. They're still going to volunteer. They're still going to spread the word, but I think at this point, you're just going through the motions. I mean, if this isn't enough, what exactly would it take? What would have to happen for you to say, you know, I just don't think this is the right strategy for the liberty movement. Obviously something short of I'm coming over and murdering your mother. At some point, something happens that makes you say I don't like this strategy; I don't buy into it at all.

HORTON: Well and another question is, what is it going to take to get other Republicans like the John Hageeite, born again Christians or the Wall Street bankers, you know, the Jeb Bush supporters, the Israel Lobby – what's it going to take for him to get them on board? There's no amount of backstabbing us and lying and flip flopping around on his belly and pandering before these people that he could possibly do to win them over. They are not interested. And he's already proven to them and to any other Republican faction you could possibly think of that he'll say anything to please you, but he doesn't mean it, because he'll contradict himself to please the other faction the day after tomorrow. In fact, if you Google "Rand Paul flip flop," you'll get a zillion results or whatever. That's the thing he's most known for is that nobody knows what he's for, because he always changes his mind. And then, boy, if a lady TV interviewer says, "But you used to say," he'll scream at her that, "I did not ever say that," when she's reading him back a direct quote. It's ridiculous.

WOODS: All right, Scott, let's wrap up. I want to of course recommend you and your show. ScottHorton.org is where people can find out about you. At the top of the show I told people about where you can be heard, but I'll just remind them in particular the daily show is the one that you want – not the old Daily Show on TV; your daily show, the Scott Horton Show, on LRN.fm, the Liberty Radio Network every weekday from noon to 2pm Eastern time, where you're talking about foreign policy pretty much day

in and day out. People can become experts, frankly, just by listening to you. So we'll steer people over there, and talk to you again soon. Thanks, Scott.

HORTON: Thank you very much for having me again, Tom.