



Episode 556: Lew and Tom Dissect Another GOP Debate, on Foreign Policy

Guest: Lew Rockwell

WOODS: I really didn't think I was going to be enjoying these Republican debates, and I can't say I am, but as you say, I look forward to the next day. And I get now so much feedback from people who say we can't wait till you guys talk about it — we're not interested in watching, but we are interested in hearing what you guys have to say. All right, well, I think — let me give you a few of my impressions, and you jump in with yours, and then we'll get specific.

ROCKWELL: Okay.

WOODS: I thought overall again it was a pretty good performance for Rand, but it was really ridiculous for Wolf Blitzer at the beginning of the debate to look us in the eye through the camera and say we're going to do our best to be equal in the questions that we pose.

ROCKWELL: (laughing)

WOODS: I mean, come on. I mean, in this case —

ROCKWELL: Then it turns out just by happenstance every single question is about Trump.

WOODS: Yeah, I know, exactly. Or Ted Cruz was on camera the whole time, although there was one time when he was speaking out of turn and he was doing it so badly that the audience, which kind of liked him, started to boo —

ROCKWELL: Yeah, true.

WOODS: — because he clearly was breaking the rules. So that goes to show that simply grabbing the microphone doesn't always work, so you can't fault Rand for not just grabbing the microphone, because that didn't win any sympathy either. But clearly Rand was being shut out, and I didn't feel like other candidates — I didn't see the breakdown on time, but I thought Rand really got the shaft. But I thought again he had a good, strong performance. You know, there were things that I would have done differently, and we'll talk about that, but I liked that. I thought he had a good back-and-forth with Christie. Interesting that Christie didn't really shoot back at him. Now

they're shooting at the Democrats. There could be reasons for that; we can talk about that.

I thought Cruz again came across well, again bearing in mind they're all horrible on foreign policy. I mean, shocking and disturbing. But Cruz I think is an effective communicator, and again, he's a smart politician. He was appealing to — he was trying his best even to keep a foot in the libertarian camp or the non-interventionist camp, even in this debate, you know, by using the phrase "America first."

ROCKWELL: Oh yeah. And in fact —

WOODS: You know there's —

ROCKWELL: — neocons have already been criticizing him for the dog whistle, as they put it, for referring to neocons in a pejorative way.

WOODS: Right. Right, right. And there's no way —

ROCKWELL: "America first" is like hyper-dog whistle, according to —

WOODS: Exactly, exactly. I know. And so there's no way that a guy like Cruz, as smart a debater as he is, said that on the fly or at random —

ROCKWELL: (laughing)

WOODS: He knew what he was going to say. So anyway, so that's how I felt —

ROCKWELL: It's also, by the way, unanswerable.

WOODS: Oh, of course.

ROCKWELL: In an actual debate, nobody could say, "Wait a minute, how dare you say that?"

WOODS: Yeah, "I have an 'America seventh' policy."

ROCKWELL: Of course.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And I thought Trump seemed fairly strong and sensible, again, by Republican standard and by the standards of how he has looked in previous debates. That's what I'm saying, that he was more restrained — still bombastic, but you know, there were aspects of him that I thought were more restrained. And I thought Bush again came across very bumbling. There was a picture linked on Drudge of the Miami watch party. Now, Florida is Bush's state, and it's all empty chairs, basically. Did you see that on Drudge?

ROCKWELL: Yeah, it's a great picture, yeah.

WOODS: All right, so that's just my quick overview. What's your overview?

ROCKWELL: Well, I think Trump won, just because he's the frontrunner on the Drudge after-debate poll, which I think shows us a lot about GOP primary voters, at least their thoughts at the moment, and he has 44% of the vote as of this morning. I think his demeanor showed he feels he's winning. From a Trumpian standpoint, he was actually, I thought, pretty calm and soft-spoken — from a Trumpian standpoint.

WOODS: Yeah, that's what I meant. Yeah.

ROCKWELL: And he said some horrible things. He said some good things. He repudiated the whole Bush foreign policy and all the activities in Iraq. He repudiated the Iraq war, so that was all good stuff. And he talked about the unbelievable disaster of nation building. So I thought he did well. Of course he justified that the families of terrorists — terrorist suspects, we might say — should be killed, but on the other hand, even though Rand was shocked to hear him say that, ever single one of those people believe in the killing of civilians.

I mean, we only have to think they all have supported, for example, and they all would support today, even the ones of course who weren't alive then, the morale bombing of World War II, where the U.S. deliberately bombed all the cities of Germany and Japan, carpet bombed them to kill civilians, to kill the families of the soldiers. I mean, that was the explicit U.S. policy. There's a reason that U.S. killed about 7 million people in Vietnam. Those weren't all soldiers. The deliberate killing of — the vast majority of casualties in war these days, in our democratic wars, as Hoppe points out, it's always civilians. It's much safer to be a soldier than a civilian in one of these wars.

So Trump is bad on this stuff, but they're all bad on it. So he did say some — you know, he said some good things, but I thought the key thing was just how calm he was, his business where he repudiated the idea that he'd run a third party, although I noticed he didn't say as an Independent. He would not run as a third party. He's come to respect the people he's met in the Republican Party. These are the words of a frontrunner. These are the words of a guy who believes he is winning, and I think indeed, as we first discussed in our first one, I think he is winning.

WOODS: And in a way, he's got to be grinning inside when he says, you know, I don't think I will leave the Republican Party, when he's triple the size of the support of the second place candidate.

ROCKWELL: (laughing)

WOODS: What possible reason would he have to leave now? So it's so funny that now they have to deal with the fact that they've been urging him to stay. Okay, I'll stay, now that I'm winning. These poor suckers.

ROCKWELL: Oh my gosh, no!

WOODS: Yeah, exactly (laughing). They really don't know what to do. All right, so that's a lot of fun. Why don't we start with Rand in particular, because there's a lot of interest in Rand among the listeners? Rand had some good moments —

ROCKWELL: Yes, he did.

WOODS: — he had some good moments on surveillance and on war itself, and his opening and closing statements I thought could have been zingier, but they weren't totally uninspired either. I would have been zingier. He's making a good point about — well, let me give you my whole thing, and then you give me your whole thing.

ROCKWELL: Okay.

WOODS: He does make a good point about when you secular dictators, you create vacuums that even worse people are going to fill. Now, there's certainly truth to that, and that's a great point, but I would say — and I'm saying this as a friendly amendment of what he said, just because I want him to be effective. He is the only remotely sane person on the stage, so I want him to be effective at communicating. Bear in mind, you have to really try and speak to an eighth grade audience in a presidential debate, and most of them don't even know — I mean, honestly, we travel in different circles from most people, who have no idea what you mean by "secular dictator." So Ted Cruz was better in just saying "bad guys," just reducing it to "bad guys." So I would have said, look, every time we go after the bad guy of the month, and we think we're doing some good by getting rid of him, all we do is create an opening for 100 more bad guys to fill. How does that make us any better off? I mean, in other words, he's got to dumb it down one more notch, because the point he's making is a good one.

And he had this great confrontation with Christie, where I thought he was really, really good going — I mean, he had this great line; we can talk about it in a minute, but I'll just say the one line where Christie's talking about he'll shoot down Russian planes in a Syrian no-fly zone, and Rand says, well, for anybody who wants World War III, you have your candidate. Perfect. I mean, that's tremendous. And in a way, I almost wanted to hear him say something like, you know, I guess I have to be the guy — I mean, I don't recommend that he say this, but it would have been funny — I guess I have to be the guy, who, for posterity's sake, when people look back in the history books, they'll be able to say, well, there was one guy on that stage who hadn't totally lost his mind. I kind of wanted that, even though I know politically that wouldn't have been a good move. All right, so what were your thoughts about Rand?

ROCKWELL: Well, I thought it was a very good debate for Rand. I thought his demeanor was good. I thought that he was articulate. He made some — I think he took down Christie. I think this will go down — I mean, Christie is in the — he's just, what, 2% in the Drudge poll. I think that's about how GOP primary voters feel about him. I think this will be revealed in New Hampshire. Also, Rand's mention of the bridge scandal was deadly, and Christie was unable to respond to it; he wasn't able to respond to the World War III thing, so I think there's a lesson here for Rand: whenever

he goes back to his father, he does well. He was channeling his father last night. These are the kinds of things his father would say.

So I would say, Rand, get rid of the advisors who've been advising you to get away from your father, have nothing to do with your father's ideas. Just look at the Ron Paul Liberty Report every day. It's just 15 minutes. RonPaulLibertyReport.com, Rand. Go there; you'll learn everything you need to know about foreign policy. We've got some great arguments. And just don't be apprehensive, as these people would like you to be, about learning from your dad. This is the key guy on American foreign policy and of course on much else, so I would say there's a lesson here, Rand. You do well when you channel your dad. Be like Cruz. You're not afraid of your dad; you're not afraid to praise your dad, who's a very great man, and if you want to have any success, be more like your dad.

WOODS: Yeah, no question about it. I mean, it was clear in the debate, to me, that Rand is an alternative to these people in foreign policy. Now, I know there have been times, maybe more times than I'd like, that he's said things and done things that have shocked me and that have also been strategically very unwise, because of the need for brand differentiation. He sounded too much like a conventional Republican at some points. But last night he did lay out something of an alternative, which was good. Now, I also want to point out with the Drudge poll that Rand came in third in that Drudge poll.

ROCKWELL: Yes, he's doing well; he's practically got 13%. That's with 44% for Trump and 27% for Cruz, 13% for Rand. He's doing very, very well, and Rubio is down; Chris Christie's down; the horrible Fiorina's down; the horrible Bush is down the horrible Carson is down. Kasich of course is practically nonexistent. I will say that the two people who kept talking over and over and over their time, Fiorina and Kasich, were so annoying — I mean, they're also wrong, of course — but do they actually believe this is a good tactic, to keep going over their time, because you've got to have one more memorized line you've got to get out? I mean, I just find it very compelling, even though I do have to credit, by the way, Carly Fiorina for mentioning me in a YouTube. She did a YouTube — in fact, I'll post this today — of playing with some puppies. And I must say, she's sweet and relaxed and funny and calm and nice when she's with dogs. Carly, this is a lesson for what you might do with the rest of your life.

WOODS: Yeah. Yeah, indeed.

ROCKWELL: Forget politics. Do some work with dogs. But anyway, so she's very charming, and there's one funny line where she's talking to the dogs and she says, by the way, you should vote Republican, because, you know, Obama ate one of your cousins.

WOODS: (laughing)

ROCKWELL: Very funny line. And then she said, you know, "There's somebody on Twitter who's called me Cruella. I think that's very cruel." And then she's patting this

little white dog and she says, "Though you do have a very soft coat." She even sort of laughs at herself. So unlike her Medusa impression last night. She was just horrendous.

WOODS: Oh my gosh, I thought, yeah, last night she came across just so bad.

ROCKWELL: She didn't belong on the main stage, and my guess is, despite Affirmative Action, she won't be on the main stage the next time, even if she's still in the campaign.

WOODS: I think the reason they're going over time is partly to show that they're decisive and they're manly and they're going to have their say. I think that's the same. And also that some of them probably feel like, with a debate like this, you've got to elbow your way in. You've got to get every possible second. But there are diminishing returns, because it really does become annoying. It becomes annoying to the audience. Let's see, what else can we talk about?

ROCKWELL: I think Rubio lost. In fact, Rubio may have lost the whole nomination last night, whatever chance he had.

WOODS: Partly because Cruz was so relentless.

ROCKWELL: Cruz killed him.

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: Cruz killed him, and Cruz is of course a much better debate; Cruz is much smarter. Rubio is weak, and he looks weak, and I don't think it's good for him that he's got a lisp. It's not his fault, but you know, it's just not, from a PR standpoint, it's not good. And of course he's a crazed let-everybody-in-and-put-them-all-on-welfare guy.

Unfortunately, though there were hints of opposition to this, I'd just love to have somebody be able to make the point: really, should the American people be made even poorer than they're being made poor by the government right now to bring the whole world in here? I mean, it's not just Syrian refugees. There are plenty of refugees from civil wars in the Congo, and all over the world there are probably 100 million people who would just love to come here immediately and go on welfare. Should they all be brought in by the government and planted around the country, the way they love to do? You know, they put Kurds in middle Tennessee and all that kind of stuff.

And of course we heard all kinds of praise of the Kurds last night. Rand, in fact, has talked about U.S. should intervene to create a Kurdistan. Talk about another crazy — this is a guy who's not really against nation building, if he's saying that — and arm them. And we keep hearing about how great the Kurds are. The Kurds, just to make one point about the Kurds, are the champion female genital mutilators of the entire Muslim world. These are the ones who really do it to every little girl. And so is this really a great bunch of people? I would dissent on that.

But I think Rubio, he just looked weak; he sounded weak; he was refuted; he became, I think, clearly identified to those who didn't know it as Mr. Amnesty, Mr. Open the Borders to Every Welfare Bum Who'd Like to Come Here and Live Off Us. And I think that's definitely a loser program, period, let alone among Republican primary voters.

WOODS: Yeah, and Cruz just kept hitting — associating with Chuck Schumer and his —

ROCKWELL: No, no —

WOODS: Awful.

ROCKWELL: (laughing)

WOODS: And the blows just kept coming and coming, and they just couldn't be stopped. Yeah, at this point it's quite clear Cruz cannot stand this guy.

ROCKWELL: No, no, they don't like each other, and of course they're, you know, sort of ethnically close, right they really hate each other. But Cruz has just gotten so much more on the ball. I mean, he just is much smarter.

And of course Bush, I noticed is down at, let's see, 1.8% in the Drudge poll. Bush is such an unpleasant guy. As you say, he's bumbling. I don't think he's smart, but he certainly doesn't have any appeal that W., his brother, had the common touch. Obviously much wrong with him, the criminal, W. His father, H. W., had the aristocratic touch — much wrong with that too — but Jeb has got neither. You know, he's just the very unpleasant, entitled, demanding guy, that he should have it, and how dare you stand in his way. So I think he's through. I don't say he won't still be hanging around, because of course he's still got super PAC money. But if he wasn't through before last night, he's through.

Rubio is through, and Rubio being the key neocon candidate, so it's great to see him go down.

WOODS: Yeah, no question about it.

ROCKWELL: Go back to going into debt in Florida, Marco, and get out of public life.

WOODS: I've jotted down a couple of, believe it or not, sensible things that were said that I'd like to get your thoughts on. All right, I was just saying that there were a couple of sensible things said, and no doubt, Lew is shocked and alarmed. What could I be talking about? (laughing) But let's dig them out here. First, again, we have to say something about Cruz, because he was clearly, again, making an appeal for Rand supporters, even though he's also making an appeal — I mean, I don't think you can be a kind of warmonger like Cruz — he's not as bad as some of the others, but he still is pretty bad —

ROCKWELL: Yes, he is.

WOODS: — and ultimately hold on to libertarians and evangelicals. But if you're going to try, that would be how I would try it. I would try it the way he's doing it, if I were really, really committed to war. Now, if I were committed to nonintervention, I think I could make a noninterventionist case to the evangelicals and hold on to the libertarians, but he wants to make a war case and still hold on to at least some libertarians. And he made a — I mean, basically for a long time in that debate, I turned to Heather and said I think he is — he's making Rand's points here, about the National Defense Authorization Act —

ROCKWELL: Yes.

WOODS: — and why he voted against that, because he said I don't think Americans should be held without due process and so on and on. But did you find it a little bit weird — I found this a little weird, the way he worded the reason he did that. He said, you know, I cast that vote against the NDAA, because when I was running in Texas, I promised people that I would not allow, I would vote against anything that would take due process rights away from Americans, and I was keeping that promise. So it made it kind of sound like, yeah, I mean, look, I didn't really want to cast the vote, but look, I had tied my own hands, and what was I going to do? Did you take it that way?

ROCKWELL: Oh sure, because that was intended as such. He also won the election in Texas running as a libertarianish candidate. I mean, not to the extent Rand was last night, but just a little bit, and of course he was endorsed by Ron Paul and Rand Paul.

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: And Rand campaigned for him.

WOODS: And he has always said the liberty movement is a big part of his support, he says, or he's very devoted to them.

ROCKWELL: No, and he always says he wants their support —

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: — and he had been successful in getting it, so this is part of the reason that he was at 27% in the Drudge poll this morning. Quite a bit below Trump, but still very, very significant, and much higher than these others.

WOODS: I noted that he got very lukewarm applause — almost the most lukewarm applause of the night was after Cruz had talked about America first and had spoken some sense about when to intervene and when not, and it was sort of like *clap, clap, clap* — you know, politely clapping for the —

ROCKWELL: The audience was horrendous.

WOODS: Oh yeah, but apparently we're just forced to live with that as part of the experience. Trump had a good line, I have to say, when he said — because basically he had already made the point that now apparently it's fashionable for others on the stage to make, that maybe it would be better for the bad guys to be in power in the Middle East, because it's not like we have a choice between bad guys and good guys. You have bad guys and worse guys. Unless you're a naive, Wilsonian idiot, those are the obvious choices, and Trump had just come right out and said that, and he said, you know, I wish we had those trillions of dollars back that we spent on regime change. We could have spent it — and he used the Ron Paul line —

ROCKWELL: That's right.

WOODS: — rebuilding our bridges and everything that's collapsing here.

ROCKWELL: Yeah, he was channeling Ron, absolutely, and it was entirely smart. I just wish, because of my own proclivities of course, that somebody had made the point, why is it that the U.S. tackles the three regimes in the Arab world that were strongly anti-Islamic terrorism, strongly anti-jihadist, strongly anti-Wahhabi Muslim of the Saudi Arabian horrible type. Why are those three the ones that have to go? So maybe there's more going on than just Bush and similar people thinking, gee, we can really make everybody better off in Iraq if we only bomb the hell out of the whole country. They'll really like that; they'll really love us, and that'll do a lot of good. But of course, it causes chaos.

Empires, by the way, love chaos. It enables them to divide and rule, as the Romans used to put it. So I think myself it's not a coincidence they targeted Qaddafi and they're now targeting Assad and they targeted Saddam Hussein, who, by the way, the U.S., they helped put him in power in the 1950s as the anti-communist, as against the pro-communist faction in the Baath party and other related ideological movements in Iraq at that time. So of course the world would be better off if Saddam — and, by the way, Christians would be better off — if Saddam Hussein — he was the protector of the Christians — if he were still in power. Same with Qaddafi, same arguments. Same with Assad. He's the protector of religious minorities. He belongs to a religious minority. He's not a regular Muslim, and he's been a protector of the Christians, Orthodox and Catholic, in Syria.

That's of course all going by the board. They're all going to be either murdered — they have, many of them murdered — or ethnically cleansed. Why isn't that a lone reason — why, by the way, is it any of the U.S.'s business who's running Syria? I mean, I know the Israelis want to get rid of Assad and all that sort of thing, but really, why is that any of the U.S. government's business? Of course, the whole world is the U.S. government's business, and that's why this problem is more than just specific wars. It's the whole imperial mindset. The whole world is a U.S. colony. The whole world is U.S. jurisdiction; I guess the solar system too. And the U.S. has got to run everything. Why, those rotten Chinese, they're wanting to be dominant in the South China Sea right next to their country. How dare they? It's like, of course, America doesn't seek to be

dominant in the Atlantic and Pacific literal or in the Gulf of Mexico. We know that we welcome Iran to sail their ships in there, for example. So it's just typical hypocrisy.

But more than hypocrisy, and as Rand pointed out, what these people are proposing in terms of a no-fly zone, they're just going to order — by the way, the Syrian government and its allies the Russians and also its allies the Iraqis, I was glad to see somebody pointed out, to not fly planes; only the U.S. can fly its planes. Again, where does the U.S. get off doing that? I mean, what if Assad said I'm calling a no-fly zone over New York City? I mean, he couldn't enforce it, but morally how is that any different? So it opens up questions as to why the U.S. is targeting, overthrowing, murdering, and causing unbelievable, horrific human suffering. The U.S. has killed, so far as we can best determine, since 9/11, 4 million Muslims in the Middle East. You can't bar them from immigrating here as welfare patients and welfare clients, but you certainly can bomb them. That's toleration; that's friendliness; that's being pro-Muslim, in the U.S. view.

Maybe it's a good idea, maybe we don't have to bring people over here to live off us and to enhance the de-Christianization of America and the other plans these people have, or maybe we should not bomb them as well. Maybe noninterventionism in every sense is the proper policy for the United States, which of course has never been, unfortunately, the American policy, but could be. So there's no hope lost.

It's great Rand is talking about it; it's great Trump is talking about it; it's great Cruz is hinting at it. And of course that audience — I don't know who — who chooses the ticket holders? Mr. Reince Priebus. Who is it that recently referred to him as clearly an anagram? Who chooses who's in the audience? Why are they — maybe it's just all the Republicans. Maybe this is the Republican Party, but they all seem like an hysterical bunch of warmongers, even by GOP standards.

WOODS: All right, but Lew, ask yourself this question: would you want to sit in the audience for a Republican debate? I think it's a self-selecting process. (laughing) There's some of that.

ROCKWELL: The one chance I had, which was Ron Paul in 2012 in Iowa, I did, and I loved it, even though, of course, the audience, like virtually everybody on the stage, they were all terrible people. But it was still a fun thing, so sure, I — and in fact, I understand that Matt Drudge and Ann Coulter were in the audience last night, and I'm sure they had fun too.

WOODS: Well look, if we were in the audience, I would be live tweeting it, and boy, would we have a great wrap-up show for the next day. Let's see, I like the — (laughing) Trump and Bush, oh my gosh, it's just hysterical. Bush is predicting that Trump's poll numbers are going to fall. Now, this is after Trump has now cleared the 40% barrier, and Bush was talking about —

ROCKWELL: Bush had specifically said that by December 15th —

WOODS: That's right.

ROCKWELL: — Trump was going to be through.

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: One of his many predictions.

WOODS: And he's higher than ever. So Trump, after Bush says, "We need toughness," Trump says, yeah, you're a tough guy, Jeb; I know. Just immediately cuts him all the way down, and Bush is helplessly trying to say, "Donald, you're not going to insult your way to the presidency," and Trump says, "I'm at 42; you're at 3, so I think I'm doing well." (laughing)

ROCKWELL: No, it was tremendous, and Bush is like Carly Fiorina, like Kasich, I have to also say like Ben Carson. The more people see of him or of her, the less they like them.

WOODS: Yeah, that's — okay, yeah, Carson. Did you — I felt like Carson was invisible last night.

ROCKWELL: Well, I think Carson, maybe it'll turn out — it's very possible Carson is through after last night. Certainly did himself a lot of damage. I notice he's down to less than — he's down to a percent and a half in the Drudge poll this morning, even though he's said a — he's said a couple of horrendous things. Yes, of course I'm willing to kill hundreds of thousands of innocent women and children to achieve U.S. purposes. By the way, they all are. Any of these people who are advocating wars, of course they're willing to kill them. Hugh Hewitt didn't mean to ask a libertarian question, but in a sense he did.

Although I liked it also when, talk about bringing refugees over here, that Carson made the point that you can't be charitable with other people's money — and of course that's what the government, oh, we owe compassion and kindness and Obama saying Christianity, to import all these people over here, put them on welfare. I noticed the new housing complex they just built for all these Mexican kids coming in in Texas; everybody's thrilled to see it's got a huge indoor pool. Well, that's nice. I'm sure you've got an indoor pool, Tom, and the rest of us taxpayers.

WOODS: (laughing)

ROCKWELL: So they're all going to live very well. They've got super duper welfare. Far better welfare, by the way, than any Native American would ever get. And this is called charity. It's rip-off. It's theft. And I think, you know, there's a reason that the people who promote this, they want to culturally, demographically change America, and they don't have good motives. For one reason, they want to strengthen the state. The weaker the culture, the more in-fighting there is among the people and so forth, the stronger the state. So this is a very dark and horrendous policy they're running.

Trump brought up the whole question of whether people who are going to violate property rights and otherwise hurt people who live there are going to be brought in and cow-towed to, and they're going to live in the style to which they've always wanted to become accustomed at the expense of American working people and really every single person who's a net taxpayer in this country, as of course the vast majority of us are, except those who work for the government.

WOODS: Here's a — before I go take a dip in my indoor pool, let me raise one other point, that Trump foreign policy, which is, like a lot of Trump policies, you know, hard to get a full picture of, and it's not completely consistent by any means, and it's a bit ad hoc, but it's not straight down the line neocon, which is of course why he's raised hackles among the neocons. But what that tells me is that if you have a guy who says what the heck are we getting involved in Ukraine for, it makes no sense, or why don't we just let the Russians get involved in Syria, big deal, or why don't we make deals more often than go to war, or why don't we not destabilize the Middle East, or why don't we be more willing to just let sleeping dogs lie — I mean, he's at least saying things that if you had said them in 2012 or earlier, why, you're an isolationist and you're an extremist, and you're not part of the debate.

What interests me is that he generates so much support, even though he says these things, which shows me partly that a good chunk of the Republican base is totally confused about what they believe on foreign policy, because when you look at their second choice, well, their second choice would be Carson or Rubio or whatever — people who have a clearly and very consistently interventionist foreign policy, and these voters are acting as if, well, you know, I could take one or take the other. So I could take one or I could take almost the opposite of that one on foreign policy. So they don't even know what they think. But what it does show is that you can indeed get away with saying at least some of these sensible things, and it does not necessarily doom you, you know?

ROCKWELL: Well, I think it's — of course, maybe he's actually changing people's minds. It's why the neocons, the media, the state, all the related groups flip out at Ron Paul having said the things he said. It's not because they feared that Ron was going to win. It's because they feared changing hearts and minds. So to hear these things, there are some people who are going to think, hey, well — I also think it's indicative of the fact that, although this is little discussed and little polled, that it seems clear to me that Trump is attracting a lot of Democratic working class support. Maybe they won't actually go into the Republican Party to register and vote, although they can do it much more easily in New Hampshire, for example, than in Iowa, but they definitely in a general election —

I don't think there's any question, by the way, that Trump could beat Hillary. I think she's eminently beatable, and I think part of it would be she's not going to get a lot of the working class. A lot of blue collar people — blue collar people love Trump, and my guess is they also know, and I've been told by a number of people this is the case, he's very, very good to his employees. All his blue collar workers and white collar workers talk about how generous he is and how nice he is. He's not at all the bombastic and

yelling guy that, you know, we see on screen, that he's a very, very different person. This is a persona. He's very, very different in person, and this is known. I mean, this is known in the construction industry in New York and any place he's ever done business, he's good to his employees, and needless to say, he's focused on doing good for his customers too.

So there's something about being a businessman. It's quite a wonderful thing. He's never been a politician. He's not — you know, now he's a politician, as he says, but he doesn't come out of that. It's a wonderful thing. It's a wonderful thing. Carson made the same point too, although, you know, I think poor Carson, he just doesn't have it. All I can say is if I had a little kid who needed brain surgery, Dr. Carson, you're not doing the operating.

WOODS: Yeah, exactly. I do want to ask you about if, let's say, Trump got the nomination, he would have a pretty major obstacle in front of him. I mean, we make fun of the Republican leadership and how clueless and out to lunch they are, but they wield a lot of power. And if they pull what they pulled against Goldwater in '64 on Trump, he's going to have an uphill climb, as I bet some of these people would be secretly collaborating with the Democrats.

ROCKWELL: Well, they probably would, but you know, it's very different than '64. I was tremendously active in the '64 campaign, on a very low level of course, because in Massachusetts, like other liberal Republican states, the entire Republican Party apparatus walked out. So all the jobs were open and all the offices were open, so I was able to work very hard for Barry. So in those days, yes, if Scranton of Pennsylvania and Rockefeller of New York and so forth were opposing Goldwater, that was a big deal. That was the whole electoral apparatus.

Trump doesn't need that. It's one of the things that drives them all crazy. You know, I saw there was an article in *The Guardian* a week or 10 days ago. Trump is putting the entire Republican consultancy apparatus out of business. They're all worried about the future. This multibillion-dollar, all the consultants, the pollsters, and all that, he's just — he doesn't need them. I think in a general election, he does not need them — not that he would repudiate them or not want their help if they would give it, but if they're sitting on their hands or even if they're whispering sweet nothings in Hillary's ear or whatever, I don't — if they go public with this, it hurts them, not Trump, and I think he will, just as he has shown in this election, he's able to draw people in just by himself. He has a relatively very small staff, and it's a phenom, right? It goes far beyond previous candidates of this start. So I don't think it's going to — if, I don't know, the Republican governor of Michigan doesn't like Trump, is that going to hurt him among Republican voters or general election voters of Michigan? Uh uh. It could very well hurt the governor and help Trump. So I think it's all brand new territory.

It's another reason, you know, I think he's going to do serious damage to the Republican Party. I was sorry last night when he said last night he's not going to run third party and he loves the Republican Party. On the other hand, this is the statement of a man entirely confident that he's going to get the nomination. That came through

in everything he did and said last night, and so I think — I also noticed, by the way, he said he promised not to run *third party*, which is a different thing than not running as an Independent, by the way. But we'll see.

But I would still say if they, which they can do, use rules to deny him the nomination in a tricks of the same sort of thing that happened to poor Bob Taft in 1954 when they put the establishment Eisenhower in, then I think, well, is Trump going to take that sitting down? I don't think so. So I think there's a lot of interest — those of us who follow politics, even those of us who follow it from a train wreck standpoint, it's going to be — there's very, very interesting stuff ahead, but the notion that he can't beat Hillary, just I think, crazy. Hillary is very vulnerable.

WOODS: And also she would get — I think this is a case where Independents who might incline toward Trump might be less likely to say that to pollsters, because it would be very, very politically unfashionable to say that you're supporting Trump. So I think the polls would understate his support. Now, I think we've gotten burned sometimes in the past by saying the polls are not accurate, but I think this would be a case where there's so much social opprobrium attached with supporting Trump that only Republican primary voters are willing to openly say they're doing it. And I think you would get some timid Independents.

ROCKWELL: I think that's exactly true, and in fact, I would argue that's happening now, that Trump support is actually bigger than the polls indicate, because there are a lot of people who, you know, they don't want to tell some guy, could be from the Justice Department or the FBI or something calling up, wanting to know do they support Trump, which puts you definitely on the politically incorrect list. So I think that there are Republican primary voters who are saying they're undecided or whatever who are actually Trump supporters. It's my prediction he's going to actually do better in these primaries than the polls are indicating.

WOODS: Now, I mean, we've already done an episode on Trump together, and I'm going to link to it; today's show notes page is TomWoods.com/556. I'll link to that there; of course all your previous appearances I'll put there. I just did an episode a couple of days ago where I took some listener questions, and one of them was, "Am I afraid of a Trump presidency?" So I won't repeat all of that, because I gave the answer there. The thing that concerns me about him, of course, is that his personal style has some attractive qualities to it in some ways, but politically, my concern is his view is that I'm Donald Trump, and I am the embodiment of the will of the people, and if you disagree with me, then I'm going to run roughshod over you, because the will of the people must be accomplished.

Now, it's not like the rest of them are scrupulously observing the separation of powers. I don't want to be unreasonable, but you know, this does concern me about him, and also the fact that his ideas are just — they're too ad hoc for me, and sometimes I think he's a lightweight intellectually on a lot of things. So I'm not saying that I would be glad — I think we would have a lot of battles on our hands with this guy, but what I will say is that we really are in uncharted waters, because we're in a situation where

we don't have a completely by any means anti-establishment candidate on our hands, but we have a candidate the establishment can't seem to stop.

And I didn't think that was possible. I thought that's what makes it the establishment. It can do what it wants to do, and here we are in a situation where they seem unable to do it, and that's why I find it so interesting.

ROCKWELL: Well, of course we live in a country that's had fascist presidents for a very long time. Wilson was a fascist, and Roosevelt was definitely a fascist. In fact, the New Deal was based in part on Mussolini's program. And all the presidents have been fascists since then. In fact, Obama has a number of times said in effect, the people elected me, I'm in charge, I can do this, I don't have to get Congress' approval or whatever, because the people wanted me. And they all believe that. So Trump has got a different personality, of course. We'll see.

You can't — here's another golden rule: you can't trust anybody who wants power over others. The only candidate I've ever been familiar with who ran who did not want power over others was Ron Paul. He did not want to run other people's lives, let alone other countries or people's businesses or communities. That's the only kind of guy you can trust with power. So I think we have to worry about whoever is in office, whether it's Hillary or whether it's Rubio or whether it's Cruz or any of these guys. Whether it's Trump. So yeah, it's — but it still doesn't mean you can't enjoy the whole circus.

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: It is a circus, and I always try to think about how Murray Rothbard would look at it. There's no question in my mind, and all the Rothbardians I talk to, he would be cheering on Trump and rooting for Trump. He doesn't agree with Trump on virtually everything any more than the rest of us do, but his style, the sort of demagogic style is, as Murray pointed out, able to reach over the heads of the establishment and directly appeal to the people. That is not — we're supposed to think that's a bad thing, because you're supposed to always do everything through the establishment. It's actually a good thing, and it's why they fear him, it's why they hate him.

I hope his health is going to be okay because of that. There's intense, intense, intense hatred of Trump of the sort I've not ever seen — I mean, more so than Barry Goldwater — among the media, among just the power elite in general. They just vibrate with hate. So are they capable of doing something about it? I certainly hope to goodness not, but you know, who knows? They've certainly done it in the past to others. So we just have to see.

But I don't think, is Trump uniquely a dangerous guy than all these other ones? I think that's just not true. I think that's the voice of the establishment speaking, Tom. Not you, but the — you're of course Mr. Anti-Establishment. But still, you're absolutely right. His personality is entirely different. There have been other figures like this in American history. But I don't know, the sort of regular presidents have been unbelievable, world historic monsters.

WOODS: Yeah.

ROCKWELL: Mass murderers on a scale, you know —

WOODS: Yeah, look at how soft-spoken George W. Bush was. There's your soft-spoken, sweet, Bible-reading candidate. There he is. And is there a way he could have been worse? I bet I could come up with one, but he was pretty darn bad. And Barack Obama has all kinds of scholarly credentials, and he taught Constitutional law, and now you've got that. So I think the selective outrage, the politically correct outrage about this one person is just a bit too much for me to take, especially among libertarians. I mean, let's be equal opportunity in our concern about these people, especially the greater warmongers. There are people who are much bigger warmongers than Trump, and I hear little tiny bits of concern about that.

ROCKWELL: Well, and I think, you know, just because somebody's a businessman doesn't mean you can trust him in office more than somebody who's a lifelong politician, but still, I must say I feel a little bit different about somebody who's fundamentally been doing good things all his life. Yes, he, you know, declared bankruptcy, although all of these guys believe in bankruptcy. Just libertarians oppose bankruptcy. And yes, he's done some bad things. But fundamentally, he's done some great stuff. I mean, built beautiful golf courses and improved human life, unlike anybody in politics. So I don't know. And also, by the way, I'd like to think that my interest in Trump or my opposition to Trump somehow would have an effect on anybody. So I'm enjoying it. I enjoy the whole spectacle. Trump has made politics entertaining. He's made it riveting, in fact, and maybe we're getting at least that for our tax dollars.

WOODS: Yeah, exactly. Well, I want to make sure everybody, of course — no doubt my audience reads LewRockwell.com, but if not, check it out, and while you're there, make sure and click on "Political Theatre," because that's Lew's Political Theatre blog. Lew has two blogs: a group blog with himself and a bunch of other LRC contributors, but he also has the Political Theatre blog, which he writes entirely on his own, and which — if I say I couldn't live without it, that would be an exaggeration. I'm sure I would struggle along, but it would be a much less happy life. I check that blog — I don't take all the — I think an RSS reader sucks all the fun out of life. I want to physically visit the Political Theater blog regularly, which I indeed do. We will link to it in case you forget at TomWoods.com/556. Well, Lew, I think the next one is — from what I can see, there may be two of them in January, so you can enjoy Christmas, enjoy the New Year, and then it's back to the grind.

ROCKWELL: Tom, it's great to be with you, and thanks so much for having me on.

WOODS: Thanks a lot, Lew.