Episode 578: Right-Wing Dissenters from American Conservatism

Guest: George Hawley

WOODS: I love this topic, because I love talking about, well, really all stripes of American thought. I like talking about American conservatism, libertarianism, left liberalism, socialism — whatever it is, I love it. I love talking about these different schools of thought. But I have a particular spot in my heart for conservatism, because I've read so much about it, and I've read so many primary sources. But what you're doing here is — I think you're breaking new ground. I don't think there has been much of any scholarly attention paid to what you're doing, and there would be if there were any academic interest in conservatism whatsoever, but as far as I can see, there continues to be almost none. It's mentioned as a source of ridicule, but otherwise there's really no academic interest in it. And you've got this new book coming out just today that looks at these divergent strains of the Right that dissent from what we might call mainstream conservatism or the so-called conservative movement and so on and on. So first of all, I mean, do you have to define conservatism before you can proceed with a book like this? I know you do in the book.

HAWLEY: Yes, I think so, and this is actually quite a tricky thing to do, because there's so many different definitions out there. And what's curious is there's not a lot of self reflection on the part of many observers as to what things like conservative or right-wing or left-wing really mean, so before I could really move on to the meat of the text, I sort of had to come up with some of these definitions that, at least in my mind, were satisfactory.

WOODS: So what do you think we should use as a guiding, I don't know, lodestar for proceeding in this study?

HAWLEY: Well, I found it easier to work with the terms "Left" and "Right" than the terms, say, "liberal" and "conservative." As you know, the term "liberal" is very difficult to nail down, given its historical evolution, but I do think the terms "Left" and "Right" have a very strong degree of historical continuity going back at least to the French Revolution, so I tried to start with coming up with a definition of the Left and the Right that was not necessarily context-dependent — that is, some guiding principles that you'd always find, wherever you were looking at this dichotomy, whether you were looking at the United States throughout its history or even abroad, at least when you're looking at a Western context.

WOODS: All right, so if somebody just wants a quick little cheat sheet, bearing in mind that this is not the subject of the entire episode and we just want to get some basic ideas out there, I know I have some people who listen to me who say "Left" and "Right" is a false distinction, and I completely disagree with that, that there is something very, very valuable about understanding the difference between Left and Right, even if it doesn't, of course, explain every single issue and divergence on every single issue, it is a very helpful way of distinguishing between the ways different people look at the world, I think.

HAWLEY: Yes, I agree with that, and the way I view it is that the Left is actually easier to define than the Right —

WOODS: Yeah.

HAWLEY: — and since its inception has primarily been focused on this notion of universal equality; that is, that which makes people more equal is more preferred to that which makes people less equal. And when you look at all the different left-wing movements, they disagree on things like strategy and tactics; they disagree on whose equality should be emphasized first, but this notion of equality is one consistent them.

And so a lot of people will say, well, if the Left stands for equality, then the Right stands for inequality. And that is something that I really don't agree with. I would say that the Right is defined very broadly as not being for in equality but at least for something else; that is, that something else will take precedent over equality when it comes to what it is that society should be focusing on. So obviously from a libertarian perspective, you value liberty over equality. A localist would prefer strong communities over equality. Any number of things. You could value religious piety; you could value martial virtue or even racial supremacy and purity. Any of those things I would define as being on the Right, because they don't place equality at the top of their hierarchy of values.

WOODS: Now, let's talk about — by the way, the reason I wanted to get that out is that there will be some — in other words, this makes it easier for people to understand how there could by right-wing critics of American conservatism, because that sounds like a contradiction in terms. If you're right wing, you belong to American conservatism, but not necessarily. And certainly one of the criticisms that some of these people will have will be that American conservatism in the form of the conservative movement has bought into too much of the Left's ideological baggage, and so that's why it's helpful to clear all this up.

You have a chapter — there's so much we can talk about, by the way, because American conservatism is such a variegated movement with people of a variety of different stripes being involved in it. But I want to skip ahead to your chapter on the history of conservative purges, because it sounds much like something the Left would do in all of its different forms. You could see different groups of Marxists purging some Marxists for being 2% deviationist from the original Marxism. Well, the conservatives also had their purges, and were you thinking exclusively of what *National Review* did

under Bill Buckley in the '50s and '60s, or did you have something else in mind? Does it go beyond that?

HAWLEY: Largely that's what I had in mind in the sense that that's really what set the tone for how the conservative movement would deal with those who deviated from the basic principles of that movement once they were established — you know, the three-legged stool of we stand for limited government and quasi-libertarian economic policies at home, combined with a sense of moral traditionalism and informed by Christian values or Judeo-Christian values, and of course a very strong military abroad. It was decided that those were three principles that you could not fully reject and still really be welcome within the movement.

And starting of course in the '60s, really the thing that kicked it off was Buckley and his attack on the John Birch Society, and then continuing on even until today, we've seen attempts to sort of kick people out of the big conservative tent because they either break with certain principles or because they simply proved to be inconvenient.

WOODS: That John Birch Society purge was very interesting. You put in your book that it's impossible to know how many members the Birchers had, but it's got to be at least in the tens of thousands. And the reason, at least to my knowledge, that it's impossible to know is that they always refused to disclose their numbers. They would never tell you how many members they had in the Birch Society, and I don't know if that's because they felt like they didn't want the authorities to know. I mean, they really, really believed that there were some nefarious characters in the U.S. government.

When I look at the Birch program — and in your book, by the way, you are not taking sides; you are just talking about these different strands of the American right. When I look at their points of view, okay, for me it's a little bit too nationalistic, a little bit too flag-wavey and stuff like that, but by and large, other than the communist conspiracy stuff — I mean, I don't believe that Eisenhower was part of the communist conspiracy or anything like that — I don't see what's so crazy about them. I mean, they want local control of police, which is something that I'm pretty sure the Black Panthers wanted. This is not crazy right-wing unreasonableness. They judge every congressman by how he lives up to the Constitution. These are not the boogeymen they've been made out to be. They've been made out to be the most horrible people in the world, but apart from the fact that they might have a few, you know, maybe oddball ideas, they're obviously not the worst people in the world by any means.

HAWLEY: I would generally agree with that, and yes, there was a lot of personal quirks that Robert Welch had, and his organization had a very curious structure. You know, it was so hierarchical that some have said it was actually not all that different from how the Communist Party was organized. But I think you're right that in terms of its basic principles, it was not all that far out there. And in fact, there have been some that speculated that really the final straw that made the mainstream conservatives declare war on the Birch Society was not Welch's personal paranoia, but his decision to oppose the Vietnam War. That was one of the reasons why James

Burnham, for example, said that Welch and his organization were very dangerous. I can't prove that, but I think that's an interesting theory, because we've —

WOODS: Yeah.

HAWLEY: — obviously seen that militarism has been one of the things that the mainstream conservative movement has said is a non-negotiable; that is, you can't be a conservative for peace and belong in the movement.

WOODS: Now, the Birchers are a classic example of a purge, but just give me one more before we move on. What's another group that Buckley and *National Review* didn't like and wanted to get rid of?

HAWLEY: Well, one of the classic examples that particularly the paleoconservatives like to always point to would be less of a purge per se than sort of an internal battle that I would say the neoconservatives ended up winning and are able to set the tone for the movement really until today, and that would have been that battle over who was going to be head of the NEA under Reagan, and that was the battle between of course Reagan's first choice, which was Mel Bradford, and the neoconservative pick, which was of course Bill Bennett. And then when the neoconservatives, with the help of Buckley and others, successfully maneuvered to torpedo Bradford's nomination to that position, that really demonstrated that there was a great internal battle going on and that one faction was losing and would from that point on not really have any influence within the broader conservative movement.

WOODS: All right, let's move on. There are so many different topics here. You have a chapter, "Small is Beautiful: Localism as a Challenge to Left and Right." Now, I can think of some people who fall into that, the argument here being both Left and Right kind of take for granted that it's normal for us to live in a society in which every institution we interact with is gargantuan and out of proper human scale and that we need smaller, more local — a more localist philosophy, because it's more humane to have face-to-face relationships instead of being governed by a giant bureaucracy or, in our economic affairs, dealing with faceless corporations. That would be the "small is beautiful" critique. Who do you have in mind here in particular?

HAWLEY: Well, I really start with predominantly Southerners, who are not surprisingly very in favor of this view. I'm talking about of course the Vanderbilt Agrarians and their classic book, *I'll Take My Stand*. But then moving on through a number of economists who have taken this position, and then finally moving on to people today who are making arguments like this; you know, the people who are associated with Front Porch Republic, people like Bill Kauffman, people like Rod Dreher, who are equally willing to express their skepticism of a big government in Washington and a big corporation working hand in glove with that government.

WOODS: Yeah, Bill has been one of my favorite guests ever on the show. Of course even before I looked at your chapter, I immediately thought of Bill. And I also remember reading a book from the 1950s — I wasn't alive during the 1950s, but I

remember reading a book from I think 1957, called *The Breakdown of Nations* by Leopold Kohr, which I thought was also a useful examination of this. But what's interesting about this is "Localism as a Challenge to Left and Right" also puts me in mind of another person I've had on the show: Kirkpatrick Sale is the guy I have in mind. Because he was very much on the New Left, and his view was, well, the New Left was supposed to be about humane forms of association, and we don't have that, and we need to have local community. So that is interesting in that that is a challenge to both mainstream Left and Right.

HAWLEY: Yeah, and I would include Christopher Lasch as another person who sort of doesn't really fit within that dichotomy, although I think he would have called himself a man of the Left.

WOODS: Yes, I think so too. All right, so we've got those people who can't really be classified and who really haven't had much kind to say about the conservative movement. I mean, you listen to Bill Kauffman talk about them, he's absolutely withering. So we've got this group. They're totally ignored. They're ignored by the academics; they're ignored by the media, because they just assume that if you are to the right of Bob Dole, you're all probably pretty much the same, so there's no point in trying to nitpick differences between these people. They're probably all pretty much the same.

Now, you've got here Chapter Five: "Ready for Primetime? The Mainstream Libertarians", and then Chapter Six: "Enemies of the State: Radical Libertarians." Let's treat that as one unit now, because this is really my audience. My audience would be the radical libertarians. The mainstream libertarians tune in, because they want to know what I'm up to, but basically my supporters are the radical libertarians. Talk to me about these two groups. How do they differ from each other? Who are they?

HAWLEY: Well, I should note, I divided sort of into that dichotomy, but obviously there are a lot more divides within libertarianism just over that issue. But broadly speaking — and this is in the biggest generalities — I would really divide libertarians between those who are willing to sort of be junior partners within the broader conservative movement, in the hope of perhaps making marginal changes here and there versus those who really fully reject the conservative project, at least the conservative project that we've known since the 1950s, and say no, we stand for something totally different and much more radical than trying to make little changes to the capital gains tax here and there and hope that every once in a while a Republican will throw a bone our way.

WOODS: So give me some names or institutions — who do you have in mind when you talk about the mainstream libertarians? And by the way, when you say "ready for primetime," my follow up question would be, do you mean to suggest by putting it that way that these are people who want to make sure that their views are palatable enough, possibly to the establishment, that they can indeed literally get face time and they can be heard in large outlets?

HAWLEY: Yeah, generally speaking. I should note that I wrote this book mostly in 2014, so a lot has changed since then. I'm much less optimistic about that brand of libertarian future than I was then. But yeah, generally speaking, it looked for a time that this type of libertarian thinking might not just get a thoughtful hearing in the public hearing, but might actually start to shape the future of the GOP. You know, again, I was writing that as Rand Paul was really at the height of his political success, and now it's looking like that movement is starting to flounder a bit. But yes, generally speaking I was talking about this movement perhaps finally starting to break out of its isolation and starting to have a bigger influence than it had previously enjoyed.

WOODS: All right, what's your sense of the interaction between those two groups and maybe how they feel about each other? Did you get any sense of that as you wrote?

HAWLEY: Well, there's a lot of hostility within libertarianism, obviously. There are those who, for example, reject the influence of the Koch brothers, for example. And again, there are those who again reject the notion of making alliances with conservatives and Republicans. And then of course we have bigger ideological fights about minarchists versus anarchists, those who would stand on utilitarian defenses of libertarianism as opposed to natural rights arguments. All sorts of these divides tend to often follow what I would call this mainstream versus radical divide, but not perfectly and not always.

WOODS: Who would you say is a classic case of a mainstream libertarian?

HAWLEY: I would say somebody like Milton Friedman as somebody who was very much interested in making an actual impact on public policy where he could, given the political circumstances of the day. I'd say he's probably the best example of that and of having some success in that regard.

WOODS: Do you think radical libertarians' view is that we don't want to make incremental changes if they're all we can get?

HAWLEY: Well, I don't want to put words in anyone's mouth, but I do think that they would argue that these incremental changes are completely insufficient. And in fact, if you're using libertarianism sort of piecemeal to make the government, which you oppose, run more efficiently and more effectively, then you're actually undermining your own cause in the long run, would be an argument I suspect one would encounter.

WOODS: Let's talk about your chapter on the secular right. Of course American conservatism has long been associated primarily with Christianity, but one way or another, with a religious outlook. And certainly in recent years, there's been a more outspoken secular — I think of Heather MacDonald, for example, but she's not the only one — secular brand of the American right that is critical of the conservative movement for quite different reasons. So who do you have in mind here?

HAWLEY: Again, Heather MacDonald would be one of the classic recent examples, but this sort of debate about the role of religiosity within conservatism goes back really to

the beginning, when you have people like Russell Kirk just flat out stating that conservatism requires a belief in some sort of transcendental source of authority. And then we have many who would totally reject that. That's one of the reasons why Max Eastman, for example, had to break with *National Review*, because he had a big problem with this religious mindset. I should note, though, that the transparent religiosity of the conservative movement was not always as strong as it would become, say, in the '70s and '80s with the rise of the religious right, when we look at, say, the Sharon Statement. In the early years of the movement, religion only got sort of a very brief nod, and so it's sort of gone back and forth as to how strong the religious element within right-wing thought has been. Right now it seems like the religious right is sort of waning as an influence over conservatism more broadly.

WOODS: Now, I want to go from there — I do want to talk about the paleocons, then I want to talk about the European New Right, because your chapter's called "Against Capitalism, Christianity, and America." So again, anti-Christianity as being part of this way of thinking is very interesting to me. Let's just pause for a quick message, and then we've got all of these provocative questions coming.

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All right, first of all let's talk about the so-called paleoconservatives. I'd like you to explain to people what that term means. I have some affection for them, because I was in that camp very firmly for a number of years in the 1990s, and it's funny, people will dig out articles I wrote during that period and wave them in front of everybody, even today, even though it's 20 years later, and I have a huge track record of podcast episodes and articles and books, but they act like it's always 1995 for some reason. But I still hold a lot of those people in very high regard. Paul Gottfried considers himself a paleocon, and he's a friend of the show, and I have a great amount of respect for Pat Buchanan and so on and so forth. What are the paleocons all about? I think they're a very interesting group, but they are basically, to be perfectly blunt about it, invisible on the Right.

HAWLEY: Yeah, well, they became invisible because they lost. I mean, their first major defeat as I already mentioned was the defeat of Mel Bradford. And then they had a brief period where they were able to rally around Pat Buchanan, and it looked for a moment like they might even be able to wrestle control of the conservative movement away from what would then be called neoconservatives, and I now think neoconservatives and conservatives are largely interchangeable. But after Pat Buchanan's 1996 defeat, there really was not very much of a movement there at all anymore.

But in terms of what they've believed in, to a certain extent they are holdovers from an earlier conservative tradition, perhaps even a conservative tradition that preceded the Second World War, sort of holdovers from the so-called Old Right. But one of the things that really became a big division was the end of the Col War, when the question was, okay, this great struggle against communism is over, the paleoconservatives I think could be defined by the desire to say, okay, let's go back to being a normal

country again, whereas the more neoconservative right would say now it's time to create a new American century, one that is dominated by the United States pushing its ideological agenda throughout the rest of the world.

WOODS: All right, give us some names, then, of people we associate with that movement. I already mentioned Paul Gottfried; I mentioned Pat Buchanan. Is here anybody people would have heard of other than Pat Buchanan we associate with the paleocons?

HAWLEY: Yeah, I would say people like Thomas Fleming of *Chronicles*, and I would also mention that, although he was not a paleoconservative, I would say that Murray Rothbard did a lot to sort of build bridges between his branch of libertarianism and that branch of conservatism in the hope of, through their combined efforts, being able to unseat the conservative movement that was then completely dominant in terms of what was acceptable right-wing thought.

WOODS: Yeah, that's right. He became friends with Paul Gottfried and some of these people, and that's frankly how I know them, because I followed Rothbard and I went to some of these meetings with a lot of these people and I got to know some of them. I got to know Clyde Wilson in that way as well. He's a tremendous Southern historian, a very accomplished scholar. So it was great to get to know some of these people, some more congenial than others, but all of them extremely smart.

And I find — I feel bad generalizing, because there are always good and bad people in every movement, but it seems to me anyway — and I don't have a dog in this hunt anymore — but that in the paleocon camp, there were some real intellectual heavyweights. These were people who were intellectually serious, you could learn from, they had done real, serious scholarship. And in the neoconservative camp, I thought it was much more journalism, sloganeering, radio hosts — says the podcast host here. It just didn't seem to be as substantial. Now, I know you're trying not to take sides here, but surely this is not just in my imagination.

HAWLEY: No, and what's so interesting and was such, I don't want to say surprise, but somewhat surprising to me, given the story that we hear about the rise of the neoconservatives, sort of the generally accepted narrative is that before their arrival, conservatism was not a particularly erudite movement, that it was only because of, you know, all these brilliant social scientists like Irving Kristol, etc., who came in and really got this movement on its intellectual footing that it would really become a legitimate movement that could answer the problems of the day. And those who didn't get with the program, these anachronistic paleocons, were just sort of dullards who couldn't get with the times, who were just overly sentimental. But as I was going through the trouble of actually reading everything — not everything, but as much as I could about what they had been writing, it's clear that whatever you think of their worldview, it was built on some very serious scholarship, and many of them were and are very brilliant and provocative scholars and writers. Again, that's not an endorsement of their worldview, but I think they deserve to be taken more intellectually seriously than has traditionally been the case.

WOODS: Now, in talking about this — I've done whole episodes on some of these different groups, or at least I've discussed them on a number of other occasions. So first of all, the show notes page for today is TomWoods.com/578 for Episode 578. That's where you can find Professor Hawley's book, and I will put up a list of related episodes where we've talked about different groups and Left and Right and different groups within American conservatism and all that stuff so people can get more information. So obviously you can't do these groups justice in this short, little bursts of overview that I'm making you do, but that's not stopping me. I still want to do it, because I'm interested in these groups.

And in particular, you talk about the European New Right, and as I say, the first half of your chapter title there is "Against Capitalism, Christianity, and America." Let's go to Christianity right in the middle there. If I'm getting this right, the objection that this particular group has to Christianity is primarily that Christianity is a universalistic religion, and this, therefore, disarms the West in the face of radical egalitarianism, because the radical egalitarians can appropriate Christian language for themselves in the service of, let's say, mass immigration or multiculturalism or whatever, and claim that really Christianity after all mandates this. Secondly, Christianity is fundamentally alien. It's an alien force in Western civilization, that, if anything, we ought to return to still more ancient mythologies. Like, I know there's interest in Norse mythology among some of these folks. Am I getting at least the basic contours of their unhappiness with Christianity correct?

HAWLEY: Yes, and it's very interesting, right? I mean, their critique of Christianity is quite Nietzschean compared to, say, most critiques of Christianity we hear today. I mean, when we listen to most of the critics in America of Christianity or in the West in general, the focus is that it is reactionary, that it's insufficiently tolerant —

WOODS: Right.

HAWLEY: These people will say no, the problem with Christianity is the degree to which it is so tolerant —

WOODS: Exactly.

HAWLEY: — and that liberalism is actually truly just the bastard child of Christianity, and that all these problems with egalitarianism, well, those problems stem from the sort of metaphysical principles of the Christian worldview.

WOODS: Well, break down for us what the European New Right is. This is not just a bunch of intellectuals sitting around. Are they to be found in all the European countries, or are they concentrated in just a few? How did they get started? Give us the basic story here.

HAWLEY: Well, it's a fairly amorphous group, but we can point to really one person as being the founder of this movement, and this would be somebody named Alain de Benoist, who was writing in France starting up really around the time when the French

Left was at its peak in the late '60s. He didn't actually like the name "New Right," because like many people, he said that the Left-Right dichotomy was fully mistaken or at least incomplete. But the name was eventually given to him, and it finally stuck, so I think people have stopped fighting it. It's always been fairly small and not really held any real power anywhere, but I included it because I thought it was at least a very interesting, from an intellectual standpoint, thing to examine.

And it does a lot of interesting things. Obviously it's borrowing a lot of ideas that would earlier animate fascism and National Socialism, you know, borrowing lots of ideas from the so-called Conservative Revolutionary movement in Germany in the 1920s. But it also rejected certain elements of that and even borrowed a lot of ideas from the New Left, ideas about environmentalism, about anti-imperialism, etc. So I do think it is genuinely new, as opposed to others who would say that it simply was a continuation of the prewar fascist right, sort of repackaged to be a little bit more palatable.

WOODS: Why are they against "America"?

HAWLEY: Well, the problem from their view is the United States is sort of coming to culturally dominate not just Europe but the entire world, that leading to a sort of homogenization of culture as things like McDonald's and American film are leading to a sort of bland monoculture throughout the entire globe.

WOODS: So I assume that's the same kind of critique that they have against capitalism, the first in your triad here in the chapter.

HAWLEY: Yes, and the United States of course is pushing obviously its capitalistic vision, and also through its military might, it was ensuring that there would not be any sort of uprising against the new global order that was being established in the postwar years and beyond.

WOODS: Chapter Nine is a pretty hot chapter, because it's called "Voices of the Radical Right: White Nationalism in the United States." Now here you have a movement that for a long time I think people just — well, non-hysterical people realized was very stagnant, had a very small, just a negligible number of people involved. For instance, if you look at the Ku Klux Klan, like 60% of them are FBI informants. There isn't much to worry about.

HAWLEY: Mm hmm.

WOODS: But it seems like in recent years, I have been hearing about the so-called Alt Right movement that does seem to have more racial identity, and so it does — I don't know what numbers are involved, but it suggests that there are more numbers and more intellectual heft behind this than I would have thought. Can you comment on that?

HAWLEY: Yeah, the Alt Right is sort of an interesting phenomenon, and I don't use the term in the book, because as I said, it was mostly written in 2014, yet it wasn't until really last year that you started hearing the term Alt Right quite a lot, you know, if you were on certain aspects of Twitter and other places where it sort of became the tag of this new racial movement. I don't want to necessarily say that the entire Alt Right is white nationalist, but it is —

WOODS: No, they're not; they're not. that's right.

HAWLEY: But it is definitely, there's this very heavy racial element to it. The problem right now is trying to get a read on some of these numbers, because the people involved are very savvy with social media and really able to, whenever there's a meme going around, being able to in a sense hijack it and make sure that their new view is getting into the public sphere, being able to, whenever there's a story anywhere about race or about gender or about general equality or immigration, they're very quick to make sure that the comments section is pushing their own ideas. But I don't know if it's a large movement numerically, but it is one that is very good at using the Internet, and certainly they've really improved even just over the last year, which is why it'd be nice if I ever do a second edition of this, there will be so much more to say about it than there was at the time I was writing.

WOODS: Yeah, I'm interested in this in the sense that I'm interested in all these unapproved forms of the Right. Doesn't mean I endorse them, and in fact, a lot of people in the Alt Right I do think have in common with the European New Right the disdain for Christianity for exactly the reasons that we mentioned. So anyway, I find that interesting even though I disagree with it. I find a lot of things that I disagree with interesting; that's what makes me an interesting person.

At the end of your book you end with "The Crisis of Conservatism." What do you mean by that? Is it just because there are all these dissenters? Haven't they just been pushed to the fringes and they don't matter anyway? How could that be a crisis?

HAWLEY: Well, it's not really the dissenters that have made the crisis. I think the biggest problem is that conservatism arose in a very specific social milieu, for which it was appropriate at the time, in terms of building a coherent movement. Really, if you want to understand why the American conservative movement is what it is, you have to know about what was going on in the 1950s and '60s with the Cold War, with various social movements at home.

But the trouble is that this is not 1960 anymore; this is 2015, and it's a movement that is very much sort of stuck in the past, and the question is whether or not sort of Ronald Reagan-style conservatism is appropriate anymore, especially when we have changing demographics and sort of the groups that have always signed on to the conservative movement are shrinking as a percentage of the total U.S. population. So that's one issue; that if we view the Republican Party as being the primary vehicle of conservatism, then conservative movement is in trouble.

And then we have other issues as well, right? There's sort of — again, I sort of was hinting at this already — an intellectual crisis, in that it's a movement that is insisting that we have the same policies we had during the Cold War when this is a very different world, and trying to create new boogeymen who will take the place of the Soviet Union. Whether it be Iran or Russia or whatever, I think that's going to fall flat in the future.

And then finally — and this does relate to the rest of the book — is that the ability to conduct purges is clearly waning, and I think we saw this just last summer when the whole mainstream conservative movement decided it was going to try to purge Donald Trump, and we had people like George Will and all of these others following the old playbook for purges, and it didn't do anything. Nobody cared. There isn't somebody like William F. Buckley who can say, okay, this guy is not welcome anymore, and then suddenly everybody gets on board with that.

WOODS: Yeah, see, that's a function of technology for one thing, because anybody — we don't have to worry about, oh, I can't get my article published in *National Review*. Okay, but you have a million alternatives now, and not everybody reads *National Review*. And you have the potential for viral traffic; you can put a video of yourself up. So the irony is that some of these anti-conservative movement conservatives have also been suspicious of technology, but it's technology that's giving them a voice in this conversation.

HAWLEY: Oh yes, absolutely, because really, you think about it in the 1960s and '70s,if you couldn't get into one of the big conservative publications and they said you're not welcome anymore, I mean, what are you going to — and you couldn't get on TV, you couldn't get on the radio, what are you going to do? I guess you can be a pamphleteer and hand them out on the sidewalk. You just had no way of reaching a national audience. Now anybody's website can be just as good as *National Review's* website, and you know, who's even reading the print publications anymore? So it's very easy to build an audience if you find people who think your argument is compelling, and so that's why I thought a work like this would be timely, just so that people would know these are some ideas that I think are probably going to be getting discussed in the years ahead, and whatever you think of them, it's probably a good idea to at least know what they are.

WOODS: Absolutely, and an excellent way to do that is by reading your book, which I recommend, and you'll find it at TomWoods.com/578. It's *Right-Wing Critics of American Conservatism*. Let me ask you before you get going, do you have tenure?

HAWLEY: No, so you know, I hope I did not say anything I wasn't supposed to say.

WOODS: Oh no, no, no. You didn't, but I was about to ask you some questions that might lead you down a path that you might not want to go, so we're going to — I'll have you back on the show six years down the road and we'll talk about them then (laughing).

HAWLEY: With any luck, earlier than that.

WOODS: Okay, that would be great. Okay, thanks so much. It's been a pleasure talking to you.

HAWLEY: Thank you.