



Episode 622: From the Air Force to Rothbard: Lt. Col. Karen Kwiatkowski's Journey

Guest: Karen Kwiatkowski

WOODS: Of course I'm going to have you back, because people are demanding that you come back. They cannot get enough of Karen Kwiatkowski, and now here's their chance to hear you again in a kind of encore presentation but it's a different topic, related topic. I want to know about you as a person, because somehow you were in the military and then you worked under Douglas Feith. And you have written and spoken an awful lot about the intelligence that was given to the president and the pressures of the White House and all this and you've done all that stuff. And today, we're talking in 2016, you are like a full-blown Rothbardian. And something tells me you didn't start off that way. So what I want to know is, who were you when you entered the military and when was that.

KWIATKOWSKI: Okay it was 1982 was when I was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Air Force. And who was I then? Well, politically I thought of myself as a Goldwater Republican because that's what my parents were and I thought that made sense. I didn't reject that. It made sense to me. Limited government. I thought my attitude towards government, even though I was entering to work in government, you know, the military, my attitude towards government was that you know it was inefficient, almost always guaranteed to have a lot of waste. I didn't think government was as corrupt as I came to find out that it was. You know, I kind of gave it the benefit of the doubt. So I wasn't a minarchist; I was really just kind of a 1980s Goldwater, maybe Reagan Republican. That's who I was then. And of course in '82, you know Reagan was in the White House, so this was the era of Republican supremacy in the sense of we got rid of Carter after one term, and you know, we were fighting the Cold War, which was, you know, rah, rah, you know thing, very – most people in the country agreed that this was a good thing. So kind of the first 10 years of my military career, that's where I was, and really feeling like I was part of a confident majority of people in the country. You know, a lot of people liked Reagan; I liked Reagan. A lot of people wanted to win the Cold War; I wanted to with the Cold War. You know, it was like –

WOODS: Yeah, sure.

KWIATKOWSKI: I'm with the crowd, you know, and what I am doing is good. Now, even when I was a lieutenant, at that time I saw lots of waste, at least what I thought was waste. And I grew in a household that, well, both my parents were born during the Depression. They really didn't experience it. They were just children, but they heard a lot of stories growing up, so it was always recalled to them. So they were fiscally

conservative and didn't like waste, and they were definitely, on both sides of my parents, my mom and my dad, both of them couldn't stand FDR. I mean they definitely hated communists and socialism and FDR. This was – you know, the growth of government was bad. It was, so I was predisposed to see waste and fraud, not so much fraud maybe, but waste and useless things being pursued by the military. I was predisposed to, you know, be looking at the bureaucracy and not liking it. So there was that. But I have to say, most people in the military don't like the bureaucracy, I mean, again, I was not outstanding in that way. I was just like normal, you know, we all thought that the higher ups, you know the higher up they went the – you know, there was a joke, to make general there was this special surgery that they did. It was a lobotomy that was done to, you know, it was the higher officers.

WOODS: Isn't that funny, because there's a joke about becoming a Catholic bishop, there's a special procedure where you have your spine removed.

KWIATKOWSKI: [laughs] Wow, that's a good one.

WOODS: All right, so go on.

KWIATKOWSKI: Well, so I didn't feel like I wasn't a part of something. Now in the '80s, I think the percentage of women in the military, in the Air Force anyway, was still around 15, 12 to 15%. So even then, I wasn't like, oh, I'm the only woman; no, that generation preceded me. The generation where women were working side by side and were a significant minority, that preceded my generation. I mean I worked with women. I mean I worked with women officers. There were women in the military. So I was used to fitting in, I guess you could say. And I felt like I did fit in pretty well.

Of course, while I was in the military, and from the very beginning I had my undergraduate degree in zoology, and you know officers were encouraged to get master's degrees, so I immediately, since I was a second lieutenant, I'm taking classes. And that is something that did make me a little bit different. I constantly was taking college classes. You know, graduate classes, almost throughout my entire - well, actually throughout my entire military career. That's how I ended up with – I mean, I got a PhD after I retired, but all the classwork had been done while I was still in the military. So always did that; that was my hobby. That was kind of my personal activity that I did outside of work and outside of family. That was the thing I did.

So I guess you could say I was getting exposed to some ideas, but look at where I went to school. I mean, I remember my first master's degree up in Alaska, was, I remember very distinctly a course that we took on public – it was like public planning. It had to do with how you design towns and cities. It was all about zoning and it was all about telling people how they have to do things so the people who are really smart can make these places that they want. Kind of like what we watch in, oh, one of the movies, the trilogy. The girl who shoots arrows - oh, gosh.

WOODS: Oh, oh, *Hunger Games*.

KWIATKOWSKI: *Hunger Games*, yeah, kind of like, you know kind of like Agenda 21. Of course I didn't know what Agenda 21 is, but the idea that people that are really, really smart and have the best interests in mind of everybody, can plan whole cities and

whole communities and can plan the economy. I took a class in 1984 which was all about that. And I remember recoiling at it and I didn't understand why, and I actually wrote my paper on the failures of the Tennessee Valley Authority. And this was long before I saw the great movie, you know, which documented what really happened to the people there, and had the great message of freedom and liberty and independence. But anyway, I was kind of a libertarian in the making, for sure. I didn't know anything about Rothbard. I never heard of him until the year he died, actually. I didn't discover his name until 1995, and I think he had passed when I did that. And so you know, that was, I guess I was ready for Rothbard when I found him, which is probably everybody's story.

WOODS: Yeah, but that makes me ask you the following: I mean, was there a particular moment when or there was a discreet moment, it could have been and event or anything, that made you say the world or the government or the military is different from what my assumptions have led me to believe?

KWIATKOWSKI: Absolutely. And because I saw lots of waste and after I left my first assignment I worked in acquisitions where I saw even more waste and more bureaucracy and things like that. And it didn't really change me, but it was after, it was in 1989, 1990 when the Wall came down, Berlin Wall came down, and the Cold War ended. I saw how the military, both the civilian side of it and the military side of it, reacted to that opportunity, which was an opportunity to shrink itself.

And I remember very distinctly wondering why NATO didn't stand down a month or so after the Warsaw Pact dissolved, because NATO had stood up because the Warsaw Pact had been created; I mean, it was a reaction. And so now that that was gone, what did NATO do? Well, NATO, instead of not standing down and not even shrinking, NATO immediately launched in an expansion mode. They were looking for new members, and particularly among the old Warsaw Pact countries. And I'm like, whoa, I thought they were enemies, like, 90 minutes ago, and then now we want them on a – what is this about?

And really, that was truly the turning point, because we were really excited, we were up in Massachusetts and I had three kids at the time. And Hap and I, my husband, and the kids jumped on a – you could get space available airplane rides if you – you know, there was a base there in Springfield, Massachusetts. We jumped on there and went space available to – flew into Frankfurt, I think it was. And then from there we rented a car, which we weren't supposed to do. Found out later that was not – what we did we weren't supposed to do. But we rented a car and drove all the way to Berlin. Drove through Eastern – drove through that corridor. And you know, technically weren't supposed to do that. But who knew, you know? Apologize later. And we did that and we were so excited to get a little piece of the Wall, and we got a little piece of the Wall. Brought it home and it was just like, we were so optimistic, we were so positive because at that time, Reagan got a lot of credit for ending this.

Although I – you know, it didn't take too long to understand that really it was the collapse of the very statist and very corrupt and, really, a system that couldn't sustain itself anymore. And the people, the Russian people, and the people, the non-Russians that were part of the Soviet Empire, I mean, these people had stopped generations before believing in their government, which of course, that's fascinating. Because

that's like huge, I think to use a, I hate to say "huge," but I say it just like Trump does. (laughing) You know, that "yuge." But yeah, it was the fact that the reaction that the military that I was in – the Air Force and all of the Pentagon as a whole, and the companies, the defense industrial complex that works with the Pentagon, and the Congress – all their reaction was the opposite of what I thought the logical reaction would be to the collapse of the Soviet Union. And this was a peaceful collapse. I mean, this was a peaceful collapse, this was a monitored collapse. Yeah, sure, some of their weapons went around the world, but for the most part, considering the massivity of what the Russians had, it was remarkably well controlled. I mean, you know, it was a great example of a peaceful win, progress and all that.

But the military's reaction and the military industrial complex reaction was simply to find new enemies, which we did very rapidly. I mean 1991, 1990, in the fall of 1990 we're telling Saddam Hussein, you do what you want, knowing full well we were planning to invade, which we did and we've been at endless Middle East war ever since 1991. Has not stopped. And the military budget has grown and grown and grown.

So my second half of the 20 years, the last 20 years was on a very different footing than the first 10 had been. Now I was very cynical. Now I really could see how, if not insane, then how stupid and wrong the decisions of this organization that I was a part of. And this organization I was a part of, this military, this is the United States. I mean, you know, I didn't really separate the government from the people. I do that now, of course; we all do that now. We all understand that the state is not society, but then you know, I'm sitting here in the middle of this going, my God, this organization is insane. And this country is insane. This foreign policy is insane. And it's not what I expected. Why isn't it?

And so my continued education, you know, I tried to read and learn. And around 1995, around 1994, I think, around that time frame, and actually that's when we first got easy access to Internet, I discovered LewRockwell.com. And so I started reading all these articles and getting educated and going to the other links and reading some of this stuff and look at the Mises Institute and the things they had, and it really helped me.

Actually, I have to say, I have to thank Lew Rockwell that I have a retirement today because I stayed 20 years. Because I wasn't going to stay 20 years if I had not been able to get an explanation for what it was that I was seeing, because I was very frustrated with it and I didn't believe in it anymore. But it was there. And so basically, like a lot of people, I just kept working, because I needed the money, and because the day-to-day stuff was a lot of fun. There's no doubt about that. I mean, you know, you work with people; most people who like their jobs, you like the people. You like the excitement, there's stuff to do, you know, it's fun. So I kept on going.

Now, in the last year and a half of my 20-year career – oh and by the way, I mean, I got promoted, which was a miracle among miracles, which also tells you how insane the bureaucracy is and how out of touch with reality they are. You know, I really have no idea why I got promoted. If they had known what was going through my mind, I'm sure they wouldn't have. You know, because I didn't believe, I didn't believe in what it was that – I was very cynical. And really, you know, I believed the lobotomy stories were true basically. I mean, I had a lot of contempt for a lot of the people in the

system. And you know, just not a lot of faith in the -

But anyway, I knew I was going to retire. We were going to live in the country. We already had a place to live in the country in that last year and a half. So I was just working to put my time in, and they moved me from the North Africa – sorry, from the Sub-Saharan Africa area in Policy in the Pentagon over into Near East South Asia. That's what we talked about last time. You know the Policy Office under Doug Feith. Now, I worked for Doug Feith in the Sub-Saharan Africa. He owned that as well, but he had no interest in that, so I had very little interface with him. I didn't have to worry, he never – in fact, we had papers that sat on his desk for eight or nine months; it was like a joke. We couldn't get any feedback. He wasn't interested in –

WOODS: Oh, gee, okay.

KWIATKOWSKI: But was he was, – and so this was like a nice setting, because I worked for this guy in one branch where we never saw him, couldn't get anything back from his desk. No input whatsoever, couldn't care less about what we did, which was actually a good thing from a – you know, if you don't like the state, this is a good thing. And then I moved into the place that he was overwhelmingly focused on, so obviously I could see why he wasn't doing our stuff, because he was overwhelmingly focused on what was going on in Iraq and what we were doing, prepping and lying our way, and propagandizing our way into this invasion.

And of course being in Washington D.C., being in the Pentagon, you know you're reading the *Post*, you're reading the *Times*. You're looking at what the opinion makers are saying, what the politicians are saying, and we could – plus we had access to the intelligence, so it was like, okay, here's the intelligence, here's what they're saying. Here's this stuff we know that's not true, and here's what they're saying. And they are saying things we know are not true. So you know, it doesn't take – you don't have to be too bright to figure it out.

And most people figured it out. Most people I worked with absolutely knew what I knew. And many of them felt the way I felt, but they were in different situations in their life. Because I knew I was retiring, I wasn't staying around to kiss any more butt. You know, I shouldn't say that, I mean obviously, promotions I'm sure are well deserved. But I wasn't there to play the game to get that next promotion. I wasn't there to stay thirty years. I wasn't there to make the world safe from communism, because I think we did that already like 10 years before and I didn't believe in what we were – you know, this thing in the Middle East was confusing to me at the time. Well actually, I think it still is to some extent.

So I was in a place where I could kind of sit back and say what I thought. And when I did, I got a lot of positive feedback from people I worked with in the sense that – I shouldn't say positive feedback; it was negative feedback. They basically said, yeah, I feel the same way too. It's really messed up, so messed up, whatever, whatever. They're making up these stories, and you know, we're going to war based on – you know, other people were saying this, not just me. But they wouldn't – most of those guys needed something from the system that I didn't need anymore, because I'd already decided to be a civilian, to live far, far from any military facilities and all that kind of thing. And I didn't need them to pay my kid's college, I didn't need to stay, to

pay some mortgage that I couldn't afford.

But all the rest of these folks either had career aspirations, wanted to stay in as long as they possibly could, owed a lot of money on a house or some other thing, didn't really have the freedom to act freely. And this I think is the danger of, you know, it's the danger of the state. It's what happens. You know, people work for it. People take the welfare, whether it's in the form of a little – you know, it's a debit card welfare, or it's a contract welfare, or it's some other kind of thing. And pretty soon, you need it. And once you need it, at a certain point, you can't, you've lost your freedom of speech, because your freedom of speech does have consequences. And you will lose your job, you will lose your contract, we know this. That's life. But people are afraid. And they put themselves where their hands are tied.

I wasn't in that place. My hands weren't tied. Well, they were tied a little bit. I only wrote anonymously while I was wearing the uniform. They were tied, because I didn't want to go to Leavenworth. Okay, I did have one thing that I didn't want to do. I didn't want to be put in prison. And the military can do that for – you know they have a lot more leeway than the normal court to put people away if they had to. And this, I didn't reveal any classified luckily, because it was already being – the classified was already on the front pages of the newspaper, thanks to the neocons. So I didn't really reveal classified, but my contempt from within and some of the tales that I told, the stories that I wrote, the sarcasm, it was very disrespectful. And in the UCMJ, I mean, disrespect to an officer sounds like it's not much, but you know they could have done stuff to me.

So I wrote anonymously so I did have that aspect of my hands being tied. But for the most part I was, you know I think mentally and professionally free to be objective and to be honest about what I was seeing and to call it like it was. I mean, it was kind of like before you get divorced, you kind of know it's happening and a lot of times maybe you have clarity. I've never been divorced, but I'm imagining that's what it would be like, that you know this is coming and you sit back and you say, well, I've made some decisions and there was some good and some bad, but I can see it objectively. That's how I kind of felt those last few years.

And not to say – when I say objectively, I don't mean I wasn't angry, because I was infuriated. I mean, there's a huge sense of betrayal there as well, because you have spent your professional life and your time and your effort and your faith. You've spent that on something and you find out, well, they're just a bunch of liars, and they don't care about the Constitution. They swear to it, but they ignore it. They don't even know what's in it. And again, back then, I really was, I thought the Constitution was a really cool thing. I still talk about it, you know, because it's a point of commonality. A lot of people think the Constitution will save us. It was only after I'd left the military, and again, through Lew Rockwell and Mises and other people that I was exposed to, did I learn about, kind of that the Constitution is maybe part of the problem. But anyway –

WOODS: All right, I've got a lot more I want to ask you, if that's all right, because the more you talk, the more I want to know about. But first, let's pause for a quick message.

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All right now going back to something you said, it was almost a throwaway line. But I'm going back into the garbage and moving the banana peels and picking that thing out again, because you were talking about how you were writing anonymously. I guess from the summer until the spring of or the winter of 2003. Who's publishing this and what were you saying under, I guess, must have been a pen name?

KWIATKOWSKI: Well, kind of. In August, about the same time that the Office of Special Plans separated out of our spaces, and that's when we were starting to get in the talking points, I started to really understand what this office was doing. You know, they were propagandizing. They were preparing for a war that had long been decided on, but had not been made popular to the American people. So their job was to popularize this war. And they would do and say anything, and which we got to see them do and say anything.

So it's very shocking, it's very concerning, and most of us, even though we see it, the guys I'm working with, our hands are tied. We're not able to do anything. So it's really stressful – because that's the definition of stress. It's when you can't control, you know, what you need to control around you. You're in a sense of being out of control. That's kind of how I felt, and so I started to write these short, kind of tongue-in-cheek – they weren't really reports; they were just like observations of the way people talked about something in meetings that had happened or whatever. And revealed no classified, but it was highly sarcastic, dark humor. Very disrespectful to the bosses, that kind of thing. So I talked about, you know, Goodlad and Wolfowitz, and I of course, when I wrote these things, I would provide links, and I would do things like, I would link to things that people had done or said.

And I remember I wrote one on Newt Gingrich, who of course, back in, you know, a decade before, had been like this big reinventing government, was supposed to be this good conservative. Of course Gingrich is this war wagon, and he's all pushing this thing, and he had given some speech somewhere in D.C., I think, talking about how we had to go do this, and he was also referring to his – he's a historian, and he was talking about a great battle in France in World War I or II, I don't even remember. But I researched it and I made a big – you know, I sarcastically described him and talked about what he was saying and the emotion that he felt. And yet this man had never seen fit to put a uniform on and never served his country in any way, other than just, you know, pushing for these things. And this, soldiers hate this stuff. Okay first off, it always happens. It's not new; it's the nature of the state and war. You know, politicians start these wars, for the most part. Soldiers get to die, and more – not even soldiers, just people, regular people get to die in them.

And so I kind of, I would write about things like this, that I saw, and of course I would claim accurately that lies were being told. I mean, I would be saying this. Now, I didn't say this as Karen Kwiatkowski. And initially, I wrote these for myself. Then I would send them to some of my likeminded friends, and they would laugh their heads off. So I liked that part, okay, here, I sent you something, did you enjoy it? Yeah, I thought it was – that's cool, I liked it, I'm laughing, you got it. You know, and so it really started out as entertaining. I had five of them, that I had sent around to some of my friends. And just, I kept writing them because it helped me feel better about what I was

observing around me.

And so then I sent all five to Lew, because I'd been reading Lew for some years. And I sent them to Lew Rockwell, and I said, Lew – I didn't say "Lew"; I said "Mr. Rockwell," because, well, I didn't know. And I said, look, this is who I am, this is where I work, and here's some short things that I've written. If you'd like to publish them you can, but you can't put my name on them, because I'm inside the Pentagon here, active duty and I'll get in big trouble. And Lew said we don't do anonymous, so I said, okay, too bad. And you know, I thought, well, that makes sense, but I wasn't willing to go non-anonymous. I had to stay –

WOODS: Oh, that's too bad that he wouldn't even let you use a pen name. Huh.

KWIATKOWSKI: Oh no, well, I didn't suggest that, and you know, he and I, we didn't know each other. You know it was just –

WOODS: Yeah.

KWIATKOWSKI: I'm sure he gets sent a lot things from people he doesn't know. But in any case, my second person I sent it to was Colonel David Hackworth, who, highly decorated Vietnam War guy, wrote a lot of books. And he ran a website called *Soldiers for the Truth*. I think he might still have that, but I don't know - well, not him, but the guy that took it over. In any case, *Soldiers for the Truth* was pretty well read and talked, did a lot of things. And I sent them to him, and I didn't know him from Adam. He didn't know me, plus I was a female. He knew my name obviously, I told him who I was, and you know, he's not big on women in the military, certainly not women in combat. I was not in combat, but, you know, here's a guy who I'm thinking maybe is of another generation and maybe he doesn't event approve of me being here. I don't know.

But immediately, immediately, as soon as he got them, he emails me back. We'll set it up for you. We'll make it – you can post these yourself. He made it so that I could post directly to the site. And he called them "Insider Notes from the Pentagon" I think is what he called them. And so that was the moniker, "Insider Notes" or "Notes from Inside the Pentagon", something like that. Anyway he put it on his website, and I would publish my things, really almost weekly. Until I got out, until March, I published them.

And it was whatever I wanted to write. Things I was observing. Of course tie stuff from the new, and I would point out if you read it in the newspaper, here's what, you know, I saw it first. Guess where I saw it first. Well you know actually, I saw it this way but I saw it the right way, not the wrong way, whatever. I mean I'm sharing information, not hurtful or harmful information, but really just eye-opening information, you know, critical of the propaganda stuff that was going on. And not just critical of the Pentagon, but of the politicians inside the Beltway that were pushing for this war over in – you know, all the different things. And so it was just like fun for me. And I felt like I had an audience. Of course I had never any contact with any members of the – you know, it wasn't like where people put comments down, not back in 2001. It wasn't something where people would say, oh yeah.

And it never occurred to me until months and months after I retired why Colonel Hackwork had accepted what I was saying and provided me that outlet so rapidly and so confidently. And I realized afterwards because he was hearing it already from all of his many, many friends inside the Pentagon and inside the various commands. The Army people, the Marines, all the people that he knew, and he had a big network and this was not secret. What they were doing, the propaganda war was not secret.

And there were even media outlets that knew it wasn't – I mean, what is it, one of the news agencies that did a good job of reporting it? Not the *Times*, not the *Post*, but there were media outlets, and there were thinkers and writers at the time who knew this was wrong, and I could name their names if I was prepared for it. But these are people, and some of them are still writing today. And they saw what was going on from outside. I was just one more data point, one more little bit of evidence of what many, many, many people knew was happening, but nobody seemed to be able to stop it.

And again, I still think about that, and I still wonder how – you know, how do you control the state? How do the people control the state? At what point – we all know the states collapse. They – our state, we're not a republic; you know, we're an empire. And we're in the latter stages of our existence as an empire. We're in that collapse mode. But you know, we have these pseudo elections, we have these pseudo representatives. How do you – ? We have this pseudo independent media. How do we control our state?

You know, and it seemed like we weren't able to. You know, we weren't able to then. This government, the government under Bush and Cheney, those folks, Condoleezza Rice, all these people, and the neocons and the think tanks, they marched to war, they created a war, and they went to war. And it was as if the rest of the country didn't exist for them. Truth didn't matter. They published a few things, took a few polls, and then bombed the living heck out of a bunch of countries. We're still doing it. And so, very, very frustrating, very not a happy time.

When that kept – of course, after I retired, I tried to keep it up for a little while, and I still kind of spoke out. I mean, I still do to some extent. It's just, you know, it's just hard to say. I would like to think that we have gotten to where we can control our government a little bit better, because we don't see Obama going as hog wild as Bush and Cheney did, as far as creating these wars. It seems like there is a more – but how much of that is just fifteen years of, you know, the people going this is so stupid, I don't even want to hear about it? And people not wanting to join in the military, which they don't.

I mean, it's almost like the Soviet Union with Afghanistan. I mean, the Soviet Union didn't care what their people thought, but after about 10 or 12 years in Afghanistan, pretty much the people just turned their back on their government and said, you know, this is so incredibly stupid. It has nothing to do with what's in our interests. It's just something these communists want. You know, I think we're in the same boat. So I still don't – I don't have any answers on how you control government. Now I have to tell you – do I have minute?

WOODS: You have all the time you want.

KWIATKOWSKI: Okay, okay, because one of my buddies on Facebook, who is a farming buddy, she does farm and food freedom activism. She shares a video of the Liberty Me guy, Liberty.me, you know who, Tucker, Jeffery Tucker.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah.

KWIATKOWSKI: She shares the Jeffrey Tucker video. Don't know when it was, it seems like it was pretty current. Down in Australia, he went to something, and he gave a little talk, and it was a very personal talk and a very inspiring talk. And it was about, it was about Murray, really; it was about Murray Rothbard, because he knew him, I guess, in person, and had spent actual time with him and everything.

WOODS: Yeah, he knew him very well.

KWIATKOWSKI: Yeah, so he gave this talk, and of course he's hilarious. I mean, he's just the funniest guy. And he's sharing a lot of information about Murray and the movement and just the way of thinking about things and how change happens. But he tells the libertarians, and I assume there were a lot of them there or something, but he tells them, you know, we obsess about changing the state. And he says, you cannot – it's not going to happen. That's not how – you know, it's not going to happen. It doesn't – you can't do it; it's not worth the energy to do it.

So the change happens in other ways, in different ways. And of course the emphasis, I guess, being society and people and love and brotherhood. That's the real world. And the state is kind of this façade, and you know, why invest in it? But we all, it's hard to not want to think that, hey, can't we make the state do what we want it to do? You know, and I don't think we can. And that's very – you've got to get over that. You've got to think of some different things, because I don't see where –

I think if Obama had a vice president that was not that crazy Biden guy, if it was actually as aggressive, as sociopathic as Cheney, if Obama had that kind of a vice president and that guy wanted to do something, it would happen, just as it happened with Bush and Cheney. I think they could pretty much – I think the state can do what it wants, and I think it does do what it wants. And it did what it want, it certainly did what it wanted back in 2002, 2003. The whole idea of getting the people on board was just propaganda. Very much like *House of Cards*, let's get people to think something. Doesn't matter what it is. Doesn't matter if it's true or not. Doesn't matter how long they think it or even if they believe it. We just want – let's impact the polls. How can we do that? Okay, make a plan. Do it.

WOODS: Yeah, yeah, that's exactly it; that's exactly it. Now, I've a couple more quick things I want to ask you, though. First of all, I know you live on a farm. Are those farm animals we've been hearing? My listeners are going to want to know.

KWIATKOWSKI: Oh, well, probably to some extent. I know last time when we talked I had baby lambs in the house. They're outside now.

WOODS: Okay, because I could swear, I mean, I know I've been hearing some noises, and I could swear I heard a squeal at some point.

KWIATKOWSKI: Okay, yeah, yeah, we don't have pigs; we have everything but pigs.

WOODS: Okay, okay, all right. Just so if people are wondering, where is Woods doing this interview. All right, then the next thing is, given that you had this archive of those fun pieces that you wrote, that you didn't write under your own name, and then later you went on to write under your own name quite a bit, and even though, you know, you weren't as big a player as Feith himself was or any of these other people, why didn't you ever write a book? Did you ever consider it?

KWIATKOWSKI: Well, you know, I did; I did think about it. One thing was, I was working on my dissertation, during the first couple of years that I was out, after I retired. So I finished that up in 2005. So that was kind of like a book effort. And so I didn't — you know, in my mind I thought, yea,h I should do a book, but then I contributed a couple of chapters to different people's efforts. And it seemed like I pretty much had it there. And you know, I don't think I had a book in me. I did think about it, but it didn't seem like I had a book in me about that. Yeah, it's a good question.

WOODS: Okay.

KWIATKOWSKI: I don't know, it never — it didn't seem like — I had a couple of chapters, but it didn't seem like I had a book.

WOODS: (laughing) Yeah, but you know, most books you read, you feel that way. They could have written this in two chapters. Don't you know that's how you write a book?

KWIATKOWSKI: Yeah it's still on my list to do something, but —

WOODS: But you know, doggone it, you could have made a little eBook out of your dispatches that you wrote anonymously, you know.

KWIATKOWSKI: That's true; that is true. And I do have the text of those. They're not on, I don't think, on the Internet anymore. Well, they probably are somewhere. It's hard to find them. But I do have the text of those and —

WOODS: I mean historians could cite them in the future, right?

KWIATKOWSKI: Actually, that's a good point. Maybe I'll do an eBook at some point here, just some of this. But I'll have to be in the right frame of mind. I have to know that it's going to be useful, and you've made a good point. That actually, the way you're describing it, historians might want to use some of this.

WOODS: Yeah, and those historians better thank me for lighting a fire under you for this. All right, last thing I want to ask you is, given that you went through a philosophical development, contrast for me your view of the federal government and the military, let's say 25 years ago, and what is their nature? What are they fundamentally about? As compared to how you view them today?

KWIATKOWSKI: Yeah, well, 25 years ago I thought, or 30 years ago, I thought, you

know, the military defended the country against communism. And I thought the government was the – I thought worse of the general government than I did the military, but I still thought, you know, I didn't think it was – I thought it wasted a lot of money, but other than that it was acceptable and not really necessarily bad. I also thought that our government, that the United States government was somehow a really good government and that everybody else's government really, probably had problems or were corrupt or whatever. And of course, now our government is not just as bad as most governments around the world; in many ways it's worse. The whole way that it funds itself is really criminal.

In terms of the military, my view of the military is that it's not a fighting machine. Very little of the military fights. Most of what the military does is justify its budget. And really I come by that honestly, because I went years and years and years, and the budget drove everything, just like it does in all of both state and even local governments and certainly the federal government. It's the budget cycle. So what is the objective? The objective is to extract money in a justifiable way from whoever has the money. And that would be the working and producing people, and then of course the bank that can print money, the Fed, can provide this. And that's the objective. I mean, that's what it lives for. It lives to justify last year's budget and 5 to 10 or 20%.

And to grow, the individuals in government live to grow their own authority. They live to become part of a larger and more important and more powerful agency or office. It's even down in the smallest levels, where one guy has two guys working for him but he wants three guys working for him. Now, none of this matches up with productive enterprise; none of this matches up with the free market where you might have, hey, I need three guys because, my God, people are knocking on my door, they need this stuff that I'm making, and I need a third guy because I can't make enough stuff for my customers.

Well, none of that applies to the government. The government makes up in its – they make a vision, a fantasy of what they could do if they could only get the money. And then they proceed to justify it and then they get it, and then they grow and then they look and they go, oh, we can grow even bigger. And it becomes unsustainable. And I think the collapse of the Soviet Union was very much like this.

Also, lies are highly, not just tolerated within government, but the government lives on lies. I mean you can't tell the truth in government. This is why our whistle blowers have to run to foreign countries. Okay, you cannot tell the truth in government. You know, we've got, who is it, Ed Snowden who can't come back. Well, you know they say, oh, well, why didn't Ed just tell people at NSA that NSA was violating the letter of the law and the Constitution and they were doing things. What? Yeah, whoever says that doesn't know anything about how any government works and certainly not how our government works.

WOODS: Well, you know when I had Lew on to talk about one of the presidential debates, we commented on what Ted Cruz had said about Snowden, that we knew he was up to no good when we saw how he behaved after he disclosed the information. He ran off to foreign countries. What did you expect him to do?

KWIATKOWSKI: Right, that's right. I mean, he would have been in a hole somewhere. I

mean, we have people that have done – I mean committing crimes against the government will get you sent to supermax. There's a lot of things you know – in fact, we need to need to start a new meme, Government Lives Matter, you know, because I think they do. You know, that's beyond Police Lives Matter; it's all the people work in government; I mean, they are so important. They must be protected from anything that would make them feel bad about themselves or the job that they do. I'm being sarcastic here.

WOODS: (laughing) I have a pretty good sarcasm detector.

KWIATKOWSKI: But I mean, more and more people are becoming aware of this, and certainly the more people who work for government or work with government, which is the nature of this endless growth of government. You know, we do run into government more frequently, whether it's law enforcement or any other aspect of government. The more we know it, the more contempt we will hold it in. I mean, it's just empty, bureaucratic thievery. And so that's what I ended up viewing it as.

And of course I thought of myself even about six or seven years ago as more of a minarchist. But I'm not really. I mean, I am, you know, I am an anarchist. I see absolutely no use for government. There's nothing government can do that people themselves can't do, and we should do. We should do, we should have freedom, we should live just like Jeff Tucker says, you have to just live your life. And the things that you can control, you know, and live liberty and live anarchy. Peaceful anarchy obviously.

But true anarchy is peaceful, you know. I mean, we human beings are not, you know we don't like to hurt people's feelings. I mean, people tell white lies because they don't want to hurt their neighbor's feelings. This is what human beings are. We're actually kind of nice. The state is wholly incompatible with the real true nature of human beings, which is not bad; it's not bad. You know, we are not, individual people are good; communities are good. People want good things. The state is what's evil and wrong. So yeah, I've progressed a little bit philosophically.

WOODS: Well, you know, Karen, now we're at the end, and of course now I want to ask you, does – I'm not actually going to officially ask you this, but looking back on things that you thought justified government activity, would you now look back and say maybe I even look at the Cold War differently? That's going to have to be for another day.

KWIATKOWSKI: Yeah, but it's true, I do and like many people who've studied this, yes.

WOODS: Very interesting, great to talk to you. Now see, I'm going to get people calling on me to have you on regularly. So, you're busy, you're a busy person. And the thing is that out of two interviews, so half and half, so fifty percent of them have resulted in you getting a homework assignment. So you're not going to want to be on with me. But I hope you can overlook that and come back again soon. Thanks a lot. I really appreciate it; it was great.

KWIATKOWSKI: It's a great pleasure talking to you, anytime.