



## Episode 941: Current Events: North Korea Update with Michael Malice

Guest: Michael Malice

**WOODS:** Some interesting North Korea stuff to talk about, some great Michael Malice stuff to talk about, by the way, which I guess has happened since the last time you were on. I don't think I've had an opportunity to mention it, except that I did run my episode with you on your show as an episode of mine. That's how I introduced it to folks, but not with you here with me, so I do want to talk to you about how that's been going and the sorts of people you've been talking to. I've been following along the best I can, but then I was out of town for a few weeks, inaccessible. But I watch you on Facebook. I know what you're up to and it's always fun, so I'm —

**MALICE:** You don't know what I'm up to.

**WOODS:** [laughing] But I do know that it is the year of Malice.

**MALICE:** Yes.

**WOODS:** I do know that. This really is shaping up to be the year of Malice. Well, let's talk about North Korea. First, let's be as current as possible. Today I'm reading headlines saying that McMaster is giving Trump a military option in case he wants to exercise it against North Korea, so we've got that sort of tension heating up. But this very morning you were talking with Stuart Varney on Fox Business, and you were saying, as they are indeed reporting on their website, that contrary to what the bluster might make you suspect, the North Korean government actually very much wants to avoid a military confrontation. So what makes you say that?

**MALICE:** Well, when you go to North Korea and you read their literature, they are pretty explicit about their goals and their strategies, and they make the point very clearly that they don't think they can win a military strategy. They compare themselves to an anthill fighting an elephant. Now, one of the myths that they put forward about why the Dear Leader, Kim Jong-Il, who's Kim Jong-Un's father, took over as Supreme Commander for the Great Leader, the founder of North Korea, Kim Il-Sung, they were supposedly having this big meeting with all the generals, and Kim Il-Sung says, What happens if America wins? And all the generals are saying that would never happen. We'll kick their butt; that'll never happen. And the Great Leader says, What if? And Kim Jong-Il says, If they win, we will destroy the world. And Kim Jong-Il goes, "Spoken like a real Supreme Commander."

The point of this being: they know if they're going to go down, they're going to go down fighting. But they're also very well aware that if they lose, it's going to be horrific, especially because the creation myth of North Korea is that the U.S. imperialists, as we're referred to, came during the Korean War – which we launched, they claim – and basically when you had the Korean War, you had Russia, China, and North Korea in the north; you had the United States, the UN, and South Korea in the south, and the Korean people were in the middle, and their country was devastated. So they very much remember this as part of their history, and they know perfectly well that it would get very, very ugly very, very quickly. And McMaster thinks the same thing. He said, Look – When he laid out those plans for Trump, he says, "Nobody wants the military option."

**WOODS:** Well, because of all this, there's been – there are other news items that are related to North Korea that I'll get to in a minute, but you have been all over the media talking about North Korea and you've made multiple appearances in front of gigantic audiences. People can't – It's what I said would happen some day. People can't get enough Michael Malice.

**MALICE:** Well, I'm going to correct you and I'm going to tell you a little anecdote. This morning when I was on Stuart Varney, he said, "You get more airtime than I do." And I said, "Well, that's because of the lapel pin." And he busted out his cufflinks, and he has American flag cufflinks, which he's worn every day since he became a U.S. citizen. And I pointed out to him, "Well, I was born in the Soviet Union and that's why this North Korean issue matters so much to me." And he looked at me and was like, "Okay, I get you."

But the point is, why I wrote the book, no one knew what they were talking about with this issue. I mean, this was one of the big reasons I wrote the book. And I thought, to quote *Atlas Shrugged*, "I'm going to put a stop to this once and for all." I'm like, someone has to be out there who's coherent who can make this comprehensible. And the first step to defeating any enemy and to destroying the most evil government on earth is to understand how they operate, their M.O., their logic. And they have a perfectly coherent, perfectly evil logic to their actions, which I spell out in the book – which, I was shocked to to learn how explicit they were about spelling out their techniques and strategies.

**WOODS:** Yeah, so that does seem to be a common view of North Korea, that they're crazy. This regime is run by crazy people. But there's something a bit more sinister when it turns out they're not crazy.

**MALICE:** Right, and they're twisted. And the thing is, if they're crazy – to be crazy means to act in defiance of reality, to act not in contact with reality. If you're not in contact with reality, reality's going to be in contact with you. It's going to catch up with you sooner or later. You're not going to be able to make something last for 70 years under a complete system that does not bear the facts of reality into account. So they are bright, they are conniving, they regard human life as having no value, and they practice what they preach, which has caused the country to be turned into basically a lunatic asylum and a prison camp.

**WOODS:** Well, let's talk about this item that I just saw today – in fact, it's dated today – from UPI: "North Korea drought mobilizes workers to fight drought, bans travel." And as I scroll down, I read that the ban on movement began in April, that they're closing down marketplaces early, they're restricting movement, they're forcing people to do work relating to drought. What do you know about this, and does it seem that – he asks rhetorically – in communist countries, there seems to be more difficulty with drought and more difficulty coping with the weather? Bad weather is always an excuse.

**MALICE:** When the famine hit in the '90s, North Korea was hit with some of the worst storms they'd ever seen two years in a row, or at least two years in a row, which was of course the reason for the crops failing, as opposed to, I don't know, refusing to allow the UN to give food to the people. So an interesting point is one of the things I always stress when I talk about North Korea is how normal and human the poor people are. And I don't mean poor in the sense of just financially poor; I mean poor in the sense of they truly are victims of this despicable autocratic regime. And my guide, when you have a guide in North Korea, they are very, very, high class; very wealthy; very high status – which meant she dressed in '80s clothes, because that's as nice as you're going to get in North Korea.

And my guide, a young woman, she pointed out that once a year, they make everyone in North Korea go into the countryside and harvest rice. And being kind of collegial and friendly, I'm like, Oh, that sounds very nice, you know, kind of like some Hands Across America thing if some people can remember when you and I were young. And she looks at me and she's like, Yeah. And you realize, you know what? Despite all the propaganda and the kinds of things she's taught in school, this is a bourgeois, wealthy, city-dweller who has to get in the muck once a year like a farmhand, and to her, it's as low as it gets. So they very much are motivated by the same human impulses that everyone else is, and that to me is a big sign of hope, that when this regime comes down, it will not take that much to have these people have a normal, functioning society.

**WOODS:** I read a book probably when I was in college by a guy named Hedrick Smith, and he had written a book called – I think he had written a book called *The Russians* in years past, but then he had written a book called *The New Russians*, where I think he had gone there either in the late '80s or early '90s, and if I'm remembering this particular book correctly, he was suggesting that the communist experience had left a deep and profound imprint on the Russian public that he did not see as being easily reversed.

Like for instance, in the U.S. – less so today, but when he wrote certainly – if you would see somebody in a fancy car, well, you might say, Oh, you know what? If I save up, maybe I'll have that car someday. Whereas he said in Russia, you don't see that among the public. You see instead this attitude of I'd like to kill that guy who has that car. And he says that is a product of basically associating success with cronyism, because anybody who's doing well around here must have some connection, and so it makes you disparage success in general. So do you think that's true about Russia, and if so, why would that not be a problem in North Korea?

**MALICE:** Well, let me break this down. So first of all, Russians have jokes about New Russians. So this is like a comedic trope where you make fun of them, because of the idea that they're very flashy and flamboyant and kind of trashy, kind of like the new rich in America. So that's very much something in the Russian consciousness. But the question that has always happened vis-a-vis Russia is: did communism cause this or was it the character of the Russian people that allowed communism to take root there? It's a chicken-and-the-egg situation. So there always has been historically a dark cynicism to the Russian spirit. This is not a controversial statement to make. So it's not surprising that you would see this kind of outcome. The Russian belief is very much the idea that aspiration and hope is a fool's gambit and you should really get your eyes off the stars and just focus on getting through. It's a very, very dark worldview, which I've spent my entire life in complete opposition to.

But as regarding North Korea, I think it's a different situation because now they're getting food through entrepreneurialism. The government's not providing food, so they're doing it through black markets. And you know what? Honestly, if we come to a point where North Korea's free but they have contempt for the people driving Ferraris, I'm fine with that, you know?

**WOODS:** Obviously —

**MALICE:** Let's get these people fed [laughing].

**WOODS:** Yeah. Obviously worse things could happen than that.

**MALICE:** Yeah.

**WOODS:** Yeah, yeah. All right, more stuff to talk about with Michael Malice and North Korea after we thank our sponsor.

[Sponsored content]

All right, let's talk about this case of this American who'd been imprisoned in North Korea who recently died, because this of course has also generated a lot of attention to North Korea. People are talking about this particular episode. So tell me, how did he come to be imprisoned there and what were the circumstances of his death?

**MALICE:** You know, I've got to tell you — I'm just going to make a broader point about Otto Warmbier, that student, which is whenever something happens to any American anywhere, you have the neocons saber rattling and being like, This can never pass; let's have war today. But in fact, every appearance I've been making discussing this, the host who I've talked to and the audience have been extremely receptive to my message. So I'm glad to be able to be a small voice of reason on this issue.

Otto Warmbier was a college student. He took a tour to North Korea. He stayed in the same hotel I stayed at when I was there. He stayed on the same floor I was at when I was there. You're segregated by nationality in that hotel. And what he did, supposedly, is he trespassed to a floor you're not allowed to go to, which I was tempted to do because — you know, when I went I Googled about this trip and there's

some blog I saw that says, Hey, there's this secret floor. So there were a few people many times over the years who go to the secret floor. And supposedly, he took one of their posters.

Now, does this person deserve to be murdered? Absolutely not. However, if you go to the White House and you trespass and you try to steal Hillary Clinton's painting, it's not going to end well for you. You're going to be arrested. You are going to have to deal with consequences. But what they do is when North Korea captures people as a hostage, they're just looking for a pretense, because they don't want to say they took someone for no reason. Now they have a reason and now they have a bargaining chip.

They claimed he was in a coma for ten months, which is absurd because they don't have the medical care for that. So basically what happened is, in my view, they had a hostage; things started turning bad; they're like, Crap, quick, let's get rid of this body; they got him on a plane; and he passed away here. And then this thing that I want to point out that I haven't seen mentioned in the press is that poor mom, because you know that she sat him down before he got on the trip and said, Don't do it. This is a mistake. And she's going to have that guilt for the rest of her life.

**WOODS:** Yeah.

**MALICE:** So my heart really, really goes out to her.

**WOODS:** Oh yeah, yeah. "I should have stopped him. I should have tried harder to persuade him." Yeah.

**MALICE:** Right.

**WOODS:** Yeah, that really is crushing. But it's true that of course it wouldn't end well for you if you did something similar here in the U.S., but obviously it would end a lot better. You wouldn't die of unknown causes after being barely in a state of wakefulness when returned to your parents.

**MALICE:** Well, one big theory is that he committed self-harm, because the doctor didn't find any evidence of trauma. So he was first sentenced to 15 years of hard labor, and I said at the time that that's a lie for several reasons. First of all, you'd want the hostage returned in good shape. None of the people that North Korea held captive over the years from America ever served hard labor, number one. Number two is if he gets sent to these labor camps, he is a Western eyewitness to their atrocities. So either he dies in the camps, which they can't have, or he is released and he gets to testify in front of the UN what the conditions are like, which they can't have either.

**WOODS:** That's a great point.

**MALICE:** So what is the — and hard labor, how much value is he producing with his work? Very, very little. So everyone they've held captive points out that they're treated very well, by North Korean standards, of course, which is hardly the Hilton. And the guards often develop relationships with these prisoners because this is their only window to the outside world. So when you have a hostage — and again, these are

rational actors – you want that person kept in good shape so that you get the money or whatever it is you're looking for in exchange.

**WOODS:** Yeah, man, that is such a – it's kind of obvious when you put it that way, but I hadn't quite thought of it.

**MALICE:** And here's the other thing. When he got caught at that floor, that hidden floor, whoever saw him – in America, maybe some guard could be like, Okay, I'm going to look the other way. North Korea's a surveillance society where everybody watches everyone else. If I'm a North Korean guard and I see malfeasance on the part of a tourist, I have to report him or else I'm going to be in big trouble.

**WOODS:** Right. Now, back up, though. I want to get your thoughts, though, on this question of the professor, I guess at the University of Delaware?

**MALICE:** Right.

**WOODS:** She was part-time and she apparently on Facebook, and then it got circulated all over the place, said that he more or less got what he deserved; he was one of these entitled, privileged white guys who just thinks he can do what he wants and not face any consequences. And that was her response to the death of somebody's child, basically. And she wound up getting fired. And I'm not – whatever university policy they want to have with these professors, you know, do what you want to do. But for one thing, as I've seen people say, if you are a part-time professor, don't say something like that, because you are so expendable. When the public relations winds blow the other way, you will be gone in ten seconds. And if you think that the sisterhood of feminism is going to defend you, if it means that their budget is threatened, bye bye. You're dispensable. It was a dumb thing to do, apart from kind of evil.

**MALICE:** Well, is there any possibility this woman knew anything about Otto Warmbier, other than he was a white male college student? She had no insight into his background. She knew nothing about him other than that. And just based on that, she was being flippant and glib. And I'm sorry – I mean, even if he didn't die. Even if he was just spending 15 years hard labor, I don't agree. Let's suppose it's true. Let's suppose he was an obnoxious, entitled college student, and I've seen plenty in my day. Went to Bucknell, which is full of them. The idea that any of them should be sentenced to 15 years hard labor for trespassing and stealing a poster is psychotic.

**WOODS:** Yeah, well, that goes without saying.

**MALICE:** Well, apparently not [laughing].

**WOODS:** Yeah, I know. Well, it goes without saying with normal people, right? But you know, American academics, you know, who knows what they would say? There have been – has there been at least one other celebrity visit? Was it – who was it who went and visited? Did Dennis Rodman go and visit recently to North Korea?

**MALICE:** Correct.

**WOODS:** Okay, what came of that, and was there any point to it other than — I mean, what do you think the deal is with that?

**MALICE:** He was there promoting a cryptocurrency, which got a great deal of publicity from this trip, whose name I will not repeat. And it's very, very sad that this currency is going to exploit this nation full of children who are starving for political purposes just to sell their product. Dennis Rodman is an idiot. When Dennis Rodman was on some Sunday morning show, he was asked, Hey, what about their concentration camps? And his response was, "We have prisons. What's the difference?"

**WOODS:** Oh.

**MALICE:** Yeah, so ask any prisoner in North Korea or any American prisoner, Hey, you guys want to do a swap?, it's not going to be a very hard question. They'll be glad to tell you what the differences are.

**WOODS:** Yeah.

**MALICE:** So it's — he's just an idiot. And to their credit, the media did not give him as much attention as they had in the past. In the past, it was a spectacle, and you can understand that because this was the one guy who's going to be talking to Kim Jong-Un from the West. And now I think there's an understanding that, wait a minute, this is unusual and bizarre, but this isn't really that funny in the sense of, let's just take a step back and think what we're carnivalizing as this is just terrific. And again, I've been speaking out a lot about the idea of stop viewing them as a sideshow and start viewing them as a butcher house or abattoir, and I think that's really, really starting to sink in with the press. And if I can take a little bit of credit for that, I will.

**WOODS:** Well, let me just ask you one more quick thing. You are in crazy demand, and I couldn't be happier about it because I want people to listen to you more than anybody else on almost anything. Not quite everything, because you are dead wrong on some things.

**MALICE:** Especially Hamilton.

**WOODS:** Well, that's not even going to be discussed. Although, you know, we were on St. Kitts and it's their sister island where he was born, and if we'd been able to get over there to his birthplace if it's marked in any way, I would have done it.

**MALICE:** Awesome.

**WOODS:** There was just no time, unfortunately, to make that happen. But have you been there?

**MALICE:** I have not, no.

**WOODS:** Okay, all right, because that would have been the ultimate coup. All right, next Caribbean trip I'm going to sneak that in there.

**MALICE:** St. Croix.

**WOODS:** Anyway, what was it I wanted to say about — Oh yeah, okay, so we've got at this point Trump having promised — Okay, we all know campaign promises, right, but on the campaign trail he had some kind of plan to eliminate ISIS in 30 days, and then he laid down the law with North Korea — you know, no more launches, and there have obviously been subsequent launches. At some point, is there a possibility that he just lashes out and says, Well, look, I've got to deliver on something, and maybe it winds up being North Korea because they keep —

**MALICE:** Well —

**WOODS:** I mean, if he says don't launch and they launch, something's got to give here.

**MALICE:** Well, look what he's doing. Let's suppose, Tom, you and I have a feud. And I go on my Facebook and on this day, I'm meeting with that sibling who you hate. And the next day I'm meeting with that professor who you had a rivalry with. And the next day I'm meeting with a former coworker who thinks you're piss. And I'm just putting this up on my Facebook. You're going to get a message that I'm colluding with all your foes and something's up. And it's going to get to your head, whether you like it or not.

And that's exactly what he's doing. He had the Chinese President come to Mar-a-Lago and they very publicly said we've discussed North Korea. The Japanese prime minister came. Tomorrow he's meeting with the South Korean president. And they're all explicitly saying, "We're discussing North Korea." Now, if every country surrounding you is sitting down with your archenemy, America, and they're talking about you, that is going to make you as North Korea very nervous.

And that's very smart in his approach, and we can see the paranoia because Kim Jong-Un killed his other brother, Kim Jong-Man, who was the only real eligible successor to him if something happened to him. So he's clearly freaking out about his hold on power. And you can't blame him. He's like in his early 30s. The idea that — First of all, no one can govern a country — we know this because of Mises' economic calculation issue. But when you're in your 30s, you can barely get dressed. So you can't blame this kid for being terrified, and he should be terrified because this to me, if the North Korean regime was going to end, this is what the beginning of the end would look like.

**WOODS:** Huh. Very, very interesting. Well, I want to make sure we have a little bit of time here to talk about your new show. Michael Malice has — I mean, I told you it was the year of Malice. Can you believe Michael Malice now hosts his own show, that we get to live in that world? That world is now. So what's the name of the show? Of course, look, if people are longtime listeners or even just for a few weeks, I took our episode together — I was your first guest — and I made an episode of this show hoping to give you a little bit of a bump, whatever *Tom Woods Show* bump there is. But tell people exactly what the show is and what it's all about and then how they can watch it.

**MALICE:** Well, the show's called *You're Welcome*. It's on CompoundMedia.com, which is run by Anthony formerly of Opie & Anthony, the two shock jocks. So I've kind of been

playing it by ear. I had you as my guest, than Pax Dickinson who's a big troll. I had a 4chan mod just yesterday. And my buddy Tom Shillue who was the host of *Red Eye*. I've got some other cool people coming up. But it's very interesting, as you know, going from being guest to host. And the more I'm doing it, the faster the time is flying, and I'm really having fun with it.

**WOODS:** Yeah, absolutely. I watched the Pax Dickinson one and I enjoyed that. I actually felt like, Darn, that was a lot more fun than I gave Malice on our thing. I should have been more fun [laughing].

**MALICE:** But we were more cerebral. And Pax is a big troll.

**WOODS:** Yeah, I know, but – Right, but I was thinking maybe that was – I was reproaching myself, that maybe I should have been more – But anyway, I thoroughly enjoyed it and I was really glad to be there. And it was really neat that two of my daughters were there for that. And later on, of course, they will appreciate the historic significance of that moment, but all the same, it was good to have it. So CompoundMedia.com –

**MALICE:** And they did chastise us for our language.

**WOODS:** [clears throat] Our language, right.

**MALICE:** It was your language.

**WOODS:** Yeah, I know; I know, but it was just – it was under your influence. But anyway, it doesn't matter –

**MALICE:** You're welcome.

**WOODS:** Yeah, this is neither here nor there. But people should go to CompoundMedia.com, which, by the way, I subscribed to because I wanted to watch Dave Smith fill in for Gavin I think one day.

**MALICE:** Yeah.

**WOODS:** And then I just never unsubscribed, so you know – once I subscribe to something for 7 bucks a month – like it's worth more – it would take more than 7 bucks to get me to bother to unsubscribe, so I'll just – go ahead and keep taking my – it's doesn't matter; it's not worth it to me. But now I've got Michael Malice, though.

**MALICE:** Well, here's what I think when people are like, Oh, I can't believe it's behind a paywall. Well, it's Anthony's network and that's his choice, number one. Number two is there's a bunch of different shows you can watch. They're all archived. And most importantly, pretend it's a Patreon and you're contributing \$7 a month to the Malice fund.

**WOODS:** Yeah, that's exactly right.

**MALICE:** I mean, when you put it in those terms it's — yeah.

**WOODS:** Yeah, big deal. Yeah, yeah, no, anybody who complains about paywalls, I mean, they can complain like from a strategic point of view. They say, Well, maybe you'll get more listeners. Yeah, okay, but —

**MALICE:** Sure.

**WOODS:** Right, but you're not the owner, so it's not ultimately — we appreciate your opinion; we'll file it away. But there are different models out there and they — you know, a pay model works for a lot of people. Variety makes the world go round, so I hope it's super successful for you.

**MALICE:** Oh, I'm having a blast.

**WOODS:** Yeah. And look, I'm more than getting my money's worth. I mean, if anything, I owe you, right?

**MALICE:** [laughing] I'll see you in court.

**WOODS:** Well, in fact, remember one of my favorite *Simpsons* moment is the Comic Book Guy complaining about "the worst episode ever," and then they're asking about what on earth grounds he could have for complaining. And he says, "As a longtime viewer, I feel they owe me." Of course their correct response is, "Wait a minute. What could they possibly owe you after giving you hundreds of hours of free entertainment?" And then all he could say was, "Worst episode ever [laughing]."

**MALICE:** You know that was based on an actual Usenet post?

**WOODS:** I didn't know that. See, I get all the inside scoop when I get you on. I didn't know that.

**MALICE:** Yeah, I used to be back in the '90s on Alt.TV.Simpsons, and someone had this whole post, like, Last night's episode was just the worst episode ever, and they tore it apart. And that inspired the *Simpsons* writers to have that whole sequence.

**WOODS:** Wow, that is great.

**MALICE:** Yeah.

**WOODS:** Yeah, and man, those people deserved it [laughing].

**MALICE:** [laughing]

**WOODS:** So anyway, well, thankfully I haven't had anybody so far — even if I occasionally have a clunker of an episode, people are so kind about it. They try to blame it on the guest. There's always some reason that it's not Woods' fault. I have the most charitable listening audience in the world [laughing] — most of the time.

**MALICE:** That's very sweet.

**WOODS:** Yeah, I appreciate it. All right, great. Listen, Michael also – not only does he have his own show now, which is *You're Welcome* – and I'm going to link to it, by the way, directly over at [TomWoods.com/941](http://TomWoods.com/941). But he's also joining me for my Episode 1,000 extravaganza in Orlando, September 9th. Of course Michael hardly needs any reason to come to Orlando, because you know Michael Malice and attractions in Orlando. I mean, the two go together like chocolate and vanilla ice cream, right?

**MALICE:** And the sushi.

**WOODS:** [laughing] And the sushi. Oh man, oh man. But he's doing it as a favor, and it's going to be really exciting, so make sure and sign up at [TomWoods.com/Orlando](http://TomWoods.com/Orlando) for that free event. And Michael, thanks a lot.

**MALICE:** Thanks, Tom.