

Episode 159: Okeefe Meckler

Speaker 1 ([00:04](#)):

Welcome to the Bill Walton Show, featuring conversations with leaders, entrepreneurs, artists and thinkers, fresh perspectives on money, culture, politics and human flourishing. Interesting people, interesting things.

Bill Walton ([00:24](#)):

Welcome to the Bill Walton Show. I'm Bill Walton. I think as most of you know, I got involved in politics or got involved in political action back in 2010. Maybe you didn't know, but I'll tell you now. I was involved early on with the Tea Party and was very concerned about the direction of the country. And that was then. And let's fast forward to now. And by the way, I should mention I've got a couple people in the show with me who were in this far before I was and have a lot more knowledge about how things were back then and how things are now, but let's talk about today.

Critical race theory, vaccine mandates, \$5 trillion reconciliation bill, close to \$30 trillion in federal debt, growing and really oppressive social media censorship when all our critical issues. We have an attorney general, Merrick Garland, who has essentially ordered the FBI to surveil and suppress parents who have the audacity to ask school boards in schools to teach what they think ought to be taught.

We're in an upside down world right now and I brought a couple of friends on to talk because we talk about this anyway, and I thought we'd want to share the conversation with you. And joining me is Mark Meckler, cofounder of the Tea Party and longtime involved citizen. He cofounded with Eric O'Keefe, my other guest, the Citizens for Self-Governance. Mark along the way, I guess for a while, you were CEO of Parler.

Mark Meckler ([02:06](#)):

Yeah, somehow I stumbled into that hot mess as well.

Bill Walton ([02:08](#)):

We'll talk about that. And Eric really had his life on the line. He was involved in the John Doe issue in Wisconsin, where I think early on, we saw the kind of rough tactics that the government would use to suppress dissenting opinion. So, you got, I think, some stories from that.

Eric O'Keefe ([02:27](#)):

Yes.

Mark Meckler ([02:27](#)):

Yes.

Eric O'Keefe ([02:28](#)):

Mark and I would like to have.

Bill Walton ([02:29](#)):

Okay, we'll dig. So, Mark, where are we? I mean, I teed this up with 2010. We didn't know each other back then. We had the same concerns. They were largely fiscal.

Eric O'Keefe ([02:42](#)):

Correct.

Bill Walton ([02:42](#)):

And now I think we're seeing a lot more invasive concerns, threats to our liberty.

Eric O'Keefe ([02:49](#)):

Yeah, I would say, we're nowhere where I thought we were going to be. If I look back, my political life actually just begins with my first vote when I was 18 years old. I voted for Ronald Reagan. And so, this is how I come up. And it's kind of a rose-colored glasses way of coming up. I vote for this inspiring conservative guy who paints this incredible vision, the shining city on the hill. Reagan wins. We end up with the Berlin Wall falls, communism is dead. It's relegated to the ash heap of history.

And from my perspective as a young up and coming conservative, that fight was over. I never expected we would get to where we are today. You fast forward to 2010, there was a lot of fiscal concerns or concerns about our government exceeding its bounds, but nothing like we have today. Not the oppressive censorship, not the idea of the IRS, or the FBI investigating its own citizens to suppress speech and dissent. None of that stuff was even really on the horizon at the time. We were just worried about Obamacare and things getting out of control in the country fiscally, primarily.

So, we were fighting for limited constitutional government, free markets, and basically just for the capitalist system at large. I never expected in my wildest dreams, if I could have gone as dark as I could have imagined, I didn't imagine we'd be where we are today. And I would describe where we're at today as Mark Levin wrote a book by this title, I think we live under American Marxism.

And that's not a hyperbole. I actually think we're living inside of a Marxist system. It's not Marxism in the same way you might have seen in the Soviet Union or Maoist communism like you see in China. It's its own version, it is American Marxism. So, I think that's the burden under which we labor at the current time.

Bill Walton ([04:31](#)):

So, Eric, you've been involved in Wisconsin for almost for over four decades, and you've headed up us term limits back in the '90s. We can talk about whether that it was probably a good idea then. I mean, that'd be something we think is our best line of action, but you're also a historian. I mean, how do we think about this? And we had a populist movement growing in 2010 and we've had in the past, but now we've got something else growing. And where do you see us going? Where are we now? Where do you see it going?

Eric O'Keefe ([05:08](#)):

Well, like Mark, I've been shocked and appalled by the last five years. So, studying the past doesn't give me a crystal ball at all. It's amazing the aggressiveness of the woke left, and their contempt for Americans. And that's what they hold us in contempt. One of my favorite contemporary writer about American history is Gordon S. Wood. And Gordon would emphasize that one of the drivers of the American Revolution was the contempt that London held for Americans, even the successful Americans, they were held in contempt. And there were other things going on, but the colonies-

Bill Walton (05:52):
Contempt from London.

Eric O'Keefe (05:53):
From London.

Bill Walton (05:53):
Okay.

Eric O'Keefe (05:53):
So, the London elite, that governors those ruling and those advising the king and the king held Americans in contempt. They were just viewed as inferiors. And so, America, our predecessors here had the freest and most prosperous area in the world. And yet, when Britain threatened through the declaratory acts, threatened their liberty that they treasured, they were defined, they were defined.

But I think the biggest lesson out of history is, out of our American history is the leading famous founders responded to the citizens at home. And literally, the people in Philadelphia who voted for the declaration of independence were more concerned about the patriots at home who are pushing them than about the threat of the gallows of the British. There they were being pushed toward independence by a broad, well-organized grassroots effort.

And that needs to be recreated. And they engaged locally to affect the developing country. So, there are strong parallels. And that successful revolution, as [inaudible 00:07:12] was born out of defiance, not of fear. So, we still have way over 100 million Americans who are independent, self-reliant, have a sense of our history, and will not be ruled. We will not be directed. We won't be turned into search.

Mark Meckler (07:30):

I want to add another piece of context for American history that I think is important in a kind of a stunning parallel. Eric and I are both students of Pauline Maier, one of the best modern historians of the American Revolution. She was a professor at MIT. And Bernard Bailyn is another one. And these are folks who, Bailyn is still alive, but I don't think he's writing anymore. We met with Maier a few years before her death, her untimely death a couple of years ago.

So, I started reading a lot of the original stuff, not looking through the lens of history. Because normally when we read history, there's all kinds of layers of filters of history that go over it. And so, Pauline Maier, she's a total originalist. All she did was look at the original documents to determine her view of history. And she read all the pamphleteers. And so, this is the main way that political discourse took place. There was no YouTube or Facebook or anything like that. And so, really, people would print these pamphlets and they would be circulated widely in the colonies, and also in the mother country.

And there's a phrase that keeps coming up from the pamphleteers over and over. And the phrase is something like, "Great Britain has the finest form of government ever created among men for the preservation of liberty." And this is written by people who are fomenting revolution. So, they're talking about the British system of government. They're saying the best ever designed, which is extraordinary for people who seem to hate the system so much they want to overthrow it.

But what follows that was the important phrase, they say, "The branches of government, however, are now conspiring together against the people." And I think this is where we are today in

America. It's not our system. We don't look at the constitution, I think it's bad. We say that the branches are conspiring against the people.

Bill Walton ([09:07](#)):

I bought Mark's book. I want to read Mark's book, but I think a lot of it is based on the notion of cultural Marxism. And this is a guy, there's an Italian theorist, Gramsci.

Mark Meckler ([09:18](#)):

Yeah, yup.

Bill Walton ([09:20](#)):

I think I pronounced that right.

Mark Meckler ([09:21](#)):

That is correct, yeah, Gramsci.

Bill Walton ([09:21](#)):

Anyway, he was writing in the '20s and '30s about they discovered that even the revolution in Moscow, Russia, wasn't really about the masses overthrowing the class. It was really about a very aggressive guy named Lenin, who came in and with about 1000 people took control of a crumbling Russian aristocracy. But it didn't fit the Marxist playbook. And so, Gramsci figured out, was not going to happen like that. We need to get control of the cultural institutions.

Mark Meckler ([09:50](#)):

Correct.

Eric O'Keefe ([09:51](#)):

The long march through the institutions, that was Gramsci.

Mark Meckler ([09:54](#)):

That's Gramsci.

Bill Walton ([09:55](#)):

That's the phrase.

Eric O'Keefe ([09:55](#)):

Yeah.

Mark Meckler ([09:56](#)):

Yeah.

Bill Walton ([09:57](#)):

Well, K-12, colleges, now our big corporations.

Eric O'Keefe ([10:04](#)):

Hollywood.

Bill Walton ([10:05](#)):

Now the military.

Eric O'Keefe ([10:06](#)):

The military.

Bill Walton ([10:08](#)):

And so...

Eric O'Keefe ([10:09](#)):

Churches, too, to some extent, religious organizations.

Bill Walton ([10:13](#)):

All the Presbyterian churches, the Pope. By the way, off camera, we have-

Eric O'Keefe ([10:20](#)):

The smartest person in the room.

Bill Walton ([10:22](#)):

... editorial context. The smartest in the room. My wife, Sarah is going to ... She actually gives me all my good stuff, if there is any.

Mark Meckler ([10:29](#)):

I think it's great that you went to Gramsci. This is really important and more and more people are understanding who he was. He was imprisoned by the Mussolini government. And when they threw him in prison, they probably should have executed him. They understood how dangerous he was. And that's why they put him in prison. But that's where he wrote his notebooks, which laid out all the theories that you're talking about, which turned into this long march through the institutions. He had this time and this energy to write these books.

And what his frustration was, was that the masses didn't take up Marxism. That people were struggling to get people to buy into Marxism. If you're doing well and you live in a society that's relatively prosperous, if you can climb the economic ladder, why buy Marxism? And so, that's when they realized they had to affect all facets of culture. That was not enough to be dominant just in the political sphere.

Bill Walton ([11:23](#)):

Well, you're too young. But in '68, we had Danny, the Red in France and all these uprisings. And again, we had Columbia uprising, student risings here. And they all went onto the streets, and they expected all the proletariat to join them. And one of them finally said, they get it. All they want are more washing machines and cars and vacations, they don't get the struggle.

Mark Meckler ([11:49](#)):

And they're right, they don't get it because all they wanted was more washing machines and cars, and they were getting them and their lives were pretty good. It's hard to have a Marxist uprising when under the capitalist system, you're doing pretty well. We have a very mobile society from a class perspective. So, it's hard to get lower classes to hate the upper classes when they want to be part of the upper classes.

Bill Walton ([12:11](#)):

Well, it's hard, this long march through the institutions, I guess these institutions include the Ivy League schools. You get a guy like Merrick Garland, who...

Eric O'Keefe ([12:22](#)):

Yeah, the leaders of the protests in '68 was a pivotal year. A lot of them went into academia. And they did not change their ideology, they change their approach. And one of them, Bill Ayers, became an education educator, educating people on how to, what I would call subvert the education system, so it undermines our society. So, hundreds of them smart, young, revolutionaries in 1968, shaped a lot of what we're suffering from now through these years, the universities, especially but universities and media.

They ever changed their views. They watched the collapse of the Soviet Union and all the proof of the evils under Soviet Union and China and didn't change their advocacy for Marxism. So, we have this American Marxism as Mark said, and they are in the high on the high post in society and government. They're in much of the permanent government. And we just had a CIA director who voted for a Marxist candidate for president and was just left in heading the CIA, and then turning the powers of that against the elected president of the United States.

It's almost unbelievable. And here's a negative and a positive. The progressive left has been at this since before Gramsci, really. In the United States, it's over 100 years, Woodrow Wilson and others, over 100 years of our progressive mark. It's always been anti-constitution.

Bill Walton ([13:57](#)):

John Dewey.

Eric O'Keefe ([13:57](#)):

Yeah, Dewey in education, and other socialists. So, they have 100 years of a focused march to undo America. While the Americans were busy making the greatest country in the world and the greatest economy in the world, and not in a political war with them, one side, 100 years, 100-year headstart. That's why we have a problem. The fact that we're even in it and that we have so many people who have an understanding of America is great. It's amazing, because we don't have the institutions.

And yet look at where the country is split. We're lucky. And that is anchored deeply that those of us who think this way, which is way over 100 million of the adults in the country, it's over half. We are the majority. We're the wealth creators. But we are not organized effectively politically because we haven't been obsessed with that for our whole lives.

Bill Walton ([14:49](#)):

You're watching the Bill Walton Show. I'm here with Eric O'Keefe and Mark Meckler and we're talking about unfortunately, what looks like so far successful long march through our institutions by the cultural

Marxism. I don't like that sentence, but that seems to be where we are. So, this is a strange thing to fight though because it's not like we taught the London elite, well, the London elite where they were 3000 miles away. And the Civil War was fought over different issues, obviously. Those were the north and the south, you could kind of divide.

Now you look at a map of the country. And if you look at the map who voted for Trump in 2020, the map is red, geographically, except for those little blue dots, New York, Chicago, San Francisco. You can pick the towns. So, there's an urban elite that's all part of what we're talking about.

And then there's sort of the rest of the country. And the reason I want to talk with you guys, you've been grassroots activists forever, and you also have a good sense of how to bring about change. And I think all of us want to bring that change in a way that's ... I'm not particularly interested in taking into the streets. I don't think that's a good line of action. So, how do we bring about change?

Eric O'Keefe ([16:19](#)):

Bill, Mark has the really most amazing political organization I've ever seen. And Mark has put together and given tools and given training, but they are energized and inspired, frankly, by the offences.

Bill Walton ([16:35](#)):

This Citizens for Self-Governance?

Mark Meckler ([16:36](#)):

Yeah, I mean, that's the parent organization of what most people would know as Convention of States.

Eric O'Keefe ([16:41](#)):

Yeah.

Mark Meckler ([16:41](#)):

So, the Convention of States project is what I run that sort of the forward-facing arm of this. And it's organized around an effort to use Article V of the Constitution, to call a Convention of States to propose amendments to restrain the federal government. And this is something we've never done in the history of this country. It's there in the Constitution. It was put there by the founders intentionally for this time.

We know exactly why it was put there because Colonel George Mason stood up in convention September 15th, 1787. He's from Virginia. He talks the second most of anybody at convention, very influential guy, brought the Virginia Plan, which becomes the basis for the Constitution.

Bill Walton ([17:21](#)):

Well, he was an anti-federalists.

Mark Meckler ([17:22](#)):

He was an anti-federalists, so, he knew.

Bill Walton ([17:24](#)):

By the way, anti-federalists are the people who wanted to preserve most of the power in the state.

Mark Meckler ([17:29](#)):

Yeah, they were right.

Bill Walton ([17:30](#)):

And not in the federal.

Mark Meckler ([17:31](#)):

It turns out they were right.

Bill Walton ([17:32](#)):

They were absolutely right.

Mark Meckler ([17:33](#)):

Exactly. So, he didn't sign. He was the guy that wouldn't sign the Constitution at the end of the convention. But he stands up and I imagine when he stood up, there's two days left in convention, I imagine he stands up and everything sound like, "God, here comes Mason, again." You heard enough from him. And he said something really wise. He said, we made a mistake. And the mistake is we gave the power to Congress to propose amendments if they think they're necessary. But we didn't give the same power to the states, people acting through the states.

And he asked a question, he said, "Are we so naïve we believe that a federal government that becomes a tyranny will ever propose amendments to restrain its own tyranny?" Everybody laughed. Usually when I say that in a big public meeting, people laugh because no tyrants ever restrain themselves. And we know pretty much they did laugh because Madison's notes like they say [foreign language 00:18:20], two Latin words, no comment. Not one person debated this. There's no fight about it. And it's unanimously put in the Constitution to give us this power.

Bill Walton ([18:29](#)):

You're trained as a lawyer?

Mark Meckler ([18:30](#)):

Yes.

Bill Walton ([18:32](#)):

The thing I've worried about having a new constitutional convention is that, yes, we come in with the things we want to fix. But then all the people we've been talking about, the cultural Marxists are going to see this as an opportunity to blow up pieces that they don't like.

Mark Meckler ([18:47](#)):

Yeah.

Bill Walton ([18:47](#)):

How does this summed up not being mud wrestling.

Mark Meckler ([18:51](#)):

So, I would say first rely on the founders because they were masters of structure. I mean, this is the thing they understood two things better than anybody I've ever seen in history, human nature and structure. And they studied these things, extensively, all of them. That's why we got the structure we got. So, they set this thing up so that it was intended to be foolproof, ego proof, tyrant proof.

They set such high bars, it takes 34 states to agree what the subject matter is. So, that's two thirds of states. That's the highest bar in our entire system of governance, other than anything that comes out of convention is just a suggestion. The convention itself has no power. It goes out to the states. It has to be ratified by 38 states. So, the bar is so high, you have to have the mainstream of public opinion with you, three quarters of states, to agree on something to get an amendment to the Constitution.

Eric O'Keefe ([19:40](#)):

And these delegates, Bill, are selected with a process set up by each state legislature. So, it's not just everybody who's interested, let's get all together. The state legislatures, most of which actually are patriotic and representative of the country. They're the ones who pick the delegates.

Bill Walton ([19:57](#)):

Well, you said more than half of American adults were on the side of freedom, as I would call it, as opposed to coercion. How does that line up in the state legislatures? I mean, when we talk about the overreaching federal government, but there's been a lot of good things happening at the state levels and republican governors and [crosstalk 00:20:18], if we count the votes, how does this-

Mark Meckler ([20:22](#)):

Thirty-one states have both houses controlled by republicans today.

Bill Walton ([20:26](#)):

Thirty-one?

Mark Meckler ([20:26](#)):

Thirty-one states, and that's been climbing.

Bill Walton ([20:29](#)):

Okay.

Mark Meckler ([20:29](#)):

The only flip in the last cycle from a legislature perspective, New Hampshire went both houses from blue to red. We have only one split state today. That's Minnesota, is a split state. I think we're more working on flipping that back. I think we have a chance of flipping Virginia partially this cycle. I'm hopeful on the House of Delegates there. Virginia was red state just a couple of cycles ago. We'll take two cycles to flip the House and Senate there. But I think we're on the way.

I think at least 125 seats flipped from democrat to republican in the last cycle. Over 1200 seats have gone democrat to republican since 2010. So, the trend in the states is all in the proper direction and the direction of liberty.

Eric O'Keefe ([21:12](#)):

And Mark correctly spoke a structure. And one thing easy to forget with our big centralized government, the federal government is a creation of the state governments, which were the independent states. They were independent states that created the federal government. And they reserved. It's not a really a grant of power in the constitution. They reserved. The states creating it reserved to themselves the right to revisit. So, the states have that right to revisit it.

And in such a convention, each state is a state and you spoke of the urban concentration, there's a concentration of this will collectivism in the cities that are the culture creators and that look down on the rest of the country. They're very concentrated. This is a huge political advantage in the structure of the Constitution. Because North Dakota and South Dakota offset California and New York in a convention, one vote per state, one vote per state.

Mark Meckler ([22:08](#)):

Yeah, so the urban areas getting no advantage. And one last thing I would add about this idea, what you're talking about is something called the runaway convention. That's what people worry about. So, we talked about the left basically taking control running away with the convention. When I look at any political issue, I'm not an expert on everything, I can only be an expert on a few things. This is one thing I am an expert on. I rely on experts. I look at people who I respect and trust.

And so, if you look at this issue and how it divides up among the American experts on politics, every single person on the right that you would know nationally known names in America whose weighed in on this issue, is waiting in favor and against the runaway convention. And every leftist group in America, by the way, has signed a press release against it led by common cause Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Bill Walton ([22:54](#)):

Why would they care? Woodrow Wilson thought the Constitution was a useless piece of paper and archaic and was holding us back. By the way, Woodrow Wilson was one serious racist.

Eric O'Keefe ([23:07](#)):

Oh, terrible, terrible, worst president probably in American history.

Bill Walton ([23:11](#)):

Well, no, no, no.

Eric O'Keefe ([23:12](#)):

Who are you going to say?

Bill Walton ([23:14](#)):

I would say our current. But you're right, Woodrow Wilson-

Eric O'Keefe ([23:14](#)):

Historically.

Bill Walton ([23:20](#)):

... did start over everything. Joe is a beneficiary of Woodrow Wilson.

Eric O'Keefe ([23:23](#)):

Yeah. No.

Mark Meckler ([23:29](#)):

I would say the reason that they care, Bill, is because this is a mechanism that was given to us to restore Constitutional boundaries, and they don't like-

Eric O'Keefe ([23:40](#)):

They don't need it. They never need to amend by the amendment process ever again, because the Congress passes what they want, put garbage as they want. And the courts often let it slide. So, they're the side that they that doesn't need amendments. They don't use amendments. They changed the Constitution by either the court or the Congress. So, they don't want the process use. They don't need it.

Bill Walton ([24:04](#)):

Well, how do we put the genie back in the bottle?

Eric O'Keefe ([24:08](#)):

Here's something I learned from Sam Adams, a fundamental great operating principle he had, which is the tyrannies want dispersed individuals to rule who cannot organize. So, a chess club and Hitler's Germany had to have national approval. In the Soviet Union, same way, no organizing. The Chinese Communist Party-

Bill Walton ([24:27](#)):

It was true in China right now.

Eric O'Keefe ([24:29](#)):

Right. They've crushed Falun Gong. Falun Gong had no political principles. So, we cannot be that. We cannot be dispersed 350 million people talking to a complainant or throwing their shoes at television. So, what do we do? What Sam Adams did then, use the biggest political platform available to you, and that used to be the colonial legislators until the royal governor shut them down. And then he went to the Boston town meeting. He never went solo. It was never Sam Adams says this.

A Boston town meeting passed the resolution. Send it around to other towns and they would change a few words and write a similar patriotic resolution. And that would come to Boston and Sam Adams would say, "Look at this brilliant resolution from Connecticut." So, like them, we must organize locally and engage locally. And that might mean school board, state legislature. One of the things I love about the convention is of states application is we ask people to engage with the state legislator to rescue the republic.

Bill Walton ([25:29](#)):

So, I mean, one big takeaway you think we ought to focus on is local solutions, local actions.

Eric O'Keefe ([25:35](#)):

Absolutely.

Bill Walton ([25:35](#)):
Small groups people-

Eric O'Keefe ([25:37](#)):
Engage locally.

Bill Walton ([25:39](#)):
I'm not taking control of the school board, too.

Eric O'Keefe ([25:42](#)):
It's the best thing going on and the system today.

Bill Walton ([25:46](#)):
You're watching the Bill Walton Show. I'm here with Mark Meckler and Eric O'Keefe, and we're talking about the lines of action to preserve our liberty. And we're talking about possibly convention for the states as one way to bring that about. Guys, one of the things I worry about, though, is our ability to communicate with each other. Because it seems like what's happened is that we've got this ratcheting effect with the social media companies, and you've been right in the middle of that with Parler.

And so, there are these issues all of a sudden that you don't get to talk about. You don't get to talk about ivermectin just to pick an example. You don't get to talk about masks. And it's focused largely on the vaccine, the vaccine mandates and that. But increasingly, it's going to other areas of speech-

Eric O'Keefe ([26:31](#)):
Election integrity is another one.

Bill Walton ([26:34](#)):
You're not allowed to talk about whether elections are fair and right. So, I'm throwing that into the [crosstalk 00:26:41].

Mark Meckler ([26:42](#)):
Having come through the Parler mess, I'm really worried about that. And what happened to Parler is, I think it's much more serious than most people understand. When Parler got taken down, what people know is that Amazon Web Services shut off their servers and shut them down. And that's bad, it's real bad. It was a breach of contract. They didn't really care. And Amazon spends over a billion dollars a year in legal fees. They don't care about if Parler was going to see them.

But they not only got taken down there, all the ancillary services that are required to be alive on the web to have a presence on the web disappeared as well. Real simple one that most people will understand, if you want a website, you go to GoDaddy or some provider like that, and you get your website name, and you register it and it's 12 bucks a month, or whatever it costs or 12 bucks a year. Well, they lost that. They lost their domain name service. The company canceled them. And so, we had to go out and we had to find another domain name host-

Bill Walton ([27:39](#)):
Google cancelled them.

Mark Meckler ([27:42](#)):

No, this was GoDaddy. [crosstalk 00:27:44]. No, they're an independent company.

Bill Walton ([27:46](#)):

Okay.

Mark Meckler ([27:47](#)):

And so, that's called a domain name server, DNS. And so, are they host the name, and the name points the traffic at your servers. So, if the person who hosts the name says, "We're not hosting your name anymore." Even if your servers are up and running, you type in parler.com, and it doesn't come up. And so, they lost the technical infrastructure. The servers gets shut down. The domain name hosting gets shut down. So, you don't even have the servers, nothing points at the servers anymore when you go search it.

And there are many, many more layers, another 5, 10 layers below that of technical infrastructure that's required to exist in any sort of scale on the web. And virtually, all of those got pulled from Parler. They got, in dystopian parlance, they got unpersoned. They got wiped out of existence. Banking relationships were fractured. Merchant processing relationships were fractured. So, all of these things had to be rebuilt. It's not a simple thing. It's not just go get a new server and get rehosted.

So, I think it showed the fragility of the system. And I would say, this is a warning to anybody who runs a conservative organization, a libertarian organization. And Bill, it's much broader than this. And this is a part that really worries me. What if you're none of those things? But what if you're known conservative and you just run a business? You're an investor and you run an investing business, or you run a bank, or you run a construction company. They can take all of that stuff away from you as well.

And you're probably, I don't mean you personally, but you run a construction company, big national presence, you're hosted on Amazon Web Services, and they find out, well, the CEO gives money to conservative causes, we don't think he should be able to speak anymore. We don't think he should be able to do business.

So, they have the power to wipe all of that out. I think it's really important. It's something I'm working on. We need an entire infrastructure for people who believe in free speech. So, I say that the great decoupling is taking place, that decoupling is a commercial decoupling in the United States of America.

Bill Walton ([29:42](#)):

How do you define the two sides? I mean, I define it as enemies, the coercion is people versus lovers of liberty. But there are other ways to draw a dichotomy. I mean, how would you define-

Eric O'Keefe ([29:58](#)):

And we've been working on that.

Bill Walton ([29:58](#)):

We're playing skins and shirts. How do we decide? Which team are we on?

Eric O'Keefe ([30:03](#)):

Yeah, with Scott Rasmussen is working with us on that. And we don't have a simple answer, but we're trying to cut that line. Some things catch a lot of it, actually just simply urban and non-urban captures a huge amount of it. We've also found that-

Mark Meckler ([30:20](#)):

[crosstalk 00:30:20] was really good on that.

Bill Walton ([30:23](#)):

We've had him on here, he was great.

Eric O'Keefe ([30:25](#)):

Oh, yeah, no offense to anyone with a PhD. But having a PhD is a highly likely marker of posturing on the woke left. And being a working guy, who gets his hands dirty is highly associated with being a pro American. But I don't think there's a simple thing on it, but it's definitely captures people who love America, the distinctly American things, which is a majority in the country are our folks. This elite does not like America, they don't like it. They think the rest of the world is, which they don't even know how it is. But they think they want to be like.

Bill Walton ([31:10](#)):

We're going to do really well in Europe. Right?

Eric O'Keefe ([31:11](#)):

Yeah, yeah. One reason they're not too hard on China is they're jealous of the Chinese Communist Party. Our ruling elite is jealous of that citizen control they have and they're imitating. It's a straight up ... The whole lockdown, shutdown stuff over COVID was an imitation of the supposedly successful job that the Chinese did on protecting their people from their virus created in their lab, and flown around the world after they cut off flights into China flight from Wuhan, they send it around the world.

But because they have the cultural high posts, those the anti-American left is able to trick many people into thinking they're on that side. They do that largely by saying we hate you. We hate the poor, we hate you. So, spin. Really, I think the woke left has about 10% of people who are pretty much with him. But they are able to manipulate their way into making it close elections.

Mark Meckler ([32:13](#)):

There's another interesting way to slice it nowadays that I think is important, because I think there are quite a few people on the left now that are shaking their heads at what's going on. And they're not necessarily fully woke and they're not with all this stuff. And so, I think if you look at the people who believe in free speech, and there are people who openly anti-free speech now, and there's some really interesting thinkers, Bari Weiss among them, and she's pulled away from the New York Times. She's doing her own thing on Substack.

Bill Walton ([32:41](#)):

Bari Weiss was editor of the New York Times and she left the Times because she felt like they were controlling speech.

Mark Meckler ([32:47](#)):

Right, absolutely controlling speech. And she did a very interesting interview last weekend with Ben Shapiro. And the most fascinating thing about the interview is they don't agree on almost anything. Literally. I mean, she is of the left.

Bill Walton ([33:01](#)):

Does she talk fast enough?

Mark Meckler ([33:03](#)):

No, not even close. You have to slow her down, maybe speed her up a little bit. But I think it's interesting, and the only thing they agree on, they're both Zionists. But other than that, they don't agree on anything except this one thing.

Bill Walton ([33:14](#)):

I'm a Zionist, too.

Mark Meckler ([33:15](#)):

Yeah, they believe in free speech.

Bill Walton ([33:17](#)):

Yeah.

Mark Meckler ([33:18](#)):

And so, I think that is a fundamental alignment that's really important in America today. If you believe in woke stuff, whatever, I can sit down and have a conversation with you. We can debate, unless you believe I shouldn't be able to say the things that I'm saying.

Eric O'Keefe ([33:34](#)):

Yeah, the real definition, I think, is we don't want to shut down anybody. So, we do not insist on deference and having our political adversaries say they admire us and they're going to do what we say. They want from us, they want us to either shut up or to profess agreement with them. That's what they want. And they're not going to get it. They're not going to get it. They're not going to be happy. They can't have that. But that's what they want.

Mark Meckler ([34:06](#)):

Yeah, I would agree with that. And so, that's why I think this is a fundamental dividing line. I do talk to people on the left, who they're shaking their heads, they're trying to figure out where their home is. Right now, they're not republicans. They're not ever going to be conservatives. But they're free speech advocates. And they are currently hated by the left. They're some of the most hated by the left.

Eric O'Keefe ([34:27](#)):

Someone who saw this coming is the late Patrick Caddell, who was a young pollster for Jimmy Carter long ago and remained a liberal democrat his whole life. We spent time with him at the end. He was a patriot. There are many liberal America lovers, right? A lot of them are silent because they might lose their posts, their job. And Caddell was worried. He told me, he was helping us out in Wisconsin and the fights. And he said, "If people found out I was doing this, I would lose my reputation."

But Caddell said, "This is a time when the Hamiltons and the Jeffersons have to work together." The Hamiltons and the Jeffersons have to work together. After we fight this off, this dangerous [inaudible 00:35:08], then we're going to fight each other, which is what Hamilton and Jefferson bitter enemies. And we're at that kind of time.

Bill Walton (35:16):

You're watching the Bill Walton Show. I'm here with Eric O'Keefe and Mark Meckler, and we're talking about how to define the problem as to who's on which side of the argument and what are their characteristics? And most importantly, how do we bring this back together? Lines of action.

One of the really sinister pieces of Merrick Garland coming out with a memo he came out with recently, it was a one-page memo, and it basically instructed the federal agencies to work with state and local law enforcement to ensure that school boards were protected from violence by parents. In the first place, I don't think there's a single shred of incident that involve violence when people are trying to talk to their school boards about what's being taught.

But the thing that struck me that really, as you look into this, it was instigated. It was instigated by the National Association of School Boards. It was instigated by the Biden White House, by the democrat operatives. And they're terrified, talk about your 10%. They're terrified that these issues that they're pushing now are going to get them clobbered in 2022.

And somebody, I mean, as I understand it, one of the issues was, we can't get let parents organize the way that the Tea Party organized back in 2010, because this CRT is going to be much, much more a motivator than anything was back then. So, we got to chill this thing. We got to kill the cradle so it doesn't become an issue in 2022.

Eric O'Keefe (37:00):

It's a great insight. And one of the tough things about the Tea Party was the target, was the Congress behaving? Well, Congress was having a pretty good time. So, there's about 15,000 school boards in the country. Everybody has a school board near them. And someone who gets almost no attention and probably isn't paid is on the school board. And a lot of them don't know, their authority, which tends to be pretty extensive, but they're just there. They've been coasting.

It's a great place to engage in and you're right, that it's a sign of the fear of the left. They're afraid, so it's a horrible attempt to silence. And implied in that memo from Garland as well as the school board's memo was that a strongly spoken speech is dangerous and is a threat. It took this left thing and implied that speech can be violence.

Bill Walton (37:54):

Exactly.

Eric O'Keefe (37:54):

So, an upset parent is a danger. We had the FBI looking at that, and they're not looking. Now, they're not looking at jihadists or criminals coming across the border. No, they're looking at our moms that are going to school board meetings. What a disgrace. But this is also an opportunity.

Bill Walton (38:12):

But you went through this in Wisconsin, and I want to tell that story. But the thing that they're doing here is the FBI, there's no federal jurisdiction here. There's nothing they can do. And what the memo

says is we want to work with local authorities and encourage them to use the resources of the FBI to monitor parents. You have a little experience with that maybe.

Eric O'Keefe ([38:35](#)):

Well, yeah. The FBI was involved in the John Doe investigation. They have extensively-

Bill Walton ([38:40](#)):

Quickly, John Doe investigation.

Eric O'Keefe ([38:41](#)):

Okay. In Wisconsin, when Scott Walker proposed reforms, which dramatically reduce the power of public employee unions and increase the influence of school boards, and the legislature and voters, because the unions had a tremendous amount of muscle. This is what he did that was so awful. They had to pay a portion of their retirement money and a portion of their healthcare and less than average in the private sector. And this is the one that union leadership, but not the union members were really upset about.

It limited their negotiating latitude. They couldn't negotiate over things like seniority. So, in school districts, seniority was no longer a protection. That's what they really hated, so one of the big values the union thought it offered. Walker took those away, the legislature passed it, and the unions went ballistic. This was covered nationally in 2011. Truly massive protests in Madison, 80,000 people marching around the Capitol. And in a time of no other elections, it was very high profile. They ran recalls against state senators. We have recall against Walker.

My group, Wisconsin Club for Growth was the primary anchored defender of the senators who were being attacked. I raised money nationally through our network. Lots of people around the country wanted to help Walker. We won the elections. So, shortly after Walker won, he has a recall and we had sustained all of this, shocking them by the way. They spent \$40 million trying to undo that, \$40 million the left spent. And we counted it with about the same amount over two years. And we thought we won, it's over. I made a huge mistake, Mark and I have been talking, it's never over with the left. It's never over.

So, we relaxed a bit. And then they had started the administrative state collaborated with a prosecutor that they raided four family homes at 6:00 AM with children at home.

Bill Walton ([40:38](#)):

Including yours?

Eric O'Keefe ([40:39](#)):

No, mine was on a list of aerated and they didn't trust the sheriff, who's a republican, to cooperate. So, I got a subpoena and a gag order in order not to talk to anybody.

Bill Walton ([40:50](#)):

What year was this?

Eric O'Keefe ([40:50](#)):

2013, October 3.

Bill Walton (40:52):

Okay, so yeah.

Eric O'Keefe (40:54):

And we had just started convention estates, and I got pulled off of that. But just to make a long story short, I spent the next two and a half years full time raising money, lining up lawyers for my whole team. My average, the average combined legal bills that I was covering for two years was \$350,000 a month.

Bill Walton (41:16):

Wow.

Eric O'Keefe (41:17):

Okay, so we had lawyers from around the country, because so many people needed separate representation. But this has a good element and a bad element. The good element is the support we got from people who wanted to help those who were being attacked, tremendous help. I got all those legal bills paid by patriots around the country. The Wall Street Journal ran 27 different editorials over the period of three years, covering this in a great way. Huge help, talk radio nationally. Hannity and Limbaugh mentioned it. Fox News was [inaudible 00:41:49]. Our talk radio in state was terrific on it.

And soon, I defied the gag order. And we beat them in court with a fabulous decision from our state Supreme Court, which said that the investigation was conducted without foundation and reason are law. Now, here's the bad part. None of the perpetrators have been punished. Okay, we rewrote the laws. We cleaned up the laws, but none of the perps have been punished. I sued them personally and appeal to SCOTUS, Supreme Court of the United States, cert was denied there.

And also, the newspapers were against us the whole way before, during and after, the in state print and the New York Times. And the FBI was involved. And Senator Ron Johnson, a great senator from Wisconsin, wrote a detailed letter to Christopher Wray while chairing the Oversight Committee, asking him who asked for the files. Why do you have the files? How many do you have? Four-and-a-half-page letter, terrific letter. He got a blow off from them. They stonewalled. They blew it up.

So, I asked for my file and who asked for it. Why do they have it? And they took them a year to send me one page, which was one newspaper clipping, and then to check a box a bunch of boxes and why they couldn't answer the other questions.

So, what we learned then, this is a preview, right? We learned that the way they think in the administrative state and the left is it's their government. And if they don't like what the voters do, they will use the power of their government to overturn the election. It was a preview of what we saw nationally. They tried to get Walker thrown out of office and reverse his policies because they couldn't win at the ballot box.

Bill Walton (43:37):

Wow.

Mark Meckler (43:38):

Yeah. We went through the same thing, essentially with the Tea Party movement. 2010, you get the 2010 elections. Post-2010, they seek the IRS on all these Tea Party groups that are seeking nonprofit status. The abuse is incredible. They're just applying, filling out simple forms, applying to be-

Bill Walton ([43:56](#)):

Well, this is the IRS.

Mark Meckler ([43:57](#)):

Yeah.

Bill Walton ([43:57](#)):

Yeah.

Eric O'Keefe ([43:59](#)):

[crosstalk 00:43:59] This is simultaneous. This is under Obama. This is the administrative state. And by the way, Lois Lerner was friends with the cheap enemy I had in Wisconsin, Kevin Kennedy. They were friends. We exposed that through our litigation. The administrative state guys in Wisconsin asked the IRS to go after us. Lois Lerner, who Mark's group ran the litigation deposed her. That deposition of eight hours has been sealed these four years, even from us, the plaintiffs.

Bill Walton ([44:32](#)):

I've got about 5300 other things I want to talk.

Mark Meckler ([44:35](#)):

Let's go.

Bill Walton ([44:37](#)):

We got to wrap it up at some point. But one thing I wanted to get into before we get out of this one, and then we got to come back and talk some more, administrative state. Now, you started out and I was a big fan of this term limits. Only let the congressman be in there four years, eight years, 10 years, whatever. But the problem is they go to Washington, they become creatures of the swamp. And they're the problem. Well, we now know it's much worse than that.

Mark Meckler ([45:04](#)):

Yes.

Bill Walton ([45:05](#)):

It's not the people who get elected to Congress. It's the administrative state. It's the permanent ruling class we've got there. And with the federal laws that don't allow you to change anybody and the way they take political appointees, and then make them permanent employees of the department, justice department's exhibit A, I mean, it's filled with all sorts of people that Clinton put in, that Obama and now Biden has got that same crew there. Those are not political appointees, not congressmen, it's the permanent ruling class. And they don't like us.

Mark Meckler ([45:38](#)):

Right. I think there are multiple ways to deal with it. The tools actually exist. So, one of my great frustrations is that the tools exist in the administrations that come and go don't use the tools. And some of this might sound extreme, but I think it's the only way you fix an extreme problem. One example is

that you could actually take these agencies, and you could move them somewhere in the country that will not be friendly and move them to Nebraska, literally. And the administration has the authority to do this.

Bill Walton ([46:09](#)):

Move them to Kristi Noem state.

Mark Meckler ([46:11](#)):

Hey, there you go. So, move them to South Dakota, right, and put them there. And then what you do is, there's actually a reason for termination. Failure to show up for work, you can terminate a government employee. Most of these folks are inside the beltway folks. They like it here. They don't want to leave the beltway. And so, you tell them, you're going to be in Pierre, South Dakota, in the winter, and they won't go. Here's another. So, you can actually do that if-

Eric O'Keefe ([46:34](#)):

You have to move to America in order to work here.

Mark Meckler ([46:37](#)):

Exactly. I'm going to give you another option. You can take these employees.

Bill Walton ([46:43](#)):

Going to live in one of those red spots on the map.

Mark Meckler ([46:46](#)):

You can tell these employees, "Look, we're going to move you to a new office building." And it sounds facetious. I mean, it's for real. They move you to a new office building. New office building has no phones in it. It has no internet access to it. And you can go sit there every day, all day. You have no more authority. You don't do anything. And it would be worth the literally several billion dollars to pay these employees to just sit there.

Bill Walton ([47:08](#)):

It's a wonderful idea. But don't we need to take no prisoners president.

Mark Meckler ([47:12](#)):

And Congress. I mean, one of the big problems that we have is that Congress has no cahoonas.

Bill Walton ([47:19](#)):

Let's talk about that.

Mark Meckler ([47:19](#)):

Yeah.

Bill Walton ([47:20](#)):

Because the Congress over the years I, s I don't remember the quite technical word for, but they've delegated all their authority to the administrative agencies.

Mark Meckler ([47:30](#)):

Unconstitutionally, in my opinion.

Eric O'Keefe ([47:30](#)):

Yeah.

Mark Meckler ([47:33](#)):

Yeah. And so, they the agencies, there's no authority in the Constitution to delegate all this rulemaking. It's the illegal administrate.

Bill Walton ([47:39](#)):

[crosstalk 00:47:39] we've got to take no prisoners president, and we've got a sweep of the House and the Senate and we got people ... There's strength in numbers. They're not a slender majority. They've got a chance to actually do something big. You've moved it all out of DC.

Mark Meckler ([47:54](#)):

Okay, that's one. But I'm going to back down your dream. We don't have to dream that big.

Bill Walton ([47:58](#)):

Okay.

Mark Meckler ([47:58](#)):

So, I do believe based on current trajectory, unless the republican screwed up, which they're entirely capable of doing. I think we're going to-

Bill Walton ([48:06](#)):

Take the track record.

Mark Meckler ([48:07](#)):

Yeah, we'll take the majority-

Bill Walton ([48:08](#)):

[crosstalk 00:48:08] track record.

Mark Meckler ([48:09](#)):

I think we're going to take the majority in the House, maybe even in the Senate. So, let's say we just get the House, dream small. We get the House. The House controls all spending, all spending. And they can literally just say, "Yeah, we're not funding any of this stuff anymore." They can defund it any line item essentially that they want to. That is Constitutional. They have the power of the purse. All spending initiates in the House. And so, again, fantasy. I don't think they have the spine to do this, but they can do this.

Eric O'Keefe ([48:40](#)):

I had a lot of fun over the years in politics picking on Congress, and it's a longstanding tradition in America, Mark Twain did it. But the Congress will be no stronger, no more assertive on behalf of our liberty than they are required to be by their constituents.

Mark Meckler ([48:57](#)):

Yes.

Eric O'Keefe ([48:57](#)):

So, the outside organizing and things caused by your show and the activities that we're all engaged in, those have to develop the program, show that the support is there, and make it politically rewarding. So, we don't need a bunch of suicidal heroes. We need people who are responsive to what they're being pushed into doing. So, it's really on us outside to make this the attractive way for Congress today. Don't you think, Mark?

Mark Meckler ([49:22](#)):

I totally agree with that. And we make them heroes for doing the right thing and heels for doing the wrong thing.

Bill Walton ([49:27](#)):

So, it gets back to both what you're doing. It's organizing a local level to put together our voice and reach them. Of course, that brings me the thing I worry about is our ability to speak. I feel like eventually, we're going to be using smoke signals to try to project-

Eric O'Keefe ([49:44](#)):

Mark is in touch with people doing the workarounds. And I'm sure there are entrepreneurs we don't know, but this is a great business opportunity to provide,

Bill Walton ([49:51](#)):

Workarounds so people can communicate.

Eric O'Keefe ([49:53](#)):

To work around Amazon, to work around Google, work without Facebook. They're being developed there. They're winning political opportunities, not because of the money in politics. Because so many patriotic businessmen actually have as, Mark said, a business risk. So, they need to be shown a way to not be vulnerable to the whim of a world corporation cutting off their digital. Everybody needs digital communication today.

So, I'm just predicting that the market is going to respond that we don't have to fix that. But we, you guys will be on top of it. When it happens, you'll be able to point people, "Look, now we have a company doing this. We have a company doing that." And Mark has been in touch through his Parler with the cutting edge of all these fronts. We're not the only ones worrying about that.

Bill Walton ([50:39](#)):

Guys, we got to stop here. I can't believe-

Mark Meckler ([50:42](#)):

We're just getting started.

Bill Walton ([50:43](#)):

I get all these other pages of notes here. We're just getting started. Let's continue next time soon. You guys get back into town, we'll go to part two. And then after that, part three and take back the country.

Mark Meckler ([50:56](#)):

Sounds good.

Bill Walton ([50:57](#)):

Mark Meckler, Eric O'Keefe, you've been watching the Bill Walton Show. We're found on all the major podcast platforms most of the time, unless we say things that our platform companies don't approve of. But I think hopefully they'll approve of this a lot of smart things. Eric and Mark, come back.

Eric O'Keefe ([51:14](#)):

Thanks.

Mark Meckler ([51:14](#)):

Thank you.

Bill Walton ([51:15](#)):

Okay, great. Thanks for joining. I hope you enjoyed the conversation. Want more? Click the subscribe button or head over to the billwaltonshow.com to choose from over 100 episodes. You can also learn more about our guest on our interesting people page and send us your comments. We read everyone and your thoughts help us guide this show. If it's easier for you to listen, check out our podcast page and subscribe there. In return, we'll keep you informed about what's true, what's right, and what's next. Thanks for joining.