

Episode 172: Ukraine: Is the Biden Administration Unleashing Furies It Does Not Understand? with Dr Peter Vincent Pry and J. Michael Waller

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 ([00:25](#)):

Welcome to The Bill Walton Show. I'm Bill Walton. As we've all heard, there are growing calls among our political elites in Washington that the United States "do something" about preventing a Russian invasion of the Ukraine, but after Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, haven't they learned anything about America's appetite to pursue foreign adventures thousands of miles from home? There's so many questions about this. One of them is, do we even have the military capabilities today? Does Ukraine matter? How do the Ukrainian people feel? Do they care? Are we pushing China and Russia to make common cause with each other, and what do we really know about their leaders? Who's Vladimir Putin? Who is Xi Jinping?

Bill Walton ([01:21](#)):

To get some answers to these and many, many other questions, I have two seasoned national security analysts and returning guests, Peter Pry and Mike Waller, and I've asked them to weigh in. Jay Michael Waller, PhD is a senior analyst for strategy at the Center for Security Policy, and Dr. Peter Vincent Pry is the executive director of the MP Task Force, the National and Homeland Security. Both have written extensively, provocatively, and in a very smart way and a whole range of national security issues recently, and he's very much in the minority on this. Peter is called for making peace, not war with Russia, and Mike has written a fascinating profile, title is Nursing Injustices: An Unsparring Psychological Profile of Vladimir Putin. Mike, I can't wait to hear more about that. Peter, let's talk about your view about what we ought to be doing with Russia right now.

Peter Pry ([02:23](#)):

In terms of the Ukrainian crisis, I think we have to start with what is the overall geostrategic situation that the United States faces, and people talk about our position in Ukraine pushing Russia and China together I guess closer together might be a way of phrasing it because Russia and China are already an alliance and that poses the most formidable combination that the Western democracies have ever faced in their history. It's more formidable than the access of World War II, the alliance between Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. Not only is there in effect a defacto Alliance.

Peter Pry ([03:09](#)):

In fact, it's a formal one. They have actually signed treaties in effect making them an alliance, but part of this combination is North Korea and Iran. This is the new power block and Washington just doesn't seem to acknowledge it. They've started to wake up to the fact that this power block exists because as they think about supporting Ukraine against the Russian invasion, it has occurred to some in NATO and some in Washington that China might simultaneously attack Taiwan, and then we'd be confronted with a two-theater war and we can't win a two-theater war. In fact, we can't even win a one-theater war if you're talking about Taiwan or the Ukrainian situation.

Peter Pry ([04:01](#)):

Our own calculations from the Pentagon and Rand show that Russia can overrun Ukraine and the frontline NATO states in 72 hours. We've had 18 war games. The Pentagon, Pentagon's own war games on Taiwan scenarios, and we have lost every one of them versus, and this shouldn't be surprising because Taiwan and Ukraine are in the backyards of Russia and China, and we would be having to project power over the Atlantic and Pacific oceans into the main strength and the very teeth that would be like a charge of the light brigade against these two superpowers who are allies, and it's been alliance that's been around for more than a decade, really.

Peter Pry ([04:50](#)):

China has become a military superpower because of Russia. Its conventional and increasingly effective nuclear forces are based on Russian technology. They have exercised together. Vostok '18 was probably the largest military exercise in history, 300,000 troops, 20,000 armored fighting vehicles, hundreds of aircraft, and China was a participant and that's not the only one. More than a decade ago, Russia and China have conducted strategic nuclear forces operations together, including a scenario where they engaged in a joint nuclear war against the United States over Taiwan.

Peter Pry ([05:34](#)):

So we have been slow to wake up to this and are still not completely aware of it, but the main focus of our defense and foreign policy should be this dangerous block, what I call the CNO Sino-Russo Access that we face in the new cold war and the object of our policy should be to split this access, to make peace with Russia or at least try to turn them into a neutral because together they have such a formidable military and economic combination that we're on the verge of aggression. We're on the verge of wars, both over Ukraine and Taiwan, because they know that we can't win against them.

Peter Pry ([06:20](#)):

While people say, "Well, these are totalitarian and authoritarian states. How can they be partners with us?" Well, Winston Churchill was wise enough during World War II to make common cause with Stalin, Stalin's Russia, in order to defeat the common enemy of Nazi Germany.

Bill Walton ([06:43](#)):

I'm sorry, Peter, I didn't interrupt you. I want to give Mike a chance to weigh in here. He founded NATO's defense strategic communications journal, and so you've got extensive knowledge about NATO. I guess one of the trigger points for this is Russia's or Ukraine's rather desire to enter NATO as a member, which would be like us having Mexico join some Russian alliance or something like that. I mean, what's your take on this?

Mike Waller ([07:11](#)):

Well, Ukraine's had 30 years to get its act together as a country and it's failed.

Bill Walton ([07:18](#)):

This is since 89 when the Soviet Union fell.

Mike Waller ([07:21](#)):

Yes, since '91 and it became independent. We wish them well. We had fine relations with Russia, but both the Bush and the Clinton foreign policy establishment couldn't imagine a world without a Soviet

Union, couldn't imagine Russia without a communist party running it, and they actually fought attempts to undermine the USSR and to prevent Ukraine from becoming independent in the first place. So these are the wisest ages of the foreign policy and defense establishment that have been guiding us or misguiding us ever since then. These are the same elements that want us to have some kind of military commitment to Ukraine.

Mike Waller ([08:03](#)):

The unfortunate thing is Ukraine inherited a strategic nuclear arsenal from the Soviet Union and had it, and under US and other Western pressure and false promises of defense, Ukraine unilaterally surrendered its nuclear arsenal to Russia. Now, the United States under President Clinton promised to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity if it would disarm unilaterally. So imagine, we're getting Ukraine to give up its nuclear deterrent or potential one that it could have assumed command and control of in exchange for committing ourselves to its defense.

Mike Waller ([08:45](#)):

Now, it's not a treaty, so it's just a memorandum, but we've been proceeding on this notion, and then Ukraine has all this time to build what Finland has done and what the Swiss have done and others have done in their own defense as foreign countries, and that is to have a partisan warfare capability to be a porcupine that Russia would have to swallow or Russia to invade and even to take an insurgency into Russian territory where if you combine them.

Bill Walton ([09:13](#)):

Well, Ukraine is the second largest country in Europe by size, second only to Russia as I understand it, and it's the poorest country in Europe by far. You look at the map, it's snuggled right up there with Russia. Haven't they culturally been part of Russia for hundreds of years? I mean, is this something that ... I ask this question, will your Ukrainians care if Russians come in? I mean, how big of a crisis is this and do we really need to move on to something more important?

Mike Waller ([09:52](#)):

Well, you have to ask what is our strategic interest, and I don't really see one that would cause us to need to have hostilities with Russia. I'm all for selling Ukraine as much weaponry as it needs for its defensive purposes. I see no problem with that at all.

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

Well, Peter, how do we get Vladimir Putin to start thinking about us in a different way? I mean, it's one thing to say we want to stop a Sino-Russo alliance. I think that's right. How do you do it?

Peter Pry ([10:27](#)):

To answer your question, one of the question you'd asked about Ukraine and its history, one could argue and the Russians have argued that Ukraine is actually the Russian homeland because if you go back to 1,000 AD, Russia originated with the Kievan Rus'. Kiev is the modern capital of Ukraine and they were called the Kievan Rus' at that time, and it was only later that their empire expanded outward to include the areas that are now Moscow and St. Petersburg, but it started with what is now Ukraine.

Peter Pry ([11:04](#)):

How do we get Vladimir Putin to come to our side? When you go down the six demands, and I know I'm not going to earn friends with this, but NATO and Washington, the Biden-

Bill Walton ([11:22](#)):

I'm sorry. Refresh my record. The six demands are what?

Peter Pry ([11:24](#)):

Yeah, Russia's six demands. Here I got them. The first one is not to expand NATO further east and not to allow Ukraine to become part of NATO. I don't have them right here.

Bill Walton ([11:43](#)):

You don't have to pull them up. They're Putin's demands. These are his demands right now and we're supposed to accede them.

Peter Pry ([11:50](#)):

It's a peace treaty. During this crisis, the Russians put forward what they call a peace treaty. They gave it to every member of NATO, including the United States, and it has six demands. NATO must not accept new members including Ukraine. The US and NATO must not deploy short or immediate range missiles within range of Russian territory. The US must not station nuclear weapons abroad. NATO must not deploy forces or arms to member states that joined after the so-called founding act of May 1997. This includes all former Warsaw pact states such as Poland, as well as the formerly Soviet Baltic states. NATO must not conduct military exercises above the brigade level 3,000 to 5,000 troops within an agreed upon buffer zone. The US must agree not to cooperate militarily with post-Soviet countries.

Peter Pry ([12:44](#)):

This has been rejected out of hand and characterized as basically surrender, that they're asking NATO and the United States to surrender to Russia and it would constitute a bloodless victory, and maybe that's true, but to be honest, first of all, each of these points can be negotiated and many of these points are more in our interests than they are in Russia's interest. I do not think these demands are unreasonable to take the first and the most important one. We might be able to diffuse the crisis if we were simply to agree to that, which is we're not going to let Ukraine into NATO and we're not going to expand NATO further east.

Peter Pry ([13:31](#)):

When I was a young man and a staffer on the House Armed Services Committee, my portfolio was NATO enlargement. This is before these countries came into NATO. I was sent on frequent trips to visit all of the countries that are now in Eastern Europe that are now NATO member states to confer with their political military leaders and to see what are they going to bring into the alliance. I had recommended to the late great Floyd Spence, who is the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee at the time, that we should not expand NATO further east, that none of these countries was going to bring anything to the alliance. US vital interests weren't at stake in any of these countries, that it was going to guarantee someday a new cold war with Russia, that if we wanted to get in a new cold war with Russia, the world's greatest nuclear superpower, then we should expand NATO further eastward.

Peter Pry ([14:29](#)):

We can't defend any of these countries. We can't project power to defend any of these countries that are in Eastern Europe. The only way we can defend them is with nuclear weapons. So in effect, by expanding NATO in that direction, we're committing the United States to a possible nuclear war for the sovereignty of countries like Latvia and Lithuania and Estonia or Ukraine if they were to come into NATO. One should not promise to go to nuclear war for a country that most Americans can't find out on map. So it was never in our interest to expand eastward anyway.

Peter Pry ([15:10](#)):

So I think that the other NATO, there's a thing called, most Americans haven't heard of it, but it's called the Partnership for Peace. It's an interim step toward becoming a NATO member state. If you look at who are the members of the Partnership for Peace, well, that includes Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, all these countries in Central Asia. It'll go almost all the way to China.

Peter Pry ([15:36](#)):

So if you are from a strategic culture of paranoia in a nation that has been repeatedly invaded over many centuries like Russia and you see all of these former Soviet territories are now in the Partnership for Peace, it's entirely understandable that Russia sees itself as possibly being surrounded by NATO and that our intentions are not benign, but that we eventually plan to destroy Russia-

Bill Walton ([16:04](#)):

Russian leaders have felt that way for a thousand years. I mean, it operates on a vast plane. It's got no natural geographic protection. So if you're a strong leader of Russia, your marching orders are expand, expand, expand, not let people come in closer and closer. I'm here with Mike Waller and Peter Pry and we're talking about what's at stake in Ukraine and there's a lot to it. Mike, why don't you-

Peter Pry ([16:30](#)):

We have to meet each of these six demands and actually make a case as to why the United States, why it's in our interests too to meet one of those demands.

Bill Walton ([16:39](#)):

Okay. Mike, would you amplify?

Mike Waller ([16:42](#)):

Well, first, Peter has some great points and I agree with a lot of them, but I don't agree that we should ever have the Russians dictate "demands" to us. They certainly weren't dictating these demands when we had a strong president. One might say about his actual strategy is different, but when you have a-

Bill Walton ([17:05](#)):

When Trump was president, they weren't doing-

Mike Waller ([17:08](#)):

When you have a president with such cognitive disability-

Bill Walton ([17:09](#)):

We have Biden president, and they're taking advantage of it. I'll say it if you can't.

Mike Waller ([17:12](#)):

Exactly. The same way Stalin did with FDR at Yalta. Yalta was suffering from dementia. He couldn't remember or understand the things that he was signing. He had himself surrounded with Soviet agents like Alger Hiss Harry Dexter White and Harry Hopkins and others who were designing the whole plan for what became the cold war to give Stalin what he wanted. Now, Putin's not a Stalin by any means. I'm not saying that, but Biden is an FDR in the sense that he has people with really sketchy connections surrounding him. I mean, secretary of state whose stepfather who raised him was the general counsel to a KGB agent, Armand Hammer, CIA director who kept a portrait of Soviets by Alger Hiss on his wall at the Carnegie endowment. I mean, these are-

Bill Walton ([18:08](#)):

That's our current CIA director? What's his name?

Mike Waller ([18:11](#)):

Yeah, Burns.

Bill Walton ([18:13](#)):

Okay. All right.

Mike Waller ([18:14](#)):

Now, that's not to say he is one, but the fact that he was content to run an organization to keep a Soviet spy's portrait on the wall, that's a problem. So what signal does this send to somebody like Putin? That he can push us around. So we can allow ourselves to be pushed around under this weak, compromised leadership, and then where you have a president whose own family has been corrupted by a Ukrainian company whose business model was buying gas from Russia.

Bill Walton ([18:44](#)):

Well, this show sometimes I frame it as we're talking about the enemy without and the enemy within, and the enemy within are the people you're talking about that are in most of the departments in government that don't much like this country. So I'm interested, Peter, your thoughts about this because it's not exactly like people within the United States defense establishment are wholly aligned in terms of protecting freedom of constitutional limited government in America. In fact, they very often make common cause with the other side, and we're talking about Russia now, but if you look what's happening with China and the love affair that most of our tech oligarchs have with President Xi in China, I mean, sometimes you wonder who in this country's on our side. So can you negotiate the kind of thing we're talking about when we get a very, very soft foreign policy, in fact, government establishment in DC?

Peter Pry ([19:53](#)):

Well, the Biden administration is weak, and I'm not sure that you can put iron in their spine. I think that the Russians, if they follow the course that Washington, I mean, if the Biden administration follows the course that I'm recommending, I think we will get taken to the cleaners again. It's also true, by the way, that under Republican administrations we often get taken to the cleaners on these arms control agreements that the Russians invariably cheat on. So the Republicans don't have a monopoly on strength and wisdom when it comes to dealing Russia.

Peter Pry ([20:33](#)):

I mean, I just take it as a given that the Biden administration is probably going to do bad job and will get pushed around, especially because we've chosen to make Ukraine an issue, an issue where we cannot win, but I want to keep the conflict between us, the tension between the United States and Russia at the level of diplomacy. I don't want to see this thing turning into a war that brings in the United States. It has potential to escalate into a nuclear war. Even General Flynn has written recently about how it could escalate into a nuclear war that could kill hundreds of millions of people.

Peter Pry ([21:18](#)):

I don't agree that we should be sending arms to Ukraine, certainly not at this time. That sends exactly the wrong message to Russia and will heighten their suspicion that we do intend to bring Ukraine into NATO. Why are we making such a fuss over Ukrainian sovereignty and arming them to the teeth if we don't intend to make them a NATO member state? That's how they're going to think about it.

Peter Pry ([21:43](#)):

What will happen if we arm the Ukrainians enough so that they do cause the Russians a lot of blood? In Russian military doctrine, they believe in early nuclear first use if they get in trouble with conventional forces. That could mean the use of tactical nuclear weapons against Ukrainians. What if the Ukrainian army is strengthened not enough so that the Russians can't achieve a quick victory that the Ukrainians end up executing a fighting retreat into Romania or Poland or other neighboring NATO state?

Bill Walton ([22:15](#)):

Where are the Ukrainians themselves in all this? I asked the question at the outset here. I mean, you point out it's really been part of Russia for a thousand years or certainly there's a close relationship. I encourage everybody to actually look at a map to see what Ukraine looks like on the map because it sits there right next to it and Moscow is not very far away, 150 miles, 200 miles.

Peter Pry ([22:41](#)):

If Ukraine joins NATO, Russia will have a NATO member state within 300 miles of Moscow. They spent 20 to 30 million lives during World War II to push the Nazis out of that area and out of these other areas that are called the Bloodlands in Eastern Europe. So if you just imagine from their perspective, I mean, this is within loving memory of some Russians, and it's certainly taught at the general staff academy, the Operation Barbarossa, and how close the Soviet Union and Russia came to extinction because of the presence of adversary military force.

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

Yeah. Barbarossa was Hitler's thrust into Russia. Would they stop at just 20 miles short of the city line of Moscow?

Peter Pry ([23:24](#)):

Right. The last step in Operation Barbarossa to launch pincers toward Moscow originated from that part of Ukraine. So it puts them, from their point of view, that puts NATO within easy distance for making surprise attack by missiles and aircraft and tank armies if that happens.

Peter Pry ([23:46](#)):

Now, from our point of view, that's ridiculously paranoid. NATO alliance doesn't even have the military wherewithal to launch an invasion of Russia nor do we have such intentions, but their own strategic culture is one of paranoia. So they see threats everywhere, but I would add that our strategic culture is what I would call dysfunctional optimism. We can't understand that other states might see us as a threat. We're the good guys. We don't do nuclear Pearl Harbors or Pearl Harbors of any kind. So how can anybody object to us having a Partnership for Peace or expanding NATO into Eastern Europe?

Peter Pry ([24:28](#)):

That was the attitude. That was the attitude. This is a very dangerous combination to have one civilization that is dysfunctionally optimistic and can't see how what they're doing could provoke a world war up against another strategic culture, which is deeply paranoid and sees threats everywhere. This is not a wise thing for us to be sending arms to Ukraine when Russia is not only the nuclear super power, but what I would also call a cyber warfare superpower.

Peter Pry ([25:10](#)):

I've written articles also warning how they could shut down our electric grid with cyber and EMP attacks and probably will do so prior to not necessarily our grid, but if they think that this situation could expand to involve NATO and the United States in a war, they may well attempt to preempt us with that kind of an attack.

Bill Walton ([25:32](#)):

This is the Bill Walton Show, and I'm talking with Peter Pry and Mike Waller about Ukraine and why on earth we would want to go in there and what might happen. Peter's coined a term about our defense establishment characterized with we called it dysfunctional optimism and that we're the good guys, and why could anybody think we'd be the enemy.

Bill Walton ([25:57](#)):

Mike, you're close to the, and we've all stood about the deeply paranoid culture in Russia, is that the same under Putin? Is it made worse under Putin because of his personality or is it just, I mean, you can hardly characterize the Stalin's Soviet Union as a happy place? What's changed in Russia? Is this an eternal thing we're going to have to deal with or can we think about it some other way?

Mike Waller ([26:24](#)):

Well, paranoia and insularity are part of the Russian national character and have always been apart from when they were communist and they had an internationalist character to spread communism in terms of their own affairs. They were always very insular. Putin undid the openness that Gorbachev had begun and Boris Yeltsin, the Russian leader who seceded Russia from the USSR continued, but Yeltsin didn't have a political party of his own. He didn't really know anything about how democratic governance worked. So he placed his whole presidency in the hands of the former KGB, and that's how Putin was brought in.

Bill Walton ([27:08](#)):

Well, your doctoral dissertation predicted that the KGB would end up running Russia.

Mike Waller ([27:13](#)):

Right. That was in the early nineties. Yeah. So I was over there at the time. I was in the Kremlin the day the Russia seceded from the Soviet Union. So I got to watch the whole thing really close and upfront. I interacted with a lot of people who were in the KGB or freshly out of the KGB or who had been victims of the KGB and with Russian reformers who had wanted to do something about taking control of the KGB and pulling it out by the roots. That was never done. So every Russian leader has relied on the former KGB and continues to as Putin personifies because that's what they know for keeping control. So the it's a very centralized government that sucks all the wealth and innovation and everything else from all of the regions to keep the center in power, and that's Vladimir Putin, who is a creature of that organization, the KGB. He speaks with great affection for the old Chekist, which was the Cheka, which was the Bolshevik secret police. So that was a communist secret police, but for Putin it was a Russian secret police, and he still-

Bill Walton ([28:18](#)):

Was it Beria?

Mike Waller ([28:19](#)):

That was pre-Beria. Well, Beria, he was alive then, but he wasn't in it. Beria came much later. This was Felix Dzerzhinsky who founded it. Dzerzhinsky's birthday is on September 11th, so September 11th has a very different meaning to a guy like Putin than it does to us. He officially observes the birthday of the founder of the Bolshevik secret police. Every December 20th he still celebrates as state security workers day, which was the anniversary of the founding of the Bolshevik Cheka. So this is part of Putin's personality and his whole professional being.

Bill Walton ([28:57](#)):

You mentioned, Peter, that I don't think most ... You've written extensively in cyber warfare and EMP and the various ways that a modern war would actually happen. There's this naive notion that we could go to war someplace like Ukraine and there wouldn't be some countermeasure here in the United States in the form of cyber warfare of some type. That's not only a risk with Russia, but it's very much a risk with China who has probably even greater capabilities to wage that kind of warfare. Do you want to amplify on that?

Peter Pry ([29:32](#)):

Sure. In fact, I published a book last year called Blackout Warfare that talks about these. It's the first book published in the West that talks about how our adversaries, Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, think about and plan for cyber EMP warfare. I call it, they have many different names for it, cyber warfare, no contact warfare, electronic warfare, information warfare. It's all the same thing that involves a combination of what we consider cyber attacks, computer viruses, bugs, and logic bombs.

Peter Pry ([30:13](#)):

When we think of cyber warfare, that's what we think it's limited to, but for all these other adversaries, they have a much more sophisticated approach and it's a combined arms approach. So to them, cyber warfare includes physical sabotage by small teams of specialized troops going in and shooting up extra high voltage transformers and control centers, non-nuclear EMP weapons, drones that carry non-nuclear EMP generators that can follow power lines and knock them out, including all the way up to nuclear EMP attack, which they do not consider crossing the nuclear threshold, and they're right if you

really understand the physics because the EMP attack basically just attacks electronics and there is no radiation in the way.

Bill Walton ([31:02](#)):

A nuclear EMP attack would be a high altitude nuclear blast that would knock out the electrical grid?

Peter Pry ([31:08](#)):

Right, 300 kilometers high if you were on the ground directly beneath the explosion. You wouldn't even hear it. There'd be an EMP at the speed of light that could cover all of North America and put at risk electronics and take out all the critical infrastructures, transportation, communications, everything at the speed of light. It's a way of paralyzing us. Now in the long run of the EMP attack, any one of these things could be used to take out the electric grid. You could do it with cyber alone. You could do it with physical sabotage alone, non-nuclear EMP alone or nuclear EMP alone, but general staffs are conservative military planners, and so the combined effects of this make it irresistible.

Peter Pry ([31:49](#)):

You want every advantage that you can get. They could phase it in and start with cyber and see if that works and then quickly bring in and sabotage then escalate to non-nuclear. All of this could be done in less than 24 hours to win a blackout war. What's an American president going to do when the lights go out all across the nation and you can't project military power anymore because our military bases, they get 99% of their electricity from the civilian electric grid? You can't project military power and at the same time, the water is shut off to people. The food will start spoiling. The clock starts ticking toward mass starvation as a consequence of the blackout.

Peter Pry ([32:34](#)):

I think a president's highest priority and his constitutional priority should be to rescue the American people and the bad guys know that. They would be counting on that as well to not only eliminate our ability to project power, but create a situation in our homeland where our interests would be to bring all of the surviving forces remaining to an American president try to recover what they've done, and it could escalate to that level. I certainly think if Russia invades Ukraine, it's going to be preceded by a cyber attack on Ukrainian electric grid. They've practiced that every year for the past seven years or so taking out the Ukrainian electric grid.

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

So the idea of Russia lining up a hundred thousand troops and marching down the highway into Ukraine is not the way this war would be fought. I think people are acting like this is World War I and you're saying this is not. This is World War II. Now, could we-

Peter Pry ([33:35](#)):

Well, I think the tanks will go in, but they will go in-

Bill Walton ([33:38](#)):

After they've soften the target.

Peter Pry ([33:41](#)):

Right, and I think that the effects of that will similarly paralyze the Ukrainian military so that they can probably achieve a pretty quick and relatively bloodless victory.

Bill Walton ([33:51](#)):

Sure. Mike?

Mike Waller ([33:53](#)):

Yeah. I think Russia doesn't even need to use military force to get its way in Ukraine. One of the big concerns among the people I've talked to past few days in Kiev is Russia sponsoring a coup d'état against the Ukrainian government, so even a bloodless one, not they get their way, they win without fighting. They've made their show of force and then they can do what they want and they can get a Ukrainian leadership that will just be much more malleable.

Bill Walton ([34:19](#)):

That's the more likely scenario.

Mike Waller ([34:21](#)):

That's a scenario. That's one of the things that we-

Bill Walton ([34:23](#)):

Well, could we pivot a bit because I want to get your view about the other strategic issue, Taiwan, and that to me looms even larger because I think we've established Ukraine doesn't really matter to the United States, but Taiwan does. I mean, Taiwan's got 90% of the high level semiconductor manufacturing done by TSMC, Taiwan semiconductor and a lot of other strategically important manufacturers and industries. That is a very important country to the United States. It's also very important to China because China imports almost all of its semiconductors. If you're thinking about pivoting towards China, a couple quick questions. Are the cyber warfare capabilities roughly the same with Russia and with China, less, more? We talked about Ukraine, if something happened in Taiwan, what's that scenario like? I think I asked about six questions and either one of you can jump in, but I'm very interested because I worry a great deal about Taiwan. People don't understand how important it is.

Peter Pry ([35:44](#)):

If you think of cyber warfare as it's defined by the bad guys, by our adversaries, then it's not limited to viruses and logic bombs and things like that, but it's a combined arms operation. It includes nuclear all the way up to the nuclear level. Then Russia would be more capable than China in terms of cyber warfare defined as they define it. Nonetheless, China has capability to knock out our electric grid as well. The Russian capability is greater, but the Chinese can put us into a nationwide blackout too by all of these means. We think they have all of these means, cyber capabilities, physical sabotage capabilities, all the way up to super EMP weapons. China has got those as well.

Peter Pry ([36:41](#)):

Even North Korea, frankly, probably got a super EMP weapon. We don't have a super EMP weapon in the US nuclear deterrent. So in terms of the effect from an American perspective, they're an equal threat because once you've destroyed ... The Russians can make the grid rubble bounce and the Chinese

have a less of a capability to do that, but still a nationwide blackout is a nationwide blackout, and it could be for a protracted period.

Mike Waller ([37:14](#)):

The Chinese have a capacity to compromise our leadership in business and politics and communication and journalism and education and everywhere else where we have been blinded to-

Bill Walton ([37:29](#)):

Not capacity to, they already have.

Mike Waller ([37:32](#)):

Yes. They've been doing this for decades. Those of us who've talked about it have been anathematized and pushed aside as being completely unreasonable. We've been right about all of it. Many of our former critics are now agreeing that this has been a problem all along, but where you have a Chinese laboratory tied to the people's liberation army that works with strains of viruses and has been doing things on contract with some of our health leaders of our own government for years, and then this virus is released or escapes from that lab to plague the whole world, and you don't have anyone anymore who wants to hold the Chinese regime accountable.

Mike Waller ([38:16](#)):

In fact, the, the director of national intelligence issued a report last summer, the unclassified version said, "The intelligence community can't find out the origin of the pandemic without help from the Chinese authorities." Meaning, our whole intelligence community had no means of ascertaining where the virus came from unless the Chinese government helped us find out where it came from, which it wasn't doing. That's the pathetic state of our intelligence capabilities right now, and the timid conclusions that our intelligence community is making.

Mike Waller ([38:48](#)):

So if we can't even assess something like that that has affected every last person in our country and on earth, what other capabilities don't we have? The politicians who've been compromised and the senior military figures who've been compromised wanting to be promoted by behaving in a certain way while they wear the stars on their shoulders to get on corporate boards of companies that do business at China or the entrepreneurs and bankers and others on Wall Street who are tied completely to the Chinese communist party, these huge investment houses that have determined every last person's economic future here and our own economic security completely compromised by the Chinese regime.

Mike Waller ([39:34](#)):

So you have decisions that aren't made, intelligent taskings that aren't made, policies that aren't even devised and strategies that aren't even devised that make us completely vulnerable to the types of things that Peter's talking about, but they don't even need to do it to us because they've compromised us so much.

Bill Walton ([39:52](#)):

Could you give us an example? Could you give me ... I've got a lot, but I'd rather hear from you an example of how they compromise people, a person or a strategy?

Mike Waller ([40:02](#)):

Sure. For example, let's take something visible, an entertainment company. Why is Disney pushing Chinese propaganda? Why is it adjusting its entertainment for children in ways to appease the Chinese communist party? To what end is that? Part of it is because they want to build a Chinese market, but part of it is the Chinese say, "If you do not comply with what we want you to produce and not produce, we will not grant you entry here," and Disney's more than ... That's just an entertainment company.

Mike Waller ([40:40](#)):

Now, think of certain defense companies. When you think of, was it Lora the engineer? It was a huge, huge. I don't remember. I want to say the name of the firm, a big American firm engineers were giving the Chinese military advice on how to devise a weapon to destroy an American aircraft carrier and to put multiple warheads on an ICBM. These are American engineers and companies that were doing this long ago.

Mike Waller ([41:12](#)):

Bankers, think of Wall Street, think of places like BlackRock. Think of some of the big investment houses in Wall Street that are so immersed and so intertwined with Chinese communist party businesses with their phony bookkeeping and their opaqueness and their fake numbers, and they're putting our pensions and our entire economy intertwined with a completely false communist party system of phony companies and fraud, and then they give money to politicians and they tell them how to vote, and you look at the whole New York state delegation, practically, they're all in the banking and finance committees then governing it and they're governing our national policies that the Wall Street folks are funding the campaign's vote.

Bill Walton ([42:03](#)):

Well, BlackRock, Larry Fink is still advising us all to put more of our portfolio in China even when you have no idea what the Chinese companies' numbers really are, but BlackRock's also been invited into China to help with modernize its investment markets. They're lusting after that 400 or 500 million people with savings dollars because BlackRock wants a piece of that. So they're willing to put American shareholders into Chinese stocks to please the Chinese communist party. I mean, is that the kind of thing you're talking about?

Mike Waller ([42:37](#)):

Then these stocks tank because the companies are just built on pyramid schemes or fraud and that affects every last one of us. Then you have our media companies. When you have Steve Forbes of all people selling his company to Chinese interests, when you have Chinese communist party figures owning parts of our news organizations and selling out to them, when you have even one great media figure who's a hero of mine, Rupert Murdoch, publicly saying that his Chinese born ex-wife was a communist spy who was sent to try to influence him.

Bill Walton ([43:08](#)):

Is this Wendy Ding?

Mike Waller ([43:09](#)):

Yeah, and then you've Facebook and Twitter and these social media outlets that are censoring in ways favorable to the Chinese regime. So it's affecting the perceptions and attitudes and policies of our population in our country.

Bill Walton ([43:25](#)):

So Peter, I mean, I think what Mike's saying, based on everything I've done on China and the capital markets and other things related to this show, I tend to agree that it's very hard for us to defend American interest because so many Americans are making common cause with what used to be our enemy. We still think so. How does that affect some of your strategic advice? I mean, if you've got generals with divided allegiance or other people and government with divided allegiance, doesn't that compromise the kind of strategies that you're advocating?

Peter Pry ([44:03](#)):

Sure, it does. I'm really concerned that we're in a civilizational crisis here and that Republicans and Democrats, the business as usual, may not be able to fix it. Free societies are not the norm in world history. Mankind usually lives under tyrannies precisely because systems like ours, free systems like this are divided among themselves and they focus on their differences within as we are deeply divided now, basically having a cold civil war at home. I mean, whether you look at Athens or Rome or now us, how we are our own worst enemy.

Peter Pry ([44:48](#)):

So my strategy is a strategy of desperation. I'm not saying that making peace not war with Russia is done. The alternative to making peace with Russia, a humiliating peace with Russia, possibly, probably under this administration is better than the alternative, which is possibly as General Flynn warns, hundreds of millions dead in a nuclear war because we don't make peace with Russia because we-

Bill Walton ([45:15](#)):

Wait a second. You have-

Peter Pry ([45:17](#)):

... because we explode the Ukrainian powder keg the way Serbia got exploded in World War I and it results in a series of cascading unexpected things that bring us into a world war, but let me say this quickly to complete my on this. So I'm not hopeful about the Biden administration, all the corruption, being able to achieve the objectives. I'm hoping we can come out of the situation that we're in and get more competent political and military leadership in the future that can fix the problems that may be created by a negotiated peace with Russia where they have taken us to the cleaners and we've made perhaps too many concessions.

Peter Pry ([46:01](#)):

Diplomacy, you're still alive and you can fix the diplomatic faults later, but one of the biggest things we've got going for us in being able to achieve a peace with Russia and being able to make them a strategic partner so that we don't lose this war with China, and it's a war whether it involves shooting or not, what we're describing as a form of war. Sun Tzu said, "The best victory in war is to achieve victory without a battle," to achieve the bloodless victory, but the thing we've got going for us most is that I think Putin is smart enough to understand that a strategic partnership with the West is more in his

interest than being aligned with China because China is a bigger threat in the long run to Russia than the United States.

Peter Pry ([46:49](#)):

So even though we're a bunch of fools right now, and that might even make us more attractive, that he can manipulate us and have his way with us right now, the strategic partnership between Russia and China has been a lot of ways, I think from Russia's point of view a one way street. I mean, Russian technology and scientific expertise has helped build China into the superpower that it is day. They really haven't gotten much help from the economic giant that China is in exchange for that. They also know that China hungrily eye Siberia and probably has territorial aspirations.

Peter Pry ([47:31](#)):

Russia's population is going down. China's a huge, dangerous neighbor with billions of people in it. If the new Sino-Russo access prevails, and we have a new world order run by them, I think Putin and Russia understands they're going to be the junior partner, and they also probably understand that the way of totalitarian states, the reason they're totalitarian states is they want total control, and the next guy on the hit list after the United States is going to be Russia.

Peter Pry ([48:04](#)):

Our principles of coexistence and respecting sovereignty, if you look at a long run, probably look pretty attractive to Putin despite the fact that we have a very foolish administration, a very weak administration right now. So Russia's own self-interest is probably the best thing we've got going for us. I think we might be surprised at how easy it would be to establish a strategic partnership with Russia if we were willing to be reasonable on some of these points and do things like lift the economic sanctions and try to reestablish a strategic partnership with Russia, hit the reset button again.

Bill Walton ([48:45](#)):

Mike?

Mike Waller ([48:46](#)):

Well, only a madman would have policies to drive Russia and China closer together. That's just insanity for any Western leader, especially for the United States ever to do. So it's in our strategic interest to separate Russia as much as possible from China. Russia's long term future is pretty bleak in terms of, we just talked about the demographics of the situation, but China is expanding. It needs more space or it perceives that it needs more space for its population, and it's the Chinese merchants who are the real business backbone of much of the Russian far east already going back and forth running the stores and the shops and providing a lot of the work that the Russians can't or won't do or there are no Russians there to do it. It's only a matter of time before Chinese population migrates to other areas on land, and Russia is the easiest place as I've told you.

Bill Walton ([49:46](#)):

Siberia is on the main path.

Mike Waller ([49:47](#)):

Right. It's right there. It's just north of China and it has infrastructure and it has a declining population. So it's a pretty attractive population target for just Chinese to go to to migrate on their own, let alone if you had a Chinese communist party orchestrated migration to there and to places in the Russian interest like Kazakhstan and elsewhere. So it's really to Russia's benefit to get rid of some of its paranoia toward us.

Mike Waller ([50:15](#)):

This is one of the things that causes me to wonder why are these American politicians who work so soft toward Moscow for their entire political careers giving the Kremlin its way on arms control, making sure the United States never had a national missile defense, making sure we never had adequate counterintelligence and all of a sudden they're uber hawks against Vladimir Putin.

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

Why?

Mike Waller ([50:39](#)):

You have to wonder why.

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

Well, no, but how about an answer? I wonder why. I mean, we've got these guys like Elmer Fudd. I mean, they've determined to be tough guys after all these years and they're these little men or little people who are acting like they got to be tough now, and it's crazy.

Mike Waller ([51:00](#)):

It's completely out of character for all of them, and then anybody who is advocating a third way, separate Putin from China, you're being accused of being a Russian agency. It's proof that you're a Trumpy and Trump was working for the Kremlin and, therefore, you're compromised also, but it makes no-

Bill Walton ([51:19](#)):

Yeah, but Trump was tough on Putin. I mean-

Mike Waller ([51:21](#)):

He was uncharacteristically quiet about it. That was one of the things-

Bill Walton ([51:23](#)):

Putin was quiet about it, yeah.

Mike Waller ([51:24](#)):

No. Trump was quiet about it.

Bill Walton ([51:25](#)):

Yeah, he was.

Mike Waller ([51:28](#)):

Usually, you'd expect the bluster to come out for Trump to say, "This is how tough I am toward Putin." He handled Putin in a very different way and Putin didn't mess with him.

Peter Pry ([51:37](#)):

Yeah. I think Flynn's idea was to try to do exactly what I've been describing. I think this was going to be the Trump administration policy to try to drive a wedge between Russia and China, to try to lure Russia into a strategic partnership, and Putin was waiting for the offer to come from the Trump administration, but Trump couldn't make the offer because of all these allegations that he was the Manchurian candidate. So we're in this situation that we're in now.

Peter Pry ([52:09](#)):

I think part of the explanation as to why we get taken to the cleaners on these arms control treaties, another question from the cyber and EMP point of view, how is it that we haven't hardened our electric grid and our other critical infrastructures from EMP and cyber attack even though there's an executive order to do it, bills get passed by Congress? There isn't an easy answer to that.

Peter Pry ([52:44](#)):

I personally believe that I think we can't understate the possibility that we've been deeply penetrated by the other side, by Russian agents, by Chinese agents, by people who have divided loyalties. I'm thinking of Klaus Fuchs, who was a Soviet spy that penetrated the Manhattan project. It was supposed to be the most secure project that we had, but it penetrated and many Soviet agents had, and then he proceeded to misinform us, not just send secrets back to the Soviet Union, but to misinform us on certain nuclear matters while he was there.

Peter Pry ([53:26](#)):

I think about how much easier it is to penetrate institutions like the US Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, the utilities. They don't do polygraphs and background checks on anybody coming into these organizations that are really vital to our national security because they manage our electric grid, but then on the other hand, I remember that Dr. Graham, who was the chairman of the EMP Commission, he was President Reagan's White House science advisor, would always caution me, "Peter, never attribute to a conspiracy in Washington that which can be explained by stupidity."

Peter Pry ([54:06](#)):

The fact of the matter is we have a lot of Dr. Faucis working for us in all the fields, whether it's in the state department, the defense department, the Department of Homeland Security. There's a lot of incompetence there. On our side, you can't fire these people. They're not deep thinkers. At the top, we change with every administration and the kind of people that are brought in to do these things are not very impressive people.

Peter Pry ([54:36](#)):

Right now, for example, Wendy Sherman, who is our deputy secretary of state is over there trying to negotiate with Russia, trying to avert this crisis. Who is Wendy Sherman? It's just one example. Well, she was never trained as a strategist or foreign policy analyst. Her background is a social worker. She used to

run the Department of Child Services for the state of Maryland, and then was the director of Emily's List, which was designed to get women elected who supported abortion to political roles. She became a friend of Bill and Hillary. They put her into high position in the state department, and from there, she proceeded to give us the agreed framework with North Korea, which actually helped North Korea become a nuclear weapon state, the joint, the Iran nuclear deal, and now we're hoping Wendy Sherman will win World War III or be peace on our time. Okay?

Peter Pry ([55:37](#)):

So I expect us to get taken to the cleaners by negotiating with Russia. It's just inevitable with this crowd, but it's better than losing World War III because of Wendy Sherman. A bad deal is better than a war we can't win.

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

So it sounds like the strategy is to just try to avoid catastrophe for the next three years until we can get a new gang, a new team in place and hope that that's the right team.

Peter Pry ([56:08](#)):

Yeah. We need time to rebuild our military power, to rebuild our political military leadership, to defend ourselves. We need time to do that. That's the only way I can see to buy time.

Bill Walton ([56:23](#)):

Speaking of buying time, we're out of time, but I want to continue. Mike, you get to give a point of view.

Mike Waller ([56:32](#)):

Well, we're not at a point now where we can look for the best policy. It's just look for the least damaging policy.

Bill Walton ([56:38](#)):

Right. Yeah. Well, this has been a very sobering Bill Walton Show. I'd like to thank Mike Waller and Peter Pry for joining and giving us a very, I think, clear eye view of our foreign policy and the defense establishment, and also our prospects in dealing with Ukraine and with Taiwan, China, Russia. We've got a lot more to cover here and I hope I can get you. You guys are already returning guests, so we're going to get you returning again.

Bill Walton ([57:07](#)):

Next time, Peter, we're going to have you in studio so we can have more. We miss you. We'd like to have you here. So Peter Pry, Mike Waller, thank you, and thanks for joining the Bill Walton Show and we'll be back with more on this time topic in the not too distant future. You can find our show on the billwaltonshow.com, on YouTube, on Rumble. We're on Monday nights on CPAC Now, 7:00 streaming. Also, we're just joining the For America platform and we'll also be seen there along with all the other podcast platforms. So stay tuned, keep listening, and send us all your good ideas, and we'll try to make shows at them. So thanks.

Bill Walton ([57:52](#)):

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