

Episode 176: “Ukraine First?” with Fred Fleitz and John Zadrozny

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. 13 months into Joe Biden's Presidency, he remains enthralled to the climate left, open borders, woke identity politics, elite internationalism, and trillions of dollars of government spending that send inflation to 40 year highs. Instead of an American first policy, he seems hell bent on an America last. In a State of the Union Address, he doubled down. No call for smarter 21st century defense spending as Russia and China ramp up the air militaries, no reset of his anti-fossil fuel agenda, that has gas prices heading towards \$5 a gallon. Instead, he claims he'll quote, cut energy costs for families an average of \$500 a year by combating climate change. Well, hasn't anyone told him the entire point of his green climate agenda is to raise the price of energy for Americans? He pledged to quote, secure the border and fix the immigration system but his administration has done virtually nothing to bring this about. In fact, just the opposite.

China seems absent from his concerns. Worse, he just recently ended the Justice Department's China Initiative Program that was aimed at the Chinese Communist Party theft of intellectual property, United States intellectual property that has been costing America billions of dollars and threatens our national security. I could go on and on and on, but I wanted to get to my guest to know a lot about this stuff and also a lot about the destructive Biden agenda and how it compares to what President Trump did for us during his tenure as president. With me again, returning guest Fred Fleitz, Vice Chair of America First Policy Institute Center for American Security and has served as Deputy Assistant to President Trump and Chief of Staff of the National Security Council and John Zadrozny, Director of AFPI Center for Homeland Security and Immigration, and has served as Deputy Assistant to the president in the office of Senior Advisor for Policy. Fred, John let's cut to the chase, Ukraine.

Fred Fleitz ([02:50](#)):

Well, we're really seeing an unbelievable disaster and a tragedy in Ukraine and we have to face a reality of why this happened. We have one of the weakest presidents in history, in leadership and in foreign policy and one year of disaster after disaster, especially the withdrawal from Afghanistan, which was ordered by Joe Biden. We had appeasement of Putin by Biden throughout the year. Incoherent statement and incoherent foreign policy that made climate change the priority for national security instead of real threats. Then the biggest threat, of course, being China. I think Putin saw an historic opportunity to move, to do something he would never have done ordinarily if there was a strong and decisive American president and Biden made it worse with via these constant red lines and ultimatums and threats of sanctions being thrown at Putin, which we weren't going to carry out or Putin was going to ignore and made the situation worse.

And now we are where we are, but it's just worth noting, it's no accident this happened under this president, not under the last one. Donald Trump knew we're not going to condone Putin's behavior, we Putin's a thug. In a perfect world, he would go on trial on a war crimes court, but this is a state with the largest nuclear arsenal on earth, and we have to find a way to coexist with it. And that was really the basis of Trump's approach to Russia. We can have differences with different things that Trump may have said from time to time, but Biden has no concept of that, that we can't sanction Putin into changing his ways, we have to find a way to work with him.

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Bill Walton ([04:26](#)):

Now is this Biden or Biden's team? I mean, you remember Afghanistan, that catastrophic withdrawal. If there was worse word for that, I'd find it. Later on, we hear him say, "Well, nobody told me that it was going to be like that." And the military then claims that they were... They didn't want to do it that way and so everybody's pointing in his direction. Can this be laid at the feet of somebody else be in addition to Biden? What about the rest of his team?

John Zadronzy ([04:59](#)):

I think the reality is that you see a lot of people in charge, but no one leading in this administration. The one thing I defer to Fred on all things Ukraine, I would say this though, I think this administration, we work from a certain assumption that every American president means the best for the republic and fights to serve the republic and in any way possible. I think though, what we're seeing in almost every issue is a forced failure. It's almost a continuation of the Obama years on steroids, where they are determined to cause damage. I work on Homeland Security immigration issues. It's very apparent in the immigration space this is intentional. They are driving a collapse of our immigration system because I mean, I look at it this way, when you spend 50 years of boarding children in the womb, you're short about 60 million voters. As your policies radicalize, you have two choices. You can change your... To get votes, you have two choices, you can change your policies to reflect what the American people want or you can find new voters and they've clearly chosen the latter.

I think you can see this in foreign policy to some degree, where they claim they want to stop global warming but they're perfectly happy dumping a lot of money on the very man who is invading Ukraine by destroying our energy self-sufficiency. And you could go down the list of issues where you'd see this forced decline. I don't even know where to begin on how to stop it, but Fred might have some thoughts.

Bill Walton ([06:23](#)):

What about the Ukraine team? Where's where's Lloyd Austin? Where's Anthony Blinken? Where's our national security advisor?

Fred Fleitz ([06:33](#)):

Jake Sullivan.

Bill Walton ([06:34](#)):

Jake Sullivan. I mean, I see them and I think, oh, my goodness.

Fred Fleitz ([06:39](#)):

Well, we know Bob Gates wrote in his memoir, which came out, I think in 2011, that Joe Biden has been wrong about every national security question for 40 years. And let's bear in mind, that's when Biden was a young man, he's now suffering mental decline. And I don't like talking about that, but we all know that.

Bill Walton ([06:55](#)):

And he didn't from a very high level.

Fred Fleitz ([06:56](#)):

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Exactly, exactly. So now he's suffering mental decline. The Afghanistan debacle was Biden's fault. He was told by his military advisors not to do that, not to do it the way he did it and he ignored them. But on Ukraine, I think there are others who bear responsibility, Anthony Blinken and Jake Sullivan are way out of their league. They are third stringers at best. They don't understand Russia, the Russians don't respect them. And I think we have a weak president surrounded by former staffers, former congressional staffers, who simply don't have the gravitas and experience in making tough national security decisions and interacting with major leaders. They should be let go immediately. And I think Biden should try to bring in some men and women with gravitas and experience.

And there are Democrats who we could live with. We wouldn't put in a Republican administration, Leon Pinetta, Senator Chris Coons, Jane Harmon, who was the top Democrat [inaudible 00:07:54].

Bill Walton ([07:54](#)):

Yeah, and Jane's [strong 00:07:55]

Fred Fleitz ([07:55](#)):

They're strong people, they're serious people. And if we sent them to negotiate with put Putin, Putin would respect them. I'm not saying we would necessarily change his mind but when we send these people, he disregards as lightweights, it makes the situation even worse.

Bill Walton ([08:13](#)):

Well, are we beyond the point of negotiation? I mean, are we really, even in the room? I mean, it seems like this is Ukraine and Putin, and in fact, the EU has been a whole lot stronger than anybody ever imagined. That meeting, where they were with Germany, reversed all of its green energy policies in the course of one speech. I mean, it was really stunning how aggressive they've been versus us.

Fred Fleitz ([08:41](#)):

We have to keep the door open to negotiations. I don't think Putin wants to negotiate right now. I was glad that Zelensky sent a delegation to talk with Russian representatives in Belarus recently, no one thought that would go anywhere. But if it's true that the Ukrainian people are going to do so much damage to the Russian military, to the extent that they're going to have to consider pulling out. If it's true that we are doing so much damage to the oligarchs and the Russian people, maybe Putin will look for an off ramp. We have to pray for that. And I think that it could be that Zelensky is going to have to make an offer, maybe that Ukraine will be neutral. That seems to be a minimum level of compromise, I think Zelensky could live with. And hopefully Putin will soon realize that's the way he has to go. But if Zelensky doesn't do that, I worry that consequences is going to be just devastating for Ukraine. There's not going to be a fair and just resolution to the situation unless Putin is overthrown, which I hope will happen, and I don't think that will happen. But my hope is that negotiations will open up and continue.

Bill Walton ([09:52](#)):

Do you got any thoughts?

John Zadrozny ([09:54](#)):

The only thing I can add to what Fred said, because he covered it pretty well is basically this feels like the first 50 pages of a Tom Clancy novel, where things could spin it out of control pretty quickly. And I think

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that's what worries me the most. I can tell you on the immigration homeland front, that what's happening in Ukraine, even though I don't expect a ton of Ukrainian nationals to be crossing the US-Mexico border, you're going to see, and keeping with the administration's desire to have our immigration system crashed, you're going to see a lot of other people from other countries around the world, in that general region, coming to the United States across the US-Mexico border.

And that's one of those things that actually worries me the most in the sense that you have a lot of people who are... We deal with people coming from the Northern Triangle in South America and that's enough of a security concern. But when you start seeing people from other continents, that means they have resources to get here. I'm not saying that everyone with resources who finds their way to the US-Mexico border is a national security threat, but you know that if people can get there and they're innocent, there are people with nefarious intent who have the resources to get there, who are crossing. I mean, I can tell you stories that the Border Patrol has shared with us.

Bill Walton ([10:59](#)):

So the America First Policy Institute, I look at all the people that are now there and a lot of former people in the Trump Administration, some not, but very serious people. It's like, you're almost a government in waiting. I mean, it's like we've got ready for the next administration. Do you all talk amongst yourself as the other foreign policy and immigration people about what our concerted response ought to be? Because these are all interrelated. You talk about the people leaving, fleeing Ukraine or whatever, that's okay maybe, but we got a lot of other countries that are coming in through our southern border and we've got this preposterous notion that we're supposed to care about the Ukrainian border, when we don't care about our own.

Fred Fleitz ([11:41](#)):

The American First Policy Institute, it's an incredible organization. We have a number of policies centers look at domestic issues, Homeland security, foreign policy and we coordinate these issues. We just did an incredible panel with Senator Rick Scott on China and we brought in people who looked at how it affects the economy, domestic security, foreign policy. It was really an incredible way to go but we are a due tank and we are an organization, AFPI, that plans to be around for 100 years. We're nonpartisan, we're hoping to affect the conservative movement and to promote good policy, foreign policy, domestic policy, not just for the '22 or the '24 election, but far beyond that, but John you've been with this organization more than me. You probably have a better take on it than I do.

John Zadronzy ([12:33](#)):

I mean, I think everything Fred said is pretty much spot on. We basically tried to... We all spent... Everyone in that, in AFPI has spent some amount of time either in the administration itself or on the campaign, basically fighting for an America first agenda. And I think what's really stark, is we fully expected it to be a challenge environment with the Democratic administration where we would say, "We would do this differently, we would do this differently." They have gone 180 degrees on almost everything we've done. Almost, I mean, I don't know what Fred thinks, almost out of spite. It seems like they've just clearly reversed to say, not Trump on most things. You can count the number of things they haven't done that on one hand and they've been super quiet about it.

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

Well, it seems like a lot of... I mean, this is the Bill Walton Show, I'm talking with Fred Fleitz and John Zadronzy. I'm working on my Polish, I'm getting there. And we're talking about the Ukraine, we're talking

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about the Biden foreign policy team generally, but specifically how badly they've booted this issue. I want to be careful, but we talked, Fred, I think last time we were on the show with Mike Waller about this notion of the enemy without and the enemy within, and it seems like we got a lot of people in the Biden Administration that are not really fighting for our side. Now I've got John Brennan on CNN all the time telling us about this and John Brennan with was a catastrophe. Do we have to worry about the motivations of the people guiding Putin or guiding Biden's hand in this situation?

John Zadronzy ([14:07](#)):

Well, the answer is, yes. I mean, I am struck by how similar Biden's team is to Obama's team. It's almost basically, he basically brought all of them back. There are a couple of new names but not really. It's kind of remarkable to me because even in the past, Republican, Democrat administrations bring in people they've known for years and worked with for years, there's no Delaware team here. It's really interesting and like Obama brought in his folks from Chicago and he had a pretty good network, but they're basically running this administration too. And so that's why I don't think any of this is a mistake. I think a lot of what you're seeing is policy, the forced decline concept is a very real thing and we're seeing it in every issue.

Fred Fleitz ([14:51](#)):

You know, Rashida Tlaib gave her own rebuttal to President Biden State of the Union. And it's pretty clear that the Biden Administration wants to separate itself, publicly separate itself from this far left movement, the Democratic Party. But I don't think-

Bill Walton ([15:06](#)):

The squad.

Fred Fleitz ([15:07](#)):

I don't think they actually wanted to denounce it because that's where the Democratic Party is going. Let me give you an example, and I wrote about this concerning the nuclear deal with Iran in 2015. There's pretty clear indications that the Obama Administration negotiated that deal because they saw nothing wrong with Iran getting nuclear weapons, that they saw some type of moral equivalency or fairness if Israel has nuclear weapons, why can't Iran have one? And there are actually, there are academic articles written on this. Why can't Iran have the bomb? I think if we were able to peel the onion back and really push hard, that's at the root of the Obama Administration's approach and it's the radical view of the Biden Administration's approach to the Iran nuclear program. But there's this deception to make the American people think they're moderate, not to let them know the real radical and dangerous motivations behind their foreign and domestic policies.

Bill Walton ([16:01](#)):

You brought up something about Putin getting overthrown or ousted. How real a possibility is that and how much of a whip hand does he have on this? Because you look at that photo op that he did, I don't know it was a photo op, but he had a... There was a photo of him in his conference room with his top advisors, military advisors and he's sitting at the head of, it looked like literally a 50 foot long table. Did you see that?

Fred Fleitz ([16:31](#)):

It looked like a James Bond movie.

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Bill Walton ([16:33](#)):

Well, it looked like Dr. No, looked like he looked like a Bond villain, absolutely.

Fred Fleitz ([16:36](#)):

He did, he looked like a Bond villain.

Bill Walton ([16:37](#)):

And he's terribly completely paranoid about the virus. And so ostensibly, this is like the ultimate social distancing, forget six feet for him at 60. And he doesn't use a cell phone and he's not on the internet because he thinks that's the CIA invention, and it's going to be used against him and so he seems to be very detached. And when you're that detached, I think you got to be vulnerable because people can talk and do things and things like that. Is he the sole finger on the nuclear button for Russia? Does he have to get other people to weigh in?

Fred Fleitz ([17:19](#)):

Well, we think so, but there's a lot we don't know about how this operates. It looks like his hold on the security services will make it pretty hard to overthrow him. But let me tell you concerning Putin not using a cell phone, I don't think heads state like Biden or Trump or Putin should use cell phones, they're simply too vulnerable to monitoring.

Bill Walton ([17:39](#)):

I forgot, you spent 25 years in the NSA.

Fred Fleitz ([17:44](#)):

I love you. We asked President Trump not use cell phones.

Bill Walton ([17:46](#)):

You get a long category in the dark science.

Fred Fleitz ([17:50](#)):

That doesn't necessarily mean he's paranoid, but I don't know that it's true that he doesn't use the internet. I've heard that report, we just don't know. Is he as isolated as people on the outside think? It could be, and I think the pandemic probably isolated him more, but I do think his hold on power is a little stronger than we would like believe because he has such a strong hold on the security services. But we will see as the pain starts hitting the oligarchs who are behind his rule, as the military starts seeing huge losses in Ukraine for a war they don't understand and don't support, I don't how that will come down.

Bill Walton ([18:30](#)):

Well, John, go ahead.

John Zadrozny ([18:31](#)):

Well, there have been and just a dovetail on what Fred just said. There have been a lot of anecdotal reports and again, everything's in the fog of war right now about what's happening on the ground, but

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you hear reports about how Russian military are leaking information to Ukrainian forces and others about what's happening to give them a heads up. You hear some rumblings about how the Russian public is not lined up behind a war. It's really hard... I mean, history teaches us, it's really hard to do what Putin's trying to do without having the people fully at your back.

Bill Walton ([18:58](#)):

Well, I'm going to show you all a chart that I think... My background's in finance and Wall Street and money. And I look at this chart and we'll get a graphic of it when we edit this. But what this is, is this Russia's GDP over the last 20 years and it's GDP per capita and what you can see is the GDP capita flatlined and then it rose nicely up until around 2012. And since then, GDP per capita's been falling and Russia's got a shrinking population and when you see GDP per capita, per person falling, I think the Russian people have got to be in a world of hurt. And they're talking now about the economy shrinking 10, 15% because of this, they've cut off banks from the SWIFT system. Now they're ways around that, which we can talk about, but how does he retain the popularity with people or does that matter?

Fred Fleitz ([19:58](#)):

I think it's going to have an effect and there are already people risking their lives and risking prison sentences to protest the Ukraine war in Moscow and in Russian cities, they're being arrested and beaten up. It's hard in modern society right now to completely conceal this kind of thing in a country like Russia. Maybe in China, they could conceal it, if there was an invasion but the Russians are a little too connected to the outside world. I think it's going to have an effect but I'll tell you another consequence of this that I think we really need to think about which Biden has given no thought to, China is the major threat to our national security, not Russia. And we are pushing the Russians closer to China by the way this has been mishandled. And ultimately, I wish we could come with a strategy to bring Russia into Europe as a European power to, as I said, I don't want to condone their behavior but a Russia-China Alliance and I don't think there's an Alliance yet, I think they're getting there. A Russia-China Alliance, I think is extremely dangerous to American and global security. I'm afraid it is accelerate significantly over the last week, but we need to think about that.

Bill Walton ([21:08](#)):

Well, Peter Pry, you know Peter?

Fred Fleitz ([21:10](#)):

Know well.

Bill Walton ([21:11](#)):

I had him on the show a couple of times. He believes we ought to make peace with Russia, become partners with Russia to the extent we can. Europe needs its... Germany obviously needs its natural gas. If we brought them inside of our world, that would be a very different strategic position than looks like where we're going. And Russia's, remember that play in the '50s or movies in the '50s or '60s and the mouse that roared? Where this little country in Europe, in order to get foreign aid, decided to declare war on, I don't know who they declared war on, United States. Didn't really matter, some big country.

John Zadrozny ([21:48](#)):

United States.

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Bill Walton ([21:49](#)):

It's United States and Russia, they're hardly a mouse, but they're 11th largest economy in the world. They're smaller than South Korea and in economic terms, they're going the wrong direction. 30% of their economies built on the natural or fossil fuel industry. They've got a tech industry, which is getting... Could do something, but it's really not a player in the world stage in any sense. It's a mouse, but it's a mouse with 5,000 nuclear weapons.

John Zadronzy ([22:21](#)):

So one thing, we can't go back in time, but if we could, it would've been interesting to have tried our approach to Russia post cold war in a different way. I think one thing that maybe we never really appreciated about the Republic's post Soviet Union and Russia was that there was a little bit more of a sensitivity to their perception in the world. They clearly viewed themselves as an empire like country and if the expectation from the United States that they would just fold into Europe and just be like everybody else, was probably a little bit shortsighted. What could we have done? I don't know. Maybe we could have ironed out some of the overtures during the years with Yeltsin and then that way we might not have seen a Putin, because there was clearly this desire to have Russia be strong again, and Putin appealed to that and he's run the country for basically the last 20 years. There's no way to go back in time but we have to keep that in mind, going forward with Russia but also other countries that have that mindset.

Bill Walton ([23:15](#)):

This gets back to our personnel question. Now, what you're suggesting is extremely smart and interesting and something we ought to be serious about and yet I don't see anybody on this foreign policy team that's capable of something like that.

Fred Fleitz ([23:29](#)):

Unfortunately, that's right. And I wish senior Democrats in Congress would do an intervention with Biden. If they'd recognize his incompetence and look, let's bring in some of our own, let's replace these guys you have in there, they had their year. Let's bring in some-

Bill Walton ([23:45](#)):

I'd far rather have Jane Harmon. She's tough.

Fred Fleitz ([23:47](#)):

Yeah. I work with Jane Harmon when I was on the House Intelligence Committee. I didn't enjoy working with her, but I respect her for her competence. I want to talk about China just for a minute.

Bill Walton ([23:57](#)):

Yeah. I did want to pivot to China, I also want to pivot to our borders, but these are also in a related. Go.

Fred Fleitz ([24:02](#)):

Well, we will see soon how strong this relationship is between China and Russia. My guess is that Chinese president, Xi told Putin to not invade until after the Olympics, that the Chinese are not wild about this Ukraine invasion, because it could interfere with their economy. It could interfere with their relationship with rich Western states that they need to trade with. We'll see how... Because I mean,

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there are many analyst who believe that the Chinese view the Russians as a declining state and a junior partner and they are a declining state, as you just mentioned because of demographics.

Bill Walton ([24:36](#)):

And by definition would be a junior partner.

Fred Fleitz ([24:39](#)):

And the Russians know this. I think their friendship is a friendship of convenience. I don't think there's a grand alliance between the two of them to defeat the US just yet. I think we're moving there, but this enormous effort by the world against Russia, it's going to test this friendship and we'll soon see how serious the Chinese are in teaming up with the Russian against the West.

Bill Walton ([25:00](#)):

Because the Chinese have got to look past this because they want to do business with Germany.

Fred Fleitz ([25:04](#)):

Yes, exactly.

Bill Walton ([25:04](#)):

They want to do business France, they want to do business with Poland. I mean their main play in Europe is not Russia, it's beyond Russia.

Fred Fleitz ([25:12](#)):

Putin may have an almost suicidal approach to foreign policy and national security, but I don't think the Chinese do. And I mean, I could be wrong. Maybe they're just going to say, "Look, this is in our interest to ruin NATO, to wreck international economy." I don't think so.

Bill Walton ([25:28](#)):

Let's pivot to the border. It's wide open. On purpose?

John Zadronzy ([25:33](#)):

Yes. Yeah. I think this is the most important message I think people need to get, it's that this is the policy. The policy is an open border's policy. Again, I think they are gearing toward creating a new voter base for the Democrat Party. The parties only radicalized. I mean, I think that's pretty obvious, you can watch it over the course of you in the last four years, but even going back over the last 10 years, it's become increasingly radical. This is isn't your grandfather's Democrat Party. None of the people who we identify historically with the Democrat Party, the great presidents of the 20th century would even find a home in the current Democrat Party. And if they were still there, they'd be embarrassed by it. So they need new voters, they are not appealing to you and me. They are not appealing to a lot of their Democrat, traditional Democrat based, the more unionized blue collar folks that they're doing everything they can to drive them out of work and they're coming to the Republican Party.

So you've got two choices. Again, you've got to change your world's view you to accommodate the voter base and basically have your own intervention, come up with policies that reflect reality and try and draw people or find new voters and their goal is to find new voters. I mean, I think something really important to remember, we've seen estimates, official estimates of about two million people

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entering the country in the last year. It's probably more like 2.5 million, probably even more than that, because don't forget, that doesn't include the number we're not aware of. And for all the people who are willing to turn themselves into the Border Patrol, there's X percent that aren't and those are the most dangerous. And then you've also got to figure that this is one thing I think we need to look at in the future.

The Republican, I'm sorry, not the Republican Party. The estimate of the number of illegal aliens in the country is way below what it really is. Any number that Chuck Schumer uses as an outright lie. He's been saying 11 million for 20 years. I'll bet you five bucks, it's somewhere between 25 and 30 million. And so the left needs that big influx to make a difference for them, that's why they've been pushing amnesty at every turn. They understand their policies platform is not appealing to most Americans, so make new Americans. And if they can ever pull off an amnesty, they've got a 50 million voter block that's right there for the taking.

Bill Walton ([27:43](#)):

This is the Bill Walton Show. I'm here with John Zadronzy and Fred Fleitz with the America First Policy Institute. And I'm just sitting here reflecting on the fact you think we may have up to 30 million illegal immigrants in the country and that's 10%.

John Zadronzy ([28:01](#)):

And I think actually that's probably why the numbers we hear publicly-

Bill Walton ([28:05](#)):

11 million does seem like it's been there since we were born.

John Zadronzy ([28:08](#)):

Right. Think Bill, here's how I would put it. 11 million sounds like a focus group tested number, right? It's big enough to make people want to do something, but not big enough to scare the heck out of most Americans, but you literally hit it on the head. You said 30 million, that's one in 10, exactly. It's easy to display that visibly to the American people, by saying it's one in 10 people walking the streets, using resources and committing crime, is illegally present and think about what we wouldn't have to deal with if that problem was solved. I think we know from history that when the... There was an amnesty in 1986, in a piece of federal legislation was supposed to allow only one million people to become naturalized citizens. I believe more than two million ultimately took advantage of that. And that's interesting because you're going to see that same type of ratio in the event they ever create some sort of amnesty. And it's ever since that moment, that people realize we can just create new voters out of thin air. We don't have to do it through the traditional process.

Bill Walton ([29:03](#)):

What's their window to do this? We've got an election coming up in November and on present course, it looks like we're going to have a significant majority in the house and probably not a significant, but a majority in the Senate. Can Congress do anything to change what we're doing with the borders?

John Zadronzy ([29:26](#)):

Well, not really. I mean, this is one thing that last night, president during his state of the union-

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Bill Walton ([29:30](#)):

Because I'm going to be looking for lines of action, because it just seems like we can't wait another almost three years for somebody else.

John Zadronzy ([29:38](#)):

Here's the problem. The problem is that all of the tools that can be utilized to solve the problem are executive in nature. Congress can do things. So let's just say for the sake of argument, we manage to get through this calendar year without any damage on the immigration front and legislation and Republicans do take control of one or two chambers. They can strip money from certain agencies, they can make it harder for them to do certain things. They can not build the wall, you can't force the executive to do certain things.

Bill Walton ([30:02](#)):

Can you tick down the list of the things they reversed in immigration since Biden came in?

John Zadronzy ([30:07](#)):

If we have a couple more hours, I could go through everything. I'll tell you that the basis-

Bill Walton ([30:11](#)):

Well, 11 is real number. How about 11 of them?

John Zadronzy ([30:14](#)):

The most important things that they undid immediately are the most consequential. Besides they immediately canceled construction of the wall. We really had very little left to go in certain sectors. There was a lot more wall to build, but there was very little wall to finish off certain gaps at certain points in the border. They stopped dead at 12:01 PM on January 21st, 2021. They ended what we referred to as remain in Mexico or the Migration Protection Protocols. Basically, if you were coming to the United States from a country other than Mexico, and you came to us at the southern border, you had to wait in Mexico to have your asylum claim heard. That was a huge, huge thing because not only did it actually require that we not run the risk of having people disappear into our country and not be accountable, but it also reduced fraud because some large percentage of the people who came to our border and realize they aren't going to be let in, turned around and went home. That doesn't sound like they were actually being persecuted to me.

We had safe third country agreements, where basically, like you would basically have to wait in another country until such time as you could come to our country to have your asylum claim heard, we had basically a good relationship with Mexico. They were very helpful at the time because we had a diplomat, a guy named Chris Landau who basically went to the Mexicans and did what no other diplomat that we had did, which was deliver a tough message saying, "Look, we're cutting you off unless you do X and Y." And they did X and Y. That's just the surface, there's so much more-

Bill Walton ([31:39](#)):

What about stuff like the Catholic charities down there helping people assimilate into the United States and we're not leaving them in Mexico or leaving him in Texas or Arizona. These people are being escorted, assisted in the most generous way to be people in all sorts of different states around the country.

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John Zadronzy ([32:00](#)):

Yeah. I'll say this carefully, but I think it's the truth. I think these organizations-

Bill Walton ([32:04](#)):

I want to make sure you pass... Get through your confirmation in 19, 2000, don't take yourself out of the running.

John Zadronzy ([32:11](#)):

I am myself, Roman Catholic, and I will tell you that Catholic charities and all these groups that wrap themselves in religion are basically co-conspirators in human trafficking operations. [crosstalk 00:32:20]. They are basically helping the cartels make their money and they're making a little money on the side for them. I know that people would like to say these are religious organizations. They may be loosely affiliated with their respective churches, but they are not the churches. And these organizations make a lot of money. They came and lobbied us during the Trump administration, they wanted high refugee ceilings and they wanted a leaner asylum policy that let more people in. What they left out of the conversation is they make a significant amount of money per capita for every person who enters the country. And yeah, basically what's happening now, is the federal government is using these organizations to launder illegal immigration.

Bill Walton ([32:57](#)):

Wow. If you're... You all have worked in government and worked in agencies. I mean, a lot of the people work in the government and professional people, they're not like this. I mean, they care about their job, they care what they're doing. How are the border professionals feeling now instead of keeping people out, there ushering people in?

John Zadronzy ([33:19](#)):

There have been a couple of videos that have leaked out. They've been pretty fiery. Basically, you've seen men and women in the Border Patrol, yelling at Mayorkas, Secretary Mayorkas, and some of the border patrol leadership saying, "You're failing us. We're in danger." And all of that's true, that echoes everything I've seen behind the scenes. We have to remember these men and women all signed up to put themselves literal early on the line of fire. They deal with cartels, they deal with violent people and unpredictable people in the field. They do night patrols on the desert. None of them signed up for that because they're weak people and when you're in environment like that, where you're basically being oppressed by your leadership publicly and otherwise, you're going to quit.

I think one of the big problems we have coming, is a wave of attrition with the Border Patrol, because a lot of the men and women who can retire will retire. And then that's actually, unfortunately that's going to bootstrap the Biden Administration into saying, "Gosh, you see, we just don't have enough people. We're going to have to roll back our enforcement efforts." Even though there are no enforcement efforts now.

Bill Walton ([34:17](#)):

Have they used vaccine mandates to purge the border people?

John Zadronzy ([34:21](#)):

They certainly tried. I actually, I'm not sure of the latest by-

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Bill Walton ([34:24](#)):

Because they've done that in the Defense Department. I mean, the theory is that if your anti-vax, you're more likely to be Trumpian and part of that vaunted white supremacy crew. And so they've used that to purge the enlisted ranks in the military.

John Zadronzy ([34:38](#)):

They definitely tried that with the law enforcement in the Border Patrol, there's a patchwork of vaccine mandates and also injunctions against those mandates, against federal employees. So I'm not sure exactly what the latest is, but they certainly tried it. And I believe anyone who didn't stick around until an injunction went into effect might have had to retire. But you're right, I think that there's something to that, they're going to get the more woke among the Boarder Patrol and federal employees in general.

Bill Walton ([35:05](#)):

Left?

John Zadronzy ([35:06](#)):

Yes.

Bill Walton ([35:07](#)):

Fred, how widespread is this? I mean, is this happening? We talked about this before and all the other defense and intelligence agencies. How thinned out are they getting from people who want to protect America?

Fred Fleitz ([35:19](#)):

Well, I think that they're-

Bill Walton ([35:21](#)):

By the way, I want to see you confirmed as well in [crosstalk 00:35:24].

Fred Fleitz ([35:24](#)):

Well, I think that ship has sailed, but that's okay.

Bill Walton ([35:29](#)):

Okay. Well then tell us what you really think.

Fred Fleitz ([35:31](#)):

Well, I think that the vaccine mandate issue hasn't gone too far in the intelligence agencies. They tried to push it, but there was a lot of resistance and they didn't push it as hard as they did in the defense department. I don't really know what the reason is and now with the mask mandates coming down, I think the administration is backing off on that a bit. I don't know that they're going to back off in the military and they're doing enormous damage to our military with these vaccine mandates.

Bill Walton ([36:01](#)):

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And I would argue on purpose, but I'm not looking to get confirmed. The Justice Department China Initiative, I mean, that was something that Trump put in place Bill Barr, I think, was behind it when he was running Justice. Is that right? And what we know about China, you say China's a big issue, they have hundreds of thousands of agents, the Chinese Communist Party inside the United States. And that's just people who are active operatives. They also have lots of financial relationships with medical researchers, vaccine researchers, people on Capitol Hill with contribution money, that kind of thing. We're very infiltrated by China. What's your take on them taking out the China Initiative Program?

Fred Fleitz ([36:57](#)):

Well, we know that is real limits on American academics in China and on American news networks in China, but in the United States, China takes complete advantage of our free system to penetrate our universities. There's, is it CGNTV? The Chinese propaganda network that is on people's cable systems, they're exploiting our free system to try to take away our freedom and liberties. And one of the best policies that Trump Administration had was to try to hone in on China's efforts to exploit academics and students. Now, I edited a book a few years ago about how an American student went to China and was recruited to apply to the CIA and they then started putting notices that when you go to China, don't be recruited by Chinese intelligence, but it's worse than that because there is a huge infiltration of American universities and professors to acquire knowledge of sciences that can be used to advance the Chinese military and Chinese tech to use it against the United States. And it's not just studying here, it's stealing technology from universities and from research firms, that program is being shut down by the Biden Administration, because there's claims that it is racist.

Bill Walton ([38:17](#)):

That's Merrick Garland, they're hiding behind the woke agenda.

Fred Fleitz ([38:21](#)):

And just to show you how awful this is, I think it was an MIT professor who recently was indicted. I hope he goes to jail, who was getting a \$100,000 a month and he got a \$1 million payment up front. He was involved in some advanced information technology from a Chinese research institution. And even the Biden Administration had to admit, this guy was being bought off by the Chinese Communist Party to provide information to advance the Chinese military. This is an extremely well paid academic and it was hard. I mean, I know academics who were laughing at that, at the huge amount he was receiving from his work, obviously something wasn't right.

Bill Walton ([39:01](#)):

100,000 a month, that's not a [joke 00:39:03].

John Zadrozny ([39:03](#)):

Bill, I don't think... To add to what Fred said. I don't think most Americans realize that if you are a... There's no such thing as a private company in China, there's no such thing as a private citizen in China. If you're coming here, you're coming here with the government's awareness and/or blessing and/or instruction to do certain things. This is definitely the case with universities. It's definitely the case with students, but Fred touched on it. It's a real problem, a lot of universities across the country make a huge amount of money from China. There's no... To my knowledge, there's no block on, for example, the Chinese magnet giving a billion dollars to a university. It goes without saying, that creates a lot of vulnerabilities because there's definitely a quid pro quo there that doesn't come without a cost

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Bill Walton ([39:41](#)):

Chinese Communist Party in fact, has in its doctrine, every Chinese living abroad is supposed to be an agent of the state.

John Zadronzy ([39:52](#)):

That's absolutely the case. And there's some things we can't talk about, but that's definitely a living functioning part of the current Chinese government and they were very successful. And we have been... We tried really hard. We did a lot, there was definitely a lot more to go. I can say one thing that is really important, should be focused on in the future is the immigration system. For some reason, we don't focus on Chinese student visas or student visas in general. I mean, a student from Ghana is probably a lot less of a national security threat than a Chinese national, but overall, we should be more cautious about-

Bill Walton ([40:25](#)):

Except the Chinese are also in Ghana.

John Zadronzy ([40:26](#)):

Well, that's true, that Chinese are everywhere, right? So we should be aware of that too. Every foreign national who comes here to study, should be watched with a very close eye and we don't do that.

Fred Fleitz ([40:35](#)):

And we should watch congressmen who have Chinese friends and agents like Congressman Swalwell-

John Zadronzy ([40:42](#)):

but they have great name though, we got a girlfriend named Fang Fang. That was her name.

Fred Fleitz ([40:47](#)):

That's right. That's right.

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

I mean, you'd think something is up.

Fred Fleitz ([40:52](#)):

But I mean, we need to talk about this.

Bill Walton ([40:53](#)):

I'm joking, but I mean, it's not a joke.

Fred Fleitz ([40:56](#)):

The Chinese government called Swalwell before he was in Congress with this agent, this woman who wasn't a member of the Chinese Communist Party, she left the country before she could be arrested. She probably convinced Swalwell to apply to be on the House Intelligence Committee and he's still there. And there were no consequences and she was working with his personal staff and a lot of people were saying, "Well, look, what could he find out? What could she find out from the personal staff?" She

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could find out a lot. She could find out who he's meeting with. Sometimes people come in to meet House Intelligence Committee members, maybe whistle blowers, maybe foreign citizens. They want to pass something on to the member. She would know who these people are, she'd have his counter. She would know his travel. It was devastating, I think to our national security that this woman was there.

John Zadronzy ([41:43](#)):

And she'd know if it was having trouble fundraising. And if he was, she could find ways to help him raise the right money for the right price.

Fred Fleitz ([41:48](#)):

And she was raising money for him. So it's an enormous scandal and Nancy Pelosi did nothing about it.

Bill Walton ([41:56](#)):

Didn't she put him on the January 6th committee?

Fred Fleitz ([41:58](#)):

Yes.

Bill Walton ([42:00](#)):

That's really stunning.

Fred Fleitz ([42:02](#)):

He was at the State of the Union last night. He was laughing it up with Joe Biden as he walked into the house chamber. My hope is that when we take the house, this November, that the new chairman, the new Republican chairman on that committee will throw him off the first day he takes over.

Bill Walton ([42:19](#)):

What's happen... If we take the house, what happens to the January 6th star chamber?

Fred Fleitz ([42:27](#)):

Well-

Bill Walton ([42:28](#)):

Because we have a lot of friends. I have a lot of friends who are just using this as a pretext to swop everybody in the conservative movement and into the crosshairs. And it's very, talk about unAmerican. I mean, this is better as unAmerican as you can get.

Fred Fleitz ([42:43](#)):

I don't know whether it's going to be discontinued or whether it will be done right to focus on all the issues that led up to the riots of January 6th. I don't know which way the Republicans are going to go.

John Zadronzy ([42:55](#)):

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I suspect it would be a real liability for them to keep the commission going. And this is one thing that I think is really interesting about this whole thing, we literally saw buildings burning to the ground in the summer of 2020 at the hands of a Marxist organization on US soil and then-

Bill Walton ([43:12](#)):

Billions and billions of dollars.

John Zadronzy ([43:14](#)):

Billions and ins of dollars. And then perhaps unwise, but many people wandered into the capital that day. There's still a lot of questions about how all of that happened, I think we don't know the full story.

Bill Walton ([43:23](#)):

They left the door open.

John Zadronzy ([43:24](#)):

They left the door open. We'll find out who left that door open. At some point, I hope the reality is that they're not... They could easily have thrown open all the video and said, "Here's what happened, this is terrible." But they didn't do that, that speaks volumes. I suspect what they'll do is they'll end the commission and then they'll deal with things internally. One of the big things I think they have to deal with is the strange behavior of the Capital Police over the last couple years, that has to be addressed. The good news is they don't need anyone's permission to do it.

Bill Walton ([43:49](#)):

And the Capital Police reports to Nancy Pelosi.

John Zadronzy ([43:52](#)):

Well, hopefully they'll be reporting to a Republican speaker in January.

Bill Walton ([43:55](#)):

Well, my point is, it's historical record. So we've got a couple minutes left. I want to go back to grand strategy. That sounds to me like the smart thing we ought to be thinking about, is instead of talking tough with Russia, we ought to be thinking more long-term about what that relationship could be. I'm not saying we give them Ukraine, but there ought to be some way to take the temperature down. Thoughts?

Fred Fleitz ([44:20](#)):

I think that's the way we have to look at it. It's going to be uncomfortable, but we dealt with Soviet Union, which was an evil empire. We have to realize now we're in another cold war and we have to find a way to coexist with this country without going to war with it. We do not want a war with Russia. I want to add a related point, which we did get into. I do a lot of interviews and the commentators and hosts are constantly saying, "Why don't we have an no flies zone Ukraine? Why don't we send troops in?"

Bill Walton ([44:49](#)):

We don't want to do that.

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Fred Fleitz ([44:51](#)):

Because we don't want to get into war with Russia.

Bill Walton ([44:51](#)):

We don't want to provoke them.

Fred Fleitz ([44:53](#)):

Because if we did that, we would break certain assumptions of the post World War II era. And this would allow Russia to go into the Balkans and to go into Poland. And it is so crucial that we understand that, but some pretty smart people, some former generals, I've seen them say this on TV, "Let's just send our air force into the Ukraine." Or, "Let's send transport aircraft to bring weapons in and throw them overboard with parachutes to the Ukrainians." It's a disastrous idea, as much as we feel for the Ukrainian people, we cannot get into a war with Russia.

Bill Walton ([45:28](#)):

That moment has passed.

Fred Fleitz ([45:30](#)):

That's right.

Bill Walton ([45:30](#)):

Should have been. John?

John Zadronzy ([45:34](#)):

Maybe how the future is dealt with, it could happen in any number of ways. Maybe we have to come to a point where we've nurtured strong, large allies and they're in charge of spheres from now on. For example, we're used to this concept of a bipolar superpower world, it's a holdover from the 20th century, right? But imagine a scenario where Iran was no longer run by the Ayatollah, it was a democratic country run by free people. Maybe we work really closely with Iran and again, another country that has an empire history that has to be taken into account, just folding them into the universe of other Middle Eastern nations is not going to work. Maybe we let them be our point of contact and our friend and ally in the Middle East that runs the region, not runs, but you know what I mean. Maybe that's something else we have to do in other parts of the world. I don't know if the bipolar superpower dynamic, I'm not saying that we wouldn't maintain superpower status, I'm saying though that we probably just couldn't do this all by ourselves in the future.

Bill Walton ([46:29](#)):

Well, you got to be coalition builder, at a certain point, that's the only smart way to play it but we're not being smart. But we are here talking with two very smart people. This has been the Bill Walton Show with Fred Fleitz, with the, I get your acronym exactly right AFPI, America First Policy Institute and I think America First is exactly the way we ought to be thinking. And John Zadronzy, who's an immigration and border guru. And you were serious man with some really good ideas and I hope to God, we can see you back in the next administration, where we can have some grownups in charge, who want to take care of the country and think longer term. Thanks guys.

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Fred Fleitz ([47:23](#)):

Thank you, sir.

Bill Walton ([47:23](#)):

Very interesting conversation. Thank you.

Fred Fleitz ([47:23](#)):

Thank you.

Bill Walton ([47:25](#)):

Well, have you back.

John Zadronzy ([47:25](#)):

Thank you very much.

Bill Walton ([47:26](#)):

And thanks for watching and you can find us on all of the platforms, CPAC Now, For America, YouTube, Rumble. I don't think I said anything about ivermectin tonight. So we'll be okay and I don't think Spotify will ban us either. Anyway, we're on all the platforms and this is definitely been an interesting conversation. I can't wait for a follow up. John, Fred, thank you. 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 the 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.