

Episode 192: “National Security Realities: Threats and Solutions” with Brandon Weichert

Bill Walton ([00:00:01](#)):

I'm beginning to think about my show in terms of themes. In terms of essentials, essential things that you got to take away. And things we can do. And so, to an extent we can kind of develop lines of action as opposed to-

Brandon Weichert ([00:00:13](#)):

Well, I think a key theme would be we need to be thinking the unthinkable more. And I think a key theme is, another cliché, would be to expect the unexpected and they don't.

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

One of my big concerns is we don't have everybody in a National Security establishment fighting for our team.

Brandon Weichert ([00:00:30](#)):

No.

Bill Walton ([00:00:31](#)):

So, that's what I call the enemy within.

Brandon Weichert ([00:00:34](#)):

We also have an entire political class, both parties that are not fighting for our interest. They are fighting for their own interest. Even Ed Royce, the first thing he did after leaving the Hill.

Bill Walton ([00:00:45](#)):

Is it? Yeah.

Brandon Weichert ([00:00:46](#)):

He went and lobbied for a Chinese conglomerate.

Bill Walton ([00:00:49](#)):

Yeah. It's crazy.

Brandon Weichert ([00:00:50](#)):

Now, this was a guy who was very low key and kept his nose clean, didn't have any major scandals for the years he was in office. The first thing he did was he went and started lobbying for these, you know?

Bill Walton ([00:01:01](#)):

Well, that's what Peter Schweiker calls Elite Capture.

Brandon Weichert ([00:01:05](#)):

Peter's a good guy. I'm a big fan of his.

Bill Walton ([00:01:07](#)):

Yeah, and he [inaudible 00:01:08]-

Brandon Weichert ([00:01:08](#)):

We correspond occasionally.

Bill Walton ([00:01:10](#)):

Yeah. He's great. Well, Kenny, are we ready to roll?

Kenny ([00:01:13](#)):

The Bill Walton Show for June 9.

Announcer ([00:01:20](#)):

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 ([00:01:40](#)):

Welcome to the Bill Walton Show. I'm Bill Walton. Almost from the moment President Joe Biden's administration took office, the world has grown a more dangerous place and the pace is accelerating. There's a long list of national security worries that didn't use to be of concern to everyday Americans, but now are, or at least should be. Russia, Ukraine, and now the prospects of nuclear war. China's mounting threat to envelop Taiwan, a world leader in semiconductors and information technology. Collapsing political stability in the Middle East with Iran's nuclear breakout and terrorism in Syria, Iraq, and of course Israel.

Bill Walton ([00:02:22](#)):

Then there's the mostly under reported Chinese and Russian quest to dominate space. And maybe worst of all is the made in America war and fossil fuels, which has driven inflation sky high and made us all dependent on our enemies for our energy. Triggered by our disastrous cut and run from Afghanistan last year, the world's bad actors have been emboldened by America's weakness. Like Thelma and Louise, Joe Biden seems determined to drive us off a cliff.

Bill Walton ([00:02:56](#)):

Well, to figure out what we can do about this is my returning guest and brilliant Brandon Weichert, publisher of the Weichert Report, and author of Winning Space, and the soon-to-be published The Shadow War: Iran's Quest for Supremacy. Brandon, who's been called a brilliant and anxiety-producing scholar has emerged as one of our most well-informed original defense intellectuals since the great Herman Kahn. He tells us what we do not want to hear, but need to know, about the gathering threats to our freedom and prosperity.

Brandon Weichert ([00:03:29](#)):

Thank you.

Bill Walton ([00:03:30](#)):

Brandon. Well, let's start with following up on where we were two months ago. We talked about Ukraine and let's fast forward to today. What's happened in the last two months and where are we now? And what do you think's going to happen next?

Brandon Weichert ([00:03:47](#)):

Well, the war in Ukraine has shifted. The focus was originally Russia had this really kind of Gonzo idea of, "Hey, let's try to take Kiev," the capital and it was a bridge too far. Most military analysts were completely shocked. I wasn't, but most military analysts were completely shocked because it was so nonsensical for Putin to try to push that far, that quickly into Ukraine and it failed.

Brandon Weichert ([00:04:16](#)):

The problem was that the war should have really ended after the successful defense of Kiev. There should have been pressure put on from the United States and its allies on both parties to say, "Hey, look, time to reset. Go back to the way things were pre February 24th," the day the invasion began. But instead the war shifted over to Eastern and Southern Ukraine.

Brandon Weichert ([00:04:36](#)):

Now, Southern Ukraine, the Russians are desperately trying to cut off Ukraine's access to the Black Sea, which is vital for their economy. They need to have some port access. That is up in the air, whether the Russians will be able to achieve their dominance there. But oddly enough, the fighting has also shifted to the one part of the country where the Russians have clear, decisive, geographical, and population advantages, which is the Eastern part.

Bill Walton ([00:05:06](#)):

Wasn't that the original aim? I mean-

Brandon Weichert ([00:05:06](#)):

Well, yeah. I think what he did is he pushed to see how far he could get. And then when got slapped away, he's sort of saying, at least let me takeaway what he's-

Bill Walton ([00:05:16](#)):

Do you think he's surprised that-

Brandon Weichert ([00:05:18](#)):

Yeah, I think he overestimated his capability and underestimated the Ukrainian capability.

Bill Walton ([00:05:22](#)):

Does he have his people behind him?

Brandon Weichert ([00:05:25](#)):

Now, he does. The Russians are-

Bill Walton ([00:05:29](#)):

Because the Rubal is better.

Brandon Weichert ([00:05:30](#)):

Everything is bouncing back for him.

Bill Walton ([00:05:32](#)):

Yeah. I mean, they're doing pretty well.

Brandon Weichert ([00:05:33](#)):

They're doing okay. So, look, the Russians have spent the last 12 years making themselves more self-sufficient, their agricultural sector, their energy sector. These things are, while you can sanction these things, they have become such a robust producer of these essential commodities that they know they're going to have willing buyers on the market beyond the West.

Brandon Weichert ([00:05:57](#)):

And when you remove, particularly their energy sources from the market, that just spikes volatility, which of course as you know, spikes the price for everybody, supply and demand. But the Russians, I think really thought they could take Kiev quickly. And when it didn't work out, the fighting shifted to the East. The problem is the Ukrainians are now overestimating their capability and they think they can push the Russians out of Eastern Ukraine and they are going to give it the old college try.

Brandon Weichert ([00:06:27](#)):

And that is a big problem because that is the one area that he'll not let go. And I think that he will risk a wider war with the West over keeping a foothold in Eastern Ukraine. What should be done now is the West, the United States in particular, needs to use whatever leverage it has to force these two parties to come to a more accommodating stance. Meet at a big beautiful table, as the former President would say and talk it over.

Bill Walton ([00:06:56](#)):

Big beautiful table. Yeah, yeah.

Brandon Weichert ([00:06:58](#)):

Yeah. And talk it over. And the Ukrainians, they're not going to be able to push the Russians out. And the Russians are not going to be able to push into to Central and Western Ukraine.

Bill Walton ([00:07:07](#)):

Well, that's why I'm so dismayed by the Biden administration. It seems to me, if we had some grownups, they would say, "Look, let's wrap this thing up because it's turning out, the sanctions are hurting us more than they're hurting Russia." And you think food prices are high this year, wait till the cost of fertilizer and the scarcity of all that hits. It's going to be more far worse.

Brandon Weichert ([00:07:27](#)):

Well, the fertilizer issues are already bad and getting worse, that's partly because there was a drought in Latin America. And so, that has been negatively impacting agricultural prices across the board, the whole since last six months ago. And so now, you have you add in this Russian issue and now, you have a real problem where not just fertilizer, but in general, the cost of agricultural goods is going to spike for

everybody. And the supply chain issues are going to be exacerbated. It's going to be made worse by all of these different things happening at the same time, and so.

Bill Walton ([00:08:09](#)):

Well, who in the administration should we look to, to help us bring the parties to the big beautiful table?

Brandon Weichert ([00:08:18](#)):

Well-

Bill Walton ([00:08:18](#)):

Because we've got Biden out there saying, "We're going to go all the way to defend, I mean, plucky Ukrainians and all that." But there's some point at which you got to say, "Let's wrap this thing up."

Brandon Weichert ([00:08:29](#)):

So, the problem is that Biden is not in charge. I've said this to you before. Biden has a say in so much as he's yes, the president, but he's got a cadre of people with competing interests and objectives all with their hand on the wheel, which is canceling out whatever positive momentum they might be able to gain. You have people like Ron Klain, who's apparently the Outgoing Chief of Staff now. Ron Klain is one of the most fanatical ideologues in the administration and he's the gatekeeper for President Biden. And Ron Klain is surrounding Biden with hawks on Russia.

Brandon Weichert ([00:09:03](#)):

You have a lot of the defense people, Jake Sullivan, the current Secretary of Defense. The whole defense team basically wants to press Russia harder than even what they're doing now. The problem is what's the end game? How do we end this thing? And nobody's thought this through because I was speaking to somebody who works in the Department of State recently and I brought it up. I said, "Look, the nuclear genie could be let out of the bottle." And they start laughing at me. "Oh, come on. Don't be so weak. This is, come on."

Brandon Weichert ([00:09:37](#)):

And I said, people don't realize that the Russians view this as an existential issue. And they may not be able to convert any gains with conventional military, but that just means that they're going to have to rely more on their unconventional capabilities or their nuclear weapons capabilities. And if you remove whatever conventional capabilities, traditional military capabilities they think that they have, if you remove that from the table, they're not going to surrender, so they're going to do the only thing they can do. And that's escalate in other areas, notably nuclear. And people need to remember the Cuban missile crisis, just how close we were.

Brandon Weichert ([00:10:21](#)):

The same people advising Biden are the same people who were telling Kennedy, "Just push Khrushchev and the Soviets all the way, because they're not going to do the unthinkable." And then you listen to the Kennedy tapes of that crisis, because he recorded the whole conversations he had with LeMay, for instance. And he says, "Well, General, they're going to do something." And he said, "No, because the only thing that they can do, they can't do, which is nuclear war." And Kennedy was like, "Well, that's not a solution because of course, they're going to use whatever they can."

Brandon Weichert ([00:10:52](#)):

And it's the same thing here today in Ukraine, if you push them too far, they're going to risk something wider because they cannot be made to look bad, particularly Putin.

Bill Walton ([00:11:03](#)):

Well, there's a perception that somehow we still maintain our nuclear superiority, but we don't.

Brandon Weichert ([00:11:10](#)):

No, we don't.

Bill Walton ([00:11:12](#)):

And China and Russia have been working a pace to modernize their nuclear capability and we haven't. And the nuclear triad, the B52s, the submarines, the ICBMs. Those are all gathering dust.

Brandon Weichert ([00:11:28](#)):

They're gathering dust and furthermore, the Russians beginning in 2010, thanks to the Obama Administration's new start treaty, allowed for Russia to begin a full-thwarted modernization and expansion, particularly of their tactical nuclear weapons. These are the lower yield nukes that would probably be used in a war over Ukraine. We didn't do that. We didn't, we didn't meet them in the same way. We didn't start modernizing our forces again.

Brandon Weichert ([00:11:57](#)):

China, we actually don't... so, officially, the DOD and the intelligence services say, "We know exactly how many nukes they have in China. They have about 350 to 400." That is the tip of the iceberg. And if you remember last summer, it was civilian satellite imagery that caught all of these new missile silos being built in the Gobi desert. There's also this thing called the Underground Great Wall, which of course is poo-pooed by the people at Georgetown. But I got to tell you, I am convinced that this is something significant. This is basically going back to Mao, China built these very complex, series of tunnels that interconnect the whole countryside with the sea, the coastal area.

Brandon Weichert ([00:12:39](#)):

And since 2009, there have been a group of nuclear warfare experts who've been saying, "We think the Chinese have been stockpiling nuclear weapons in these underground bunkers and we can't see them. We don't have any ability to determine." And they use these advanced rail systems underground to move nuclear weapons around, so we can't track them. Those mobile nuclear underground weapons constitute the Great Underground Wall. And we have no idea how many nukes they actually have.

Brandon Weichert ([00:13:05](#)):

And so, this idea that we have sup supremacy in the nuclear warfare domain, it's not true. We don't, we don't.

Bill Walton ([00:13:12](#)):

Well, tactical nukes are just slightly less lethal than the bombs we dropped in Hiroshima. So, it's not like-

Brandon Weichert ([00:13:21](#)):

No, I mean, these things are designed. I'll tell you how the Russians look at it. And this goes back to VD Sokolovsky, who was in 1962, he was the grid, basically, their equivalent of a joint chief staff. And he came up with a doctrine that Putin has reconstituted, which basically says, "Tactical nuclear weapons are just big pieces of artillery and we will use them to punch holes through the NATO defense perimeter when the war begins as we would use our largest artillery piece or our largest strategic non-nuclear bombs."

Brandon Weichert ([00:13:53](#)):

That's how they view it. And now, this view eroded a little bit after Chernobyl with Gorbachev, but Putin has reconstituted it. And this view of a forward leaning offensive minded nuclear warfare doctrine is something that our intelligence services in my opinion has not fully rectified and has not come up with a counter strategy. This is why in my book, I call for a complete full-throated, if you want say crash program for space-based nuclear.

Bill Walton ([00:14:25](#)):

This is your book on space.

Brandon Weichert ([00:14:25](#)):

Yeah. Space-based nuclear defense system.

Bill Walton ([00:14:28](#)):

This is the Bill Walton Show. And I'm here talking with Brandon Weichert, publisher of the Weichert Report and an author of a couple brilliant books. And we're thinking and talking about the unthinkable, which is nuclear war. And as I said in my intro, that was not in the cards three years ago, two years ago. Now, all of a sudden with a lot of inept handling of national security issues, it's back.

Bill Walton ([00:14:54](#)):

So, listen, I don't want to do politics, but it just does seem like that Joe Biden is just provocatively weak, and really has emboldened the world's bad guys to say, "Now is the time to strike."

Brandon Weichert ([00:15:09](#)):

I think it's important to note that for four years, Mr. Trump, who is supposedly a Russian spy. For four years, we didn't have much to worry about from Mr. Putin in Ukraine. It was April of 2021 when the path to war was really decided upon in Moscow to invade Ukraine. And that was when President Biden did two paradoxical things. President Biden started ramping up his anti-Russian rhetoric and ramping up supplies to Ukraine's forces and really getting provocative with Russia.

Brandon Weichert ([00:15:50](#)):

At the same time, he decided to meet with Putin and last summer signed an agreement that allowed for Russia to start doing their Nord Stream 2 Pipeline, which basically was the fuel for Russia's war machine in terms of the financing. This was a major pipeline connecting Russian natural gas to Germany and the rest of Europe. And for four years, the Trump administration sanctioned that. And almost immediately Mr. Biden removed those sanctions.

Brandon Weichert ([00:16:21](#)):

And there is a straight line, if you're being honest, there is a straight line from that decision and the decision by Mr. Putin to invade. And that was also because I think Mr. Putin thought, "I know Biden. I've dealt with him for many years as Vice-President and then Senator before that as a foreign relations committee." I think Mr. Putin looked at Mr. Biden and said, "This man is weak." This man is, I think, I believe that the Russians believe Mr. Biden is senile.

Brandon Weichert ([00:16:52](#)):

And I think that they look at him very much how we looked at, if you remember for a hot moment the Soviets had Konstantin Chernenko, who was in the '80s. After Andropov passed, it was Chernenko. Chernenko was the sclerotic aging old party Apparatchik, who was this angry guy. Didn't really have any vision for the Soviets, who presided over the ultimate decline that then Gorbachev finalized with Glasnost and Perestroika. I think that Putin looks at Biden as Reagan used to look at Chernenko. And he can be pushed around and sclerotic and senile.

Bill Walton ([00:17:32](#)):

Some of my friends that don't know a lot keep saying to me, "We know there's some chance that Putin has cancer and he's dying and that's going to be our salvation."

Brandon Weichert ([00:17:44](#)):

It's not, it's not. So, in 2018, I wrote a piece. I couldn't get it published anywhere, except this very widely read magazine online called American Thinker. They published it.

Bill Walton ([00:17:58](#)):

Good magazine.

Brandon Weichert ([00:17:59](#)):

Yeah. And this-

Bill Walton ([00:18:01](#)):

That's actually a great place to be published.

Brandon Weichert ([00:18:03](#)):

It is a wonderful place. And mark Galati, who's supposedly this great Russia expert, took me to task about how I was an idiot. Because the article was all about once Putin goes, what comes after and this was in 2018. So, at that time I was saying, "Look, Putin's old and he's outlived the average age for a male in Russia." He's like 55, 57, and he's then going into his 70s. So, he's already outlived his peers. Obviously, he has a lot of money and power, so that makes sense. But at some point, whether it's a bullet to the back of the brain by a rival or it's just natural causes, Putin is going to go. What comes after him? There's not a deep bench in Russia of new up and coming leaders. That's probably-

Bill Walton ([00:18:47](#)):

Is it as bad as the Democrat party?

Brandon Weichert ([00:18:49](#)):

Well, it's very similar, it's very similar.

Bill Walton ([00:18:51](#)):

Really? That's interesting.

Brandon Weichert ([00:18:52](#)):

They don't have a deep bench. And so, they have some people who could believably take over, but could they keep the whole thing together? That's the big question. I don't think they could. And so, my fear scenario in this article that I wrote was that once Putin goes, you could have a situation where the Russian Federation itself collapses. Interestingly, the Foreign Affairs, which is the council of foreign relations magazine, this last week published a deep dive essay calling for, it was called Russia's De-Federation. Saying that in that very soon in our lifetimes, Russia is going to destabilize even more and break up into its component parts, the end of an empire truly.

Brandon Weichert ([00:19:32](#)):

Now, that sounds great to anybody. As I'm concerned about Russian aggression, I don't like it and I don't support Putin in any way. And I don't think what he's doing in Ukraine is right. But I'm concerned with all those nukes and bio and chem weapons, what comes after Putin? If it is a breakdown of the Russian central power, we could be witnessing like a war lord era arise in Russia in which you have loose nukes and loose WMD and terrorism.

Bill Walton ([00:20:02](#)):

So, let's imagine, we're in White House and we're trying to get this thing wrapped up and diffused. What do we do?

Brandon Weichert ([00:20:14](#)):

Well, the first thing you do, we have a lot of leverage with Ukraine. The military of Ukraine would not be able to be doing what it has done without our support.

Bill Walton ([00:20:25](#)):

The thing is I agree. So, let me interrupt, but to set the stage, Ukraine has been a real basket case. It's been the most unsuccessful Soviet satellite state since the whole thing blew up.

Brandon Weichert ([00:20:34](#)):

One of them. I don't know if it's the most, but I think Belarus probably is.

Bill Walton ([00:20:38](#)):

Okay. I'm entitled to hyperbole. Okay, almost [inaudible 00:20:42].

Brandon Weichert ([00:20:42](#)):

But certainly, it is the most corrupt according to foreign policy magazine in 2019.

Bill Walton ([00:20:46](#)):

Okay. Corrupt.

Brandon Weichert ([00:20:46](#)):

The most corrupt European country is Ukraine. Again, I support Ukraine's right to sovereignty. They should not be getting trampled on this way, but they are a basket case. They were until recently a quasi failed state. The current government is trying to clean it up, but it's an uphill battle. And if it were me leading Ukraine, I would say, "We defended our country from an invasion. Let's close this thing up now. Let's make a deal."

Bill Walton ([00:21:14](#)):

Sell the movie rights. He's an actor. He gets to play himself.

Brandon Weichert ([00:21:18](#)):

That's right, that's right. But there are forces inimical to that. Notably, his Foreign Minister, Zelensky's foreign Minister, Kuleba, who's really a hawk on Russia. And again, I get it. Look, I get where he's coming from, but you have to be realistic now. And so, the issue is you go to push Russia out of Eastern Ukraine. They're not going to go quietly, even if they can't be beaten conventionally. They're going to escalate somewhere else. And it's going to be against us, probably because we've been giving the weapons.

Brandon Weichert ([00:21:47](#)):

And at that point, Putin doesn't care. And so, if it were me in the White House, I would use our leverage with Zelensky. And by the way, Zelensky, I think wants to do a deal, but he can't quite make it happen because of political issues at home. But if it were me, if I were in the White House, I would say, "Zelensky, you would not be defending yourselves the way you are without my help. So, I'm telling you, I'm tethering our aid to your willingness and ability to sit at a big beautiful table with the counterparty Mr. Putin."

Brandon Weichert ([00:22:17](#)):

And on the other end, I call Russia and I say, "Hey, look, your economy, yeah, it's rebounded a bit, but let's face it, you still want to do business with us. You still want to do deals with us, so we can talk about removing some of these sanctions in exchange for you sitting at the other end of that table, not trying to poison the counterparty. And you make a deal where we reset the situation to what it was the day before you invaded, which is you get Eastern Ukraine. You get the breakaway Russian-speaking provinces."

Bill Walton ([00:22:45](#)):

Now, is that the day before they invaded? Did they have Eastern Ukraine de facto?

Brandon Weichert ([00:22:49](#)):

They basically did.

Bill Walton ([00:22:49](#)):

De facto?

Brandon Weichert ([00:22:49](#)):

De facto, they basically did. They basically did. And so that's what you want to make you end this thing. Fine. We'll draw a line. We'll divide Ukraine like we did Germany in the Cold War and that will be the dividing line and we'll try to figure out peacefully how we can get along.

Bill Walton ([00:23:04](#)):

The \$40 billion, has that gone over? What's that for?

Brandon Weichert ([00:23:07](#)):

I believe it has. That was the military.

Bill Walton ([00:23:08](#)):

So, where did that go for?

Brandon Weichert ([00:23:10](#)):

That was for, no.

Bill Walton ([00:23:12](#)):

We don't know.

Brandon Weichert ([00:23:12](#)):

Supposedly, it was for-

Bill Walton ([00:23:13](#)):

How much of it ended up in a Swiss bank account?

Brandon Weichert ([00:23:15](#)):

Supposedly, it was mostly non-military, but I don't believe that. You have to understand the way they're moving money around through NATO, it's not always direct and it's done that way purposely, so accountability is harder. Again, we should be supporting Ukraine in terms of defending the free area, but what's Western and Central and maybe parts of Southern. But this idea that they're going to take everything back, people at the Hudson Institute, I love the Hudson Institute, but there's people at the Hudson Institute that are really banging the war drum, "Yeah. You've got to."

Brandon Weichert ([00:23:51](#)):

And I'm like, that's not a healthy position to be taking, especially when we're dealing with Iran and we're dealing with China's rise. We've got to start picking our battles a lot more wisely.

Bill Walton ([00:24:04](#)):

Well, let's hope we get you in the White House. I don't think that's going to happen anytime in the next two and a half years.

Brandon Weichert ([00:24:08](#)):

I don't think that's going to happen anytime soon.

Bill Walton ([00:24:09](#)):

Maybe afterwards. But well, so let's segue. What's China's role been in the whole Russia-Ukraine?

Brandon Weichert ([00:24:17](#)):

Well, it's interesting. China initially was encouraging this as a proof of concept, I think. Xi Jinping, in particular.

Bill Walton ([00:24:27](#)):

Proof of concept for Taiwan. Yeah.

Brandon Weichert ([00:24:30](#)):

And I think the fact that we did really bolster Ukraine and the Ukrainians did a hell of a job, resisting. I mean, they're courageous people. The fact that they did resist as effectively as they did and it has cost Russia. Yes, Russia is getting back okay economically, but it did cost them. Russia is also self-sufficient, agricultural, with food stuff, with energy.

Brandon Weichert ([00:24:56](#)):

China is not. And so, the Chinese regime looked at Ukraine and said, "Maybe this is going to set us back a little bit. Maybe we should not be as vociferous in supporting Russia."

Bill Walton ([00:25:12](#)):

Expand on that point. I don't know all the details, but one of the things, for example, water. Russia has, what, 20% of the world's population and only 5% of it's water.

Brandon Weichert ([00:25:23](#)):

Yeah. Something like that.

Bill Walton ([00:25:24](#)):

And most of that water is highly polluted and undrinkable and unusable. And so, they have a water problem for both for humans and for agriculture.

Brandon Weichert ([00:25:34](#)):

Everybody's going to have a water problem very soon. Everybody will.

Bill Walton ([00:25:37](#)):

Okay. I want to come back to that one. Just so, what are other China's weaknesses in terms of-

Brandon Weichert ([00:25:44](#)):

So whereas Russia is very self-sufficient in ways, very similar to us, maybe in some cases, even better than us in terms of agricultural, China is nothing without their ability to import goods. This is why China is so insistent on their island chain strategy, so that you have the first island chain, second island chain and third island chain. China has been desperately trying to expand.

Bill Walton ([00:26:11](#)):

A map for people. Off the coast of China, we've got the whole island chain starting up at Japan.

Brandon Weichert ([00:26:16](#)):

Japan and Taiwan.

Bill Walton ([00:26:17](#)):

All the way down through Taiwan.

Brandon Weichert ([00:26:19](#)):

Taiwan, down to the Philippines, forgetting the islands.

Bill Walton ([00:26:24](#)):

Okay, so it's the Pacific islands off the coast of China.

Brandon Weichert ([00:26:25](#)):

And then they go out farther until basically, you get to [inaudible 00:26:28], which is right near Hawaii. Now, there are military reasons for why they want to do that to push us back militarily. But also it's because they're very concerned about the offshore control capability of the US Navy, which basically is our ability to block aid and choke off incoming sea-based trade of which China is completely reliant on.

Brandon Weichert ([00:26:54](#)):

And so, this is why, this is the real strategic reason for why Beijing is so insistent on expanding out as well as into the Indian ocean. Because they want to create a shield, a buffer that prevents the US Navy and its allies from being able to effectively blockade goods coming into China. So, when we sanctioned the hell out of Russia, they were able to withstand it. They've gotten hurt, but they were able to withstand it, I think far better than China would be able to.

Brandon Weichert ([00:27:20](#)):

And so, Xi Jinping, especially now with COVID ravaging Shanghai, the economy in China is slowing down. Beijing has to rethink some of its strategic calculus. And so, one of two things will happen, I think. Either this puts Xi in a go for broke mentality where if he doesn't pull the trigger, like now on Taiwan, he maybe he can't later on or this pushes China's leadership and says, "We need to delay. Delay, delay, delay, because we need to make ourselves more self-sufficient like the Russians did. That way we can withstand any blockade or sanction."

Bill Walton ([00:27:59](#)):

Well, Xi's been doing some remarkably dumb things, if you want to...

Brandon Weichert ([00:28:05](#)):

Incredibly, yeah.

Bill Walton ([00:28:07](#)):

... grow an economy. He's taken... you can elaborate. I mean, you have my list of detail.

Brandon Weichert ([00:28:15](#)):

The Zero COVID policy could be his undoing as leader of China. So, that's basically where he is forcibly, I mean, you think our lockdowns are bad. He makes California look like Florida when it comes to lockdowns. Okay? So, literally nailing people into their apartments and letting them die of starvation after weeks of being locked down.

Brandon Weichert ([00:28:35](#)):

Shanghai is their most prosperous city. It was the equivalent of New York City. It was listed by a major consulting firm that does a... and I'm forgetting the name of, I forget. I'm drawing a blank now on the name I listed in my book. Basically, they do a quadrennial review of the 10 most prosperous technology hubs in the world. Shanghai in 2017 was number one over New York and Silicon Valley. Shanghai will not be number one anytime soon in anything because of these Zero COVID policies.

Brandon Weichert ([00:29:05](#)):

And that is having a very negative impact on China's overall economic growth. To say nothing of their declining population, to say nothing of other problems that they're facing as they transition from a production old world manufacturing economy into a high-tech post-industrial society. With they're trying to get a high spending rate versus a high savings rate, like most modern countries have. And that's going to drain and slow down their economy.

Brandon Weichert ([00:29:34](#)):

China now has to worry under Xi Jinping, can they sustain even 3 to 5% GDP growth? And if they can't, what does that translate to for the Chinese communist party's hold on power. And at that point, you could very well have, and you are already seeing this rival factions within the upper echelons of the Chinese communist party forming to challenge Xi Jinping's absolute grip on power. And that could be very dangerous for Xi.

Brandon Weichert ([00:30:03](#)):

However, one other thing, while that is bad for growing an economy, if you are a leader who is intent on a Maoist style war, these Zero COVID policies, war time controls, as the communist party calls them. Wartime control, it's a very interesting term that they use.

Bill Walton ([00:30:24](#)):

This is Bill Walton Show. I'm here with Brandon Weichert, publisher of the Weichert Report. And we're talking about China and it's Zero COVID strategy and the lockdowns and what's really behind it. And continue.

Brandon Weichert ([00:30:37](#)):

Well, if your goal as Xi Jinping is to not just be an economic master of the universe, but to restore China's lost, supposedly lost greatness militarily, putting your people into a psychological framework of war against the world, like he's doing right now, might serve his interest psychologically for prepping his people for the coming conflagration with the West, which could be apocalyptic.

Bill Walton ([00:31:04](#)):

Well, the theories I've heard were one, it's about COVID. I don't believe that. Maybe it is. But the other one was that as Shanghai, the most cosmopolitan city in China, but also has lots of enemies of President Xi and all sorts of forces are working against him. All sorts of connections to the outside world. And so if you wanted to punish them and get the Chinese prepared for a war mentality, prepare for a nuclear war mentality, you would do what they're doing.

Brandon Weichert ([00:31:36](#)):

Yeah, exactly. Well, you're a Wall Street guy, so you know there's a difference between that culture in Wall Street and the culture in DC. I mean, it's a political versus financial, at least it used to be. Now, we have more co-mingling.

Bill Walton ([00:31:47](#)):

Well, now Wall Street. It's hard to tell a difference now.

Brandon Weichert ([00:31:50](#)):

Right. But let's say that for most of your career, it was probably more of a cultural divide between-

Bill Walton ([00:31:55](#)):

And that culture in the '80s was a lot of fun.

Brandon Weichert ([00:31:57](#)):

Yeah, I bet it was.

Bill Walton ([00:31:57](#)):

It had nothing to do with DC.

Brandon Weichert ([00:31:59](#)):

I bet it was. But the point is that in China, it's very similar. You have the more business-oriented people in Shanghai who want to make money, who want to get rich. You have the more political communist leadership of Beijing, which yeah, they want money to prop up the regime and to make sure that the country is the beating heart of the global economy, so you can't remove it.

Brandon Weichert ([00:32:25](#)):

But at the end of the day, they want power. Power is their language, not money. Money is an extension of power, but they want power. So, there is a cultural divide. One of the groups challenging Xi Jinping for power right now is called the Shanghai Gang. And this is led by the president from two presidencies ago in China, Jiang Zimen. And the Shanghai Gang tends to be more technocratic. They're all communists.

Bill Walton ([00:32:48](#)):

Is this the president?

Brandon Weichert ([00:32:49](#)):

He's the former president and he-

Bill Walton ([00:32:50](#)):

Is this the one who held the conference call with a hundred thousand people talking about the... that was a couple of these-

Brandon Weichert ([00:32:56](#)):

No, I think that was someone. I think that was Li Keqiang. I might be wrong about that.

Bill Walton ([00:33:00](#)):

It was Li, it was Li. Yeah, it was Li.

Brandon Weichert ([00:33:02](#)):

So, Li is another guy who's leading another. That's Hu Jintao. So, you have Jiang Zemin, which was the president two presidents ago. He's leading the Shanghai faction against Xi. And then you have Li Keqiang, who's the current deputy basically to Xi, who's part of the former president Hu Jintao's clique known as the Youth Faction or the Youth League Faction and they're also challenging Xi. But the Shanghai cultural divide is critical here, critical to understand this division right now that's driving politics in China and could very well be Xi Jinping's undoing.

Bill Walton ([00:33:40](#)):

Now, recently they supposedly let up on the lockdown.

Brandon Weichert ([00:33:44](#)):

They did. They had to, they had to, it was destroying their country. They didn't have a choice.

Bill Walton ([00:33:47](#)):

So, how realistic is it that China would take a shot at, enveloping is my word, I don't know what the word is, Taiwan. I mean, Taiwan used to be Formosa. It's where the nationalist Chinese went when they lost to Mao. It's now created its own wonderful country, basically, has its own language. It's become, you mentioned Shanghai as the technology hub. I've got to believe that Taiwan is neck and neck with that.

Bill Walton ([00:34:16](#)):

It's a real country. And even though they're close geographically, so was it, Henry V taking on France, 12th, 14th century or something. I don't know which century it was. But it seems a bridge too far. I don't see any way they would actually pull that off.

Brandon Weichert ([00:34:35](#)):

So, that is the opinion of most military analysts, which is-

Bill Walton ([00:34:41](#)):

Well, that's why you're here.

Brandon Weichert ([00:34:41](#)):

Which is that-

Bill Walton ([00:34:42](#)):

I don't want to hear that.

Brandon Weichert ([00:34:43](#)):

Well, that is the opinion of most and I push back on them all the time. The same military analysts who are saying, it's going to at least be not until 2027, that China would have the capability. Those are the same people, who are making fun of me and attacking me online saying, "Your claim that Putin's going

to invade in February is insane." And then it happened. Then they were also yelling at me saying, "Your claim that he's going to hit Kiev before he tries to solidify Eastern Ukraine is insane." That's exactly what he tried to do.

Brandon Weichert ([00:35:13](#)):

And so, history tells us when you're dealing with fascistic dictators, which Putin and Xi are, they are fascists at heart. I know that Xi is technically a communist, but they resemble in China far more fascist.

Bill Walton ([00:35:28](#)):

Or simply totalitarian.

Brandon Weichert ([00:35:29](#)):

Totalitarian. When you're dealing with those kinds of dictators, overreach is in their game. That is how they operate. They get very comfortable at home and they think their power is secure, so they start pushing, pushing, pushing outward. And sometimes, they go too far. And so, I think Xi Jinping has developed, he is developing amphibious capabilities to invade Taiwan.

Brandon Weichert ([00:35:50](#)):

But what nobody talks about is the so-called, what is it, the gray hall capability. And that is the ability to convert civilian transport ships into military amphibious assault vehicles. And they have a lot of those capabilities in China.

Bill Walton ([00:36:08](#)):

This is a reverse dunker.

Brandon Weichert ([00:36:09](#)):

It's a reverse dunker. Yeah, yeah, you're right. Actually, it was very similar to the Nazi proposed invasion of Britain, which they would have had to convert some of the civilian ships to go move the troops in. Now, I watched an interesting documentary about an alternative what if they had invaded Britain and what they found was that Britain's civil military defense was so good at the Homeland, the Nazis would have been smashed at the beaches, at the cliffs of Dover if they tried this, because it was, they didn't have the capability yet.

Brandon Weichert ([00:36:42](#)):

It could be that China pulls the trigger soon and maybe they aren't as effective as they think they will be. My concern is unlike Britain in World War II, Taiwan, while they are developing very stringent defensive capabilities, Taiwan's military by and large has a lot of corruption issues. My concern is it's a Potemkin force that it looks very strong and bristling on the outside, but once you push it a little bit, it might collapse.

Brandon Weichert ([00:37:18](#)):

And ultimately, I'll never forget I was here in 2015. When I lived here, I went to an event up the road here and there was a retiring Taiwanese military leader. He had a very interesting speech. And afterward I asked him, I said, "Sir, it sounds like your whole strategy though rests on the Yanks coming in to save the day." And he said, "Well, absolutely. We could hold out for a little bit, but ultimately we would need

the Americans." I said, "Well, what do you do when the Americans don't show up?" He said, "Well, they have to show up."

Brandon Weichert ([00:37:48](#)):

I said "Why?" And he said, "Because if you don't, then we lose." I said, "Well, yes, but politically, why do you think it would be viable for an American president to risk a World War with China to protect little Taiwan?" He didn't have an answer. He said, "Well, let's just hope." I said, "That seems to be the general consensus is let's just hope." But I don't rest my life on hope, I mean, that's important, but my concern is that Taiwan, their whole strategy rests on us, ultimately coming in over the horizon.

Bill Walton ([00:38:21](#)):

What's the so-called Quad about?

Brandon Weichert ([00:38:23](#)):

The Quad, people say it's like NATO. It's not really like NATO. It's our attempt to build an Alliance of three of the biggest counterweights regionally to China's growing power. That's India, that's Japan, that's Australia, and then there's us. That's four powers, the Quad.

Brandon Weichert ([00:38:45](#)):

The problem is the Biden administration is on a bang-up job of alienating India for various reasons. Namely, because they do business with Russia, but you can't blame them for doing business with Russia. They've always done business with Russia going back to the 1947 because of their history as a colonial entity.

Bill Walton ([00:39:06](#)):

Well, for a long time, India was really a captive of the Soviet State. Wasn't Naru, basically Soviet Style leader.

Brandon Weichert ([00:39:13](#)):

Yeah. And so, they have a lot of connections with the Russian military. They have astronauts, the gaganauts, Indian astronauts, train in Russia. They train on Russian equipment. They use Russian equipment. So, this idea that Biden had where we're going to punish India, sanction them and threaten them if they do continued business with Russia. At the same time, we're begging them to stick their necks out and join us in this anti-China Alliance of the Quad. Even though it's technically not an anti-China Alliance, is really silly to me.

Brandon Weichert ([00:39:45](#)):

It's yet, again, a paradoxical idiotic move by the current administration. No strategic thought. Very similar to how they goaded Russia at the same time, they were trying to allow Russia to do the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, which ultimately led to the invasion of Ukraine.

Bill Walton ([00:40:01](#)):

Well, the Biden administration is afraid of China.

Brandon Weichert ([00:40:04](#)):

They're afraid of everybody, it seems. They're afraid of FARC in Columbia. I mean, they beat their chest at Russia because it's easy to do because Russia's not integrated into the world economy the way China is. And let's face it, the Russian elite have not spent as much money buying our elite as China has.

Bill Walton ([00:40:23](#)):

There are a lot of places I want to take this, but let's go the economic uncoupling route. I mean, it looks like Xi is now trying to become somewhat more self-sufficient, trying to shut down some of his industries that might depend more on the West. But then we depend mightily on Russia or I'm sorry, on China. And Rosemary Gibson on, and she's talked a couple times about our dependence on China and to a lesser extent, India for all of our pharmaceuticals. How do you uncouple that? It's going to take us decades if we wanted to get to be self-sufficient in this.

Brandon Weichert ([00:41:01](#)):

Well, this was why the Trump administration stated policy was the right one, which is we need to start on-shoring. And we're now paying through the nose as citizens because of inflation, because of all the knock on effects from the shutdowns of COVID and the supply chain disruptions. I wrote an article that got me a lot of flack from a lot of the Trump people. I wrote an article in American Greatness when COVID hit saying, "This is our opportunity to really reset the conversation and to fully embrace the decoupling agenda."

Brandon Weichert ([00:41:36](#)):

You couldn't do it before. COVID because there's a lot of interest. It's very hard. But we knew going into COVID shutdowns that we were going to end up paying the price, both literally and metaphorically at some point, whether it was immediately or two years thereafter because of the shutdown's disrupting global supply chains. So, why not use that as an excuse to reset the American economy and force those companies to come home or be left out in the cold.

Brandon Weichert ([00:42:02](#)):

We didn't do that. And you still have this heavy dependence on China, because it's just, it's easy. It's easy to keep those conduits open without realizing that in the longer term, they're going to have us by the cojones. You could have your rival by cojones and the hearts and minds will follow. And so, until our political elite force the business elite to start diversifying their supply chains outside of China, if not on-shoring then nearshoring. Putting them in countries that are closer to home, that we have more influence over like Mexico, we're going to keep having these problems.

Brandon Weichert ([00:42:48](#)):

It's very interesting. The head of the World Health Organization, at the very start of COVID, Tedros, who is in the back pocket of China. They bought and paid for his whole career, basically, coming out of Ethiopia when he was a politician there. He flew to China in January of 2020 and was basically, everybody assumed. This was all the talk in the media that he was going to force Xi to come out and publicly declare there is a pandemic and we need World Health assistance to basically fight the pandemic and stop the spread.

Brandon Weichert ([00:43:22](#)):

Well, when he flew to Beijing, he had a four-hour screaming match, basically with Xi. That's the rumor. And afterward, he came out and said, while we were concerned about COVID, we believe China is

managing it better than anybody. And the reason I think he said that was not only because China had bought and paid for him, politically.

Brandon Weichert ([00:43:40](#)):

But I think it's because Xi probably said at some point in that screening match, "Listen, if you go out and you humiliate me. And you say this thing is a pandemic on my own territory, I'm going to cut off the world access to our antibiotic production and we're going to screw everything up for you guys." And I think that's what happened. I think that's why Tedros held off declaring it a pandemic earlier.

Bill Walton ([00:44:01](#)):

Well, about 90, 95% of our antibiotics are produced in China. Almost nobody knows that.

Brandon Weichert ([00:44:06](#)):

Right. Well, I knew that, but yes.

Bill Walton ([00:44:08](#)):

Well-

Brandon Weichert ([00:44:10](#)):

I'm a nerd like that, though.

Bill Walton ([00:44:11](#)):

Well, that's the reason you're here. We're here to-

Brandon Weichert ([00:44:14](#)):

My readers know that, too...

Bill Walton ([00:44:15](#)):

Your readers know that.

Brandon Weichert ([00:44:16](#)):

... because I've been telling you this.

Bill Walton ([00:44:17](#)):

Well, I'm beginning to know it, but it's yeah, just as somebody that's run a company and been on this. It's to uncouple now just would require a massive amount of will, to believe we've got to do that.

Brandon Weichert ([00:44:31](#)):

Well, it's the same thing with investing in space. People push back on me. "It's so expensive." I say, "Yes, upfront, it's an upfront expense, but the back end, you're going to be getting more money off of that." Because in terms of space, the development of space resources in situ would allow for them, it's a minimum of a trillion dollar economy. It's the same thing with decoupling from China.

Brandon Weichert ([00:44:49](#)):

Yes, it's costly upfront, but ultimately in the long term, you're rehabilitating American manufacturing. You're creating a whole new set of opportunities for American workers that don't exist right now. In the long run, you're creating opportunity and ultimately greater growth potential, but it has to be long term. And as you know, most of our corporations and corporate people, they're trained in that agency theory of business management, which is bottom line, short term, quarterly report thinking.

Brandon Weichert ([00:45:20](#)):

Same thing with our politicians, it's every two and four year election cycles. We are a short-term people in a long-term world. And that is a big problem for us because the Chinese is the exact opposite. They are long-term thinkers. They don't care. They don't have to answer to shareholders and voters.

Bill Walton ([00:45:37](#)):

Yeah. I want to turn to Iran.

Brandon Weichert ([00:45:41](#)):

Yeah, let's do that.

Bill Walton ([00:45:42](#)):

Let's do all the horribles.

Brandon Weichert ([00:45:43](#)):

Let's do all the horribles, yeah.

Bill Walton ([00:45:44](#)):

We've done Russia. We've done China.

Brandon Weichert ([00:45:45](#)):

We can do North Korea, too, if you want.

Bill Walton ([00:45:47](#)):

I want to do scarce water as well, but I don't know. Quickly, let's take one minute here. You're saying everybody is about to run out of water at some point?

Brandon Weichert ([00:45:56](#)):

Well, the potable water is about to become a rare commodity in the next 10 years, I think.

Bill Walton ([00:46:01](#)):

Why?

Brandon Weichert ([00:46:02](#)):

Just because of how we've been draining potable water sources and how we irrigate and how we do not use water wisely. We take it for granted. I live in Florida. The aquifers in Florida are being drained and once they are gone, how do we replace them? It takes tens of thousands of years to get those aquifers

replaced. This is in the United States. When I lived in Chicago, I went to school in Chicago. I remember the news was talking about this all the time, local news.

Brandon Weichert ([00:46:33](#)):

The five West Coast states led by California were begging to build a water pipeline out to the West Coast to drain some of that water from Lake Michigan, because they didn't have access to enough water. The Canadian stepped in and said, "Well, we're a treaty member. We draw from that water source. You're not diverting that water supply for states far removed from the great lakes, no way." And so, they stopped it from happening. Had they done that where we'd be living in a very different world right now, the West Coast states wouldn't be having these drought problems.

Brandon Weichert ([00:47:06](#)):

But at the same time, we'd be dealing with all new problems from losing that water supply or part of it unintended from the great lakes. So you see in America, you have these issues with drought and with declining water supply. In Eurasia, Europe and Asia, as well as Africa and the Middle East, you have this shaping out to be water wars, possibly erupting.

Bill Walton ([00:47:29](#)):

This seems like an investment opportunity.

Brandon Weichert ([00:47:32](#)):

Well, yeah, yeah.

Bill Walton ([00:47:33](#)):

It seems like we have desalination, hauling icebergs from Antarctica. Is that what we're talking about?

Brandon Weichert ([00:47:40](#)):

So, this was something in 2017, a gentleman from California, who's very similar to you in terms of his background, flew me out to talk to some young upstart...

Bill Walton ([00:47:49](#)):

Yeah, yeah, seems to me.

Brandon Weichert ([00:47:50](#)):

... coming out of Berkeley. They didn't like me because of my politics, but this guy was trying to-

Bill Walton ([00:48:01](#)):

You're in a safe space.

Brandon Weichert ([00:48:01](#)):

Yes, yes. Good to know. But this guy was trying to get California to invest in his desalination desalination technology and he couldn't get anyone to do it. At that time, they were saying it's too expensive to do this. And again, this is one of those things where now we're looking at this. So, we

should be looking at this medium and long term saying, "There's going to be a run on water, clean potable water. And we had better start."

Brandon Weichert ([00:48:22](#)):

And we have this technological innovation capability here, still we're not using it to our full effect. We should be getting investors lined up to invest in developing these technologies. Now, they say it's too costly to do, requires too much energy right now because it's in its rudimentary stage. But the more you develop something, the cheaper it becomes, the more efficient it becomes.

Bill Walton ([00:48:45](#)):

So, we're focused on absolutely the wrong environmental issue?

Brandon Weichert ([00:48:48](#)):

Oh, yeah.

Bill Walton ([00:48:49](#)):

There is an environmental issue, but it's not 1 degree Centigrade temperature.

Brandon Weichert ([00:48:54](#)):

Well, that's very easily fixed, too, by the way that. This whole thing about emissions, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, her big thing was the Green New deal. And when you listen to her-

Bill Walton ([00:49:06](#)):

She doesn't know anything.

Brandon Weichert ([00:49:06](#)):

Wait, when you listen to her and well, her backers is the thing. When you listen to her backers, their whole thing is they want to curb human emissions. Well, we can't do that without curbing modern society. And who wants to lose modern society? AOC would be the worst impacted by that. She's driving around in a Tesla for God's sakes.

Brandon Weichert ([00:49:24](#)):

So, the solution is to create alternative forms of energy like nuclear, which she won't support. Fission and fusion, research and development, at least. The solution is to invest in hydropower. The solution is to invest in geothermal power. The solution is to invest in carbon capture. She would not support. I remember this when I worked on Capitol Hill, her group would not support carbon capture, which is we can do it now. It's a great technology. We should be investing in these things.

Brandon Weichert ([00:49:54](#)):

There's a girl in Oregon who developed a bacteria that eats pollution. These are things that we should be throwing a lot of taxpayer dollars at and we don't. What do we do? We spend it on solar panels that China could easily mass produce for far cheaper and destroy our investment. But even when it comes to the emissions issue, there are solutions in the free market and the private sector that aren't being done because the political people don't want to support nuclear or desalinization or whatever. And these are the things we should be talking about.

Bill Walton ([00:50:26](#)):

We seem to be longing for that good old 14th Century.

Brandon Weichert ([00:50:29](#)):

Well, for us, not for them.

Bill Walton ([00:50:31](#)):

Not for them. Yeah. Yeah. Hey, let's do, let's get to Iran. That's be the last segment here, because it's gone under reported right now because of all the other things going in the world, what's happening with Iran.

Brandon Weichert ([00:50:45](#)):

So, this is the basis of my next book, which is coming out October of this year, October 18th. It's available for pre-order now.

Bill Walton ([00:50:52](#)):

How can we pre-order? Amazon?

Brandon Weichert ([00:50:54](#)):

Any online, Barnes & Nable, Amazon and we'll have it-

Bill Walton ([00:50:58](#)):

It's called A Shadow War: Iran's Quest for Supremacy.

Brandon Weichert ([00:51:02](#)):

And this was born out of my first book, Winning Space. If you remember, I had a chapter on Iran space capability and how it's closely related to their ballistic missile nuclear weapons program. Well, our friend, Al Regnery, who's my publisher. I said, "Al, I want to do a second book. I've got reams of research that I couldn't use for one chapter in the first book. I want to do a whole book about Iran." And so, he said, "Go for it." And I did.

Brandon Weichert ([00:51:27](#)):

And basically, how I'm looking at Iran is it is the stalking horse of crises, of geopolitical crises. We keep saying, "We're done with the Middle East," like Al Pacino in Godfather III, "Just when I think we're out, they keep pulling me back in." The solution that, well, it's a non solution that President Biden and the Democrats have been clinging onto since Jimmy Carter is, "Give the Islamist of Iran legitimacy. Give them access to the world trading system. Make them a normal country."

Bill Walton ([00:52:04](#)):

Didn't we try that with China?

Brandon Weichert ([00:52:05](#)):

Exactly. Exactly. That's the idea. Replicate the success in China with Iran. Let them have nukes. Who cares? Don't treat them like a pariah and they won't act like a pariah." This is very childish thinking. And

so, they don't take into account the fact that there are other people in the region who view an Iranian bomb as a nightmare, particularly that regime. You have the Saudis, the leading the Sunni era world.

Brandon Weichert ([00:52:31](#)):

Remember, Iran is a predominantly ethnic Persian Shiite Muslim religious country in a predominantly ethnic Arab Sunni Muslim Middle East. So, automatically you have this deep historical religious and ethnic resentment. Saudi Arabia and the Sunni Arabs do not have nuclear weapons. We're going to let Iran get nukes and we think that the Saudis are not going to try to get nukes on their own. This is insane. Then the Israelis are there as well. And it's a predominantly Jewish democracy, pro-Western friendly to America, raging-

Bill Walton ([00:53:10](#)):

Technology hub.

Brandon Weichert ([00:53:12](#)):

Technological super hub in Israel. Great country, wonderful people. We've supported them for decades. They are hated by the Iranian regime, hated. And they have the bomb in Israel. So, the Obama administration and now, his former Vice-President and now, our current President, sadly. Mr. Biden has carried this idea as well, which is basically, "Well, Israel has the bomb and it's not fair that they have the bomb only because it's highly destabilizing. Therefore, if you let their great rivals in Iran have it, it will create a stabilizing force. And it will force those two to constantly be balancing and competing against one each one another."

Brandon Weichert ([00:53:49](#)):

And like the Cold War with the Soviet Union and the United States, it will create a stable Middle East far more so than we ever could create on our own. What they don't realize is there's a third party first of all, which is the Saudis. And they're not going to take kindly to either their Israeli neighbors or their Iranian neighbors having nukes and them not having nukes. So, there's that, there's a chance for a very real destabilizing nuclear weapons race in the Middle East, which is the last place you want to have a nuclear weapons race. The Saudi regime is very weak and if it were to be overthrown after they get nukes, the ones that would replace them would be another Islamist group, an Al-Qaeda type.

Bill Walton ([00:54:27](#)):

Does the treaty slow, stop, help hinder the Iraq or the Iran-

Brandon Weichert ([00:54:33](#)):

You're talking about the joint comprehensive plan of action, the nuclear deal that Obama did? Is that?

Bill Walton ([00:54:37](#)):

Yes.

Brandon Weichert ([00:54:38](#)):

Yeah. So, the Obama people, now the Biden people will tell you that this actually hindered their ability to get nuclear weapons. And that when President Trump in 2018 pulled us out of that deal, it sped up Iran's nuclear weapons development. Well, that's completely false. What we know, what they won't tell

you, is that Iran never stopped developing and stockpiling the bomb. In fact, technically speaking, I would argue they already have the bomb. It's a question of how many and how reliable it is? And do they have a delivery system that's reliable?

Brandon Weichert ([00:55:13](#)):

And so what Trump did, which was brilliant by the way, what Trump did, this is we're in a safe space here, I can say that. What Trump did was he imposed harsh economic sanctions, which drained Iranian reserves and cut off their supply of energy. They can't sell their energies to much of the rest of the world, which really hamstrung their economy. At a time when the people of Iran were tired of the regime and they started protesting and then he coupled that with the Jared Kushner-Mike Pompeo approach of the Abraham Accords, which was to bring Israel and the Sunni Arab states closer together than they ever have been. And that would form a natural regional blockade to Iran's growing power.

Brandon Weichert ([00:56:00](#)):

Iran, which is being buttressed and supported by China and Russia. And that one-two punch of sanctioning Iran's economy, preventing any shipment of any material that could be used to help grow their nuclear weapons capability, coupled with the Abraham accord. What that did, was it allowed for us to take a step back from the region without losing the region, empower our natural allies, Israel and the Sunni Arabs and also, strangulate both the Iranian economy, which threatened the Iranian regime stability at home, and then also slowed down any ability for Europe or other countries to give nuclear assistance to Iran.

Brandon Weichert ([00:56:42](#)):

And what the treaty does now, what the Obama era nuke deal does is it removes the sanctions. It allows Iran to get all of these hundreds of millions of dollars through trade and giveaways that we're giving to them in the form of IOUs from the Shah days. And then also, it allows Iran to be integrated into the world trading system, just as we did with China in the '70s and we all know how that turned out. And with Iran's massive supply of fossil fuels, you think it's bad what happened with Russia, how we gave them all that capability to do trade with Europe, for energy, which then allowed them to invade Ukraine? The same thing is going to happen to Iran. The same thing.

Brandon Weichert ([00:57:23](#)):

If we integrate them into the world system, if we make them a normal country led by Mad Mullahs, you're talking about expediting regional and possibly nuclear world war in the Middle East, not negating it. It's the exact opposite of what they say.

Bill Walton ([00:57:41](#)):

We've got to wrap it up for today. But I made a point at the beginning of the show with Brandon Weichert, that he's been called a brilliant and anxiety-inducing scholar. He tells us what we do not want to hear but need to know. And I think we've absolutely proved that today. Well, we're going to get together again.

Brandon Weichert ([00:58:05](#)):

Sure.

Bill Walton ([00:58:05](#)):

I want to come up with some lines of action when we get a real president and a real administration, what things we can do if we haven't.

Brandon Weichert ([00:58:14](#)):

And the book will have solutions.

Bill Walton ([00:58:15](#)):

The book will have solutions.

Brandon Weichert ([00:58:16](#)):

The books are not just anxiety-inducing. It's not just fear scenarios. It's also solutions.

Bill Walton ([00:58:20](#)):

Okay. And you also have solutions in winning space.

Brandon Weichert ([00:58:22](#)):

Absolutely.

Bill Walton ([00:58:23](#)):

So, they're both filled with solutions.

Brandon Weichert ([00:58:24](#)):

Yes. And my third book hopefully will also. All right. Great.

Bill Walton ([00:58:30](#)):

Anyway, this is the Bill Walton Show and you can find Brandon Weichert at the [weichertreport.com](http://weichertreport.com). And it's a very, very comprehensive view of National Security and all sorts of interesting things. We can only touch on today.

Brandon Weichert ([00:58:45](#)):

I also publish at the Washington Times, Asia Times and American Greatness as well.

Bill Walton ([00:58:48](#)):

Great. And Bill Walton Show, you can find [billwalton.com](http://billwalton.com) on YouTube, Rumble, all the major podcast platform, Apple, Spotify, et cetera. And I hope you enjoyed this and we'll come back to listen in for some more. So, anyway, thanks for this. And thanks for you.

Bill Walton ([00:59:05](#)):

Is there anything we should have talked about we didn't?

Brandon Weichert ([00:59:08](#)):

Well, if you want to talk about North Korea, that was the only one we didn't hit. But basically, Trump was right on North Korea, and Biden is wrong and because Biden is wrong, we are possibly risking a conflict with North Korea because Biden won't talk to Kim Jong-un.

Bill Walton ([00:59:28](#)):

And what's he doing to be provocative? What's happening?

Brandon Weichert ([00:59:30](#)):

Well, Kim Jong-un is now popping off nuclear missile tests like their firecrackers on the 4th of July. Whereas Trump famously got him to stop. Now, he didn't get Kim to stop developing nukes, but he got Kim to stop being provocative. That was key. And he doesn't get credit for that.

Brandon Weichert ([00:59:50](#)):

And had he gotten a second term, I really believe Iran would have renegotiated in good faith because they were going to get slammed. And I think North Korea, I think there would've been a new relationship with North Korea that would have been wonderful for us. And very bad for China. But now, China has got their claws again in Kim and he is risking war. And it would be a highly destructive war. It's the last thing our global economy needs.

Bill Walton ([01:00:21](#)):

Who would he shoot fire missile at?

Brandon Weichert ([01:00:24](#)):

Well probably, well, the missiles, it could be either Japan or South Korea, and/or South Korea. Invasion though, if he were to really go far-

Bill Walton ([01:00:32](#)):

South Korea?

Brandon Weichert ([01:00:33](#)):

Would be absolutely. Yeah.

Bill Walton ([01:00:36](#)):

Yeah. I don't follow that, but yeah, South Korea is almost strategically as important as Taiwan.

Brandon Weichert ([01:00:44](#)):

It can be. Yeah. It could be. Yeah. Yeah. I would say South Korea has a problem and some of their political establishment is far friendlier to China than I like. But the current new president is very good in South Korea. The previous president was not pro-American. It was very dangerous now.

Brandon Weichert ([01:01:06](#)):

Now, yeah. It's honestly, it is really too bad we couldn't mature the Trump-Kim relationship and move it along because it would have been really interesting to see if we could at least neutralize Kim as an overt enemy of America. And maybe flip him into a cauldron to use against China the way China uses him against us.

Bill Walton ([01:01:31](#)):

Well, it seemed like he liked Trump.

Brandon Weichert ([01:01:32](#)):

He did. Well, because he likes celebrity. Kim was a voracious consumer not only of food, but of celebrity, American pop culture. Remember, he was very close with Dennis Rodman. He was a big basketball fan. You know what though, that was brilliant, that was brilliant. And I never knew why we weren't using that to greater effect. American celebrity. It's a pain in the neck when you're dealing with them in terms of liberals at home, but it can be used for very good purposes, soft power wise if we use it smartly.

Bill Walton ([01:02:07](#)):

I hope you enjoyed the conversation. Want more? Click the subscribe button or head over to [thebillwaltonshow.com](http://thebillwaltonshow.com) to choose from over a hundred episodes. You can also learn more about our guests 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.