

Episode 197: “How We Can Rein in the Power of the Federal Government” with Mark Meckler.

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

Yeah. Let's talk about China, because I'm... Frank Gaffney's got me on a show every week now talking mainly about...

Mark Meckler ([00:10](#)):

I think they're-

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

... the intersection between big American corporations, Wall Street, China.

Mark Meckler ([00:17](#)):

Yeah. It's really bad.

Bill Walton ([00:19](#)):

Enemy within.

Mark Meckler ([00:20](#)):

Yeah. It's-

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

They are.

Mark Meckler ([00:21](#)):

This is the greatest political existential threat to America in all of American history. And we've never seen anything like it. We've never had another country inside of the US like this.

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

Well, that's exactly the point I made. He had me on a webinar last week and that was exactly my point. I said, this is not the Cold War with Soviet Union where they were sitting over there with their arsenal of nukes and we've got ours, and we're not really interconnected. Now they've got us completely interconnected with manufacturing.

Mark Meckler ([00:54](#)):

Yes.

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

And then they've also got us interconnected with elite capture.

Mark Meckler ([00:58](#)):

Yeah, and they're inside all of our institutions.

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

Every single one.

Mark Meckler ([01:01](#)):

All of our major institutions. Right.

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

Every single one, so.

Mark Meckler ([01:03](#)):

Yeah, it's incredibly dangerous. I think also, I don't know if you want to go into it, I think the geopolitical situation in Europe is fascinating right now.

Bill Walton ([01:11](#)):

Yeah, let's talk about that.

Mark Meckler ([01:11](#)):

Never seen anything like that in our lifetimes. I think Ukraine is very nuanced.

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

I'm really just skeptical of what's going on there.

Mark Meckler ([01:19](#)):

And I-

Bill Walton ([01:20](#)):

And I have a friend who was in Russia and Ukraine for over a decade, so he knows-

Mark Meckler ([01:26](#)):

Yeah. See, and I have a kind of an emotional connection Ukraine; both sides of my family, Jewish Ukrainian from Odessa.

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

Well, sure. Then-

Mark Meckler ([01:33](#)):

So, there's that feeling, the thing that... and I'm probably more pro Ukrainian, but I hate the idea that we're going to sacrifice the American economy for Ukraine. That, I struggle. I don't get that.

Bill Walton ([01:47](#)):

Well, they're sacrificing the European economy.

Mark Meckler ([01:50](#)):

Right. And we get American politicians on both sides of the aisle saying that Ukraine is the most important thing, period. Well, no. How about feeding the American people? How about making sure-

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

People will fly Ukraine flags but won't fly American flags.

Mark Meckler ([02:04](#)):

It's incredible. We should probably be having this discussion on camera.

Bill Walton ([02:06](#)):

We should be talking right now.

Kenny Reff ([02:08](#)):

Bill Walton Show for July 21.

Intro ([02:15](#)):

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 ([02:35](#)):

Welcome to The Bill Walton Show. I'm Bill Walton. As we all know, Washington DC today enjoys almost unchecked power. And for the most part, this power is in the hands of people who respect neither our institutions, our citizens, nor especially our founding document, the Constitution of the United States. The genius of the founders and the genius of the Constitution is it provides guardrails and protections against concentration of power aggregating in a few hands, which we know is the source of tyranny throughout the world and throughout history. But in the past century in America, the Constitution, as drafted and ratified, has been either simply ignored or, as my friend Mark Meckler puts it, creatively lawyered by the Supreme Court rulings, which expanded federal power. The problem of restoring the federal government to its proper limited place is huge, and some of us would say almost intractable.

Yet, entering the fray with a big idea is Mark, my friend. He founded the Convention of the States, which calls for using Article V of the Constitution to rein in the federal government's power. As most of you know, Mark also co-founded the Tea Party Patriots and was interim CEO of the social media app Parler, and has been involved in the social media wars, within the trenches firsthand leadership experience. So Mark, welcome back.

Mark Meckler ([04:13](#)):

It's great to be with you. A lot of big things to talk about.

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

Lot of big things. And I think you and I talked beforehand. We've also got, we're maybe curious about China and the Ukraine.

Mark Meckler ([04:21](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Geopolitics more interesting today, more complicated today than ever before in my lifetime, for sure.

Bill Walton ([04:27](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. So, Article V, Constitution. Give us the primer.

Mark Meckler ([04:34](#)):

So, Article V of the Constitution contains two clauses. It's the ways that we can amend our Constitution. The first clause is how we've always done it; 27 amendments, two thirds of each House of Congress proposes an amendment. Once they agree on that, that goes to the states for ratification. It takes 34 states to ratify. The second clause gets introduced to the Constitution literally two days before the end of Convention in 1787. Convention's almost over. Colonel George Mason stands and he says, "We have a problem. We drafted a document that gives Congress the power to propose amendments, but we didn't give that power to the people acting through the states." And then he asked the question, "Are we so naive that we believe that a federal government that becomes a tyranny would ever propose amendments to restrain its own tyranny?" Now, I've asked that question all over the country. People usually laugh because human nature, humans don't restrain their own tyranny.

And so he proposes that we give this power to the states. And what happens at conventions is really unique. If you've ever read Madison's Notes, everything is contentious at convention. But on this issue, Madison's Notes say *nin com*. Those are short for two Latin words; no comment. No debate, no discussion, not one objection to Mason's suggestion that we give the states this power. And in fact, unanimously inserted to give the states the power to call a convention when two thirds of states agree, propose amendments, and then send those amendments out to the states for ratification by three quarters of states. So, that's the project I'm working on, is to get the states to do that.

Bill Walton ([06:04](#)):

So, step one is to get enough state legislatures together to say, "We'd like to call a convention to revisit the Constitution." How many states need to do that?

Mark Meckler ([06:17](#)):

34 states. That's two thirds of states right now.

Bill Walton ([06:19](#)):

And how many do we have so far?

Mark Meckler ([06:20](#)):

19 so far.

Bill Walton ([06:21](#)):

And what was the kind of debate they had in those legislatures? You've been at this for how long?

Mark Meckler ([06:25](#)):

Nine years.

Bill Walton ([06:26](#)):

Nine years. Okay.

Mark Meckler ([06:27](#)):

Yeah. So generally speaking, there's one objection and one objection only. Well, first I would say on balance, almost all the Democrats in the legislatures oppose it.

Bill Walton ([06:38](#)):

Oppose?

Mark Meckler ([06:39](#)):

Oppose it. And it's really, it's not on any basis of reason. It's very tribal. I think it's because, fair enough, I'm a conservative, I'm a known conservative. Most of the people who support it are known conservatives, so they object on those grounds, primarily. The only substantive objection that's made, and it's made by Democrats and a few Republicans at the fringe, is that there could be potentially runaway, what they call a runaway convention. The idea is you gather in convention. We've proposed a convention for three subject matters; fiscal restraint on the federal government, scope and power jurisdiction restraints on the federal government, and term limits on the federal government, including the deep state. So, they say if you get it in convention, it could run away and they could deal with anything. That's not true, but that's the argument.

Bill Walton ([07:22](#)):

Well, there's debates about whether you can even limit the scope of that convention. I mean, you say you've got three things here, but it seems like it also could get opened up to anything anybody wants to throw on the table.

Mark Meckler ([07:34](#)):

I think that it's fair to say there are debates. I would say they're not reason debates. And I hate to be so harsh to my opponents-

Bill Walton ([07:41](#)):

Well, welcome to America. Welcome to politics.

Mark Meckler ([07:43](#)):

Yeah. Well, and here's what I mean by that. And I think if you consider yourself a conservative or a libertarian, one of the things that we pride ourselves on is the use of reason in an argument. And reason requires reference to history and logic. If you look at the history and the logic surrounding the idea of a convention of states, we've had 41 conventions of states in American history. That includes the 1787 Convention that's never-

Bill Walton ([08:05](#)):

But these are conventions of states to amend their own constitutions.

Mark Meckler ([08:09](#)):

They're actually what would be called interstate conventions. These are times that the states have gotten together, not under Article V but to do other things as states. They commission delegates, they

send them to convention. They tell them what they may and may not do. There's never been a runaway convention in American history.

Bill Walton ([08:25](#)):

So, the 19 states that have approved it, are they all red states?

Mark Meckler ([08:29](#)):

Yes. Yeah, all of them are red states.

Bill Walton ([08:31](#)):

And so, I've lost track. I mean, how many so-called red states do we have in the country? I don't think we have 34.

Mark Meckler ([08:36](#)):

31 states have both houses controlled by Republicans. There are two states with split legislatures; Minnesota and Virginia. I will confidently predict we're going to flip Minnesota this session, this election. Virginia will finish flipping in 2023. There's a Democrat majority, one house in the Senate, that's going to flip. And then I think either New Hampshire or Nevada flips as well. I think we'll be at 34 states by 2024.

Bill Walton ([09:01](#)):

First off, let's anchor this for anybody watching or listening. We can find the information on your website where you've got basically a terrific summary of how that's working and who's behind it. What's the website?

Mark Meckler ([09:15](#)):

Yeah, that's probably the executive summary. Conventionofstates.com.

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

Okay. That's pretty easy. Conventionofstates.com. And you've got a lot of interesting people behind this. Who are you... Mark Levin, I notice here, and Ben Carson, and Glenn Beck and Allen West. I mean, it's a really interesting cross section of conservatives. Are there any liberals backing this?

Mark Meckler ([09:38](#)):

No. None. And I would say again, it's not ideological and it's really not partisan. The whole effort is just to say power should be at the states instead of at the federal government. But I think the reason that you don't see liberals supporting it, and I talk to a lot of people, liberals behind the scenes, that do, but they look at that lineup that you just presented and it's Hannity, it's Shapiro, it's Beck. It was Limbaugh. All of these people, and they think, "I'm a liberal. I can't identify with that."

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

We've got Ben Shapiro on the list. If he's here, nobody else is going to get a word in edgewise.

Mark Meckler ([10:09](#)):

I think that's true. He'll talk twice as fast as anybody else as well.

Bill Walton ([10:12](#)):

It's faster than that.

Mark Meckler ([10:13](#)):

Yeah. And he's a good friend and supporter. He saw it way back and just said the federal government's never going to rein itself in.

Bill Walton ([10:20](#)):

Well, but is there other, I mean, I worry about a runaway convention in this sense, is that you've got a list here. You've got some great things of the list, which I want to dig into, like a balanced budget amendment or limiting Supreme Court justices to nine. It's not in the Constitution-

Mark Meckler ([10:38](#)):

Correct.

Bill Walton ([10:38](#)):

... now Congress can vote as many as it wants.

Mark Meckler ([10:42](#)):

Correct. And they're talking about it, right? So, there's open discussion about packing the court.

Bill Walton ([10:44](#)):

It's open, it's vivid, it's happening as we speak. But this is a conservative wishlist. This is a wishlist for conservatives, libertarians, people like us who really don't want that massive... but couldn't you also have a liberal wishlist? I mean, couldn't this open itself up to say, "Gee, we really want to mandate or have part of the Constitution, this thing, something about abortion, something about marriage," whatever.

Mark Meckler ([11:15](#)):

No.

Bill Walton ([11:16](#)):

No?

Mark Meckler ([11:17](#)):

No, and here's the reason. If you look at the way that the resolution is drafted, it only allows a discussion of limitations on the power of the federal government.

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

So, it's drafted like this, say, the legislature of the state, fill in the blank, applies to Congress under Article V. I'll cut through this. Calling for a convention, proposing amendments imposing fiscal restraints on the federal government, limiting the power and jurisdiction, the federal government, and limiting the terms of office for its officials and members of Congress. Is this what 19-

Mark Meckler ([11:26](#)):

That's it. That's the model resolution.

Bill Walton ([11:47](#)):

That's the 19 states of all that?

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

That's correct. Yeah.

Bill Walton ([11:50](#)):

So, this is all going to go the direction we want it to go.

Mark Meckler ([11:53](#)):

Well, so those are the rails. I call it the law of convention. In other words, you're going to have 34 states agree to that in advance. They're going to commission their delegations based on that, because that's what their state legislatures have said. So, that provides the ground rules or the guard rails for a convention. In the event somebody in convention were to stand up, for example, from California, my original home state, and say, "Hey, we'd like to propose the repeal of the second amendment," well, that would increase the power of the federal government. It'd give them the ability to regulate firearms in a much more restrictive way. That does not fit within that resolution. According to every procedure that's ever been used in a convention, any conservative or libertarian could stand and make a motion that that's out of order.

Bill Walton ([12:35](#)):

So, the key phrase in here is limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government.

Mark Meckler ([12:40](#)):

That's correct.

Bill Walton ([12:40](#)):

That's the key phrase.

Mark Meckler ([12:41](#)):

That is the key phrase.

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

I'd almost stop with that, because it seems like you could get everything else within that one. And you've also got term limits here for officials.

Mark Meckler ([12:43](#)):

Correct.

Bill Walton ([12:52](#)):

Now, how about term limits for the staff in Congress, and how about term limits for the administrative state?

Mark Meckler ([12:59](#)):

So, that's crafted for that very specifically.

Bill Walton ([13:01](#)):

You founded the Tea Party, and at the time, 2010, and I was right there with you, the concern was we want to get people elected to Congress who were going to do the right thing.

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

Yeah. Naive, weren't we?

Bill Walton ([13:16](#)):

Yes, we were.

Mark Meckler ([13:16](#)):

We were naive. I was. Speaking for myself. Yeah.

Bill Walton ([13:21](#)):

Naive, we kind of defined naive there, 'cause I was right with you. But, so we got a lot of the right people elected and then nothing happened. And I think, as we've watched this, what's happened is we've seen, now, wait a second. It's not the elected officials, necessarily. It's who they get as their staff, who are wisened in the ways of Washington. And then also, we got this vast administrative state, which we just saw at the Supreme Court's EPA ruling, reining it in, that all the power was over there.

Mark Meckler ([13:53](#)):

So, that particular provision is drafted, notice that it says, "Federal officials and members of Congress." And the reason for that is, I agree with you. Look, I'm marginally a fan of term limits for members of Congress, marginally. I'm not 100% sure about that idea. I'm absolutely opposed to it if we don't limit the terms of their staffers and the bureaucrats as well. All we do is empower what we now know as the deep state. And so, I would be opposed to it if somebody said term limits on members of Congress, but not staff and bureaucrats. I think that's very dangerous. So, I think you hit on an important distinction.

Bill Walton ([14:29](#)):

Well, this is The Bill Walton Show. I'm here with the great Mark Meckler, and we're talking about the Constitution, Article V, having a convention of the states to talk about reining in the powers of the federal government, which has to happen, or fill in the blank if we end up not doing that. So, when you get into these, who is close now in the states? People listening or watching, what states are actively considering this?

Mark Meckler ([15:01](#)):

So, most of the state legislatures today are out of session. Most are part-time legislatures. Legislatures still in session, still considering right now, would be Ohio and Pennsylvania. So, those are probably the two targets on our list. For the rest, they're possibly, in a long shot basis, North Carolina. They'll come

back in for what's called a veto session, overriding governor, gubernatorial vetoes, so they could consider it then. I don't think it's likely. But North Carolina's close. We've passed it through the house there previously, we've passed it through the Senate previously. Never in the same session. They've got to be in the same session.

Bill Walton ([15:34](#)):

Now, the original convention was sent with, they say it was sent with a mandate that you're supposed to... I think they were just supposed to improve or edit the Articles of Confederation. Is that correct?

Mark Meckler ([15:51](#)):

No. And you're going to love this because you're a history guy and you appreciate history. I think most people would say that's correct, and I think that's what we were taught, until we actually discovered the truth about 10 years ago. Professor Rob Natelson was the first person ever to pull from the National Archives the commissions of the men sent to convention. They actually came with documents that said what their authority was and what their power was. Imagine being the first to open that drawer, pull those documents out. And what the commissions say, on seven of nine of them, is that the-

Bill Walton ([16:20](#)):

Who wrote the commissions?

Mark Meckler ([16:22](#)):

The states themselves, the state legislatures. So, they're saying to their delegates to convention, "Here's what you may and may not do." Seven out of nine of the states said that the commissioner has any and all authority necessary to render the federal Constitution adequate for the exigencies of the Union. There was no limitation on their power. This idea that they were sent to amend the Articles of Confederation comes because after seven states do this, Congress weighs in. And often, as you know, Congress today is behind the American people, right? They see something happening, they try to jump in front of it. They issued what they even phrased as, "We recommend." it was a recommendation to the states. They had no authority under the Articles of Confederation to call a convention or propose amendments. So, they recommend that the states gather. They use the same language but then they also add the phrase, "To amend the Articles of Confederation."

So, that's where this idea that these men exceeded their mandate comes from. It's absolutely untrue, and frankly, it builds a slander on the framers of the Constitution. These were men who deeply believed in the concept of honor. The idea that they would all just blow off their states and their commissions is pretty outrageous.

Bill Walton ([17:28](#)):

Well, I'm glad they did. But it turns out they didn't.

Mark Meckler ([17:32](#)):

They did not. Correct.

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

Now, but that means that the secret envelope though, is not secret in this case because we're going to have marching orders that every state is giving their delegates.

Mark Meckler ([17:42](#)):

Absolutely.

Bill Walton ([17:43](#)):

And this'll all be identical language, and they've got to stick to this.

Mark Meckler ([17:47](#)):

Well, I would say they could limit that. In other words, you could say to your delegation, "We don't like term limits, so we don't allow you to vote on term limits."

Bill Walton ([17:55](#)):

I always wonder, I wonder into these topics and I know so little. I'm not trained as a lawyer, you are. I mean, what are the good lawyers who are on the other side of this, who are philosophically aligned with us, saying why this is a bad idea? Heritage, I know has come out and said they don't like the idea.

Mark Meckler ([18:14](#)):

They have not, actually. Heritage has essentially taken a neutral position.

Bill Walton ([18:17](#)):

You mean, I shouldn't believe what's in Wikipedia?

Mark Meckler ([18:19](#)):

No, definitely not.

Bill Walton ([18:22](#)):

Once again.

Mark Meckler ([18:23](#)):

You know what? I went and I had a meeting at Heritage. Mark Levin was with me. A bunch of other luminaries; Rob Natelson, Mike Farris.

Bill Walton ([18:31](#)):

Yeah. Smart people.

Mark Meckler ([18:32](#)):

Yeah, smart people. There was a discussion that took place. Some of their scholars were there. They took no position. They said here's some pros and here's some cons.

Bill Walton ([18:39](#)):

Okay, so nobody took... so, what about the people who've taken the position, what do they say?

Mark Meckler ([18:44](#)):

So, they say that they believe that it can't be reined in, and just the basic runaway convention argument. But I would add, and this is important-

Bill Walton ([18:52](#)):

They're saying the convention can't be reined in.

Mark Meckler ([18:54](#)):

That's correct. No matter what you say, they can do it-

Bill Walton ([18:56](#)):

And so when people show up, wherever they show up, they show up in Las Vegas, which would be the most fun place to have it. At least, pretty-

Mark Meckler ([19:01](#)):

I think it'll be DC, because these guys are going to decide where it is.

Bill Walton ([19:04](#)):

Okay.

Mark Meckler ([19:06](#)):

So, here's the interesting distinction for guys like you and I. There are no scholars on the right, of national renown, who believe there can be a runaway convention. And that's a pretty audacious statement to make, but it's a fact. There are none. Zero. So, when you look at the scholars on the right of note, I would throw out names of guys who are on my legal advisory board; Robbie George from Princeton, I would argue the greatest living conservative constitutional scholar. He says no runaway. Randy Barnett from Georgetown says no runaway. So, it's not that you can't find any lawyers who will say it, but they have nowhere near the stature or renown, publication, reliance by the legal community as the people who serve on our legal advisory board and say, "It can't run away. That's ridiculous."

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

Now, how are you funding this effort? Do you have a foundation behind you that people can contribute to? Or what's the economic engineer?

Mark Meckler ([19:58](#)):

There are two entities that are involved. There's a 501(c)(3), so that's the Convention of States Foundation, as you mentioned. That's the educational arm of all of this, just educating people about convention of states. And then the activist side is Convention of States Action, and that's the 501(c)(4). And the budget is probably 80% 501(c)(4) at this point because most of it involves lobbying state legislators.

Bill Walton ([20:24](#)):

Now, this got generated when we had the Supreme Court controlled by the left.

Mark Meckler ([20:28](#)):

That's correct.

Bill Walton (20:29):

Now, we've got a presumably a 6-3 majority.

Mark Meckler (20:33):

Five and a half.

Bill Walton (20:35):

Maybe 5-4. I don't know. I think there are a couple half votes in there.

Mark Meckler (20:39):

Yes, exactly.

Bill Walton (20:43):

Does this lessen the need for this, that you've got a Supreme Court that's actually paying attention? Because we both think the original Constitution was fine.

Mark Meckler (20:54):

Yeah, absolutely.

Bill Walton (20:54):

If we'd stuck to it. But we haven't. And so, now we need to go back in and amplify and clarify and get some of this stuff nailed down that the language of the Constitution doesn't do. Is it as necessary now that we've got these rulings? For example, the EPA ruling, which to me was the biggest one.

Mark Meckler (21:16):

Yeah, I agree. Interesting. I mean, I would say morally, you've got the big ruling in Roe v. Wade, but if you want to look at what's going to have the most long-term effect on our country from a governing perspective, it's clearly West Virginia v. EPA.

Bill Walton (21:26):

Yeah, Roe v. Wade was the big moral ruling, but that didn't really eliminate-

Mark Meckler (21:31):

Government structure.

Bill Walton (21:32):

... it just sent the debate back to the states.

Mark Meckler (21:35):

Yeah. And in an interesting way, they're both sort of federalists' decisions, right? Because West Virginia v. EPA says you don't have the power to do that, so it's about separation of powers. If they're not doing that, that stuff mostly ends up back in the states, right? Or it has to be legislated upon at the federal

government. So the question is, do we still need this with a court like this? And my answer is, unequivocally yes. I'm just glad to have the Supreme Court in this fight. Here's why I say yes, as a lawyer, especially. To get cases to the Supreme Court is hard. It takes a lot of time. It takes some good luck. It takes the right fact pattern, the right plaintiff, the right circuit court, the right lawyers, get to the right makeup of the Supreme Court to get these things done. And then we don't always get them done all the way that we would like to see them done as conservatives. And sometimes frankly, because the court is doing good, conservative things, I'm of the mind that the court has done some things that I think are legally correct where I still don't like the result, all right?

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

Yeah. Yeah.

Mark Meckler ([22:33](#)):

But as a conservative, I say that's the correct legal result. So, calling a convention allows us to do bigger, broader things more rapidly than the Supreme Court can do. I think we're now allies in this fight.

Bill Walton ([22:47](#)):

You've answered my question, I think, about the runaway part. One of the things that jumped out, doing a little research, was that in 1949, 6 states; California, Florida, you know, proposed an amendment that enabled the United States to participate in a world federal government.

Mark Meckler ([23:05](#)):

Terrifying, huh?

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

Terrifying. So, that's not going to jump out of the-

Mark Meckler ([23:11](#)):

I think this is really important to dig a little bit into this a little bit more.

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

Let's dig in, 'cause there have been people trying to do this through-

Mark Meckler ([23:17](#)):

We've had up over 400 applications in American history for a convention of states. We never reached the requisite two thirds of applications. So, here's why I think it's important that we go a little deeper in this argument. So, I've been on your show. I've been on all the shows; Shapiro and Levin and all those guys, and I always make this offer. I'll make it to your listeners. Here's my personal email address. It's MMeckler, M-M-E-C-K-L-E-R, @COSAction.com. The reason I'm giving it to you, if you're concerned about the kind of amendment you or I, Bill, wouldn't like, then tell me what that amendment is, just in layman's terms, not in legal terms, and then give me the list of the 38 states that will ratify it. And so I've made that offer, I'm not joking, millions of people. Nine million to I don't know how many millions. I've never gotten an email, not from the crazy person, not an email because you can't do it. I've tried.

So, I'll give you the best example I know. I hear all the time from conservatives, we're going to lose the second amendment. I'm a big gun guy. We love guns, of my family, and my mom was a cop, my

son's a Marine. So, I wouldn't put the second amendment at risk. And then I say, well, do you understand the layout of the states? 31 states, both houses controlled by Republicans. More importantly, you today, Bill, could carry your handgun inside of 24 state legislatures. It's legal. You could carry a long gun, an AR, loaded, slung over your back, into 14 state legislatures and sit in the gallery and watch the proceedings. It takes only 13 state legislatures to stop an amendment. Do we really think we couldn't find 13 state legislatures to say we're not going to repeal the second amendment?

Bill Walton ([24:50](#)):

Let me jump into that issue. I had John Lott on. You know John?

Mark Meckler ([24:52](#)):

Oh yeah. I love John.

Bill Walton ([24:54](#)):

He's wonderful. Well, those legislatures are actually being very self-protective, because it turns out that if you have concealed carry, you're a lot less likely to have a mass shooting if you don't.

Mark Meckler ([24:54](#)):

Absolutely.

Bill Walton ([25:06](#)):

And I think he said some unbelievable number, like 96 or 97% of the mass shootings occurred in so-called gun free zones.

Mark Meckler ([25:14](#)):

Gun free zones. Yeah.

Bill Walton ([25:15](#)):

And they had a sign out in front that basically says if you're a mass shooter, come on in.

Mark Meckler ([25:21](#)):

Yeah. I mean, we just saw this in the last mass shooting in the mall. That mall had a gun free policy. Luckily, that's not enforceable there. And they had constitutional carry, and we had a young guy carrying a handgun. That's-

Bill Walton ([25:36](#)):

This was in Indiana.

Mark Meckler ([25:37](#)):

Yeah. It stopped the shooter. Incredible act of bravery by a guy who was carrying under a constitutional carry scheme.

Bill Walton ([25:44](#)):

Can I go into my favorite on... I've got a list here. It's on the website. There's a list of some of the things that Mark thinks we can do. I mean, obviously, an upper limit on federal taxes. I'm good with that. Sun setting existing federal taxes. But my favorite is imposition of generally accepted accounting principles. Now, that just jumped out at me. How does this fit into a constitution?

Mark Meckler ([26:13](#)):

Well, this is really interesting to me, and for me-

Bill Walton ([26:15](#)):

It's a really good idea.

Mark Meckler ([26:16](#)):

Well, so here's where it comes personally to me. So in the Tea Party days, somehow I managed to be in a meeting with high level officials at OMB, Office of Management and Budget. I don't even remember how I came to be there or who they were exactly, and I was asking questions about generally accepted accounting principles. I'm a lawyer, I've done finance stuff. I understand the law. We have to operate according to those, right? Any publicly traded company has to operate according to those. And I asked them if they operated according to generally accepted accounting principles, and they said no. And I said, "Well, what set of principles do you operate according to?" And this was the literal answer. It's pretty ironic. They didn't mean it this way. They said, "Well, we don't have any principles."

Bill Walton ([26:57](#)):

So, I was waiting. I didn't want to jump on your line.

Mark Meckler ([27:01](#)):

And I just thought-

Bill Walton ([27:02](#)):

Principles? What, principle?

Mark Meckler ([27:03](#)):

And I just thought, "Well, no, I understand that. But I meant accounting principles, right?" And literally, they do whatever they want. That's how they do government accounting. I call it the Skittles and rainbows method of accounting. It's just, whatever you want. And so, they have stuff that's black accounting, meaning it's off-book completely. They don't account for it. They have long-term liabilities. Imagine if you're a corporation, like, "Hey, we're not going to count the 120 trillion in long-term liability. I mean, we'll just pretend that that's never going to come due." You'd go to federal prison for that.

Bill Walton ([27:35](#)):

Well, our balance sheet of the United States looks a lot like Enron's balance sheet.

Mark Meckler ([27:39](#)):

Absolutely. Yeah.

Bill Walton ([27:40](#)):

Because, I ran a public company, CEO, and you got to... it's important to get it right. But I also worked my way through business school teaching accounting, inflicting accounting on would-be accounting majors, so I'm, this is-

Mark Meckler ([27:56](#)):

You know this.

Bill Walton ([27:57](#)):

... I'm in. And almost all the debt of the federal government, you never see it. It shows up over here as... If we have one place to add it up, and had contingent liabilities and net present value of different kinds of things the government own, I mean, our debt to GDP is not 100%. It's more like 400%.

Mark Meckler ([28:19](#)):

The best number that I've heard, and I used to work with Tom Coburn and this was kind of his passion.

Bill Walton ([28:23](#)):

Sure, yeah. Great guy, great guy.

Mark Meckler ([28:24](#)):

He said, he believes that we're about 150 trillion in debt at this point, as opposed to the on-book 30 trillion.

Bill Walton ([28:33](#)):

Well, that's, so 30 times 150-

Mark Meckler ([28:33](#)):

Yeah, there you go. Five.

Bill Walton ([28:36](#)):

... that's five times. 500. Yeah.

Mark Meckler ([28:36](#)):

Five X.

Bill Walton ([28:37](#)):

That's about where it is, yeah.

Mark Meckler ([28:38](#)):

It's incredible. And those are numbers that frankly, nobody understands. I don't know what that means. I'm barely, I don't think I understand what a trillion means than the average person.

Bill Walton ([28:47](#)):

Oh, I don't either.

Mark Meckler ([28:47](#)):

Right.

Bill Walton ([28:48](#)):

I mean, we don't.

Mark Meckler ([28:49](#)):

No, it's outside of the concept that the human mind can grasp. Actually, I think the American people deserve to know that. It's not on there, Bill, but one of the things that I would love to see is that people should have to pay their income taxes. They should have to pay them, and write the check.

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

Well, Milton Friedman came up with that in World War II.

Mark Meckler ([29:06](#)):

Absolutely.

Bill Walton ([29:07](#)):

I love Milton, but that was a huge blunder. Explain why he did that. You'd already know-

Mark Meckler ([29:13](#)):

No, I don't know the story.

Bill Walton ([29:13](#)):

Well, he was in the price board of one of the agencies that was trying to win World War II and they were looking at collecting taxes, wanting to make sure everybody paid, and he came up with the idea, well, let's just withhold-

Mark Meckler ([29:26](#)):

Oh, I didn't know it came from-

Bill Walton ([29:27](#)):

... your taxes From your paycheck. And-

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

So, now people have no idea.

Bill Walton ([29:31](#)):

... and if you could do only one thing to make people aware of the taxes they pay, is don't have it withheld, have them write a check out to FICA, have them write a check out to health. All the different-

Mark Meckler ([29:44](#)):

People would be angry. That's what would happen immediately.

Bill Walton ([29:48](#)):

Well, so let's put that one in the...

Mark Meckler ([29:51](#)):

Yeah, I like it.

Bill Walton ([29:53](#)):

No federal withholding on your paycheck. And of course, I've got Kenny here, he's an independent contractor. I think people who are independent contractors, I think are a lot more aware of the tax burden that we have.

Mark Meckler ([30:04](#)):

Yeah. They know the pain 'cause they're cutting the checks.

Bill Walton ([30:07](#)):

So I'm wondering, maybe a little off our Constitution, our Article V convention, but could you really put something like generally accepted accounting principles into the Constitution?

Mark Meckler ([30:16](#)):

You could, but I think that... here's the danger in that. If you say GAAP accounting, that seems simple. You know-

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

Well, the danger is those guys up in Connecticut Who are not conservatives.

Mark Meckler ([30:28](#)):

Right. And you know how complex that is too, right?

Bill Walton ([30:28](#)):

Oh yeah.

Mark Meckler ([30:31](#)):

When you say generally accepted accounting principles, it sounds simple, so I think in that case, could you do it? Maybe, but the devil's in the details. What does that actually mean when you say that to the federal government? And I don't think you could actually impose the exact same standards. It's a different thing when you're talking about a government.

Bill Walton ([30:47](#)):

As much as I love putting the federal government into the GAAP world, I think it's really fraught. I would take this one off your list, but-

Mark Meckler ([30:56](#)):

Well, you can come to convention as a delegate and argue against that.

Bill Walton ([30:59](#)):

I'll come and I'll weigh in. Yeah. Now, what about the limiting Supreme Court justices to nine members? That's right on the table now.

Mark Meckler ([31:05](#)):

Yeah, I think it's right on the table. I'm not even saying nine is the right number. I think there needs to be some limitation on the process, simply so that you can't have Congress just packet. And here's another scheme that I've heard, a good argument is potentially no adding justices to the United States Supreme Court unless the super majority of the states agree. So, I think that's a different way to-

Bill Walton ([31:30](#)):

Put the power back to the states, not in Congress.

Mark Meckler ([31:32](#)):

Yeah. Exactly.

Bill Walton ([31:32](#)):

I think that's the right way to do it. So if you want to change the number, let's go back to everybody and say, "What do you think that number ought to be?"

Mark Meckler ([31:38](#)):

Correct.

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

That's a fair way to do it. This is The Bill Walton Show. I'm here with Mark Meckler and we're talking about convention of the states and reining in the power of the federal government. And it seems like a good idea. When I first heard about it, I was kind of in the runaway camp, where I thought, "Gee, we get everybody together, we're likely to end up with a worse constitution rather than a better constitution." You don't think so.

Mark Meckler ([32:02](#)):

No, and look, I think fear and skepticism are the natural approach and the correct approach. I just think when you talk about something like this, anytime you talk about I would say big, transformational ideas, I'm a conservative and that means my first response can be, "Mm, I don't know. We've got this incredibly beautiful document." Here's the thing about that document, and I think we opened the show with this; we don't have that document anymore. If we did, I would say no, leave it alone. Even imperfect, leave it alone. If you were to order a United States Constitution today from the Government Publishing Office... You can do this. It's about 130 bucks. It doesn't look anything like the pocket Constitution you might think of. It's over 3,000 pages. It says United States Constitution on the spine. Yeah, I know. You're looking surprised. It's unbelievable.

Bill Walton ([32:49](#)):

Yeah. This is first I've heard of this.

Mark Meckler ([32:49](#)):

Okay, so you get it and what it contains-

Bill Walton (32:53):

I've got my little pocket guide, so that-

Mark Meckler (32:54):

We all have those. Order it from them, what you'll get is a 3,000-page document that contains every case ever issued by the Supreme Court telling us what that beautiful, succinct Constitution means. And in there is everything you and I don't like. It's the expansion of all federal government power comes out of cases issued by the Supreme Court; the expansion of Commerce Clause interpretation, the expansion of Necessary and Proper Clause.

Bill Walton (33:21):

So, it'll take the language of the Constitution, it'll drop a footnote saying, "Except in all these cases where we've gutted it."

Mark Meckler (33:29):

Well, I'll give you the best example, and the simplest example. The Interstate Commerce Clause, it's very simple. It says Congress has the power to regulate interstate commerce. What that meant to the founders, you're talking 1787, the word regulate didn't mean what we think of. They didn't have a federal register. There weren't tens of thousands of pages of regulation. They wouldn't have tolerated that. It meant to regularize, or make regular. That's what you would find in a Webster's dictionary in 1787. Smooth it out, right? Make it easy for people. The reason for that in 1787, you have a trade war going on between New York and New Jersey over tariffs. Most of the goods from overseas are coming in through the Port of New York, they impose tariffs and then they get shipped to New Jersey. New Jersey said, "This is unfair," and so they're going to come to military blows.

So in convention, the men there said, "This is not going to work. We've got to give some power to Congress to smooth over interstate commerce." By the way, commerce in 1787 doesn't mean business, which is what we think it means. In 1787, it means the shipment of goods. So, narrow power.

Bill Walton (34:32):

So, regulate meant make regular or to make-

Mark Meckler (34:35):

Smooth.

Bill Walton (34:35):

... easy. Smooth. Okay.

Mark Meckler (34:36):

Easy. Yeah. And then commerce meant the shipment of goods. So, the power was "make smooth the shipment of goods across state lines". In the 1930s, there's a case, Wickard v. Filburn in Ohio. There are limits on how much wheat you can grow, and the power comes from, according to the federal government, from the Interstate Commerce Clause. And they say to this farmer, he grows wheat, it's for his own consumption. Federal government says, "You grew too much wheat, we're going to penalize

you." And he says, "Wait, you can't do that. I didn't buy wheat on the open market. I didn't sell wheat on the open market. I'm certainly not involved in interstate commerce." And they said, "Exactly. The Interstate Commerce Clause." So, the farmer's baffled. The Supreme Court agrees, and this is what they say. "Well, the farmer, because he didn't buy wheat on the open market, affected interstate commerce."

Bill Walton ([35:33](#)):

Oh, my God.

Mark Meckler ([35:33](#)):

So, the ruling actually says, and this is insane. This is what you're thinking. "This is insane."

Bill Walton ([35:37](#)):

Because it didn't affect the demand curve, it was-

Mark Meckler ([35:40](#)):

It was an effect. So, what does that mean? It means if you don't do something, you've done something and Congress can now regulate you. So, this is where the explosion in the interstate commerce power comes from.

Bill Walton ([35:50](#)):

So, this is why Shakespeare said, "First, let's kill all the lawyers."

Mark Meckler ([35:53](#)):

That is correct. He was right. As a lawyer, I might lose on that one, but he was correct.

Bill Walton ([35:59](#)):

But I want to jump to this one. This is a segue to something else I want to talk about. They didn't really mean it the way we always say it. It was written that, it was part of a scene where somebody wanted to grab all the power without law, and to become a tyrant. And so, the first step was to kill all the lawyers so he wouldn't have anybody in his way. No legal niceties.

Mark Meckler ([36:24](#)):

No law.

Bill Walton ([36:25](#)):

No law. No law. I've said, I'm not a scholar in this, but isn't the United States the only one that has a true founding document, like the Constitution? I mean, we've written constitutions for people based on ours, but it was superimposed on an already existing country, and it wasn't the founding document. Is that accurate?

Mark Meckler ([36:50](#)):

That's generally accurate. And I think the distinction between our Constitution and all other founding charters, literally ever, is the idea that it was intended to be used as a weapon or a limitation against

government. It's not a charter of rights for the citizens. We get our rights, where they're inalienable. They come from a creator. We have them inherent as human beings. And what that document says is, these are the limitations on what government can do. It was intended to be wield against the government as a limitation, and that makes it wholly unique in our history.

Bill Walton ([37:27](#)):

Huge. It very important, and nobody understands that. It's to protect us. It's not... people think, "Well, let's get rid of the Constitution so we can get all these things we think are desirable." Well, that can be turned very quickly without one.

Mark Meckler ([37:40](#)):

Yeah. And the original Constitution had 17 enumerated powers. And it said everything else is left to the people in the states. Today, they have 17 million powers. I don't know how many. And that's all a creation of the courts.

Bill Walton ([37:55](#)):

You and I wanted to talk a little bit about China.

Mark Meckler ([37:58](#)):

Yeah, I do.

Bill Walton ([37:58](#)):

What else should we cover on the convention?

Mark Meckler ([38:01](#)):

I think we've done it. I mean, if folks want to go deep, they can go to conventionofstates.com.

Bill Walton ([38:03](#)):

I'm persuaded as much as... based on what you've said, I think this is a good idea. One last question. We have 19, we need 34. What do we do to get there?

Mark Meckler ([38:15](#)):

We continue to build the grassroots. That's the main thing. That's what I'm an expert at, really, is grassroots activism. And my experience is, there's nothing that more grassroots can't solve. And so I get into a state, we get close. Double the grassroots army, we'll get it done, because that's the pressure mechanism in the politics of our country.

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

And the key for you for grassroots is just simply getting people educated about what the issues are. And once they understand it, they want to make it happen.

Mark Meckler ([38:42](#)):

Yeah. We just did national polling on this, and the numbers were extraordinary. So, I say Republican opposition to this is fringe. I've always said that. And the number was 6.7% of Republicans are opposed to this.

Bill Walton ([38:54](#)):

Opposed?

Mark Meckler ([38:55](#)):

That's definitionally fringe. Those are the people who would make the strident runaway convention argument. And so, that's just a fringe. 50.2% of Democrats are in favor of this. Two thirds of independents, who do not affiliate with other parties, are in favor. I don't know any other issue in the body politic where there's this much unity. Now to be fair, most people, you say "convention of states", they don't even know what it is. So, the way we asked the question is we said, calling a convention of states for the purpose of the three things that you read earlier, and that's where you get these incredible, unifying numbers across the board.

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

So, China. We're both worried.

Mark Meckler ([39:33](#)):

Yeah, I'm very worried.

Bill Walton ([39:35](#)):

We're worried because they seem to have infiltrated all aspects of America. And they've been at it for 10, 15, 20, 30 years, and that's part of an explicit strategy.

Mark Meckler ([39:45](#)):

Yeah. There's a lot of reasons I'm worried. So, I grew up at the end of the Cold War. Reagan was my first vote. And so I was just, I considered myself kind of like the Cold Warrior; loved Reagan, loved what he did to bring down the Wall. And I thought, I actually thought, "Okay. Well, that's the end of communism and Marxism in my lifetime, at least." It was hard to believe that we would face that again. I didn't understand the rising threat from China, which existed back at that time. Probably one of the biggest geopolitical mistakes in modern history, certainly, is Nixon and China. I think it's fair to say nobody knew that at the time, but in hindsight, it's certainly a mistake; this rapprochement with China and saying, "We're going to bring them in commercially, and that's going to make them into some proto-democratic state." It hasn't worked out.

They've actually invented a new, I would say, more appealing form of communism that's really dangerous. It's infiltrated our country. And I actually think at the highest levels of our government and our institutions, there are a lot of people who admire the Chinese model, who wish that our government had that kind of totalitarian authority.

Bill Walton ([40:56](#)):

Well, there are stories it's not only our government leaders, but it's our business leaders and our Wall Street leaders. And-

Mark Meckler ([41:05](#)):

Economists, Paul Krugman, lamenting, wishing our government had more power like China.

Bill Walton ([41:11](#)):

Well, Tim Cook, CEO of Apple, took over from Steve Jobs, was in a room in China about six or seven or eight years ago. And he had such a awe and respect for Xi. When Xi walked into the room, Tim Cook turned to somebody, he says, "Can't you feel the room move? The floor moves." And so, he was just in awe of this guy. Mark Zuckerberg; you've heard about Mark and his unborn baby?

Mark Meckler ([41:43](#)):

No.

Bill Walton ([41:44](#)):

Mark's over there at a reception. Xi is there. Mark's there. Mark's wife is there. She's expecting a baby. And she asked Xi, asked President Xi, the head of the Chinese Communist Party, would he name his child for him? And Xi said, "Well, that's a lot of responsibility. I don't think I want to do it." I just don't think he wanted to be associated with Mark Zuckerberg.

Mark Meckler ([42:09](#)):

Well, you got Xi showing more discretion than Mark Zuckerberg.

Bill Walton ([42:11](#)):

Thank Mark Zuckerberg.

Mark Meckler ([42:12](#)):

Yeah.

Bill Walton ([42:12](#)):

Now, I believe that's a true story. It may be apocryphal, but it sounds about right. And then Ray Dalio, who runs Bridgewater, he's huge. One of the biggest hedge funds in the world. He's in awe of the Chinese way of doing things. And we start with our rights from God, and we decided to give some of them to the government with enumerated power but we preserve our rights from God. That's not the Chinese model.

Mark Meckler ([42:38](#)):

No. You know what? I think you bring up something interesting that goes to something deeper in human nature. So the people that you mentioned, when you mentioned Cook or Zuckerberg or a lot of the guys that you know from Wall Street; so much money. They have so much money, so many assets. That's not the game anymore, I think, for a lot of these guys. They don't need more money. They don't necessarily even desire more money, but it becomes a desire for power and control; the ability to reshape the world according to the way you think it should be. And so, I think when they look at Xi and they look at the Chinese Communist Party, it's successful in a capitalist sense, right? The incredible amount of money being generated.

Bill Walton ([43:16](#)):

Well, up to a point.

Mark Meckler ([43:17](#)):

Up to a point.

Bill Walton ([43:18](#)):

I think that that could be changing.

Mark Meckler ([43:19](#)):

No, I think it is changing, but I think this is how they've seen it. But then, Xi and the Party control all of society, and so there's an appeal to human nature in that kind of power and control. And that's the bad part of human nature. That's the fallen part of human nature.

Bill Walton ([43:36](#)):

Well, coming back to our Constitution, that's the part of the fallen human nature that the founders sought to protect ourselves from.

Mark Meckler ([43:45](#)):

Right. And so, now we have a bunch of our leaders who actually don't acknowledge that that exists. I think there's a fundamental difference between left and right in America, if that's the right way to describe it ideologically, and it is the perfectibility of man. So if you're a believer in God, then you understand that man is sinful. I think that's human experience, personally. I know it's my personal experience. And the left believes if there were just enough laws-

Bill Walton ([44:13](#)):

AOC, by the way, is without sin.

Mark Meckler ([44:15](#)):

Right. See, that's because she is God, in her mind. Right? I really believe that. These are-

Bill Walton ([44:22](#)):

That is a problem with people who would inflict their views on us.

Mark Meckler ([44:22](#)):

It is.

Bill Walton ([44:24](#)):

They feel they're without sin.

Mark Meckler ([44:25](#)):

A total secular humanist. They don't believe in the fallen nature of man. They believe if there's just enough rules and regulations and they come from me, then everybody will be good. And that's just a incorrect notion of human nature. So, China is a country that actually believes it's without sin. It is a, from a state perspective, a godless nation. It is anti-God.

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

And as, I think, I remember I said during this show or before we were talking, I mean, it's not like we're fighting the Soviet Union where they had all their lined up... people lined up with the nukes, and they were over here and we were over on the other side. Now, the societies are incredibly interconnected. I mean, through both the economy and all the social interactions and now social media. And we've got, TikTok's the most notorious example, but the Chinese are involved in all social media. I mean, you ran Rumble, or Parler-

Mark Meckler ([44:49](#)):

Parler.

Bill Walton ([45:21](#)):

Yep. You probably saw that.

Mark Meckler ([45:24](#)):

Oh, I'd say, the amount of data that they're collecting. I just heard, at a cybersecurity forum, an incredible thing about data collection that I had never heard before, Bill, and you probably heard this from some of the people you talk to; one of the things the Chinese are collecting is scrolling patterns. And apparently-

Bill Walton ([45:40](#)):

Scrolling patterns?

Mark Meckler ([45:41](#)):

Scrolling patterns. So, the way that you personally scroll through a website and search on the web is as unique to you as your fingerprint or your retinal scan. Only you scroll the way you scroll. Only you search the way you search. So, we all have a style and it's very individualized. If you get somebody's pattern, you can find them on the web, no matter how anonymous they are.

Bill Walton ([46:04](#)):

What?

Mark Meckler ([46:04](#)):

You can find them, because you can search-

Bill Walton ([46:06](#)):

How do they do that?

Mark Meckler ([46:07](#)):

They search through petabytes of data for particular patterns coming from an IP address. And then they can say, if they know your pattern, "Well, that's Bill Walton."

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

So, this is more than just identifying one ad or one photograph or one word. It's all of them taken together, and they've developed... What do you call it, a petabyte?

Mark Meckler ([46:28](#)):

Well, petabyte is an amount of data. It's just a tremendous amount of data. So what they're... it's a digital fingerprint for you. And if you think about it, when I first heard this, I thought, "Well, that seems incredible." Then I thought, "Well, when I search for something, I search the same way every time." Nobody taught me how to search that way. But I have a method I'll use when I'm looking for something. Going to go to certain sites first. What I dig down into is generally sequential. It's just habit. It's how I search for things. It's how I use the web.

Bill Walton ([46:59](#)):

Do you know Dr. Robert Epstein?

Mark Meckler ([47:01](#)):

I don't know him, but I know his work, yeah.

Bill Walton ([47:04](#)):

Yeah. He was on the show a couple of times, and he's done all the work on Google. And his view is that that's being used to influence the way people vote.

Mark Meckler ([47:10](#)):

I absolutely agree with that. And the influence is incredible. I think his work unequivocally proves that. And so, what we don't understand... And I actually think you turned me onto a book called Total War. Is that?

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

Yeah.

Mark Meckler ([47:23](#)):

Yeah.

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

China.

Mark Meckler ([47:24](#)):

Yeah. So, I read this book on China. I kind of had a feeling about it before I read the book. Written by some Chinese generals after-

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

After 25 years. 20, 25 years ago.

Mark Meckler ([47:34](#)):

And after our foray into Iraq, and they analyzed how we do things and then came up with a strategy for how to oppose us. But they're in everything. It's not just war.

Bill Walton ([47:46](#)):

It's kinetic-

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

Right. Which is actual warfare, right?

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

... which is guns and missiles and stuff like that. It's economic. It's legal. I mean, they use what they call lawfare all over the world. They don't believe in international treaties. The only law they respect is their own. It's what they call elite capture.

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

Yep. So, they have almost-

Bill Walton ([48:09](#)):

Steven Pifer wrote a terrific book about that.

Mark Meckler ([48:11](#)):

Absolutely.

Bill Walton ([48:11](#)):

It's just stunning, the extent to which they... and their strategies. And it's true in the United States, but if they've captured most of Africa and Central and South America by getting in and providing enticements or cash or whatever for the leadership there to get on the line with... they don't have to fire a single bullet.

Mark Meckler ([48:31](#)):

So you're dealing with a state actor, almost infinite amounts of money, in regard to this sort of a thing. So, they go to people and they make people offers they can't refuse, or aren't willing to refuse because it's so enticing. And I think now so many people are doing it that people think, "Well, everybody's doing it." In DC, this is true, right? So many people are on the payroll of China here, it's incredible.

Bill Walton ([48:55](#)):

I have a visitor down here. I've got Buddy at my feet trying to crawl up.

Mark Meckler ([48:58](#)):

I love that you have dogs in the studio.

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

You've got a great name.

Mark Meckler ([49:01](#)):

Yeah. So, dogs in the studio; I'm always good with that.

Bill Walton ([49:03](#)):

Buddy's envious 'cause he can't reach the table, so I'm going to pat him down here. But, do we sound crazy? I mean, it seems like we're finding Chinese under every rock, we've got this... I mean, I don't think we are. I think this is actually happening, and yet there are very few people that are quite focused on this.

Mark Meckler ([49:24](#)):

I think five years ago we sounded crazy. It was still going on. But I think now, the vast majority of the body politic understands this. And even in Congress, you see moves in Congress to try to push back against the Chinese. I think this is now pretty widely accepted among the American public, and in Congress, that one of the few bipartisan issues is that we need to start pushing back on China.

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

So, as much as I love our Constitution or our Convention of the States, are we fighting kind of the last war with that? I mean, has the battlefield shifted to where it's even worse than abusing the Constitution?

Mark Meckler ([50:00](#)):

Yeah, I would say that is worse, but I would say we have to be able to walk and chew gum at the same time.

Bill Walton ([50:04](#)):

Yeah, I agree. We got to do both.

Mark Meckler ([50:06](#)):

There are always multiple issues facing the nation. And so, remedying what ails the nation inside is imperative if we're to have the will to fight the wars outside.

Bill Walton ([50:14](#)):

Now, I think of you as fighting these battles on all fronts. We're about to wrap up here, so what else? I mean, you've been involved in an incredibly interesting set of projects. What else are you doing that we got to know about?

Mark Meckler ([50:27](#)):

So I would say, and this is important for people to know about Convention of States, it's way more than a convention. We're building the largest grassroots army in American history. We've accomplished that now; 5.2 million people in the field. And we're engaged in elections. Well, we'll be engaged in probably 450 elections in this coming cycle, almost all at the state level, state legislatures and things like that. Also, school boards. Everybody knows about the Virginia election that flipped the House of Burgess in Virginia by one seat. That one seat, the last recount, was a convention of states district captain who got engaged in politics through convention of states, who used the volunteers there in Virginia, 150 of them, who made over 1,200 calls to low propensity voters. She won by 115 votes. So, we can say that the

Virginia House is now in Republican hands because of convention of states activists out there in the field. That's going on all over the country. Loudoun County, here locally in Virginia, is another example. Got a call from Ian Prior, Fight for Schools, the guy leading that fight in Loudoun County.

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

What's the demographic profile of your grassroots? I think it's probably changing.

Mark Meckler ([51:38](#)):

Yes, a lot.

Bill Walton ([51:38](#)):

I mean, I think about the Tea Party, and the Tea Party, Sarah was very involved in it. We had a lot of... I hope I don't categorize too many people unfairly. White, middle-aged and older women were the Tea Party. It was highly female. But that's all changing, and it was also largely white. Now, I think we're seeing Hispanics, Latinos, Asians.

Mark Meckler ([52:01](#)):

Absolutely.

Bill Walton ([52:02](#)):

They're all joining the fray. Am I? You're close to it. What-

Mark Meckler ([52:04](#)):

Yeah. I would add a little bit more nuance to that. I mean, I think back in the Tea Party days, it was skewed way older. I mean, that was a big deal and people were concerned about that. I liked it. You get a lot of wisdom out of gray-haired people like us, right? So, that's okay.

Bill Walton ([52:17](#)):

We're there. We're there.

Mark Meckler ([52:18](#)):

Yeah. But people were worried, like what's going to happen with the next generation? And today, what I'm seeing is a lot of, especially, I would say, 30 to 45-year-olds. And I think I would give a lot of credit for that to what's going on, on school boards. The mama bears are angry, dads are going to school board meetings and getting involved, and then those people are starting to say, "You know what? If it's this bad at school, there must be a lot of other stuff going on that I'm not looking at." So, I'm seeing a lot of younger people get more broadly involved in politics. I'm super excited about that because I think it has a long tail. The Tea Party tail, I would argue, we're at the end of the tail right now. I think the Trump election was kind of the end of the Tea Party movement's tail. And so, I think there's a new movement starting. I think it's broader, and I think it has a much longer tail.

Bill Walton ([53:04](#)):

I love it. Let's end on a note of hope.

Mark Meckler ([53:07](#)):

Absolutely. I'm very hopeful.

Bill Walton ([53:09](#)):

Anyway, this has been The Bill Walton Show. I've been here with Mark Meckler, who's founded so many things. And we've been talking mainly about the convention of the states, but basically our topic is freedom and liberty, here and worldwide. You can find our show, thebillwaltonshow.com. Also, we're on CPAC now, every Monday night at 7:00. Of course, you can time shift that if you just tape it and listen to it later. We're on Rumble, we're on YouTube. I don't think we've said anything here that would get us kicked off YouTube.

Mark Meckler ([53:39](#)):

Not yet.

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

Not yet.

Mark Meckler ([53:40](#)):

But we could if you want.

Bill Walton ([53:41](#)):

But anyway, we're also on all the major audio platforms; Apple, Spotify, whatever. And so stay tuned, and we also would love your comments on our website, thebillwaltonshow.com. Send us your ideas. We'll put it into the hopper and see if we can't turn it into something interesting we can all learn about. And as always, stay tuned for what's true, what's right and what's next. Thanks.

You're fun to talk to.

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

Oh yeah. I mean, I like just, this is what I love to do more than anything, is just sit around and have conversations like this.

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

Yeah, me too.

Mark Meckler ([54:15](#)):

Yeah, at some point-

Bill Walton ([54:16](#)):

I feel like we ought to go Rogan sometime, but all of... I don't think Kenny's old legs would let him stand up that long.

Kenny Reff ([54:21](#)):

What?

Mark Meckler ([54:21](#)):

We have to get him a chair.

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

Three hours.

Mark Meckler ([54:24](#)):

You know-

Bill Walton ([54:24](#)):

Maureen can handle it, I think, but-

Maureen O'Donnell ([54:26](#)):

Three hours?

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

Three, yeah.

I hope you enjoyed the conversation. Want more? Click the [Subscribe](#) button or head over to thebillwaltonshow.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.