

Episode 199: It is Time to Negotiate Peace Between Ukraine and Russia with Dr. Shea Bradley-Farrell

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

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

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

Welcome to The Bill Walton Show. I'm Bill Walton. Today, we want to talk about some events that are unfolding in Ukraine and Russia and Europe, and really the rest of the world. We're all involved in this. It involves what may be some policies that are making Europe poor and eventually the United States poor and also risking nuclear war.

([00:51](#)):

This week, a wonderful piece was in the Washington Times which is, Time to negotiate peace between Ukraine and Russia. The author is my good friend, Dr. Shea Bradley-Farrell, who is a foreign policy and national security expert and is president of the Counterpoint Institute for Policy, Research, and Education.

([01:13](#)):

Shea, welcome.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([01:15](#)):

Hi Bill. It's so good to be with you today.

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

So Shea, give us the gist of your piece of which I'm fully in agreement with.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([01:26](#)):

Well, I appreciate that coming from you. I felt like it was some time for somebody to stand up and say, "Why are we doing this? We're enabling a war that is grinding on to kill Ukrainians. We are putting billions of dollars of US taxpayer money into Ukraine," where I don't believe that they have a chance of winning. NATO's not going to step up and do what they would have to do to cause that to happen.

([01:58](#)):

And now we see that Europe is facing this energy crisis, that it has a lot of ramifications for industries closing down, for workers not having jobs any longer, and for quite frankly, a very brutal and cold winter in some parts of the EU.

Bill Walton ([02:17](#)):

Well, there's a headline today in the Art newspaper that the Louvre and all the other major cultural institutions in France are going to start turning the lights off earlier.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([02:27](#)):

Oh boy.

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

Because of energy costs. And as I think you pointed out in your article, Russia was providing over 40% of the natural gas to Europe. Without that natural gas, Europe is facing a very, very tough winter, not only blackouts and no heat, but possibly starvation. I don't think that's what people bargain for in Europe or the rest of the world when they said we need to support the plucky Ukrainians.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([03:00](#)):

Yes, I agree with you on that. So Europeans are now facing a energy war that they didn't ask for. And you're right, Russia was supplying about 40% of the natural gas to Europe, but here's the thing. They started actually reducing the flow of natural gas to the EU back last summer in 2020, signaling I believe, an intention to put troops along the border of Ukraine and to use this leverage.

([03:34](#)):

Russian's leader, Putin has historically used energy as a war weapon. He uses it for manipulation. I just believe that if you were paying attention way back in January, you would've known that sanctions were not going to work because Europe is so reliant on Russian energy, oil, and gas.

Bill Walton ([03:58](#)):

Well, there've been a lot of headlines recently that Ukraine might win this war and that we ought to be thinking about rebuilding Ukraine. The president recently said we were supposed to cough up almost \$750 billion to rebuild Ukraine.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([04:17](#)):

Wow.

Bill Walton ([04:17](#)):

It seems like this is coming off the rails in terms of common sense. Would there have been some tactical advances that the Ukrainians have made? What's your assessment of the Russian army versus the Ukrainian army? And what are the long-term prospects?

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([04:34](#)):

Well, you don't have to be a military expert, Bill, to understand that the Russian army is somewhere around the third or fourth largest in the world or most powerful and the Ukrainian army is somewhere around 24th. We historically have seen Russia grind on and on in the places where they invade. If you look at the Second Chechen War as something I always like to refer to, if you look at the pictures of Chechnya after this, it looks to me like a lunar landscape because Russia just went in there and they do what it takes to destroy cities and people. I think that they look at war and gaining what they want different from we do. They have a lot more patience. It's not a fast thing and then they move on.

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

What's going on with the referendums? I don't think that's the Russian word for it, but evidently Putin's has called for a lot of the regional territory bordering Ukraine, or maybe even part of Ukraine to recognize that they're part of Russia. And that creates territories, part of the Russian state, which Putin has said is invalid. If the Ukrainians proceed into that, that'd be tantamount to declaration, not of conventional war, but of a nuclear war.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([06:05](#)):

That's right. And I think it's another provocation that he's put out there along with amassing these 300,000 reservists, mobilizing them. I think it's another provocation put out there to the West. I believe it was his defense minister actually that said just a couple of days ago, "We're in essence fighting a collaborative war against the West." They don't think that they're only facing Ukraine. They think they're facing the whole West and I don't believe that he will allow himself to be defeated.

[\(06:39\)](#):

But to go back just to explain, again, I believe in Ukrainian sovereignty. My point is that this is not in our national interest to continue throwing billions and billions of dollars at a country that's not a NATO ally. It's not even part of the EU. And we're in a recession right now. This is hard on taxpayers. Our military, we are lacking in some of the equipment that we're sending to Ukraine.

[\(07:14\)](#):

This is not in our best interest and I believe that is not in the Ukrainian's best interest because I think Russia will do what they have to do, whether it is continue to reduce energy to the EU, and continue to plow through Ukraine and take more territory. If the Ukrainians have had a tactical territorial victory, good. That's good. I'm glad. But I just don't think long-term it changes anything.

Bill Walton [\(07:49\)](#):

Well, there is a negotiation that could be held that would reach an agreement that might satisfy both sides, and we could have had that negotiation when this first started.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller [\(08:01\)](#):

Yes.

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

But Joe Biden jumped ahead of that saying, "We're not going to negotiate. We're going to fight to the last Ukrainian," as some people put it, "And we're going to win this war against the Russians." You look into that and you begin to see the Biden foreign policy establishment, I guess one of his key people was one of the architects of the Iraq War.

[\(08:31\)](#):

They're interested in regime change. They still blame Putin for getting Trump elected and was interested in not so much supporting the Ukrainians, but trying to get Putin out in Russia. And with that as a goal, that's an incredibly dangerous one.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller [\(08:49\)](#):

It sure is. I think that he continues to provoke Russia, and certainly we shouldn't be in a position where we show fear to Russia. But again, I don't believe that this is our war. I don't have anything against having sent some money and some aid to Ukraine. And I'd like to point out just in May, I was in a Ukrainian refugee center in Hungary and got to see firsthand the Ukrainians coming through.

Bill Walton [\(09:18\)](#):

What was that like? What did you see there? What were your impressions?

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller [\(09:23\)](#):

Well, first of all, I was very impressed with the Hungarian government because they had very systematically and in a very organized way set up places for refugees to come in, get food, be given a train ticket, a plane ticket, whatever it is that they wanted to do to either stay in Hungary. They're providing them with places to stay and jobs, or to move on into the EU, which brings me to another point.

[\(09:49\)](#):

We're looking at around 6 million displaced Ukrainians. So it's not just the devastation and destruction, but I believe that we are enabling a war that's actually hurting the Ukrainians. And in my opinion, their leadership is not holding in their hearts the best interest of the Ukrainians. I think the leadership has leadership's interests at their best interest.

Bill Walton [\(10:17\)](#):

Well, it's not exactly like they're fair and free democracy as an [inaudible 00:10:21] pretty much totalitarian powers in Ukraine.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller [\(10:24\)](#):

That's absolutely true. They have a history of corruption as you know, in the government. And so this way I always say to people, "Put this in context. We're talking about a country that has not been a democratic country, necessarily. There's corruption that's rampant, and yet everybody's flying Ukrainian flags." Again, I'm not against Ukrainian sovereignty, but honestly most Americans hadn't even heard of Ukraine before this war started.

[\(10:59\)](#):

I just feel that we've got to put these things in perspective, Bill. I don't know if we talked about this yet, but Russia has actually decreased natural gas flow by 90% to the EU. And if you'd like to, let's talk about this too. Essentially, Biden's policies are forcing two of our greatest foes together, Russia and China.

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

Right. They're selling the oil, they're selling natural gas now. It's a little harder to just switch because of the pipeline requirements, but a lot of energy is getting sold and Russia is actually doing great financially. And their rubles, I don't know it's an all time high, but the ruble's up, not down.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller [\(11:51\)](#):

Here's the thing. Everybody keeps saying that Russia's in a bad situation, they are not. They just made in the first half of 2022, a 42 billion record profit on natural gas sales. That's because they squeezed the gas supply. Starting over a year ago, prices have shot up. People cannot afford them. There was already a crisis last fall in the EU because of these prices, but they're selling gas to China at a 50% reduced rate through the end of the year.

[\(12:28\)](#):

Not only that, in February, China and Russia signed this 80 billion, 10 year oil and gas deal. Again, Putin has been, I think it's strategic. He's been thinking through this and he's in a good position. I hate to say it, it's going to make people angry. I'm just trying to be sensible about this. China has usurped Europe as the oil importer. Go ahead.

Bill Walton [\(12:54\)](#):

What's the basis of a deal? Essentially, I've heard some people and I agree that in a way we forced Russia's hand here because Ukraine membership at NATO was a non-starter and we kept pushing and pushing and pushing. And it seems like if we dropped that one and we said, "Well, look, Ukraine is not NATO's future. NATO's not in Ukraine's future," however you want to put it. And then, doesn't Russia want access to a warm water port, the border of Ukraine?

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([13:28](#)):

Yes, I think so. I think that they've made it very clear that they don't want NATO up against them. I.e, meaning that if Ukraine were to be permitted to enter NATO, I think that's most of Putin's objective, is to make sure that that doesn't happen.

Bill Walton ([13:48](#)):

Well. There's a lot of savor rattling now on the nuclear front. I want to talk about them in the second. The economic situation I think for Europe is dire.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([13:57](#)):

It is.

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

It's not only the natural gas to heat homes and run their industry also. Germany is one of the largest manufacturers of fertilizers and that is derived from natural gas. And so they're also looking at agricultural crisis in Europe driven by the cost of energy. I don't think the Europeans have bargained for this. I don't know whether the French have bargained for the lights being shut off in the Louvre and Versailles.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([14:30](#)):

Absolutely.

Bill Walton ([14:30](#)):

But also the leadership of the EU, was it Christine Lagarde is president now? They're now calling for \$140 billion excess profits tax on the natural gas companies in Europe.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([14:47](#)):

Wow.

Bill Walton ([14:48](#)):

So at the time you want energy companies to invest in alternative energy sources, they're taking the capital away from them to give to consumers, because the policy with Ukraine and Russia's driven energy prices up. I don't know. It seems to mean the natives ought to be getting restless pretty soon.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([15:08](#)):

They are. You wouldn't believe the number of people who live in Europe, friends of mine that have reached out and said, "Thank you. Yes, this is exactly what we think." With this article I mentioned earlier, it was also republished in Europe by the European Conservative and-

Bill Walton ([15:27](#)):

Congratulations. That's great. That's great.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([15:30](#)):

... I think that there are a lot of people especially in Europe that are weary of this and yeah, they're facing a crisis that they didn't ask for and it could get much worse, Bill. I was reading an article not too long ago where analysts in Europe were saying that Putin could actually continue to reduce oil for over, excuse me, natural gas for over a year to Europe without any kind of dire consequences for Putin's economy.

([16:01](#)):

So again, if you're looking at this in a common sense way, I think that we must negotiate peace for the sake of the Ukrainians, for the sake of the EU and our tax dollars.

Bill Walton ([16:14](#)):

Well, and also for the sake of avoiding a nuclear cataclysm.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([16:21](#)):

Yes.

Bill Walton ([16:21](#)):

If I'm right and there's some people that have studied us more closely is that the underlying agenda for the Biden administration is regime change, trying to bring about regime change in Russia. Russia has 7,000 nuclear warheads all ready to go. Their doctrine is not first strike doctrine, their doctrine is if we need them, we're going to use them. In nuclear, there is no such thing as tactical nuclear weapons. It's just a smaller one, not a...

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([16:55](#)):

It's all or nothing.

Bill Walton ([16:56](#)):

... Nothing's dire. All or nothing. So we're pushing, pushing right now as we speak, and the economic consequences are dire, but also this nuclear game we're playing is reckless.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([17:11](#)):

Yes, we are escalating a war that we don't need. We've seen in other places in the Middle East, for example, where we push for regime change and it hasn't helped anything. It left a vacuum which made things much worse. It's also, I just believe escalating a war that the US doesn't have any kind of interest in, the best case scenario, sure. I'd love to see Putin out of office, but is that what the US needs to do right now for our own interest?

Bill Walton ([17:45](#)):

Well, we all wanted Hussein out of office and that turned out not all that well.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller ([17:51](#)):

It sure did, Bill. And you know what? Biden's foreign policy, I always say foreign policy because early on I really wanted to give it a chance. I did with Obama too. I had high hopes. But we saw it last August how he totally has made the US a laughingstock on the world stage where we abandoned our allies in Afghanistan and left Americans to die, left billions of dollars of equipment. I don't know if he has a foreign policy.

[\(18:24\)](#):

It is certainly not the model of deterrence that the Trump administration used, because that model of deterrence did not encourage Putin to put troops along the border of Ukraine and invade Ukraine. I think that Biden has totally abandoned any kind of model of deterrence, which is what we need exactly to deter our adversaries from strengthening alliances and from threatening us and our allies.

Bill Walton [\(18:59\)](#):

Our message, your message, my message is we ought to be talking with everybody and everybody's listening and watching this should be saying, "Look, guys, we do care about Ukraine and sovereignty, but they're limits to how much we can risk here. We've got to be pragmatic, both economically and more importantly, with regard to the potential for nuclear exchange."

[\(19:22\)](#):

Final thought, I know you've got to run off to another affair. Final thought.

Dr. Shea Bradley-Fuller [\(19:31\)](#):

Well, I appreciate the chance to talk about this. I was initially nervous about putting my views out there, that we need to negotiate peace because some people are very violently against that. But strangely since I've put that piece out there, I've had a lot of people come to me, some of them high up in the conservative movement actually and say, "Thank you for saying this. We actually believe that as well, but we're hindered in some way from actually saying it."

[\(20:02\)](#):

And of course, some governments in Europe have reached out and said the same thing and friends in Europe. I think that more people want to talk about peace. And right now I believe that Putin is signaling that he could be ready for that.

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

Fantastic. Well, let's hope that's the case. Dr. Shea Bradley-Farrell, my friend, president of the Counterpoint Institute for Policy, Research, and Education, thanks and let's plan on following up sometime in the near future as this thing unfolds because it's something everybody will be watching closely. So Shea, thanks for joining and y'all thanks for watching and listening. I hope you'll share this show and our link to thebillwaltonshow.com.

[\(20:52\)](#):

We're on CPAC Now every Monday night and we may be going to other nights in the near future. We're trying to get points of view out here that are not commonly out there. And I hope you'll share this because I think we're saying things that are true and will help us make better decisions. So anyway, thanks and see you next time.

[\(21:17\)](#):

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[\(21:36\)](#):

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