

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 ([00:24](#)):

Welcome to the Bill Walton Show. I'm Bill Walton. Well, we're back today with one of my favorite guests and an astute observer of the world scene, Dr. Steven Bryen. As you may recollect, he's Senior Fellow for the Senator for Security Policy and the Yorktown Institute. And I think no one's following the details and the ins and outs of what's going on with Ukraine, Russia, and the prospects for negotiated outcome or whatever the outcome's likely to be in that terrible, terrible war. Stephen has over 50 years national security experience, including many stints at the Pentagon where he was known as the Yoda of the arms trade. So Stephen, you've been covering this, you recently predicted, I think just last week that Zelenskyy may be on the ropes and consequently, so may be Biden if Ukraine doesn't pull out of this.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([01:25](#)):

Right. I think that's a very closely fraught situation, but he has to deliver on the so-called offensive, which has been promised, in which the US provided lots of weapons. And if he can't deliver or if they fail, then I think we're at a tipping point as far as Ukraine's future is concerned, certainly Zelenskyy's future. So I think he'll try, I'm not convinced he'll be successful.

Bill Walton ([01:56](#)):

There's talk of a Ukrainian offensive, but do they have the weapons and supplies to pull this off? Isn't the cupboard pretty bare?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([02:05](#)):

They have a lot of weapons. I think the US has really pumped in an awful lot of stuff, so have the Europeans. But I think the real issue is manpower. I don't think it's so much weapons. I mean at some point you have to have operators and fighters and the more losses they sustain, they're supposedly on their third army now, the first two having been estimated wiped out, eliminated. So they're really almost out of elite forces and they're having trouble recruiting.

Bill Walton ([02:38](#)):

When you say they're on their third army, what exactly does that mean?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([02:41](#)):

Well, the general view is that the first army was destroyed in the initial fighting. They replaced most of those troops. The second army has been attrited and it's just about gone. And so they've raised up a new force of young men, some not so young, who are being sent to fight.

Bill Walton ([02:59](#)):

I think during ... The kids hanging out in front of McDonald's, aren't they dragging them in?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([03:03](#)):

Yeah, so the Russians did that too. So it's not a one-sided dragoon. But yeah, I mean the fact of the matter is that they're having trouble because people are running out of Ukraine. They don't want to serve.

Bill Walton ([03:18](#)):

How many people do you think have left Ukraine?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([03:22](#)):

About 3 million.

Bill Walton ([03:25](#)):

Well that's significant. Is Zelenskyy really in charge there or is he just merely a puppet for Victoria Nuland and Tony Blinken?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([03:36](#)):

Well, he certainly takes orders from them, but I don't think he's a puppet. I think he's in control at the moment of the Ukrainian government and the military. But there's a little bit of unhappiness with him because he committed forces to Bakhmut, which is a cauldron. It's a very difficult place to fight in. And they've been sustaining a lot of losses there. They're hanging on, but they're losing ground every day. So I think they'll soon be out of there. But this is Zelenskyy folly. He didn't need to do that. It wasn't necessary.

Bill Walton ([04:15](#)):

The folly to stand and fight in Bakhmut?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([04:18](#)):

Yeah, it's just a salient that's stuck, his nose is stuck into the heart of Donetsk and it's not a great place to try and defend. It's an urban setting, not an open field. And they've done very well and held out for a very long time, given the circumstances. I read a report this morning that they've already been able to cycle in troops about six to seven times during this conflict in Bakhmut. So they've been able to move people in and out even though it's been difficult to do it. But the Russians have been working to close off the roads to prevent them from doing that so that they can bring an end to this.

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

What about that outburst from the head of the Wagner group?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([05:04](#)):

Prigozhin? Well, let's put it in context. The Ukrainians in the last few days, and we're talking about the week of the May 10th, 11th, have launched a kind of counter offensive to try and open up the roadways that lead to Bakhmut. Obviously for military necessity, they have to do that. And what happened was that the initial contact line was held by some very untrained Russian forces and they just fell back, because they knew behind them were very good defenses with the Wagner group. So to some extent the Ukrainians had a modest temporary victory, but Prigozhin made it sound like the end of the world and raised holy hell about the Russian army and about the Russian leadership. And now he's going as far

as to call Putin names. Putin's his main supporter. So I don't know. I think he has a screw loose. I think that he's lost his ability to be rational.

Bill Walton ([06:11](#)):

Well, yeah, Putin's been his main, as you pointed, main supporter, and he really stuck something right into Putin. You can't believe he's going to last long.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([06:22](#)):

That's what I think. A lot of people think that too. But I don't think the Russians will make any changes in the Wagner group until after Bakhmut. That's my guess. But it's risky for them to shake up leadership or make any changes that will cause people to lose their coherence. They want to keep it as tight as they can until after Bakhmut.

Bill Walton ([06:48](#)):

So there's so many ways to go here, but this is not my area of expertise. But it struck me that the United States was particularly evocative leading up to this or provocative, with regards to Russia and NATO and forcing the issue of Ukraine and NATO, and now I think we're looking at Sweden and NATO. Victoria Nuland and that crew seemed to be pushing pushing pushing to push the NATO's borders right up to up to the edge of old Russia and closer and closer to Moscow. They've learned anything from the last year and a half about that, because there are many people, including me, that think, well yeah, Russia's bad. Putin's a bad guy. He shouldn't have done all this. But on the other hand, if you put yourself in their position, I think that's what most people would do were their borders being pressed like that.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([07:51](#)):

Yeah, I think there's an argument from both sides. I don't think there's one side by any means, but trying to squeeze the Russians, I don't know the point of it. What is the point? What are we trying to achieve?

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

Well, that's what I don't know, that's a-

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([08:09](#)):

It doesn't have a point. If you want to break up Russia, which I think Nuland wants to do and others. It's a fool's journey, it won't work. Russia's not going to break up. It's a big powerful country and a nuclear power. So why do you want attempt the furies with that kind of nonsense? It doesn't make any sense. It's not in our national interest, the United States' national interest to do this. It's not in the European interest, although you never know it listening to them, but it's not really in their interest because having a war in Europe in this day and age is, it would be a horrible tragedy. It would destroy you. So why does anyone want to do that? That makes no sense.

Bill Walton ([08:55](#)):

Well, it's ...

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([08:58](#)):

Sorry to get on my platform here.

Bill Walton ([08:59](#)):

No, I want you in the platform, because-

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([09:01](#)):

This is the kind of thing that you wonder where are the rational people?

Bill Walton ([09:06](#)):

Well, people, I want you on this platform because people need to hear this, that we have no strategy that that's discernible-

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([09:12](#)):

Well, we do have a strategy. I don't agree. We have a strategy, but unfortunately the strategy is to put a pincher onto the Russians and squeeze them, and you can only squeeze so much and then bad things happen. So I don't see the point of it, and I don't see how it serves European interests. Europe was quite peaceful. What we should have done is negotiated with the Russians. They asked for negotiations before they invaded. They pleaded for negotiations.

Bill Walton ([09:45](#)):

Didn't they send a couple of letters, one to the US and one to NATO?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([09:49](#)):

That's right.

Bill Walton ([09:50](#)):

Before they went in saying, "Well look, let's sit down and talk because we need to resolve this NATO issue. And if we can do that, we might feel a whole lot better and not need to go into Ukraine."

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([10:05](#)):

There were two letters. One was to Biden and the other one was to the Stoltenberg, the head of NATO. And the Russians had two issues. One was Ukraine obviously, because they felt that we were arming up Ukraine. And then the Ukrainians were pressuring the Russian-speaking portions of the country and about to invade and might cross into Russia too. And then the Russians were very alarmed about that. And so that was their view. Whether they're correct about that's not important, what's important is that was their view and that's what they were talking about.

([10:38](#)):

They were also talking about the problem of nuclear weapons in Europe. Now the Russians sometimes are as guilty as anybody about that, but the Russians were pointing out that the US had set up these missile defenses in Romania and one in the works in Poland that would be able to launch cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads, and they were concerned about it. I would too if it was my problem. So they asked him to talk about that, and they were simply turned down by NATO and Biden wouldn't discuss anything with them. It's after that the invasion started.

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

It seems like the delusion that the administration has is that they're still acting like the United States is sort of the omnipotent world hegemon and all the other countries are going to have to fall in line as we bring about a world order that's aligned with what we think the world order ought to be. And it looks like the rest of the world's watching us here. And they've watched us cut and run in Afghanistan, Iraq turns out to have been a catastrophe. It looks like a lot of our foreign adventures have been ending up-

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([12:01](#)):

Made a mess of Middle Eastern policy.

Bill Walton ([12:03](#)):

And the Middle Eastern policy. So in that context, I've got three questions. One's how is Europe feeling now? How's NATO feeling now? Or are they beginning to lose confidence that we ought to be pursuing this? And are they going to put pressure on us to try to wrap this thing up? Second is, have the sanctions worked at all in terms of crippling Russia? And I guess the third thing is what do you see with the fact that we've pushed Russia into China's arms or China has stepped into this and we really don't seem to have any other countries in the world that are much aligned with our objectives except maybe Poland.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([12:47](#)):

Yeah, well, working backwards forwards, we certainly push the Russians into the arms of China. And we put ourselves in a very bad position because now we have two large powers, two nuclear powers, one becoming increasingly prominent and aggressive and the other one strong. And we put ourselves between them. Why? We didn't need to do that. It wasn't necessary to provoke the Russians. We could have found some way to ameliorate that problem. And so now we've got two alliances against us. So that that's kind of crazy. Not good geopolitics. It's very bad, very senseless. So I think that's the part of the answer. As far as the Europeans are concerned, they speak with, as we say, forked tongue. Sometimes they say, "Well, fighting for Ukraine," but they're also saying, "We don't want to be in a war." So it's both. And the other thing that's interesting is Stoltenberg, the head of NATO, made a big speech the other day and was saying, "We're going to bring Ukraine into NATO."

([14:03](#)):

And the deputy head of the EU said, "We don't agree with that. Nobody in Europe expects or wishes for Ukraine to be in NATO." Now, that's the first time I ever heard that from a European official. So there is pushback. And it's the first time I've actually seen pushback against Stoltenberg, these kinds of belligerent statements, which I think are foolish, once again because it provokes the Russians for absolutely no reason. The Russians have set a red line as no NATO in Ukraine. That's their line. That doesn't mean there can't be security guarantees for Ukraine, but that's a different matter. And I think it's very foolish of Stoltenberg to do this. But he's been provoking for a long time. And of course that's what Washington wants him to do. But that's not the way to go. That's wrong. Is that all the questions or have I missed one?

Bill Walton ([15:05](#)):

No, I think you missed one. The big one is how has this impacted Putin's Russia and have the sanctions had any effect? My view is not nearly as much, and in some ways it may have strengthened Russia's hand. But anyway [inaudible 00:15:20].

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([15:20](#)):

Well, dollars ... I'm not an economist.

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

Oh, thank God. Yeah, that is really good. That's a good thing.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([15:30](#)):

Some things I avoided in my life. One was to be a brain surgeon and the other was to be an economist. And I think in both cases people are very lucky. But as far as Russia's concerned, yeah, it's hurt them. There's no doubt. I think the biggest loss though, at the end of the day is our loss, because Western industry has pulled out of Russia, almost all of it. And that's a tragedy because the importance is to have Russia integrated into the West in a positive way. And one of the ways you do that is economically. So if an American companies are in Russia, in Russian companies are in American, that's a good thing. But that's over now. So the Russians are now turning to the Chinese setting up a counter currency to the dollar. Well, that won't happen. Well, it may happen, but it won't work.

([16:26](#)):

But the bottom line is that they're alienated, they've shifted their focus. In the beginning, if you recall, Putin was very focused on relations with the West. That was his whole bit. No more Soviet stuff, we're going to have positive, really good relations, economic, political, everything with the West. That's gone. And by the way, while we're talking about it, but I think Putin's secure, by the way, for the moment. I think he's more secure than Zelenskyy. But that's just my assessment of things. He seems to be able to keep public support in Russia, despite a lot of losses of manpower and equipment. And no one has reckoned with the cost of this war. Because this is a very expensive war. Now, the Russians got a break for the first year because they had all this Soviet equipment from the '80s that they used against Ukraine.

([17:30](#)):

Of course, Ukraine also had all this equipment from the '80s. So they were fighting with old stuff, but the current government didn't pay for it, so to speak. So it didn't hit their bottom line. But now they've had to rush into production new tanks and new missiles and all kinds of stuff, train new troops and all this business, which is very, very expensive. And at some point that bill has to be paid or they're going to have terrible inflation, sanctions or no sanctions. That's the bottom line that's Eco 101, which I didn't teach and didn't attend the classes.

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

Well, Russia's built up an enormous gold reserves. They've been doing that for the last 10, 15 years. I think their gold reserves may be second only to the United States.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([18:20](#)):

But they have to convert them into fungible money.

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

Well, there's all this talk about the dollar's world currency status. The thing to step back and recognize is that the dollar's a fiat money, and it's increasingly losing its value because of what we've done with our budget deficits and our trade deficits and the idea we're going to create another world currency that's also fiat money, I don't think is going to be all that attractive. You're going to have to come up with

something that's a lot more sound than just the Chinese getting together with the Russians to create another form of fiat money.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([19:04](#)):

As long as China is threatening its neighbors, it's not going to be really possible for them to be successful with the currency, an alternative currency. Anyway. China has terrible economic problems right now, big time and many other problems. But the economic ones are very really serious. Heavy unemployment, construction industry at a standstill. There's factories closing, lack of foreign orders. Why is that? Well, part of the reason for that is people are afraid of China. Industry, American companies are pulling out of China and going to India or someplace else, even Vietnam, but they don't want to be in China because it's become too risky. So you can't create a currency based on a high risk nation, won't work.

Bill Walton ([19:59](#)):

Well, I think that's certainly, I think that's what people running big companies would like to do. They'd probably like to disengage. On the other hand, you take a look at Volkswagen, China is Volkswagen's largest market.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([20:14](#)):

Oh, they're probably trapped.

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

And they're trapped. And Starbucks, their market in China is neck and neck with the market here in the United States. It's on track in a couple years to-

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([20:26](#)):

But companies like Foxconn, which is a Taiwanese company, its Chinese name is Hon Hai Precision. They're the ones that build all the Apple stuff in China. They employ millions of people in China. And they're starting to pull out, they're moving to India.

Bill Walton ([20:44](#)):

Well, spending a lot of time in the investment business, the amount of money that I'd like to put into China is zero.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([20:55](#)):

Well again, it's a trust issue. If you think China's peaceful and it's going to continue developing its economy is one thing. But if they're going to be aggressive and threaten their neighbors, it's a different story. And I think that's why the currency at the end of the day won't work because-

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

And Xi, is totalitarian paranoia. As an investor, one of the things you want to do before you invest is you want to find out what's going on in the country, what's going on in the market and the industry you want to invest in. Well, China has all these due diligence firms operating in the country to help foreign investors decide where and how and when to invest. Well, Xi's having them all shut down, they're getting raided by the, what do they call them, the black men or the black policeman or something like that. And they're shutting down US audit firms in China. And he is concerned about information leaking

out about the Chinese strategies to American investors. And maybe the [inaudible 00:22:02] government.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([22:04](#)):

Americans and others don't know how bad it is in China right now. If you have auditing, you find out who's making money, don't you? And where the money's going and all that stuff.

Bill Walton ([22:14](#)):

Well, yeah, we got to circle in for a landing here. I didn't want to take too much.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([22:22](#)):

I didn't plan to talk to you about economics.

Bill Walton ([22:24](#)):

I plan to talk about it.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([22:25](#)):

I'm not an economist.

Bill Walton ([22:26](#)):

I think the most interesting conversations are the ones that end up someplace we never started or thought we'd go. But let's circle back for landing though, because you wrote about Kissinger and Kissinger's prediction that he thought the situation was ripe for negotiations to start by the end of the year. You wrote a piece on that. Thoughts?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([22:46](#)):

Yeah, well, a couple thoughts. First of all, negotiations won't start unless Washington wants them to start. Or unless Zelenskyy and his crowd are gone and someone else takes over in Ukraine. But if things stay the way they are, there's not going to be any negotiations. Biden doesn't want them, because he wants a victory. He said he is going to bring a victory in Ukraine. That's his mantra. That's his policy, whatever victory means. Well, I know what it means, it means the Russians are completely out of Ukraine. Ain't going to happen. So that forecloses negotiations. Well, Kissinger thinks that will wear down by next the New Year, let's say. And maybe Biden will change direction. I'm not a very good at these predictions, but right now doesn't look that way.

Bill Walton ([23:44](#)):

Well, but the basis for settlement, I think the United States would want Russia to give up all the gains they've made in Ukraine and certainly solidify its hold on Crimea and United States. Russia's not going to give up that, the United States think they should. So that's not a starter. And then there are lots of things Ukraine couldn't give up. I don't see the basis for a deal.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([24:12](#)):

Well, especially you have to want one. If you're lost too many men, if too much of your country's been destroyed, at that point you need a deal because you need a deal. And we're not there yet. But Ukraine has taken a terrible beating in this war.

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

How many Ukrainians have been killed?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([24:33](#)):

Nobody knows.

Bill Walton ([24:35](#)):

No one knows. Yeah.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([24:35](#)):

Well there's numbers floating around. But what the Pentagon says is Ukraine is losing seven military guys to every one Russian.

Bill Walton ([24:46](#)):

Wow. Well, I have no subject matter expertise in this particularly. I haven't been really following international events as much as maybe I should have. But is this war more difficult to figure out because of the propaganda on both sides and the US propaganda and the media machine that only wants to report certain things? I mean, is it just me or is this one more mystifying than anything we've been in?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([25:18](#)):

Well, I don't know. The other conflicts I've been able to follow fairly well. This one is much difficult because the US seems to be utterly dependent on whatever the Ukrainians tell them, including the CIA. Now the CIA has some independent ways of knowing things because it has satellites, it has reconnaissance aircraft and all that. But most of the reporting is coming right from the propaganda ministry in Ukraine. So it makes it quite difficult. Anything that Russians say for the most part is not reported in the Western press. Almost completely neglected. Now does that mean the Russians are telling the truth? Of course not. They don't tell the truth. Ukrainians don't tell the truth. There's almost no independent journalism in the war because neither side will allow it.

[\(26:14\)](#):

So it's kind of a black hole. And it's very hard to figure out. I spent a lot of time reading claims this happened or that happened then trying to figure out did this happen and did that happen? Or was it something else? Or did nothing happen? Even Prigozhin, the leader of the Wagner group, actually took the news about the Ukrainian counter offensive from the Ukrainians and reacted to it as if it was intelligence. And what he got was wrong.

[\(26:43\)](#):

And it tells you a bunch of things. First of all, that Prigozhin's out of the loop. And they're not giving him any information that is the Russian side. But it also means that he relied on what the Ukrainians said, which is foolish. And I think that we're in the same position in a way because we see this stuff in the press, some of it quite hysterical or some of it claiming things that never happened. Like the shutdown of the hypersonic missile. The Kinzhal missile, which now the Ukrainians are trying to prove happened. But it didn't happen. This is the kind of thing you have to deal with. So as someone trying to be an analyst and trying to understand the dynamics of this conflict, it's quite complicated. Quite complicated. And it makes it hard to make a sound judgment because there's stuff you just don't know. So in the broad picture, I know. I'm very comfortable with the broad picture, but the tactical picture, what's going on today and tomorrow and the day before or whatever is very hard to be sure about.

Bill Walton ([27:55](#)):

Well, you and I talked three months ago or whenever, we talked several times. We were very concerned about the nuclear trigger. Has that gotten less likely or more likely?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([28:08](#)):

Well, just when you think it's less likely, the British go and send Storm Shadow cruise missiles to the Ukrainians, which have range that can hit Moscow.

Bill Walton ([28:20](#)):

When did that happen?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([28:22](#)):

Just now, with the permission of the United States, with the agreement of the United States. And the Russians have reacted very severely to that, as I would expect they would. But it jacks up the threat again. What purpose could these missiles serve if they're going to hit Russian cities, including Moscow?

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

What was the drone about? Kremlin?

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([28:52](#)):

The drone, I think was an attack launched inside Moscow, close to the Kremlin, using put together drones with some Chinese electronics or whatever, and some explosives, not very much. It was not designed to kill anybody, I don't think, because it wouldn't have, it was designed to show they could do it. And actually since then, Zelenskyy has really gone out on a limb about, I want to read you something he said, I made some notes. He said it today. He said, "For those in the Kremlin, it will end badly for them. I don't know how," he said, "but I would like it to be quickly and they will not die of natural causes." This is Zelenskyy. It's a threat to Putin and anybody else in Russian leadership.

Bill Walton ([29:58](#)):

Well, based on Putin's track record, it looks like Zelenskyy just put a target on his forehead.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([30:07](#)):

I find it almost unimaginable what he said. Putin would never say something like that.

Bill Walton ([30:15](#)):

Well, with Zelenskyy is always, he may not be a puppet, but he's certainly an actor. His theater is dramatic pronouncements and this is the latest of a long, long line.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([30:29](#)):

But the Russians won't see it that way. They'll see it as something quite real, not just an actor. I mean, they'll say, "Okay, this guy's working to kill us. Maybe we should be working to kill him."

Bill Walton ([30:43](#)):

Well, I hoped in this conversation you'd give me a reasonable expectation that this is going to wrap up soon and we're all going to live happily ever after. I don't think we're looking-

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([30:52](#)):

I wish I could.

Bill Walton ([30:54](#)):

No, well, you can't. That's the reason I like talking with you. You're not here to cheer me up. You're here to tell me what's actually happening.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([31:02](#)):

In war, nothing's certain and there's always surprises. You can't say, but Zelenskyy could be out of office tomorrow morning and there could be some Ukrainian general who takes over says, "I want to speak to my friends in Moscow." You just can't predict what's going to happen here, because you don't have that kind of knowledge or intelligence or crystal ball, or whatever it is. But if they stay the way they are, this will grind on and there'll be many more dead. And it's an awful thing. And as I said beginning, it doesn't serve our national interest, not in the least. It certainly doesn't serve anybody else's, it doesn't serve Europe's interests. It could lead to a bigger war. And we're playing Russian roulette with a loaded gun, all chambers loaded. Why do we want to do that? It doesn't make sense.

Bill Walton ([31:58](#)):

To win in 2024 and to make it look like Afghanistan wasn't a catastrophe and that Joe Biden can, if he could take on Corn Pop, he can take on Putin.

Dr. Stephen Bryen ([32:10](#)):

Yeah, I hear you. But if that's what it is, if you're right, and I suspect you are, it's a terrible thing that one guy's election is what causes a war to continue that kills all these young men on both sides and civilians, lots of them. It's shameful. I'll be accused of being pro-Russian for having said what I said today. I am not pro-Russian by any stretch of the imagination. I worked very hard to defeat the Soviet Union during the time I was in government. I was very good at it, I think, and it had some effect. But I certainly am not pro-Russian. I'm not pro-Ukrainian. I'm not anything but pro-American and I don't think our national interest is being served. That's my opinion.

Bill Walton ([33:05](#)):

And I agree. So let's check back in the next month or two to see where we are, and I'll be interested in your update and assessments from there. But let's hope a lot of people listen to you and start putting a little pressure on the administration to rethink this adventure, which has been another one which is harming the United States, not helping. So anyway, thanks Stephen Bryen, Senior Fellow to Center for Security Policy and expert in all things national security. And hope you enjoyed this episode of the Bill Walton Show. As you know, you can find us in all the major podcast platforms, Rumble and YouTube, and on Substack as well as on CPAC now on Monday nights. And please send us your ideas about topics and guests you'd like to have us get into things with. And we will take it into the hopper and hopefully produce some good shows that you want to see and hear. So anyway, thanks for joining. Talk soon.

Speaker 4 ([34:07](#)):

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