

Bill Walton (04:15.714)

Today we're back with the Bill Walton show and we want to talk about all things nuclear. America forever, if there was some nuclear event on the horizon, there would be 24-7 coverage of this in the news and in media. And astonishingly, right now we have events brewing around the world which would make World War III loom as a possibility.

yet it's getting almost no coverage. And today, we want to highlight that and get people focused on what they ought to be paying attention to and what we ought to be doing about it. To talk about it, I've got two men who are fantastic experts in this topic. Sam Faddis, got a long resume. We try to get it down to something succinct. He's a retired CIA operations officer. And he also

is on Steve Bannon's war room frequently, as most of you know. And we also have Lance Gatling checking in from Japan, where he's lived for the last four decades, who's a retired Army Foreign Area Officer and also spent some time with the State Department and in the technology, defense technology industry. So let's get right into it. Sam, you, why don't you kick us off with what you see as the

issues we need to be addressing.

Sam (05:48.265)

Well, thanks for having me. Look, I think that the challenge is that there are so many issues, right? It's hard to put your arms around them. As you said in your intro, we've walked right up to the line, we're run up to the line or whatever, stumbled up to the line all over the world. We're on the brink with the Iranians. As we're talking, the Chinese have once again encircled Taiwan and as they want to do are constantly

rattling the saber. Putin has threatened to use tactical nuclear weapons. I've lost track of how many times. mean, we are on the brink of actual nuclear war all around the planet in multiple locations. And folks, you know, remember the Cuban Missile Crisis, at least from

history books, and this dominated the news cycle. And my God, we could be looking at Armageddon and

Today we make no reference to it at all. We pretend it's not happening.

Bill Walton (06:52.226)

Lance, you pulled together a slide that gives kind of a big picture about who has nukes now around the world. Why don't you, I'm gonna pull that up, pull it up maybe in post-production. Why don't you describe who has them and who potentially has them? It's a pretty scary picture.

Bill Walton (07:16.994)

Hey Lance, need your microphone.

Bill Walton (07:22.55)

Lance, we'll fix that in editing. We're not live. Why don't you go ahead and start over. Tell us about the slide with which countries have nukes and which countries want them.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (07:24.723)

Yes.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (07:39.987)

The largest inventories are in the United States and in Russia. At the peak in the 60s, the United States had over 31,000 nuclear warheads, everything from gigantic mega city death devices to literally manpack new nuclear weapons that were at the time were 50 to 70 pounds, say call it eight pounds of plutonium uranium.

Bill Walton (07:40.29)

Can you hear me?

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (08:09.235)

where a single individual in a special forces green light unit could be inserted. He could swim in, he could drop in and put that under a motor pool or a headquarters someplace, or we could loft them from the other side of the planet. Those 31,000 are down below 6,000 now. The United States as policy has withdrawn the nuclear weapons, most of them that are on alert.

It doesn't take that long to retarget them. Some of that is public relations. It's actually not that big a deal to punch in a series of numbers to a computer and actually just a feed rather than initializing the inertial navigation system on one of these missiles takes longer than it does to tell it where to go. So Russia has a numerical superiority. If it means anything in such a

brace as it is. If it means anything, there's actually more in Russia, which gives some people angst. But, you know, if you can destroy the world multiple times over, doing it for multiple times over plus one is probably not consequential. Following that, you have England, France, that have, you know, a few hundred. China currently has around 400, it's thought. Sam mentioned off camera that

You know, people are probably guessing, of course they're guessing. mean, they're putting together their best estimate and you hope that those estimates aren't cooked for political purposes, which is all too often the case these days. If it ever wasn't the case, it was when I was too young and dumb to believe anything other than what I was briefed when it had top secret. Excuse me. When it had top secret.

Bill Walton (09:56.192)

Wait a second, Chinese are weighing in on Lance's estimate here, and they don't want you to get into this. I think we better change the subject, Lance. Maybe we ought to switch to India.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (10:02.879)

That's right.

Sam (10:03.87)

You

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (10:08.4)

It is it does happen

We'll go to India and it has a number and the Indian weapons of course are only meaningful, primarily meaningful to the Pakistanis and the Chinese, which is why they have those devices in the first place. How they would deliver them is certainly of great interest to everybody. So you have the South Asia contingent, India, Pakistan, China.

which is in Asia, South Asia, all over the place. China is a big place and has weapons primarily concentrated on the East Coast looking towards the Pacific, but it also has it out bases all the way out into the desert, almost past Mongolia. And then one thing that's often overlooked is the dual control system within NATO.

where the nuclear weapons are stored, maintained by the United States, but there are countries that have signed up to have a say on a council that meets and, and deliberates whether they're going to use nuclear weapons. And these, I forget the exact wording, but it's something like dual purpose aircraft. So you get a tornado or

or the latest version of the English or German fighter. And it's a ground attack aircraft with advanced precision guided conventional munitions, but it can also carry a gravity bomb. B61, these are big hummers. These are the ones that get the Russians' attention when they talk about them. They're kept under literally the physical control of the United States military. And having pulled that guard, they're pretty serious about this.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (11:57.811)

those were scattered around a lot more. Sorry.

Bill Walton (11:59.316)

Yeah. Well, then we have the countries that want them very badly or maybe already have them, which number one on that list would be Iran. Sam, you've done a lot of work thinking about what they've got or what they don't have or when they might have it.

Sam (12:20.359)

Well, yeah, look, the first thing to understand is that the Iranians have been working on acquiring nuclear weapons for a really, really long time. They didn't start this last week or last year. This is a decades long effort. And the other thing to understand is that they hide it and they lie bald faced about it over and over with a constantly shifting series of ridiculous stories. And they constantly are caught over periods of time with

sites that they didn't declare, didn't tell anybody about. And then the inspectors show up and it's clear that there was nuclear material there, but by the time they get there, everything's been moved. And this shell game just goes on and has gone on for a really, really long time.

Bill Walton (13:07.339)

One thing.

Sam (13:07.387)

Everybody in the business who talks about proliferation, which is what we're talking about here with the Iranians, would recognize that the really key determiner is the possession of the highly enriched uranium. They're not pursuing plutonium weapons because that's the part that requires the biggest infrastructure that you can detect to actually run this long enrichment process, which we don't need to get lost in. All the rest of the work, the engineering work, which we should keep in mind,

Right? We cracked the code on this in 1945. So the idea that this is cutting edge technology that only six guys in lab coats know how to do is absurd. All of that engineering work can be done at sites that good luck trying to keep track of us. So where are we with the Iranians? For decades, we've known they've been working on the engineering stuff. All of the

Bill Walton (13:51.42)

Well, the

Bill Walton (13:56.162)

Hold on a second, we just had Sonos jump in here. What happened here? Did we lose our signal?

Sam (14:03.751)

the details of how to actually make the thing go boom and produce a mushroom cloud and not just blow itself into pieces as a very expensive conventional weapon. And we also know, so we know that they've been working on that for decades. We know they have a whole stack of missiles that can hit Southern Europe and every city in the Middle East. We know that. Yeah.

Bill Walton (14:10.539)

We just lost Bear's Den from this computer.

Bill Walton (14:25.442)

Sam, Sam, could I interrupt you for a second? Could you go back? I'm on the side of the mountain here in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Rappahannock County, Skyline Drive. It's beautiful, except the internet's weird. We just got dropped for about 10 seconds. Could you just go back to after that? You made the point that we've known how to build these things since 1945 and yet.

barrier to Iran doing it is the enriched uranium. I want you to start back in with that and then we'll just pick it up there.

Sam (15:02.729)

So we have known that the Iranians have been working on the engineering details, the mechanics, all of the detail work for how to actually make a nuclear weapon function, literally for decades. Because again, without getting lost in physics that nobody cares about, if the thing doesn't function exactly right, it blows up, but it blows up as a conventional weapon and you don't get a nuclear explosion.

the details of how to make this thing actually turn into a mushroom cloud. Well, that's the whole game, right? They've been working on that something that we cracked the code on 80 years ago for decades. So the idea that they haven't figured that out or that they're going to wait until they have enough highly enriched uranium to make a bomb to start working on that is absurd and contrary to all the evidence. In other words, everything we know

tells us that in all likelihood they cracked the code on that and can build the bomb and have been able to build the bomb for a long time. also know that they have the missiles, not that you can't put these things on aircraft, but they have the missiles that can deliver these things depending on the size of the weapon obviously, but presumably they built the missiles with the idea in mind that it would carry these weapons.

Bill Walton (16:10.818)

We'll see it. No, I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Sam (16:29.895)

And they can hit cities in Southern Europe and every city of consequence in the Middle East. So we know that. So now you're down to the question of, do they have sufficient highly enriched uranium, because that's the path they took, to make the bombs? And they've been enriching stuff for years and years and years. And everybody studying the problem will admit, first of all, our intelligence. Well, the polite term would be imprecise. In most cases, we're blind.

And they are, you you hear people these days say they're two weeks or three days or something like this away from having the material they need. That means they're there.

Bill Walton (17:10.658)

Well, Lance, you showed me a picture that we're now going to put into our slide deck of somebody in the 50s or 60s of special forces operator parachuting out of a plane with nuclear devices strapped to his back and to his legs, presumably going to parachute in someplace and go plant these in a spot where they could be exploded.

presumably after the special operator left the scene. If we could build something like that, that small 60 years ago, 50 years ago, why wouldn't Iran already been thinking about planning something like that inside Israel? And Lance, do you want to talk about the technology that might have made that possible?

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (18:02.591)

Sure. The miniaturization of nuclear weapons depends a lot on plutonium, weapons-grade plutonium. If you really want to get something small, you go with plutonium. Because the plutonium devices are what's in, say, 155 howitzer shell. Small enough, you think about 155 millimeter, this ain't big.

and it's a tapered Ojive, has it the boat tail, and there's a tiny plutonium pit, and it's very precisely machined, and it's surrounded by explosive lenses that compress it. In the event of, say, the Nike Hercules missiles that surrounded San Francisco and Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., they had a softball-sized

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (19:00.573)

bisected, chopped up onion looking thing, spherical cones and the explosive lenses had to be very precisely timed to bring all that together to take that softball size mass down to about the size of a tennis ball and then it would go critical. The big bang that Sam was



talking about, it's a high order explosion, not just the chemical explosion but a nuclear explosion.

Bill Walton (19:25.026)

How would that compare to say a Hiroshima-sized bomb?

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (19:30.239)

Well, Hiroshima is a standard rule of thumb. It's 15 kilotons. Okay. Nagasaki with little man actually had about the, the little, little boy bomb, the Hiroshima device was about 15 kilotons equivalent of TNT. That's a lot of boom, but it had 141 pounds of uranium. We're very simple.

a relatively low tech device. The plutonium Bob only had about 13 pounds of weapons grade plutonium, but it was in this big round cylinder. know, fat boy. It's a big mass because it was so complicated. Well, what Sam is saying is that when the Iranians, the Iranians, the Iranians, thank you, went towards highly enriched uranium, they can use a much simpler design that precludes all of that.

All right, so they don't have to go through all of this modeling on supercomputers and this and that. You and I, if we could get our hands on 90 % plus highly enriched uranium, it is quote unquote weapons grade. we could just, if we could throw it together hard enough, it would blow up. Now what happens is if you get two separate subcritical masses together,

There's so much energy that evolves. goes and kind of splits apart. It just falls apart and it splatters everywhere. It's going to kill me and you and everybody else in the room and you know, couple of rooms over.

Bill Walton (21:05.633)

Well, why wouldn't we think that Iran's already developed that? I mean, it seems to me that that's

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (21:12.595)

Well, Sam mentioned it before. They're doing this in parallel. All right. So it's kind of like, you know, you're going to make a cake and you're waiting for the flour, but you've got the sugar, you've got the vanilla, you've got the lard, you've got, you know, everything is ready for this flour. All they need now is the flour.

Bill Walton (21:19.372)

Yeah.

Bill Walton (21:34.754)

Well, the Israeli intelligence capabilities seem to vastly exceed the United States. I what do you think Israel knows about what Iran already has? Because they're playing with fire right now themselves. mean, they're going all out to win this, as far as I can tell.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (21:57.395)

Well, it's probably a Sam question. think they know everything that I think. I think they know. I think.

Bill Walton (22:00.098)

Yeah, that's a family. Sam, why don't you take that one? You've done a little bit on.

Sam (22:05.481)

Well, look, I've worked with the Israelis a lot and I got all the respect in the world for these guys. And yeah, I think it's a safe bet that their collection on the Iranian nuclear program is a heck of a lot better than ours is, particularly at this point in time. But let's also keep in mind that the Israelis are not really 10 feet tall, right? mean, Hamas just launched a mass invasion a year ago of Israel that they prepared a matter of two or three miles from the border.

and managed to catch the Israelis completely off guard. That wasn't five guys snuck over the fence. That was thousands of people that had been action that had been prepared for a period of time and literally prepared in areas where the Israeli collection is typically insanely good. I mean, when they blow up a car in Gaza and fire a missile through the window, they not only know their Hamas, but typically know the full names of everybody in the car.

And usually who's in the front seat and the back seat in my experience. That's how good their collection is. So they screwed up and they managed to miss that. the idea that it's perfect or we can just all take a nap because the Israelis will let us know. think that's, you know, that's well, that's that's really near sight. We also, I mean, just throw into the mix. The Iranians are not on an island in isolation, right? They have longstanding connections to the North Koreans.

Well, North Koreans have nuclear weapons and we know that as a fact. are we positing that the Iranians just decided to do all of this all on their own, but ask for no help from the North Koreans? I think that's pretty naive. Lots of other bad people on the planet could help them.

Bill Walton (23:45.906)

And didn't Russia and North Korea just recently form a military alliance that, and Russia is transferring nuclear technology to North Korea?

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (23:59.775)

Well, they're certainly transferring launch vehicle technology, rocket technology. That's what, that's what Kim wants. The good president, Kim in the North, he wants to prove that they are a worthwhile high tech society, that their efforts have been rewarded. He was primarily focused on launch technology. The Russians wanted ammunition. They wanted munitions. wanted rockets of various sorts.

Of the North Koreans were very happy to have battlefield testing of their equipment, but mostly what they needed was 152 howitzer ammunition. This stuff is the popcorn of war.

When I said I was a military operations officer, we would literally plan campaigns with trainloads of 155 howitzer ammunition. People have no idea what that means. An entire train. We didn't measure by trucks. We had core support.

in trains that would go someplace and have 400, two and a half ton trucks show up to carry this stuff around the battlefield. All right. So that's what the North Koreans gave. And that's what the Israelis, sorry, the Ukrainians apparently got with the drone because they got lazy and sloppy and they piled it all on one pile instead of spreading it out over, you know, three or four square kilometers, which they should have with that kind of ammunition. So the Russians were looking for ammunition, conventional ammunition.

I think the Russians have provided advanced medium range ballistic missile technology to the North Koreans. you look at their Hwasong 11 series, it's a solid rocket motor MRBM, a medium range ballistic missile. That's a big step forward from the old type liquid fuel rockets they had before. That's a big deal. So I think they got that.

Now, whether they got nuclear technology, nuclear weapons technology from the Russians, I think they already got it from the Pakistanis. I think they've had it for a long time.

Bill Walton (26:05.91)

So what about the Russians helping out with Iran, speeding that along? Sam, have you done anything on that? Or either one of you, really?

Sam (26:14.323)

Well, look, we know that there's a connection and we know that there has been support going back and forth. The question is, if you come down to the nuclear program, again, I think the issue here is collection. People are always asking intelligence, what are the Russians doing? What are the Iranians doing? And no intel guy worth his salt wants to ever have the audacity to say, I don't have a clue because we don't have the collection capability.

do it, but unfortunately that's the wall we bump into. In the Iranian program writ large, you have arrived at a point where I think you have to say, if you're at all prudent and have any common sense left, you have to say we have to treat these guys as being nuclear capable. I mean the reality is, in my estimation, if they blow up a nuclear, if they conduct a nuclear test and give you advance notice,

before they actually put those weapons on delivery vehicles, I think you will be lucky. And I don't think that's the way they would function because in my experience, the Iranians are smart, right? They are sharp people. They will put functioning nuclear weapons on a dozen delivery vehicles. They will disperse them to locations you don't know all of those locations before they ever tell you we are nuclear capable.

And keep in mind, we were talking about the size of nuclear devices here. I keep talking about delivery vehicles and primarily I'm talking about ballistic missiles of some type, could potentially be drones. But the Iranians also operate a worldwide terror network with groups like Hezbollah that have a very strong lash up with Venezuela as an example. I don't mean like a couple of Hezbollah guys show up in Venezuela every once in a while. This is a massive relationship that

The Venezuelans give Hezbollah full sets of identity documents, false identity. What's that mean? Backstopped. What that means is they'll give you a passport. And if you contact the Venezuelan government and ask them, is this guy a legit Venezuelan citizen? The Venezuelan government will say, yeah, he's one of ours. So you got a driver's license, a birth certificate, you got a passport. In other words, they can pass as Venezuelans. We've talked about the size of these nuclear weapons.

Sam (28:35.689)

especially if we start talking about something that's considered tactical, whatever exactly that means. These are not particularly large divide. mean, you know, so the Iranians have a capacity to move these weapons and put them places around the world that do not all have to involve digging big underground silos like we think of in Montana and putting it on a weapon. so if they have put all this time and effort into it,

Bill Walton (28:41.078)

Well, let's talk... Let's talk about a tactical...

Sam (29:05.597)

They are not going say to you next Tuesday we're going to begin the process of going nuclear. They're going to detonate a device in the desert and then inform you that they're already capable of taking out Tel Aviv and you're going to be left with that fate accompli. And we're effectively, in my estimation, already there.

Bill Walton (29:21.868)

Well, let's talk about, I want to talk about the tech, the tactical thing, the tactical piece of this, because people in Ukraine in particular, there was a lot of talk in the last year or two where, well, Russia might use a tactical nuke or we might do a tactical this or that, but the tactical nukes we're talking about are more powerful than the bombs that blew up Hiroshima as I understand it.

And so this distinction of somehow they're nukes and then they're tactical nukes, think is a false one. And I'd love to have you guys weigh in on that.

Sam (30:01.993)

Yeah, I would agree. I mean, look forward to hear what Landis has to say about that. But that's why I say whatever tactical means, because 100 % you would find people to tell you that the bomb that took out Nagasaki or Hiroshima in terms of yield constitutes a tactical nuclear weapon. Well, not to the very considerable number of people it vaporized or killed in one other way.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (30:02.239)

Well, that's really

Bill Walton (30:19.159)

Yeah.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (30:27.537)

So the most modern devices are essentially dial-a-yield. Yield being the...

effect of the bomb, the relative effect, just for the explosion part, doesn't count radiation and fallout and everything else, just every explosion, the yield of a nuclear device, and the modern ones can be actually dialed and usually have like three levels. And by the way, I have no clearances in this world. What I did know when I did have clearances in this world was how to use them, not how they worked.

They didn't want people like me knowing anything about what went on inside. It was just push this button and pull this string. But we had to plan for the employment of tactical nuclear weapons. And you could actually say, well, I want a yield of this size on this target. Why? Because if I have some massive effect on a city or a maze of rocks or whatever,

I don't want have to go around it. I just want to get the effect that I want in a very precise point. To Sam's point, whether you call it tactical or intermediate theater, regional, whatever, it doesn't matter when you're on the receiving end of one of these things. I actually did some calculations that I could sit here in my office and if the North Koreans hit the Capitol, you know, the parliament building and...

in Tokyo, which is only about four and a half kilometers from my apartment. If I wasn't facing the window and it wasn't an air burst, you know, I'd hear it and life would certainly change, but I wouldn't be, I wouldn't be killed, but you know, it would, it would kind of ruin the day of many people for about three kilometers in that area.

Bill Walton (32:06.946)

W-w-w-

Bill Walton (32:23.714)

Well, we're going to put up a slide that shows the, you know, I hear about North Korea and their nuclear capability and never really realized that Japan is like 100 % vulnerable to whatever North Korea decides to do. and, but I didn't, I got to think about your life living four kilometers, four blocks or four kilometers from the, from the, from the head of the government. So I've got an extra reason to worry now.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (32:51.603)

Well, I used to say the safest place for me was standing in the the Diet, the parliament building, because one of the reasons you really want to discuss having nuclear weapons on this sort of device is that they're not necessarily that accurate. If you want to spend a zillion dollars like the United States did, you'd have Trident missile, has a circular error probability.

of about a hundred meters and you put a big honking warhead on it, you can do a lot of things. You can dig in, can, you can destroy underground facilities or whatever. But the, the Iranians, I think telegraphed a lot of information when they sent this last launch and they hit that, Israeli air force base, a name of which I forget.

But it's like 90 % the size of Manhattan. And it looks like the CEP was about a kilometer, which means that they hit one building by accident and they probably shot at least, they probably had landed, it didn't have intercepted, 32 missiles. And out of them, one hit a useful military target. So that's not a good record, but it's high explosives, right? Or it's some kind of improved conventional warhead.

runway penetrators or scattered bombs, denial, area denial weapons. But if you put a 15 kiloton nuke on there, as we used to say in the army, close enough is good in horseshoes, hand grenades and nuclear weapons.

Bill Walton (34:30.501)

Sam react.



Sam (34:32.871)

Yeah, there's obviously a million variables here, but another thing to just throw in here sort of technically is the question of how is the nuke going to detonate? In other words, how is it designed to detonate? So most people think of an artillery shell and it hits the ground and it blows up. Okay, well, that may be true, but not all projectiles or weapons are designed that way.

And with nuclear weapons, it becomes a big issue when you start talking about damage, right? Because if it is designed to function as an air burst and blow up a certain altitude above the ground, then you essentially, if you can think of this just very simplistically as a sphere, the explosion, right? You potentially are getting a broader radius of destruction. On the other hand, if the thing detonates when it hits the ground,

or below ground. You may not get the same blast radius, but what you're going to get is what people have probably heard of is a lot more fallout. You're going to blow the earth and what used to be buildings and people and everything else up into the air, but that stuff is now irradiated and it's going to drift with the prevailing winds and there are million variables here. So this all matters when we talk about Israel and the Iranians. Israel is not a particularly big place.

after you hit it with a relative handful of nuclear devices, particularly if you design it to some of them at least to blow up when they impact, the fallout alone may render Israel effectively uninhabitable. As an interesting sideline, have, we uncovered information, and this is all out unclassified, some time ago, I'm talking many years ago.

that the Iranians were working on what we would call the fusing, right, this whole issue. When does this device blow up? And the information said that they were working on fusing for a nuclear weapon at essentially the same altitude we detonated our weapons over Japanese cities. Now, I don't think that's just a random chance. That tells you exactly what they were working on for at least some of these nuclear devices.

Sam (36:57.863)

They were copying literally what we did to Nagasaki and Hiroshima. When you get to the point, by the way, where you're working on the fusing of the nuclear device, I think that's a ways down the road. That's not like we're enriching the uranium and maybe 50 years from now we'll have a weapon. We're down to some fine points of how this thing's going to be constructed and detonated.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (37:21.137)

Right. You would delay that while other technologies advance to your advantage. Miniaturization of electronics, sensors, cheaper sensor, multiple bariatric sensors, term rate, accelerometers, all these devices that make a happy system to do that. I would take one exception with SAM, and this is where I'm to show my superior engineer license here.

Bill Walton (37:51.168)

You, you, you're West Point West Point engineering as I recollect.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (37:51.255)

Bill, when you me use West Point Ordnance System Engineering, was.

Sam (37:58.345)

Well, I was a poly-sci major, I have no... I... turning on the can opener taxes me, so...

and a lawyer, so yes. Well, that means I can lie about my engineering experience. That's what that means.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (38:14.023)

So it's not potentially you have greater effect. is a very well-known effect amongst certain people. It's not widely discussed because it's a real egghead sort of thing. Look at the mock stem effect, M-A-C-H, like Ernst Mock. Mock stem effect is what happened in the Oklahoma City bombing when Timothy McVeigh set off his truck.

He accidentally had the right standoff from the Murray Federal Building to almost double the power of the bomb by

time by having it time so that the two shockwaves, the direct shockwave and then the reflection from the Earth's surface, all hit the building at one time. Well, I used to sell the devices that did that. The US military spent a tremendous amount of money in World War II figuring this out with proximity fuses. So the proximity fuses are set.

in order to get the most effect out of a 2000 pound bomb or a nuclear device or whatever. I think that the concerns about fallout are a bit overcooked. It's certainly an issue and it's exactly correct if you hit the ground and you blow up more dirt and debris and concrete dust that gets irradiated, then you have, that is the definition of fallout, whether it's dangerous or not.

But in terms of borrowing nuclear weapons, that is hard. That is not trivial, as we used to say. Why? Because you've got this very complex device and you're to slam it into the ground or into a piece of concrete at Mach 2 or 3 or 5 or whatever the missile is flying at. Or some guy schleps it in and brings it in as Toyota. It doesn't matter. The point is you can't slam it into something hard without

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (40:17.501)

the fear that you break something and you end up with a pop instead of a big bang. Does that make sense?

Bill Walton (40:26.132)

It makes sense. one of the reasons I wanted to do this show was that I wanted to make people aware that this nuclear

potential was pretty scary. But after listening to you guys for half an hour, I'm terrified. The different ways that we could end humanity seem endless. Let's shift a little bit more back to

the geopolitical piece. Ukraine, Russia, where that is, it looks like Russia's finally overwhelmed Ukraine.

and that there's still talk about long-range missiles going into Russia. Shouldn't we ought to give them that? Doesn't that seem like it's going to... Putin, while he was very aggressive going into Ukraine, seems to have a lot of forbearance when it comes to, you know, maxing out and what they could do with their nuclear capability. What's that theater of war look like to you?

Sam (41:31.753)

Shall I take lead?

Bill Walton (41:33.344)

Yeah, go ahead, would you ever jump in? I mean, you guys are both great.

Sam (41:36.518)

Well, look, let me throw out a couple of, don't know if they're disclaimers or caveats up front. First of all, I'm no friend of Vladimir Putin's. think he's a thug and he's got a fantasy about reconstituting the old Soviet Union. And on some level, he got what he deserved going into Ukraine. I'm also a big believer, as is I think, a President Trump that from our standpoint,

The driving, our goal ought to be, let's negotiate and end to this thing and shut this thing down and end this war. From an American national security perspective, it ain't helping us. And there's a lot of danger of this thing spiraling out of control. Putin regularly threatens to use specifically tactical nuclear weapons, again, whatever exactly that means.

is a certain amount of that bluster and hyperbole and him beating his chest, you know, without question, right? I don't think it's wise of us to assume that that's all it is, right? The Ukrainians are bleeding to death in this war, but the Russians have taken massive

casualties as well. They're pulling T-62 tanks out of storage to send to the front. Okay, I was an armor officer long, long ago.

If I had seen a T-62 tank on the battlefield in my old M60A3, that would have been an easy day. We would have stacked those up as burned out hulks, killing them 2,000 yards out when they couldn't even see us. In other words, they were grotesquely obsolete, a little bit better than World War II technology at that point in a whole variety of ways that we don't get to get lost. So the idea that you're pulling those things out of the out and throwing them on the battlefield

you know, 40 years later, that's pretty, that's pretty sad. But what he does have completely intact is his nuclear arsenal. We could have all sorts of discussions about how many guys he's gotten killed and all the other degradation to his conventional arms and where he's getting everything. His nukes are intact. And we know for sure that they have had some very serious discussions in Russia about the possibility of

Bill Walton (43:46.196)

you

Sam (43:59.049)

doing things, for instance, that essentially constitute a warning shot of a tactical nuclear weapon at a relatively uninhabited area in Western Europe, however they define that, because at this point, know, NATO has expanded so far as a mechanism for saying no for real, back off guys. Again, no friend of his and not taking everything that Putin says at face value by any stretch of the imagination.

But when you get to this point, it probably suggests that somebody ought to seriously be thinking about how many wars have we seen in history that spiraled out of control? And in retrospect, people are trying to figure out exactly how that happened. 1914 is the classic example, right? So this is a very, very, very real danger to me. And we ought to be doing something about it, which is back to the baseline.

We ought to be getting these guys to the negotiating table, which by the way, I don't think is that difficult to a process. mean, you know, and, if nothing else, Donald Trump ought to know how to negotiate, right? Look at Vladimir Putin and say, look, brother, we can do this all day. You're bleeding to death and I'm not taking any casualties. All I got to do is keep writing checks and look at Zelensky and say, unless you plan on fighting this war without us, you will sit down at the table.

and we're gonna have a discussion. Do I think that will be resolved in five minutes? No, but I don't think it's undoable.

Bill Walton (45:25.756)

What?

I wholeheartedly agree with you. And that's one of the reasons I'm all in for Trump. I have this image of Kamala sitting across the table from Putin. you know, I think 60 minutes would have to intervene to edit what she was saying to him to make her sound more credible. And I don't think they could even do that. we're this, you know, in terms of leadership choices when it comes to avoiding getting killed.

You know, it's 100 to zero in terms of which way you've got to go. Hey, Lance, do you got a point of view about this?

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (46:08.017)

I tend to leave the politics to the politicians if they leave me alone, but unfortunately they don't. Yes. the political side, I think you're both right. You have it, right? It's a waste of humanity. It's a waste of treasure. It's a waste of time. Ukraine will never recover.

Bill Walton (46:15.362)

Well, I spent a lot of time doing politics, so don't leave it up to me. I want to hear what you have to say.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (46:36.843)

It'll be a rump state with 10 million people who aren't going back because there's nothing to go back to. Right. The biggest export for Ukraine for the next couple of decades will be marriage age eligible women. It's just, it's an unmitigated disaster in all dimensions. what

Bill Walton (46:58.53)

Hadn't the population already dropped from like 40 million to 20 million?

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (47:01.681)

It's not started that way. It's probably more like 30 now. They've literally lost at least 10 million, either families or young men that have beat feet across. They're in Japan. I see them all the time. They're all up there in Mongolia. They're everywhere. They're everywhere. They're hardworking people in a horrible situation. They had set up a very bright.

future, they'd set up a very bright idea. They were going to focus on IT and it became the IT back room for most of Europe because they're multilingual. They work hard. They learn quickly. You know, I worked with the, usually and usually much the, the inventors, the designers, testers and the manufacturers of, the Cuban missiles, the actual missiles that went into Cuba, the, the Satan S S 18 that,

Stopped Ronald Reagan cold in his tracks and they went to the real salt talks. know, I worked with those guys. were brilliant, brilliant engineers, hardworking people, ready to do business, trying to figure out their way in a new world. And this whole thing has just been insane. so I'm, I'm all for the, for that, but the, what you're talking about is breaching what's called a nuclear threshold. and it's been more brain cycles spin on that than.

than probably any question in the Western world except for how many angels can dance on the head of a pin, because there are no answers. What happens when you cross the nuclear threshold? Almost inevitably in the war games that run in the Pentagon with

testosterone-filled American generals or whatnot, it escalates. And it ends up with some exchange that nobody wins. People like to Sun Tzu from the Bien Phac.

the art of war and they always quote the wrong stuff. My favorite quote from Sun Tzu is, no country has ever benefited from a protracted war, period, right? So everybody loses by a protracted war. And this goes back to the Chinese, are the Chinese gonna attack Taiwan? No, because it becomes a protracted war. They're not gonna win immediately. There's gonna be stalemate.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (49:15.167)

So right now the stalemate has to go, but the nuclear threshold that they're talking about, you have nut jobs in every culture, in every organization and the nut jobs say, let's just put on a small demonstration of a, you know, one five five or, or a Cachouche or not. Sorry. No way. one of their, one of their medium range tactical missiles, let's just blow up something we, we occupy. Let's just, you know, make a big hole in our frontline. It doesn't work that way. Okay.

Because once you cross that, then everybody else is going to start ratcheting up. So hopefully no one will be so insane as to do that.

Bill Walton (49:56.066)

Well, we all hope that, but we're counting on the forbearance of Vladimir Putin and not our own talented, intelligent, wise members of our administration, which seem to be, you know, they're acting like children. seem to see, I feel like we're in seventh grade. Tony Blinken says, we're just going to ignore Putin. We're not going to spurn him. Well, good luck with that, guys. I mean, it's, you know, our...

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (50:22.036)

You

Bill Walton (50:25.954)



We have children playing with fire.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (50:29.567)

Well, it's not like you have a choice. People constantly will try to claim that Trump had to deal with, Trump dealt with the mafia. Well, anybody that does anything in New York City has to deal with the mafia. If you open a restaurant in Tokyo, you have to deal with the Yakuza, the Japanese organized crime. They don't leave you alone. No one's gonna leave you alone. So the notion of not engaging Putin is just insane to me.

Bill Walton (50:57.612)

Well, I have a story, quick story. I used to be a banker and was Jay Pritzker's banker and he was in a deal with Donald Trump. And we went to visit the casino in Atlantic City they were building. And I was a kid, actually I just a few years younger than Trump, but I went up and they didn't have any walls in, they just had the floors and the steel beams. And I looked across the expansive floor and it just was waving up and up and down. And...

I said, so why don't we have a level concrete floor? And they said, well, that's a mafia floor. Because they control the truth. we were surprised. I'm shocked that mafia is going on in this casino.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (51:34.263)

in Atlantic City, in New Jersey, imagine.

Sam (51:41.67)

Mm.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (51:42.783)

To me, a Southern boy, when I went to West Point, I go to New York, and it was like a different world. Everybody's talking about the Union. I thought they were the mob. The Union, you have to go to the Union to get a car to work as a, to hump bricks on a

construction site. I went, who are these people and how do they enforce these rules? No, they're Democrats, no they are.

Bill Walton (51:46.997)

You

Bill Walton (52:07.99)

Hey, we talked about the fourth flash point. We touched briefly on the other two. Just let's swing towards China, Taiwan. I'm in the camp that thinks, and I think, Sam, you've analyzed this as well, and you live there, not Sam, but Lance. I think the odds of something happening where China tries to go into Taiwan are quite low. But nevertheless, China's got, 400 nukes already and maybe...

know, 10 times that amount, we don't know, but it seems like they'd have zero interest in using that kind of weapon with Taiwan.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (52:43.017)

Well, that's my general impression is that once again, it cannot be won quickly. If you look at the history of World War II and Operation Overlord and and the, the. Terror, the stark terror of the allied commanders that they would get caught crossing the crossing the Paducalli and the English channel, which is what I forget, 18 miles wide at the narrow point or something. It's not much, right?

Bill Walton (53:10.07)

Mm hmm. Yeah.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (53:13.011)

Well, the Taiwan Straits are 150 miles. There's no place to hide. You can only come ashore in a handful of areas on the Western shore of Taiwan. And when you do, you're faced with

either a mountain or an urban area where you wouldn't want to drive through. A conventional invasion of Taiwan, to me, is almost unthinkable.

Right. Doesn't mean they're not going to use that notion to whip up their own forces and to be strong. I've had commanders who were, you know, the same way. I they never really, most of them never really thought we're going to go, you know, take our bayonets and go attack the North Koreans in their sleep. but it was certainly a way to rile up the troops and get people to work hard and everything else. and you've got domestic audiences that read that and it's, it's useful to whip up.

public sentiment against the Japanese or the Taiwanese or whatever. you know, you look at what happened to our economy, destruction, the losses in our economy with our own shutdown, much less being bombed or whatever. And the density of Taiwan is hard for people to understand. Those chips that we need, and we do need them, come from very dense industrial parts.

Bill Walton (54:44.928)

right on the shore that faces China. yeah, the advanced semiconductor business, the whole world depends on what's going on in Taiwan. It's in nobody's interest to see that destroyed.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (55:00.691)

When I was in a certain large US chip manufacturer that was offshoring as quickly as possible, I was in the defense group that was 16,000 people in a 150,000 person company. And they were offshoring chips, advanced chips as fast as they could. And I asked one of the senior VPs coming out of the military and the state department, I thought, did Washington actually okay this? mean, did anybody actually ask the question? goes, Lance.

They're all doing it. If we don't do it, we're going to be behind the, behind the eight ball and all of our competition is doing it. And what are we going to do? do you have an alternative? No, I didn't, but I went and visited the place and, know, it, it is the goose that lays a golden

egg, but the infrastructure that's required to make that happen is so complex. If you think getting an electric.

vehicle out of China, rare earth magnets, permanent magnets, AC, DC, whatever, converters, all the electronics and the lithium. You think that's complicated. It's nothing compared to what the technology that comes together into that chip that runs your iPhone or your supercomputer, whatever it is, AI, you name it. And also the Chinese don't have to do that. There's a...

There's a Chinese saying that says when to scare the monkey, kill the chicken, right? You kill the chicken in order to scare the monkey. Why? If you're a monkey trainer and you're, you you've got your monkey, whatever the Chinese equivalent of an organ grinding monkey is, and he's being recalcitrant, they're pretty intelligent creatures. So you take a chicken, which, you know, is going to end up in the pot anyhow, and you kill it very noisily in front of the monkey. And you look at the monkey and say, capiche? You get it?

Bill Walton (56:57.195)

You

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (56:57.959)

And the monkeys tend to fall in line. Well, that's what China is doing, right? They're picking on Philippines or if they can, they pick on the Vietnamese who tend to fight back. So the Philippines is a easier, better target because they don't have any advanced military capability. And thankfully we're not getting too spun up about it, but they pick on them all the time and they're encroaching on them. And the Taiwan, you see that they don't have to invade Taiwan to control it.

Bill Walton (57:00.994)

Ha

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (57:27.487)

Sam may have read the defense of Duffer's drift when he was a young army officer. It's about the Boer war and a young man has to defend a drift and he actually goes to the drift. ends up, he gets killed and he wakes up, he gets killed, he wakes up. It's like six times he finally realizes I don't have to sit on the drift to defend the drift. I need to get out up here where I can see it. Well, it's the same thing in Taiwan. They can blockade Taiwan. They've been circling. They can only do it for a short period of time right now.

Sam (57:35.763)

Ready?

Sam (57:44.221)

right.

Sam (57:49.374)

Right.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (57:56.297)

But in doing so, have to transit international waters in Japan and in the Philippines, and they're very vulnerable to being blocked off from that. it is not, the Chinese are definitely not 10 feet tall. They're astonishing developments in China. When I was a strategic war planner in Japan, we planned the defense of Japan and the assistance of the defense of Korea. China didn't even have a war plan as far as I know.

I mean, went to first time I went to China, they had 4 million men and you couldn't even in the military, the PLA, you couldn't even say there were men under arms because they didn't have arms. They didn't have enough rifles for every man in the PLA. And look what they've done. It's astonishing. And they did it with our money, honey, which is just, you know, drives me crazy, but it is what it is. And now what are we going to do with it? And it's not going to, like you say, the people in the administration now,

They're talking a good fight about the pivot to Asia, but there's not a whole lot there.

Bill Walton (59:03.138)

They don't have a clue. That really brings us, I could talk with you guys for days, but we gotta wrap this up. Brings us back to our government, our current government and what we ought to be doing. And it seems like everywhere we look, we're either blundering or deliberately taking us in the wrong direction. mean, my favorite stories are John Kerry going to China when we've got all these issues and his only issue is climate.

And then we've got our State Department all around the world flying LBGTO plus flags to celebrate diversity in countries where if you celebrated that kind of diversity, you'd likely be killed. And yet we're trying to inflict our culture on them. At the same time, we've got all these other issues going. And the world's on fire. It's moving away from us. We've thought ourselves as this.

sovereign giant that could do anything we want. And I think it's becoming really clear we cannot. So how do we, how do we come coming back to our original topic? How do you guys think we ought to deal with the with the nuclear threats all over? How do we defuse them? And and now and then we'll take it from there. That'll be the subject of our next show. Let's let's do let's do the nuclear ones first so we can keep it relatively tidy on the on the big topic.

Sam (01:00:21.353)

You

Sam (01:00:29.161)

Well, look, I'm obviously transparently an America first guy. People talk about World War II and the greatest generation, and I'm all about that. My dad, when he was 22, was at Okinawa. And I grew up on those stories. But what they sometimes forget is or look past is how hard-nosed our policy was, real politic. I mean, we looked at this war and made a deal with Joseph Stalin.

the duration of the war. armed the Soviet army, right? With that enemy, with clear ideas of the fact that, okay, we're going to have to deal with these guys down the road, but this is about America first, our national security, to defeat Imperial Japan and Italy and Nazi Germany. This is the hard-nosed, very, very pragmatic policy.

all focused on us. We'll deal with the Russians down the road. We don't think they're our buddies. But right now, we got to make these hard decisions. You've suggested, and I agree wholeheartedly, not only aren't we making those decisions, but many of the people that are in a position to make decisions, they're not feckless. I mean, they may be feckless and incompetent and all kinds of other stuff, but that's too kind. I mean, when you don't enforce oil sanctions on the Iranians,

and you let them make \$100 billion, it's not true that you don't have any clue what the consequences of that are going to be. I mean, every time a missile's fired at Tel Aviv, well, we, one way or the other, gave the Iranians the money to do that. And again, these people are not so stupid that they didn't understand that they were going to pump all this money, not just into missiles, but into the whole terror network.

Hamas, Hezbollah, all of that kind of stuff. So to me, it's a question of re-centering on that. And then because of those principles, that then drives your strategy. So we were just talking about chips and the fact that virtually all 85, 90%, whatever it is of the chips that really drive the world economy at this point come out of Taiwan. Well, so a coherent national security strategy would say,

Sam (01:02:53.701)

Well, not let's stop the Chinese from bombing those facilities, but say, I mean, maybe we do that too, but we can't continue to proceed down the road, allowing that situation strategically to exist on the Iranian front. We can't keep letting them sell oil all over the planet, and then try to send enough interceptors to the Middle East to to stop those missiles and just kind of

To me, it is always a matter of you have to have a coherent strategy and then everything is driven for the strategy. To the extent we have a strategy right now, some people call it managing decline. I think maybe even that's too kind because a lot of these guys, don't think, I think have picked a side, honestly, and the side wasn't ours.

Bill Walton (01:03:27.148)

Yeah.

Bill Walton (01:03:44.982)

Well, and lot more people get killed in rearguard actions than any other. you know, I'm telling you military guys this, but that's I did my two years in the Pentagon, so I'm an expert. As a draftee, I might add, Sam, that was so well put. Lance, I'm going to give you a chance to to equal that brilliant summary.

Sam (01:03:58.13)

My condolences.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (01:04:06.877)

Well, certainly having a strategy is a good thing. Having the right strategy is all important. You might be better off without a strategy if you have the wrong strategy. Certainly having the enemy inside the wire is not a good place to be. And there are some people that are playing the United States very adroitly. One of my misspent periods in the army was a psychological operations trainee.

and seeing how it works and they were thought of as kind of the geeks and whatever for the US army, but they turned out to be really professional, very good at this stuff. Somebody's doing it to us at multiple levels. And I've asked a variety of folks who's behind this. And the general answer I believe is it's not a single person or a body. It's just like mines heading in the same way. It's like birds homing south. There's no lead bird. It's just.



You know, they're all taking the draft behind whoever's in front. He gets tired. He gets replaced by another bird. So strategy is certainly important. proliferation is a fact. We have to find carrots to go with any kind of sticks and there are very few sticks that you know, us has left that are effective when they've sanctioned everybody in sight. They've monetize weaponized the swift system to try to try to force people to do things. All they're doing is forcing.

people into the arms of other systems. Now, whether those systems can pull it off, I have no idea. It's not my area of expertise, but I tell you what, I do believe that our lifestyles will change tremendously and the power, the ability of the United States to generate power will be grotesquely affected if that goes through. And particularly with the sort of mindset of Washington now is you spend everything plus whatever you can steal from the

from the people and then something happens and there's no surplus. What do you do? There's no surplus in people that are competent. There's no surplus in budget. There's no surplus in equipment. we can't maintain the equipment for the fence, the border fence. So we'll sell it for pennies on the dollar. mean, was fencing material. It's supposed to sit outside, leave it alone until somebody else comes along and plants it in the ground. No, no, no, no, we're going to get rid of it all.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (01:06:30.569)

Somebody is going to come along and have to replace all of that too. I would say that one thing about it is chipping. know, Sam has questions regarding the US ability to do stuff. One of the things that is always interesting to me is these countries that are forced to get all of their equipment off the black market somehow, accelerometers, chips, you name it, you know, every

Russian advanced platforms has a US chip in it. Well, you know, it doesn't take a genius because I figured it out. If you could chip those, if you could put in fake chips that have a certain parameters built in where they stop working on Easter Sunday or whatever, acceleration is this, or it gets a feed from accelerometer that this is happening in the aircraft and all of a sudden you turn off the engines or any number of things like that. I probably had some

poor North Korean logistics guy had his fingernails yanked out when I said this in the foreign correspondence club in Japan. There's no way to tell. They would never be able to recover the rocket from the missile from the bottom of sea of Japan to see if it was actually someone in the supply chain. I actually tried to get a missile engineer, missile systems engineer, friend of mine, we're going to write an article on the thousand things you could do to screw up somebody's missile if you could get inside.

their their supply chain. You'd demonstrate, you'd never tell the world you had it. But why? Because if they're going to some, you know, Chinese guy selling them advanced electronics for the North Korean missiles, well, he's doing it. He's doing it on the quiet. He's taking cash, whatever. He'll take our cash too, right? So so if you were inside that circle, you would never tell until the world came down. This is sort of the Israeli notion. As you said,

They like DSX Machina. You cannot spend too much money on the technical side of things. So they like to spend money on the technical side. They didn't like to have bodies on the fence. They didn't like to have bodies in the humit shop. when Jimmy Carter's, Stansfield Turner told all of those guys that we were out of the humit business because we have satellites. And I went, I got a tent. I mean, you can't, can you tell me what's going on inside my tent? No.

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (01:08:56.723)

So you can get too carried away. And here are the Israelis with all the money we give them, 3.8 billion a year plus billions for Iron Dome and Arrow and everything else under the sun. And they didn't have enough conventional ammo to fight Hamas. What's wrong with this picture? Speaking of strategies, that's the wrong strategy. It did give them a lot of high tech industries you could talk about with George Gilder, but it didn't help them when Hamas came through the wire.

Bill Walton (01:09:24.662)

Well, that's why we need American leadership again. you know, I end on just a political note. I'm familiar with a lot of the people that Trump wants to bring into his administration, and they understand the issues that we've been talking about for over an hour and they

understand a lot more. I think we've got some reason for optimism if we can see a regime change here and bring this about. anyway, you guys were

extremely interesting all these topics. So Lance Gatling and Sam Faddis, I can't wait to have you back on the show to talk about the next big issues. So we'll wrap it up. Sam, where can we find you? In addition to being on Steve Bannon's war room a lot.

Sam (01:10:13.209)

My wife and I, she's also a retired case officer, run a magazine called And Magazine at Substack. [andmagazine.substack.com](http://andmagazine.substack.com) and that'll take you to where we are on social media.

Bill Walton (01:10:25.943)

It's a terrific magazine and I'd recommend being a paid subscriber Lance you're in Tokyo that's we can find you proximally knowing that but where where can we find you in the digital world?

Lance Gatling ガトリング・ランス (01:10:41.335)

I tend to stick with the podcasts of friends and colleagues. I don't write a lot. I don't publish that. What I've spent the last 20 years doing is studying the history of Japan in the interwar period, the creation of modern Japan and how they got drug into a war that destroyed them, where most of the people knew it would end them.

and how they did it anyhow. And I see the parallels with today and it's really striking. And that's called the Kano Chronicles, K-A-N-O Chronicles. And I should have a book coming out in a year or so about how these people, brilliant, educated, and fully aware that they were probably all going to destroy the country, still did it.

Bill Walton (01:11:10.336)

Yeah, they did. They did it anyway.

Bill Walton (01:11:38.828)

Well, on that note, I won't describe it. Thanks, Sam and Lance. This has been the Bill Walton Show. if you're watching at this point, hit the Subscribe button if you haven't already. Encourage your friends to do the same. You can find us on all the major platforms and Substack as well. And we're also on CPAC now every Monday night. Anyway, so if you like this conversation and want to hear more like it, we'll talk soon. Take care.