

Gaslit Nation Transcript
18 November 2020
"Actual Nazis"

[Start Mr. Jones Film Clip]

Walter Duranty:

The Soviets have built more in five years than our government can manage in 10. You ought to visit factories. British engineers here [inaudible 00:00:10] you should talk to them.

Mr. Jones:

I'll do that.

Walter Duranty:

Where are they hosting, in the Metropole?

Mr. Jones:

Yes.

Walter Duranty:

How are things in London? Has Lloyd George and MacDonald solved the economic crisis yet?

Mr. Jones:

They have their best minds on the case.

Walter Duranty:

The best minds got us into this, yes?

Mr. Jones:

What have you heard from the Kremlin about Hitler?

Walter Duranty:

Did Lloyd George tell you to ask me that? Does Hitler make him nervous?

Mr. Jones:

I'm afraid not.

Walter Duranty:

Forgive me, we're putting the paper to bed. Read your article. Do you think Hitler really believes the things he says?

Mr. Jones:

Lots of people say that he's deranged.

Walter Duranty:

What is deranged, in a deranged world?

[End Mr. Jones Film Clip]

Sarah Kendzior:

I'm Sarah Kendzior, the author of the best selling books; *The View From Flyover Country* and *Hiding in Plain Sight*.

Andrea Chalupa:

I'm Andrea Chalupa, a journalist and filmmaker and the writer and producer of the journalistic thriller, *Mr. Jones*.

Sarah Kendzior:

And this is *Gaslit Nation*, a podcast covering corruption in the Trump administration and rising autocracy around the world.

Andrea Chalupa:

You heard an opening clip of *Mr. Jones*, directed by Agnieszka Holland, starring the great James Norton, Peter Sarsgaard, and Vanessa Kirby. You can watch that on Amazon, iTunes and cable on demand. We opened the show with this clip because November is the month when people around the world commemorate the victims of the Holodomor—Stalin's genocide-famine in Ukraine—which is, of course, the focus of *Mr. Jones*, which is based on the true story of the fearless investigative journalist, Gareth Jones, who risked his life and career to expose this.

Andrea Chalupa:

This story is very much about the same forces of greed and corruption that we're up against today. My grandfather, my beloved grandfather survived Stalin's genocide-famine in Ukraine, and this is what led me on this decade plus journey to bring *Mr. Jones* out into the world. So, I would be very honored if you took a moment to watch it.

Andrea Chalupa:

We have some reminders for you, very urgent reminders so we can try to dismantle the systems of corruption and greed that are holding America's potential hostage. There are multiple studies and lots of reporting on how the Republican Party is an authoritarian party. Mitch McConnell is as dangerous as Donald Trump. For the sake of the planet, America must win its war against these Neo Confederate Republican traitors. To take back our democracy, join the *Gaslit Nation Save Humanity From Mitch McConnell Challenge*. We need you to make 1,000 phone calls for Reverend Warnock and Jon Ossoff in Georgia. Their opponents are clownishly evil, and we're just learning that Lindsey Graham pressured the Republican Secretary of State to throw out ballots and steal the election for fascist Trump in Georgia.

Andrea Chalupa:

The Republican Party are fascist. Read Yale historian Jason Stanley's excellent book, *How Fascism Works*, to see the chilling parallels between today's Republican Party, the Confederacy and Nazi Germany. We still have another opportunity to save our democracy, and we can do so in Georgia. Between now and

Election Day (January 5th, 2021), we need to each commit to make 1,000 calls for Ossoff and Warnock. We're going to select three. So, us here at Gaslit Nation, we're going to select three additional winners.

Andrea Chalupa:

So, tweet at us. Tweet at us how you're making phone calls for Georgia, and we'll retweet that, and from the responses we get on Twitter, we'll select three winners and they'll each get a signed copy of Sarah's book, *Hiding in Plain Sight*, and a movie poster of Mr. Jones signed by me and you'll come on the show and scream in delight after Democrats take control of the Senate, sidelining Palpatine Mitch McConnell.

Andrea Chalupa:

If Democrats win both races in Georgia, then Vice President Kamala Harris becomes a tie breaking vote in the Senate. Donate to both races, make calls, every vote counts. We've got to get out to vote. We've got to give back to Stacey Abrams and her amazing movement on the ground there in Georgia. They showed up big time for America. They helped fight against voter suppression in Wisconsin and other key states we had to win. So, we've got to show up for Stacey in this very urgent time of need.

Andrea Chalupa:

Then a final big announcement: this Sunday, November 22nd, at 3:00 PM Central time, I will be speaking at the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center. I will share an invitation to that in the show notes for this week's episode. So, come for that, and I look forward to seeing some Gaslit Nation folks on Sunday.

Sarah Kendzior:

All right, well, thank you and back to the coup! We are still under an attempted coup. It has been two weeks since Joe Biden won the election, and Trump still will not concede. He is still raising money off of his refusal to concede. He's encouraging super spreader, neo-Nazi rallies in his name, and he's unsuccessfully—thus far—attempting to challenge the results in courts, threatening civil servants with death. And he is backed in this effort by the Republican Party.

Sarah Kendzior:

That is an attempted coup. You should not sugarcoat it. You should not parse it into very narrow definitions that require identical formations to what you may have seen in coups in other regions, in other times of history. Every attempted coup is different. It reflects its own political and cultural context. So, you need to view this in the light of American history, and of course, in the light of how Trump has "governed" for the last four years, which has been turning the United States into a mafia state.

Sarah Kendzior:

There are a variety of tactics he may still take down the line, even though thus far he is indeed losing at this attempted coup, and we're going to cover many of those tactics throughout this episode. But first, Andrea wants to talk to you about Hitler.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yes, we have, on today's show, a warning from Hitler's trial. Hitler turned his defeat into victory. From the Holocaust encyclopedia: "On November 8th and 9th,"—which is ironically when the 2016 election happened in America, "On November 8th and 9th 1923, Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party led a coalition

group in an attempt to overthrow the German government. This attempted coup d'etat came to be known as the Beer Hall Putsch trial. A five-judge panel chaired by Georg Neithardt presided over the trial of Hitler and the five other Putsch leaders in March 1924.

Andrea Chalupa:

“Like the majority of judges during the Weimar period, Neithardt tended in cases of high treason to show leniency towards right-wing defendants who claim to have acted out of sincere patriotic motives. Wearing his Iron Cross awarded for bravery during World War I, Hitler held forth against the Weimar Republic. He claimed the federal government in Berlin had betrayed Germany by signing the Versailles Treaty. He also justified his actions by suggesting that there was a clear and imminent communist threat to Germany.

Andrea Chalupa:

“The judges convicted Hitler on the charge of high treason. However, they gave him the lightest allowable sentence of five years in a minimum security prison at Landsberg am Lech. He served only eight months. While Hitler did have a base of support, left- and right-wing newspapers criticized the leniency of his sentence. A prominent legal professor also published a paper outlining many of the trial’s worst errors.

Andrea Chalupa:

“Bavarian government officials were equally displeased. However, they acted with restraint to avoid giving the impression of trying to influence the affairs of the Bavarian Justice Ministry. Hitler led a pleasant lifestyle for an inmate. Prison authorities allowed him to wear his civilian clothes, to meet with other inmates as he pleased, and to send and receive many letters. Prison authorities also permitted Hitler to use the services of his personal secretary, Rudolf Hess, a fellow inmate convicted of high treason.

Andrea Chalupa:

“While in prison, Hitler dictated to Hess the first volume of his infamous autobiography, Mein Kampf. The legacy of the Beer Hall Putsch had several ominous legacies. Among those who marched with Hitler were men who would later hold key positions in Nazi Germany. After World War II ended in 1945, four of these men stood in the defendants dock at the trial of major war criminals in Nuremberg. The fifth only escaped that fate by committing suicide.

Andrea Chalupa:

“The aims of the Putsch leaders were equally foreboding. For instance, they sought to smash internal political opposition and annihilate those who resisted. They planned to establish a dictatorial state and restrict citizenship to Germans of "Nordic stock" as well as to exclude Jews from political life. In addition, they aimed to pass emergency legislation that would allow the "removal of all persons dangerous to security and useless eaters", who would be imprisoned in "concentration camps" and, where possible, turn to labor productive to the community.

Andrea Chalupa:

“When Hitler and the Nazis seized power in 1933, they achieved each of these goals within two years. Hitler drew important practical lessons from the failed Putsch. First, he understood that the Nazi movement could not destroy the Republic by direct assaults without support from the army and police.

Second, he understood that success depended upon the Nazi Party as the undisputed leader of The Völkisch movement, and Hitler as the unequivocal leader of the Nazis.

Andrea Chalupa:

“Finally, the experience taught Hitler that an attempt to overthrow the state by force would bring forth a military response in its defense. From that time on, he was committed to taking advantage of the Weimar democracy to subvert the state from within.” Sounds a lot like how Trump came to power in 2016 with the Kremlin's help. “He sought to come to power by means of the popular vote. He aimed to influence that vote by using the freedoms of speech and assembly...”—guaranteed by Facebook... Oh, I'm sorry—the Weimar Republic.

Andrea Chalupa:

“In the wake of the Putsch, the federal and Bavarian government banned the Nazi Party, its formations and its newspaper. But Hitler's public commitment to coming to power legally induced the authorities to lift the ban in 1925. Between 1925 and 1929, the party underwent a careful organizational restructuring under Hitler's control. It would see its first significant results in the Nazi electoral breakthrough in the Reichstag Elections of 1930.”

Andrea Chalupa:

All right, and I just want to remind everyone: in 1933, Hitler comes to power as Chancellor of Germany, and immediately gets to work destroying democracy and building his first concentration camp. All of this is important because what Trump is doing by refusing to accept that he lost the election and let the Biden transition team begin its critical work in the face of a pandemic killing a quarter of a million Americans—a death count that keeps growing—is a coup against our democracy. It's also mass murder.

Andrea Chalupa:

Doctors Without Borders serves humanitarian disasters around the world. Doctors Without Borders is now in the United States because they've determined the United States, like war zones, like refugee camps, is suffering a humanitarian crisis. This is what it has come to under Donald Trump and the Trump crime family, aided by Putin's mass murdering, xenophobic, terrorist regime... and Facebook.

Andrea Chalupa:

In 2020, Trump lost the election, but Trumpism is here to stay until we dismantle the systems that allowed it to flourish. Hitler regrouped after his trial and 10 years later was in power. Where will the Trump crime family be 10 years from now? They can be back in power, destroying our country from within even faster now that they know who they need to get rid of first, who they need to buy off immediately, how swiftly they need to move and where.

Andrea Chalupa:

If you don't believe this, then look at the 70 million plus who voted for Trump. Look at the nurse in South Dakota who said people died in denial screaming and angry from a virus they died believing was a hoax. This nurse's name is Jodi Doering. Thank you, Jodi, for doing this.

CNN's Alisyn Camerota:

You said that even now, the hospital is being overrun with COVID patients. They come in, they're horribly ill, they're gasping for breath, and yet they don't believe they have COVID?

Jodi Doering:

Yeah, I think the hardest thing to watch is that people are still looking for something else, and they want a magic answer, and they don't want to believe that COVID is real. The reason I tweeted what I did is it wasn't one particular patient, it's just a combination of so many people, and their last dying words are, "This can't be happening. It's not real." When they should be spending time Facetiming their families, they're filled with anger and hatred, and it just made me really sad the other night. I just can't believe that those are going to be their last thoughts and words.

Andrea Chalupa:

Killed by a hoax. If we want to Trump-proof and Putin-proof our democracy, this is what we need to do in the next four years: Make sure your state requires at least 15 years of tax returns before someone can get on the ballot for President. Make sure your state only uses hand-marked paper ballots, and that there are mandatory vote audits to protect against election hacking.

Andrea Chalupa:

Make sure your state is signed up for the National Popular Vote Bill, which according to the site (which we'll link to in the show notes) would guarantee the presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. It has been enacted into law by 15 states and D.C. with 196 electoral votes. It needs an additional 74 electoral votes to go into effect.

Andrea Chalupa:

If we achieve those things in the next four years, essentially abolishing the Electoral College, the National Popular Vote Pact (which my state, New York has signed up for. Has your state?), if we keep tax dodgers off the ballot, if we secure our elections and protect the security of the vote, a fascist like Trump or his daughter, Marie Le Pen Ivanka, cannot become president, not without the Electoral College.

Andrea Chalupa:

Go to Gaslit Nation's Action Guide and learn how to get these initiatives off the ground in your state. No one is coming to save us. We need to save each other.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yes, exactly, and I hope people take that lesson to heart and don't rest on your laurels right now. I honestly don't think people are doing that because we know we're heading into the coronavirus winter. We see the rates rising to levels they've never been before. We know that we're in a very precarious time, and until Biden is actually in office—and even then, because as you just noted, all of these systems need to be just either reformed or gutted completely—we're not going to be safe.

Sarah Kendzior:

One of the things I want to emphasize, when we're talking about the fragility of the system is how much it relies on individual actors and on the ability of those actors to be manipulated, to be bribed, to be blackmailed, to be threatened into complicity, or simply cultivated as enablers. We've talked many times

about Trump's mentor, Roy Cohn—Joe McCarthy's lawyer, the lawyer of the five crime families of New York, an advisor to Nixon, to Reagan, a great villain of American history—and we've talked about his famous quote where he says, "I don't want to know what the law is, I want to know who the judge is."

Sarah Kendzior:

That philosophy applies not just to judges, but to any civil servant, which is how we arrive at Emily Murphy, who is the head of the General Services Administration, currently refusing to sign off on Biden beginning his transition. She will not certify Biden as the winner. As Andrea noted, this is very important to happen now, because when she does certify that he won, it opens up money for Biden's transition team and it clears the way for that team to begin placing personnel at federal agencies.

Sarah Kendzior:

When we're dealing with a pandemic, a Great Depression economy, with incredible internal national security threats, the fact that Trump's army of traders and mafiosos is running around with classified information, making weapons sales. The fact that that's not considered a crisis, or at least, isn't being treated as one, just blows my mind. This needs to be done immediately.

Sarah Kendzior:

The fact that it's coming down to this one individual who nobody has heard of from last week. If I were Biden's team, I'd just basically be like, fuck off, we're coming in anyway. That's the way that Trump's people did it. That's the way that the GOP has done things. The GOP's immorality—their criminality—are obviously not things that anyone wants to emulate, but their insistence on just getting things done, is something that the Democrats should emulate, especially because it is their legal right in this case. Biden is the winner of this election and he needs to serve the public. That is what a president does. That is what a presidential team does.

Sarah Kendzior:

They are currently unable to do this, and as a result, hundreds of thousands of Americans are going to suffer and get sick and die over the next coming months, and every day that this goes on matters. I'm so frustrated with the kind of unwillingness to go in full bore here where so many lives are on the line. The same thing happens with Dr. Fauci, for example, who's like, "Yes, I would like to give the nation valuable public health advice and guide them through the atrocity of this pandemic, but Trump won't let me go on TV."

Sarah Kendzior:

I'm like, is there a law here, or are you just following a norm? Are you just following protocol? Because if it's just a norm and protocol, you've got to throw that shit out the window. As I've said many times, you cannot go by the book when the book is burning, and it's our country that is burning now. It's our country that is crashing down around us.

Sarah Kendzior:

In this perilous time, the thing that can save us, that can at least give us some kind of structure to get through the crisis is the truth, is as much information as possible so that we can make informed, sensible decisions about our lives and how to survive this era. So, for fucks sake, please just do your jobs.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah, the political crisis created the humanitarian crisis, and this was inevitable. This is why we had to stop Trump from coming to power. Our institutions failed us by normalizing this. We've been in a constitutional crisis for four years and a quarter of a million people are dying. Obviously, you mentioned Emily Murphy, the bureaucrat that just needs to sign off on the transition. She's a bureaucrat, this is something that is her... You have one job, Emily. You have one job. [laughs] But understand that she is the product of a larger authoritarianism that Donald Trump has established for himself to protect him and his family so they could live above the law and turn America into a kleptocracy.

Andrea Chalupa:

Like I just explained, if a polished Trump like Ivanka gets in, or some other more competent type of Trump cult figure, they're going to go for the jugular on day one, and the four years of that first term are going to be a lot like what we're experiencing now from day one. It's going to make the first three years of Trump's time in office seem tame.

Andrea Chalupa:

Keep in mind what I mean by this, and I'm going to read from the segment we're calling The Purge Next Time. From the Washington Post, "Engineering much of the post-election purge is Johnny McEntee, a former college quarterback who was hustled out of the White House two years ago after a security clearance check turned up a prolific habit for online gambling. A staunch Trump loyalist, McEntee, aged 30, was welcomed back in the fold in February and installed as head of personnel for the Trump White House.

Andrea Chalupa:

"Since the race was called for President Elect Joe Biden, McEntee has been distributing pink slips, warning federal workers not to cooperate with the Biden transition and threatening to oust people who showed his loyalty by job hunting while Trump is still refusing to acknowledge defeat, according to six administration officials. The post election firings are the culmination of a months long crusade by McEntee, who reports directly to the president and sits just outside the Oval Office.

Andrea Chalupa:

"Obsessed with leaks and mistrustful of veteran government officials who have served multiple administrations, Trump has complained that he finds it more difficult to deal with the federal bureaucracy than with foreign leaders." That's because you're a traitor. "I fired some, I saved some. Just get rid of them," Trump told donors last month in Nashville. "We have some pretty deep seated people and we got rid of a lot of them." Trump rehired McEntee in the weeks after the impeachment process when Trump had been frustrated to see federal officials testify against him and granted McEntee wide latitude to make personnel changes.

Andrea Chalupa:

"McEntee quickly made aggressive moves replacing longtime staff in the personnel office with a coterie of aides in their 20s and purging officials viewed as insufficiently loyal. 'I'm only here for the president,' McEntee said, according to one official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to share private conversation. 'And,' he said, 'I'm not afraid to fire people.' Other senior aides say McEntee has offered to fire people they wanted gone. The move's created a toxic culture across the government, officials said, and several cabinet members had complained to Trump about McEntee.

Andrea Chalupa:

“McEntee's office soon launched an interview process to suss out disloyalty, asking, ‘Who on your team is good? Who on your team is bad? Who is not working to serve the President's agenda? Who brought you into the administration? What do you think of a particular policy?’”—What activities do you commit that are counter revolutionary? Just kidding. I just added that one.—“said one administration official speaking on the condition of anonymity to describe the internal questioning.

Andrea Chalupa:

“People familiar with the interviews said Trump appointees wanted names of people perceived as disloyal. One Environmental Protection Agency employee was asked his opinion on pulling troops out of Afghanistan. ‘Uh, I work at the EPA,’ the official said, startled. Another official said she was asked her opinion about the president's proclamation on transgender troops and one senior government appointee was asked by McEntee where he gets his news. He said his answer, ‘Fox News’ seemed to meet with McEntee's satisfaction.”

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah, this is deeply frustrating to hear, because as we know, this is just a continuation not only of Trump's private, "business practices" as a career criminal in New York City, but how he's operated as president from the very beginning. We all remember Comey giving his testimony in June 2017, after he had been fired, saying Trump requires a loyalty oath and the loyalty has to be to Trump. It's not to the country, it's not to the Constitution, it's not to the public. There is zero interest here in governing, in doing anything efficiently, and that is why we needed to get rid of Trump early. That is why we were so adamant about indictments from the Mueller team and impeachment from the House—impeachment that would be full and thorough, and that would bring the context of this criminality to public light.

Sarah Kendzior:

Because if the public fully knew what has transpired over the last 40 years, they would have, I think, reacted differently in terms of calls for his removal. But they won't go there. They don't want to go down that Jeffrey Epstein lined road. It's very frustrating, and we continue to see these same mafia tactics used now, targeting other individuals.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yesterday, we heard that the Georgia Secretary of State, Brad Raffensperger, says that Lindsey Graham is pressuring him to toss out legally cast ballots in the election. He is the latest public servant to get death threats for attempting to do his job. According to The Washington Post, "The atmosphere has grown so contentious, Raffensperger said, that he and his wife Tricia have received death threats in recent days, including a text to him that read, ‘You better not botch this recount, your life depends on it.’”

Sarah Kendzior:

So, we're at this point where we have to ask, will Trump threaten people into giving him a second illegal term? The answer is yes, he will threaten them. I don't know if he'll succeed, but he is doing that, because he works for a crime syndicate, and the US under Trump is a mafia state. People keep forgetting this, even though Michael Cohen admitted under oath in February 2019 that this is how Trump operates and that Cohen himself personally made over 500 threats on behalf of Trump while working for him.

Sarah Kendzior:

We have had testimony from an endless array of public officials who have been threatened with death and violence. Marie Yovanovitch, Alexander Vindman, Fiona Hill, we've seen threats towards every member of the "Squad", toward Adam Schiff, Elijah Cummings, other representatives, threats towards the judge in the Manafort trial, the jury in the Manafort trial, the judge in the Roger Stone trial, threats to Dr. Fauci, who now has to have armed security. Threats to countless journalists, including murdered journalists like Jamal Khashoggi, threats to every witness, every whistleblower. It is an endless list, and it is a culture of threat that no one in a position of power is really trying to stop.

Sarah Kendzior:

As we've emphasized, this is something that needed to be stopped in its tracks earlier. This is something that needed to be stopped before Trump was able to run for office, and the fact that he had run—or nearly ran—for president four times before 2016 should have set off alarms. It's absolutely shameful that we're in this place, and whatever inclination a Biden administration may have towards "moving forward", I'll just say it's impossible. It's immoral, but it's also impossible because this history is out there, it exists, we witnessed it, we need to examine the institutional failures that made it possible. We need to examine what still lingers, because once Biden is in the White House, this doesn't all magically disappear. Biden himself will be targeted. His team will be targeted. The kind of positive changes that they'll want to bring to American life, for example, making the vaccine for coronavirus widely available or rolling back the horrible environmental policies of the Trump administration, they will all become more difficult, because you will still be dealing with the subsidiaries of a mafia state, with all of these individuals linked to oligarchs, linked to plutocrats with vast amounts of money and power.

Sarah Kendzior:

Not all power is official. Not all power is elected or in office. There are forces that come from the underground, and there are forces that come from outside, and they've always been there. They're often euphemistically framed as consultants, when they're actually mercenaries or traitors. I think that that lesson has been one that has not been fully learned. You can read my book, *Hiding in Plain Sight* to learn more about that. But it's very frightening that the Georgia Secretary of State is in this position.

Sarah Kendzior:

You know? And it's not just Democrats or Progressives that get targeted in this way, it's anyone who wields any kind of power, who deviates from that loyalty oath mentality that Comey spelled out. And as the clock ticks down here toward late January, Trump is keenly aware that his chances of getting that illegal second term rest often on individuals, and how to bend them, how to break them, how to bribe them. That is what he will continually seek to do.

Sarah Kendzior:

I have questions about Lindsey Graham and his role in this, why he's so invested in this that he would pursue an illegal action in plain sight. We've discussed him before on the show, his 180 that he had in late 2017 when he went from being a critic of Trump who, in fact, initiated the investigation into Trump's illicit relationship with the Kremlin—along with John McCain—and then flipped into Trump's foremost lackey. There are a lot of reasons for this. I think it's a combination of blackmail and threats.

Sarah Kendzior:

Often people say to me, "Oh, but Lindsey Graham, he's just corrupt and an opportunist." I'm like, "Well, yes, he is." And deeply corrupt people who commit deeply corrupt actions like say, taking a shitload of money from the Russian mafia to fund her campaign, among other things are easily blackmailed, easily manipulated. There's a lot of interest in Lindsey Graham's personal life. I don't necessarily think that's what the cause is, but I just want people to consider the broader culture here. Think about all the people that I just listed who've been threatened. Think about all the people who've been successfully blackmailed, or threatened or silenced in some way. So much of this story remains untold because the people who know it are too terrified to speak the truth.

Sarah Kendzior:

My final question on this is, if these threats are happening in Georgia and we know about them, where else are they happening? Where have they happened successfully already? Have there been other states where the Secretary of State threw out legal ballots, say, for example, South Carolina? Who else has already been intimidated into silence, and what kind of protections are available for people who do want to speak out and protect our democracy? Because I don't see a lot of pushback from our representatives and officials, a lot of offers of help for those who see this crisis for what it is and need that kind of protection, and it's deeply disturbing.

Andrea Chalupa:

Take everything we know about Republican voter suppression, all the crimes they commit and attempt to commit out in the open to suppress the vote. Now, imagine what we don't know. The stuff that comes out is horrifying, and it makes this election really difficult to analyze because—we're going to continue having a larger conversation about the democrats and the outcome for them in 2020—but understand that anybody trying to analyze these election results, you have to factor in massive voter suppression, and you have to factor in that the stuff we know about the voter suppression is a strong red flag that there's a lot we don't know that goes on.

Andrea Chalupa:

Also, you have to factor in that our election systems are still vulnerable. If you read David Shimer's *Rigged*, he confirms that based on his interviews with experts. So, all of this points to the reports and the investigations looking at the Republican Party in America as an increasingly autocratic party. It's not just Trump. Trump is the inevitable product of the growing autocracy within the Republican Party.

Andrea Chalupa:

That brings us to a segment we're calling, Actual Nazis. So, Sarah, remember when you warned that Trump wanted the economy to crash for riots in the streets when he called into Fox News? And you pointed out that Trump really wants this, he wants to destroy the US from within, and people called you crazy, dismissed it, ignored it?

Sarah Kendzior:

Oh, yeah, they accused me of hiring a Trump impersonator to make this clip, which is available on Fox News. You can watch this clip from February of 2014, then you can look at Russia Today and other Kremlin propaganda outlets in 2014 as they extolled the virtue of this clip and saw Trump as the next president of the United States. But yeah, there is a complete unwillingness to believe this, and to some degree, there still is, but go on.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah. This was in 2015, correct?

Sarah Kendzior:

2014, February 2014, shortly after I believe, Kushner had been to Russia and right around the time of the Olympics, and around the time of the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. So, that's interesting.

Andrea Chalupa:

We'll play this clip now.

Donald Trump:

You know what solves it? When the economy crashes, when the country goes to total hell, and everything is a disaster. Then you'll have riots to go back to where we used to be when we were great.

Andrea Chalupa:

Obviously, if Trump didn't want this, he wouldn't have engineered a humanitarian crisis, an economic crisis, and fanned the flames of race war and Neo Confederates literally fighting people in the streets. Last weekend, a march in support of Trump and the lie that the election was stolen from him drew crowds of white supremacists to our nation's capital like the Proud Boys. Violence broke out in Washington with journalists attacked, several arrests were made and according to The Washington Post, one person was stabbed.

Andrea Chalupa:

The white supremacists called for the white race to rise up. There's a video of a Black woman being knocked out by a group of Proud Boys. The police were criticized by many observers including the press for essentially protecting the Proud Boys and white supremacists. Meanwhile, the police gun down children like Tamir Rice and suffocate Black people who repeatedly tell them they can't breathe, like George Floyd and Eric Garner.

Andrea Chalupa:

From USA Today, "The latest example of a cozy relationship between law enforcement and the far-right Proud Boys happened to the nation's capitol last week when the Metropolitan Police responded to a stabbing involving members of the Proud Boys and an associate. Provocateur, Bevelyn Beatty, and the chairman of the Proud Boys who was with her told police they were both stabbed by people associated with Black Lives Matter in a street fight early the morning after the presidential election.

Andrea Chalupa:

"The Metropolitan Police Department repeated their claim to media outlets, leading to headlines around the country claiming Black Lives Matter had attacked the Proud Boys. There's no evidence Black Lives Matter had anything to do with the incident. Police officials have since walked back their initial statements saying it's unclear whether anyone involved was affiliated with political groups. 'The department's willingness to echo the accusations of the Proud Boys is another example of law enforcement's deference to the group', said Michael German, a former FBI Special Agent, who is now a fellow with the Brennan Center for Justice Liberty and National Security Program."

Andrea Chalupa:

We'll link to that USA Today report in the show notes. To be clear, this is a separate incident, a separate stabbing incident than what took place over this past weekend. But what happened this weekend was Proud Boys initiated violence and police essentially letting it go on too long and certainly not using the same excessive force they use against Black people in America, including children.

Andrea Chalupa:

Keep in mind that according to the FBI, white supremacist terrorism is the greatest domestic terrorism threat we face today, and it's aided by police forces across the country and big tech like Facebook. The white supremacists during the night of violence in D.C. this past weekend called out support for Kyle Rittenhouse, the kid who shot people in Kenosha, Wisconsin. According to The Hill, Rittenhouse, aged 17 was in Kenosha on August 23, following days of protest after video footage went viral that showed a police officer shooting a Black man, Jacob Blake, in the back eight times.

Andrea Chalupa:

"Rittenhouse had brought an assault rifle across state lines from Illinois. Trump declined to denounce Rittenhouse in late August after the fatal incident saying the teenager was "very violently attacked and probably would have been killed himself if he hadn't fired his gun." During the night of violence this past weekend, videos were doctored by far right activists to try to make the Trump side look like the victims.

Andrea Chalupa:

Ivanka Trump pounced on this sentiment amplifying it by tweeting, "The media's near total silence about the physical violence being perpetrated against conservatives is shameful and dangerous. Just imagine the outrage and indignation if this went the other way. Violence is never the answer and instigators must be condemned and prosecuted." What has Ivanka tweeted to condemn Kyle Rittenhouse, who was held up by her father and his supporters as a hero? Nothing that I could find. What has she tweeted in support of one of his victims, Anthony Huber, who was murdered trying to stop Rittenhouse as he tried to flee after killing someone? Nothing that I could find from Ivanka.

Andrea Chalupa:

Ivanka's selective support for people willing to commit violence to keep her in power tells you what we've always told you about Ivanka Trump: she's like her father wrapped up in a prettier package, which makes her far more dangerous. To be clear about who Kyle Rittenhouse is, since the Trump crime family refuses to denounce him, here's a clip from Hannah Gittings, the girlfriend of Anthony Huber, who was murdered by Kyle Rittenhouse.

Hannah Gittings:

We had been being pushed south down Sheridan Road for a while. And actually, we were very close to our house where we were walking and I was about to say to him, "Let's just go home when we get up to where we live." Before I could even get those words out of my mouth, we hear gunshots a couple blocks up ahead of us. For a minute we were just looking around waiting to see what would happen. Then people started running like crazy in the opposite direction.

Hannah Gittings:

Then we see Kyle Rittenhouse running down the street, maybe 15, 20 feet away from us, and everybody was shouting that he had just shot somebody, he killed somebody. They were yelling for someone to grab him. And Anthony was just that type of person. He was not going to let an armed, active shooter hurt anybody else, and he ran off after him and tried to take this kid down, this kid who was running around waving a semi automatic assault rifle. And he had nothing on him. We weren't armed. We were not armed. We had our skateboards with us, and he still ran and tried to take him down and ended up getting murdered in the process.

Andrea Chalupa:

As the Welsh investigative journalist Carole Cadwalladr points out, Mark Zuckerberg said allowing white supremacists to use Facebook to plan an event in Kenosha and incite violence was an operational mistake. Here's the woman—Hannah Gittings—who is living with the consequences of that operational mistake every single day. Fascism in America is flourishing because of disinformation which is spread by the consolidation of far-right media, like Fox News, One American Network and Sinclair, as well as the blood money empire of Mark Zuckerberg's Facebook.

Andrea Chalupa:

According to an October 2020 report in the New Yorker, titled Facebook Can't Fix Itself, "The platform is overrun with hate speech and disinformation." The only way to stop the very real and evil destruction of big tech and their rampant damage to democracies around the world—because this isn't just our problem—the only answer is to break up Facebook.

Andrea Chalupa:

Blood Money is a hell of a drug. Mark Zuckerberg doesn't want to ban white supremacist, Steve Bannon, who called for the beheading of Dr. Fauci, who has to have a security detail to protect himself from the boiling red wave of fascism in America. Mark Zuckerberg is the Paul Manafort of big tech.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah, absolutely, and unfortunately, I expect to see more of this as we move toward inauguration. These are Trump's shock troops. I think the pandemic complicates how they operate, but they also are effective in that capacity of making sure that this virus spreads, making sure that if people get out in the street to try to do a counter protest, that they put themselves at risk.

Sarah Kendzior:

People, think strategically, think tactically about how you want to stop this, and never ever accept this as normal. These groups have been steadily rising in terms of their numbers, in terms of their hate crimes, since before Trump. The rise began during the Obama era, and it was not taken as seriously as it should have, even though we had clear signs of where this was going. We had Roger Stone calling for a bloodbath in 2016. We had Trump encouraging these groups during his election then and throughout his entire tenure as presidency. So, this is in many ways where we inevitably end up and it can get worse. So, be careful.

Sarah Kendzior:

Then from there, if you've got nothing more to say, I want to switch from the internal threat to the war in Iran—external threat that is still brewing from last week. We warned you last week that Trump was gearing up for war in Iran after a rash of DoD hirings and firings, as well as meetings between Iran

warmonger, Mike Pompeo, and fellow Iran warmonger and embattled Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, over Iran. Trump also approved a massive transfer of arms and warplanes. He installed conspiracy theorists at the Pentagon. He fired leaders of three agencies that oversee the nuclear weapons stockpile.

Sarah Kendzior:

We have gone over Trump's nuclear weapons fetish a million times, and I don't really want to go into all that again. But for a brief recap, just know that Trump loves nukes, he wants to use them. He's asked, "why do we have them if we're not using them?" He has a decade's long belief that the world is destined to end in nuclear annihilation, and he doesn't care who dies. And he's also the only one who can push the button.

Sarah Kendzior:

So, this has been brewing in the background for a while for the entire tenure of Trump's time in office. My worry peaked when Bolton was in. Then yesterday, the New York Times ran an article saying that Trump did, in fact, want to bomb Iran last week, as we were predicting, but that... [laughs] Sorry, that Michael Pence and Mike Pompeo talked him out of it.

Sarah Kendzior:

So, here is just a couple of paragraphs from that article which says, "Trump asked senior advisors in an Oval Office meeting on Thursday whether he had options to take actions against Iran's main nuclear site in the coming weeks. The meeting occurred a day after international inspectors reported a significant increase in the country's stockpile of nuclear materials, four current and former US officials said on Monday. A range of senior advisors dissuaded the president from moving ahead with a military strike. The advisors, including Vice President Mike Pence, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Christopher C. Miller, the acting Defense Secretary,"—this is one of the new guys,—and general Mark A. Milley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff warned that a strike against Iran's facilities can easily escalate into a broader conflict in the last weeks of Mr. Trump's presidency."

Sarah Kendzior:

Yes, that is true. It's also something that is very unlikely to be said by Mike Pompeo, Mike Pence, or the other warmongers who've been lusting after this war for a long time. So, no, I don't believe this article. I think it's been planted to try to make certain people look good. I don't think they're advising him against war in Iran. What I do think is that long-time Iran warmongers would use a lame duck psychopath president to launch their long-desired war and that Trump doesn't care as long as he doesn't have to deal with the fallout, and the fallout here, unfortunately, is both literal and figurative.

Sarah Kendzior:

Trump would be delighted to drop a nuke and hit the road. He'll leave the mess for Biden. But more importantly, you need to examine a potential Iran war from a global perspective. As we've said many times in Gaslit Nation, this is a transnational crime syndicate masquerading as a government, and the traditional concept of a nation-state means nothing to them.

Sarah Kendzior:

This war, if it happens—and I hope it does not happen—will be run not for the benefit of the United States but for a variety of international actors, including government officials like Netanyahu, MBS, as well as a

variety of oligarchs, plutocrats, oil tycoons, military contractors, and mercenaries that are not in an official position of power, but hold power nonetheless.

Sarah Kendzior:

Think of people like Erik Prince, for example, or John Bolton, and so on. This is another very stressful situation. It's been stressful throughout the entire time Trump has been in office. I don't exactly know what will happen if they initiate this kind of war and leave it for Biden. We know that Republicans like to do that. The Bush administration left a horrible mess for Obama, and what I hope... Oh, my God. I mean, if they do this—if they actually use a tactical nuke or start an actual war—we're in so much trouble, that it's not like Biden can just snap his fingers and reverse it. But I hope that they take a very strong stance against the instigators of these sorts of actions, because that's been the mistake of every Democratic administration that has come in after a deeply corrupt Republican one; they don't systematically pick up the mess and investigate and indict where necessary.

Sarah Kendzior:

We saw this with the aftermath of Iran-Contra, which, of course, continued into another Republican administration with George H.W. Bush, but honestly should have been looked at more by the Clinton administration, because those same actors reappeared. We obviously saw this with Obama's administration; the refusal to prosecute war criminals, the refusal to prosecute Wall Street, to have an independent commission, to take a hard look at this.

Sarah Kendzior:

I mean, I support Joe Biden—the President-elect—but this is one of the reasons that I wanted Elizabeth Warren, because you need somebody who will gut out the rot. You need somebody who will look at the corruption honestly, and head on and do whatever is necessary, because it's not about revenge, it's not about evening the score, it's about protecting the people and it's about protecting the world.

Sarah Kendzior:

I don't want Iran to get bombed. I don't want any nukes to be dropped on anybody. I don't want a repeat or a worse extension of what the United States did to Iraq, what it's done to Afghanistan, what it's done to so many countries over the course of my lifetime. I want somebody to take a strong stand and not bow down to lobbyists and not bow down to donors.

Sarah Kendzior:

I'm worried that there are many people who still have an interest in this war. That's why they opposed Obama's Iran deal when it was happening, and will try to get it through Biden. Think beyond the two party system. Think beyond the conception of nation-states. Think of this in terms of a transnational mafia and expand your definition of what a mafia is, what organized crime is, because as Mueller—failure Mueller—pointed out in one of his non-failure moments back in 2011, the lines between white collar crime, state corruption, and organized crime have blurred, and those elite actors—those oligarchs and plutocrats and billionaires—wield power at such an extent that our traditional ways of representative government, our own voice in our country's affairs, has nearly been silenced. And that's the voice that we need to get back.

Sarah Kendzior:

In order for it to be heard, we need to root out the most corrupt actors and just identify them, be very honest, have an honest conversation about what's happening. I don't see that right now, and I think it's in part because Biden is being cautious, because when he gets into office, he's going to have to deal with the coronavirus, with the economy, he's going to have to try to bring back a level of trust broadly from the entire American public for a vaccine, for example, to be successful.

Sarah Kendzior:

He's walking a very fine line, and I understand that. But nonetheless, there are a lot of just destructive, vicious actors who are going to take advantage of that sense of caution and restraint. They're not going to have some sort of good faith bargain. They don't care who dies. They don't have a traditional conception of life or a loss. You see that with Donald Trump. He's a sadistic sociopath, and there are others just like him who have immense positions of power, and no one should underestimate that.

Andrea Chalupa:

Our discussion continues, and you can get access to that by signing up on our Patreon at the Truth Teller level or higher.

Sarah Kendzior:

We want to encourage you to donate to your local food bank, which is experiencing a spike in demand. We also encourage you to donate to Direct Relief at directrelief.org, which is supplying much needed protective gear to first responders working on the frontlines in the US, China and other hard hit parts of the world.

Andrea Chalupa:

We encourage you to donate to the International Rescue Committee, a humanitarian relief organization helping refugees from Syria. Donate at rescue.org, and if you want to help critically endangered orangutans already under pressure from the palm oil industry, donate to The Orangutan Project at theorangutanproject.org. Gaslit Nation is produced by Sarah Kendzior, and Andrea Chalupa. If you like what we do, leave us a review on iTunes. It helps us reach more listeners and check out our Patreon, it keeps us going, and subscribe to us on YouTube. We are everywhere, world domination 2021.

Sarah Kendzior:

Our production managers are Nicholas Torres and Karlyn Daigle. Our episodes are edited by Nicholas Torres and our Patreon exclusive content is edited by Karlyn Daigle.

Andrea Chalupa:

Original music in Gaslit Nation is produced by David Whitehead, Martin Vissenberg, Nick Farr, Demien Arriaga and Karlyn Daigle.

Sarah Kendzior:

Our logo design was donated to us by Hamish Smyth of the New York based firm, Order. Thank you so much, Hamish.

Andrea Chalupa:

Gaslit Nation would like to thank our supporters at the producer level on Patreon...

