

- Speaker 1: You and every other member of the house on Wednesday is going to have the responsibility of voting on these articles. Can you give us any sense, just as people are going to be watching this from the outside, what it'll be like and what you expect from the process?
- Eric Swalwell: Expect a protracted debate. I mean, this is an opportunity for members to go to the floor and explain why this offends their oath to the Constitution and why we have a duty, again, to protect national security and the upcoming elections. But you're also going to hear a lot about the urgency here that these articles, you said they're not a dead letter. I've said they're written in the active voice they're not written in the passive voice. They're not looking back at something that happened in the past. This is ongoing. The President's lawyer just got back from Ukraine and is briefing the President this week. And so we have all the reason to be concerned that if we do nothing, we could lose everything.
- Sarah Kendzior: I'm Sarah Kendzior, the author of the bestselling essay collection, *The View from Flyover Country* and the upcoming book *Hiding in Plain Sight*.
- Andrea Chalupa: I'm Andrea Chalupa, a filmmaker and journalist, and the writer and producer of the upcoming 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. We are an independent podcast supported by our listeners and we encourage you to sign up for our Patreon to keep the show going and to get extra episodes and bonus features. So today we're going to talk about the UK election. Last week, conservative Boris Johnson won the UK election, beating Jeremy Corbyn by what many saw as a shocking margin. Johnson won and the reaction to it echoed with shock and dismay many felt after the Brexit win in 2016 and prompted many in the US to argue that Johnson's win represents some kind of omen for our country.
- Sarah Kendzior: This is a superficial take. There are some aspects of the UK and US situations worth comparing and some not. And so in my view, it is worth comparing the role of dark money in UK politics, particularly that which was laundered into campaigns by Russian oligarchs who have been steadily buying up Britain for the past 20 years. It's worth comparing the use of weaponized digital media, particularly the troll farms and data mining tactics of groups like Cambridge Analytica and its successors as we've previously discussed on Gaslit Nation with British researchers like Carole Cadwalladr and Emma Briant. So go check out those episodes. It is worth comparing how mainstream media is functioning as propaganda, particularly the coverage of outlets like the BBC, which traditionally commanded respect but which have refused to examine a state corruption deeply and tend to "both sides" every issue, and an obvious American analog here is the New York Times.
- Sarah Kendzior: It is worth comparing how fascism is masked as populism and how Johnson exploits the pain and anger Brits are feeling, the same pain that they felt in 2016, only add nearly four years of trauma and confusion following the Brexit

referendum, the feeling of lost opportunity and anger over elite impunity has never gone away and it is justified. But unfortunately that feeling is exploited by elites like Johnson who redirects the anger of his followers toward immigrants and other vulnerable people. So that is what is worth comparing. It is not, in my mind, worth comparing the election system in general. The US has a two-party system with regular four-year elections and an electoral college, which can override the popular vote. The UK has a multi-party system with irregular elections and a parliamentary body that balances power in a very different way than in the US. And finally, it is not worth comparing the Left.

Sarah Kendzior: The UK and the US have a different political vocabulary. Terms like “Liberal” and “the Left” and “Labor” have very different meanings and histories and the idea of what comprises “leftist position or policy” is also very distinct. The UK has things like national healthcare that are considered by some in the US to be dangerous Socialist inventions. And of course that's how Johnson and his cronies want Brits to see national healthcare as they try to sell off the NHS for parts. Figures like Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren would probably be a moderate liberal in the UK. A figure like Joe Biden might be a moderate conservative. It's therefore silly to see the example of Corbyn as a warning sign for how the Democrats will fare in the 2020 election. Corbyn is a historically unpopular Left Wing candidate who ran against a historically unpopular right-wing candidate, Boris Johnson. Both of them have extremely high unfavorability and that affected the vote.

Sarah Kendzior: Corbyn is also loathed by much of his own party and is not trusted by much of the British population, which prompted many Brits to stay home and some traditional Labor voters to abandon him. The problem here is personality more than policies. There's certainly a lesson for the Democrats that they should never assume everything will magically work itself out. This is a lesson that the Democrats are consistently terrible and learning, but there's not much more to it than that. Andrea, what are your thoughts?

Andrea Chalupa: My heart goes out to our British listeners. We know how difficult this election day was, even though the warning signs were there as you mentioned, Sarah, with Corbyn's very low polling numbers, lower than even an unpopular Prime Minister, Boris Johnson. The warning signs were all there and we'll get into them. It's still a shock just to see it all come back and I'm glad that you refuted some of the really bad hot takes trying to compare our progressive political movement in the US to what's happening in the UK. It's apples and oranges for some of the reasons that you cited and we'll get into more of that today.

Andrea Chalupa: And so I think first and foremost, look at what Boris Johnson's government is now aiming to do. They're attacking voting rights in the UK. They're attacking the judiciary, they're not wasting any time. So it's imperative that if you care deeply about human rights, if you care deeply about the environment, you need to be committed to self-reflection and you need to be committed to learning and being curious and open minded and trying to make your team, your coalition, stronger and better always.

Andrea Chalupa: Everyone has to be committed to that. The wonderful adventure of learning and curiosity and all that comes with it. Because that's really what was at the core of this. We had a divided coalition on the Left and as we always say on Gaslit Nation, Donald Trump came to power because of a really strong coalition, a coalition that depended on each other. It was just good old fashioned coalition building that helped bring the Trump crime family to power. That's just a simple tried and true formula that has won elections for many generations. And of course in Donald Trump's case, that coalition included the blood money terrorist organization, the NRA, the mass murdering terrorist regime, the Mafia State, Putin's Russia. You had all the guards from America, like Robert Mercer who co-founded, with Steve Bannon, Cambridge Analytica, the militarized propaganda firm that did a Blitzkrieg of fake news online, driving out authoritarian voters—Trump leaning voters.

Andrea Chalupa: They did the same in the Brexit vote. Then you had, of course, Russian oligarchs like Oleg Deripaska who was a pollinator, you know, had Paul Manafort on a \$10 million a year contract as his handler on behalf of Putin's government. And so you had all these shared interests coming together with one goal, which was to get this deeply corrupt, useful bunch of idiots elected to power and they succeeded beyond their wildest dreams. And you saw their shocked reaction to that on election night that they actually pulled it off, but they pulled it off through good old fashioned coalition building. That is what was at the heart of Donald Trump's surprise. Success in 2016 and coalition building needs to be at the heart of the Democrats' success in 2020 because you cannot—as I always say, hell is other people. Learning to work with other people is one of the greatest challenges in life, but nobody gets into heaven alone. We all are going to go into victory together.

Andrea Chalupa: The divide and conquer strategy is what the Kremlin's disinformation campaign used in 2016. You had all these Kremlin bots posing as all different walks of life from Black Lives Matter to Bernie supporters, to Trump supporters and so forth, creating chaos and division online, stoking those flames, making it worse. So we have to really come together. Because if you look at the UK election, what you had was a very divided Left and on top of that you just had bad strategy that helped further those divisions. You had terrible messaging and all those factors combined just led to the slaughter that we saw. And so we're going to go through some details on that for us to see what we here in the States can learn in time for our own election and how we can strengthen our own strategy. So Emma Briant, a propaganda expert that we featured on the show, did a wonderful deep dive discussion for us on this brave new world of social media and all types of mind hacking technologies that influence us without us even realizing we're being influenced.

Andrea Chalupa: Listen to that interview. It's called "Bannon and Brexit", all about how Bannon's company, Cambridge Analytica, helped hack minds and Brexit as well as in the US and what's next and mind hacking technologies and how they might impact us in this next election. So Emma Briant, being British, being a propaganda expert, being on the forefront of understanding all the different factors that

drive power and win elections. She sent me a great report by a firm called Data Proxy, which surveys people, looks at all the data of how elections are going, how the polling is going. They had some accurate polls leading up to this election and they did a first look deep dive analysis of what went wrong, what went right. So I'm going to start reading from some of this and we'll just break down what it means. So from the data practice report, this election was decisively lost by Labor.

Andrea Chalupa: Progressive's were painfully divided, all the center and left wing parties in England and Wales performed badly and Remainer campaigners failed to achieve their goals. The Liberal Democrats began to campaign with immense aspirations, but ended it with one seat fewer. Their leader, Jo Swinson, even lost to the Scottish National Party, was surged to 48 seats, and will now push hard for a second independence referendum in Scotland. There was no real groundswell of support for Boris Johnson and his Conservative Party. They improved their share of the vote by less than 2% overall losing over a million Remainders but gaining more lead voters. The decisive factor was their success in winning over voters from the Brexit Party, who decided to stand down on all seats held by the Tories. So let's stop there. So what this report is just saying is that the Left was deeply divided, but on the Right they consolidated their forces.

Andrea Chalupa: So you had the Brexit Party not running for office and letting the Tories run. And so the Brexit Party did not challenge the Tories in this election, whereas you had Labor being challenged by the Liberal Democrats and that was splitting the vote. So not only did you have all this bad blood in the media, all of this mudslinging that was being seized upon by the big media gossip mill and cesspool and so forth, that was further angering people and splitting the Left. You had a consolidated Far Right effort. They understood that they were stronger united. So if you—and we have that here in the US with Republicans falling in lock step behind Trump. And you see very few, everyone's wondering like where is the Republican Party? Why aren't they doing anything to stop Trump? Because the Republicans understand that their policies are not popular. And so they have to be strategic to win.

Andrea Chalupa: And their strategies include, of course, attacking voting rights and propaganda, including social media propaganda, funding their own independent media, promoting their own independent media and media thinkers and voices and provocateurs and so forth. And also being united, being united at all costs. We know what Lindsey Graham thinks about Trump, because Lindsey Graham has told us what he thinks about Trump, but Lindsey Graham wants power so he's obedient. They're all obedient. And instead of saying what they really feel and think now under Trump, what you're seeing is a lot of these Republicans refusing to run for re-election and giving up their seats because that's their sort of silent protest of what's going on because they don't want to be complicit or a part of it because they understand that it's the rise of Hitler's Third Reich. So you have to understand that this united strategy is a winning strategy for Republicans.

Andrea Chalupa: So when you don't have a lot going for you, you use what you do have. And so being united is a major advantage here and the Far Right in the UK used it brilliantly and the Left just allowed themselves to be fractured. What would've prevented that would have been strong leadership coming from the top. Jeremy Corbyn is not a victim in this. We understand that the British media landscape is as depressing as the American media landscape, meaning you have oligarchs owning your media and therefore controlling the narrative. You have brilliant independent journalists like Carole Cadwalladr, who are kept off television, who barely appear on TV if ever and are basically confined to Twitter where they have a limited audience. We understand that all the challenges that you're dealing with, but when you're stuck in a David and Goliath situation, what you need in all classic David and Goliath success stories.

Andrea Chalupa: You need a strong leadership. Leadership matters. Leadership sets the culture. Leadership sets the strategy. Leadership sets the communication strategy, like the buck stops with Jeremy Corbyn here. And so Elizabeth Warren has all the same things going against her as Jeremy Corbyn does. And on top of that, she has misogyny. And yet her poll numbers are surging. Elizabeth Warren's running the same grassroots-dependent campaign as Jeremy Corbyn. She has wonderful polling numbers. Her popularity can't be stopped even by this horrific cable news bubble that's going against her. And that is because she has a smart strategy, including a smart communication strategy. And that leadership was sorely lacking under Jeremy Corbyn and it led to further dividing the Left. And so that's a responsibility that he owns. And that's important for all of us who care about human rights, who care about the environment, criminal justice to own and, and to reflect on.

Andrea Chalupa: And so this other divide and conquer strategy points to a conversation Sarah and I were just having about Tulsi Gabbard, right, Sarah? I'll let you talk because I've been spitting into the mic like 20 minutes. But this all points to signs of, like, watch out for Tulsi Gabbard because our enemies need us to be divided in order to secure their victory in 2020. So Hillary Clinton being the boss that she is, went out and called out Tulsi Gabbard, implying that there's going to be a third party spoiler candidate that the Kremlin would be excited to get behind. And everyone's like, "Okay, that's Tulsi Gabbard" because people know from her own rhetoric that's Trumpy in nature and divisive in nature and her horrible positions on Assad. We've covered Tulsi Gabbard on her own Gaslit Nation episode, "The Tulsi Gabbard Episode" to go over all the dangerous signs that are there. So this— we have to be vigilant of Tulsi Gabbard or somebody else running third party to try to divide the left in 2020.

Sarah Kendzior: The reason that Tulsi came up in conversation that Andrea and I were having before we started taping is because she announced that she is not in favor of impeaching Trump. And what I was saying is this doesn't just make her a bad Democrat. This makes her a bad representative of the American people. Because Trump is being impeached—we're going to talk more about that in the showz—by the House, but will very unlikely be convicted in the Senate. But the crimes he has committed are very serious, very blatant. It should not be

complicated to impeach him or indict him. Obviously it is, which is why we are still here talking about this, nearly three years after he committed his first impeachable offense with the Emoluments Clause. This should not be something that should be difficult for Tulsi Gabbard to embrace, yet she is.

Sarah Kendzior: And so you can call her a lot of things. You can call her a stealth Republican or simply somebody who shows bad judgment. But I do think it is possible she may run as a third party candidate. I don't think that this is the only danger I could see. For example, if Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren becomes the nominee, somebody like Bloomberg perhaps running as a third party candidate or maybe, you know, someone else jumping in because there is real fear from the GOP— but also from the Democratic donor class—of Elizabeth Warren and also of Bernie Sanders. They're really afraid of progressive policies getting passed. And you can see this through the way that they've reacted to the upstart candidacies of more left-leaning or progressive Democrats, whether it's trying to prevent them from getting money, if they're going to primary somebody because they don't want a repeat of the Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez situation, which is ridiculous because she's been a very good representative and she's also extremely popular.

Sarah Kendzior: She is leading fundraising. She's inspiring young people. Like, these are qualities that the elder statesmen of the Democratic Party should be embracing. But, you know, Pelosi spent a lot of time attacking AOC, attacking Ilhan Omar, attacking Rashida Tlaib. You know, there's been wariness of Warren and of Sanders and a primary is a primary. It's going to be contentious. Everybody's going to have their preferred candidate and that's fine. That's how it should be. I don't think that most people who listen to this show need to hear the mantra of “Vote Blue No Matter Who”. I mean we regularly talk about Trump as an apocalyptic existential threat and the GOP by extension as an apocalyptic existential threat and you should always vote against the apocalyptic existential threat. So in case it's not clear, let it be clear. And you know whoever the nominee is, yes, obviously we're going to vote for them, but that should not dissuade us, I think, from an in-depth conversation of the various attributes that candidates have and most importantly, what are they going to do if they win?

Sarah Kendzior: Imagine if one of these candidates actually wins the election, which we know is going to be a shitshow. There's going to be voter suppression, there's going to be foreign interference. There may well be unsecure voting machines and you should look at the work of Jenny Cohn, who has a new article today about that possibility, about the possibility of machines being hacked. If we know that this election is, for example, illegitimate, who's going to stand up and fight? Is it going to be the Democratic donor class? Are they actually going to pull through? Or is it going to be the grassroots?

Sarah Kendzior: If we have a situation where the Democratic candidate wins and we can see clearly that this was a legitimate win, like a sweep for example, or even a close win, will that person continue to fight when Trump refuses to concede, which is a very likely outcome, or will they just shrug their shoulders and walk away and

hand over the security and sovereignty and democracy of this country to a transnational crime syndicate. You have to think about all that going in and that is why we need unity. And let me stress that unity and conformity are not the same thing.

Sarah Kendzior: We're not asking everybody to have the same values in terms of them being identical, although it's good, obviously, if we shared general values in favor of democracy. You know, we're not asking everybody to be identical. That is fascism. That is extremely dangerous. That's been part of our problem all along because there's a culture of timidity that underlies that, but we are asking people to be pragmatic, to be discerning and to recognize that you are in a war. You are in an information war and you are also in a war, like a low-key civil war, a low-key kind of Neo-Cold War. And I mean honestly the reason I'm struggling to describe this is because it is an unprecedented situation. This sort of political, internal hijacking with the help of multiple external foreign countries is unprecedented. And the 21st century digital culture that made it possible is also unprecedented.

Sarah Kendzior: It's very hard to look back into history even at other autocratic regimes and find a corollary. So you know, our answer is always to fight, it's to be defiant against your enemies, be defiant against the annihilation of moral values and of political norms, but also be pragmatic and just look out for each other. And if you look out for each other, look out for the people who are most likely to suffer under these administrations and proceed from there, then I think we'll get somewhere. So yeah, that was quite a rant. You want to talk about impeachment?

Andrea Chalupa: Well, I want to keep going with this report because I think it's important. This was an historic election in the UK and the result of this election could have been avoided if more was done sooner. And unfortunately we're going to have to be living with the fallout of this election for the British voters well for a long time to come. So I want to keep going with that. But I do want to say in reading about what happened to the Left, to Boris Johnson's opposition in the UK, and here I am talking about calling for greater self-reflection. I do want to say that in reading this I did reflect on the incredible job that Nancy Pelosi does, keeping the Left together under the Big Tent as we call it in the US. We understand that in the opposition to the Far Right Republican Party, we here in their opposition, allow for a Big Tent to bring together all these different voices on how we should be.

Andrea Chalupa: We allow for a big boisterous conversation and that's perfectly allowed and acceptable and needed. And our country was founded through discord, the Founding Fathers; some of them hated each other and were bitter rivals until the bitter end. And they still were able to help bring forward a country—this big experiment that's incredibly fragile, called America. And so having a big boisterous conversation is perfectly acceptable and just everyone needs to remain united together under that Big Tent. And I think Nancy Pelosi, like any leader, she makes mistakes. But you could also see what a giant mechanical bull

she's forced to ride in terms of having all these different factions. And the media tries to seize on this and sometimes there are warranted flare ups, but given what's at stake and given the incredible shades of differences that exist on the Left, it's pretty remarkable how united we are at this moment.

Andrea Chalupa: We really are more united than we are divided. Certainly if you look at Boris Johnson's opposition in the UK, and we'll go into that a little bit further. So when Nancy Pelosi came to powers in her campaign for the House speaker, it wasn't AOC and The Squad that was going to challenge her. They consolidated behind her and supported her. It was in fact the conservative branch of the Democratic Party that tried to undermine Pelosi, and Pelosi navigated that quite well. And she has helped prop up The Squad in many ways, and The Squad in turn has been incredibly patient and careful in how they've called her out when they've felt that her leadership was lacking. So I think overall there has been sensitivity paid within the Democratic Party of these different factions. So I think people should take heart that currently, in the current climate, we are far more united and the threats to division, we see them clearly.

Andrea Chalupa: We see where they're coming from. So I am heartened by that. And unfortunately that realization came from studying what happened, what went wrong, in the UK. So let's continue on that thread. So back to this report, which we'll link to in our show notes for this episode. According to our analysis and this report, around 78% of voters for non-frontrunner progressive parties in each seat would have had to vote tactically instead to block a Conservative majority. This bar is so high as to be unrealistic. British Progressive's need to look long and hard at the consequences of their divisions and bickering over the last decade. A dose of realism is required. It may be time to think the unthinkable, either the center and the left can somehow be reunited under a single banner or better cooperation and alignment is required among a device flotilla of progressive parties and movements.

Andrea Chalupa: One bright point is that 220 women have been elected to the House of Commons for the first time ever. More than a third of MPs are women now, including a majority of the Labor and Liberal Democrat contingents and the only green, Caroline Lucas. The new Parliament is also the most ethnically diverse ever. The Conservative landslide victory will hold for five years, but is fragile. The 2024 general election could see a dramatic reversal in fortunes. Neither a Hard Brexit nor a long transition period are likely to be good for the country. Boris Johnson and his allies may come to regret the games they have played between 2016 and now. The voter coalition assembled by Dominic Cummings to get Brexit done, their message is temporary and fragile. So what they're saying is, revolutions are easy, governing is harder, and the report goes on to take a bigger view of all this. Britain will be out of the EU by February 2020. The focus of the national conversation could then turn to the more fundamental challenges dividing our society and undermining our economy and global environment.



Andrea Chalupa: Many of the voters who backed the Tories this year are Left Wing on economics and will end up disappointed by Cummings' corporatist turbo Capitalism. Okay, so the pitchforks and torches that Dominic Cummings ushered up to win in this election. They can easily turn back on him, but there remains a grave risk, but the UK will become ever more deeply riven by the culture wars we see spreading globally from the US to Austria, from Israel to India, and from Brazil to Poland. Everywhere we look, Progressives are splitting and Conservatives are uniting. The lessons should be clear, divided we fall. But politics is more volatile than ever time to shoot the rapids together. When reading this, what comes up is that David Cameron, part of his disastrous legacy will include rallying the Far Right, consolidating his Far Right enemy together in this Brexit referendum that David Cameron called, that was the stupidest thing to give in to them by putting that blood in the water.

Andrea Chalupa: Because what that did was that united the Right, and it gave them this huge rallying banner that they flew under, like flying monkeys in *The Wizard of Oz*, to seize power so grotesquely in this election through propaganda and so forth. And it's that Brexit banner. So they had a simple message, get Brexit done and on television, and this oligarchy owned corporatist TV media landscape in the UK. If no one's diving in and allowing all of the necessary airtime to understand how deeply corrupt the Brexit vote was in the first place, instead of there being gaslighting that this was democracy in action, the people have spoken, well, the Brexit vote itself was so incredibly close to begin with. And what gave that little extra edge that tipped it over the scaled up for Nigel Farage to have a victory—Putin-loving Nigel Farage—was that corruption that drove the Brexit vote in the first place.

Andrea Chalupa: And so the British people are being horribly gaslit here. Corporate-owned media and oligarchy media is driving that gaslighting and so are all the special interests that are paying for this Blitzkrieg fake news pile spreading on social media networks. And all of this has allowed the right to consolidate around a single simple message. And in reaction to these forces, you had Jeremy Corbyn and his Stalinist friend Seumas Milne, who is a Champagne Stalinist, the son of a famous TV and media executive who has written horrible articles for The Guardian defending Putin and Yanukovich and Maduro and other autocrats and wannabe autocrats. They came up with this massive manifesto. It's like, nothing screams Che Guevara t-shirt, freshman year in college naivety then a manifesto. "Hey everybody, hey everybody living these very busy lives who just wants to go down to the pub and drink a pint and forget about your sorrows, here's a giant manifesto we need you to read and wrap your head around, and please absorb and dissect and if you have any questions, we want to sit down with you and talk."

Andrea Chalupa: There was one report where somebody's anonymous source was talking about how horrified they were watching a young Labor press officer remark on how boring the Tories were because they kept repeating the same message over and over again. "It's so boring." That is how you win campaigns! You say the same thing over and over and over again. :Make America Great Again, Make America

Great Again, Get Brexit Done.” You just keep hammering it in. And so when you talk about–

Andrea Chalupa: “It's transnational crime syndicate masquerading as the government, Chuck Todd Industrial Complex.”

Sarah Kendzior: “Kleptocracy here is Kleptocracy everywhere”. Like, there's a reason that we invoke our own repetition on this show and in our life. It's because we need people to understand what is going on and there's unwillingness generally speaking in the mainstream media because of the aforementioned Chuck Todd Industrial Complex to talk about the extent of criminality head-on. So yes, repetition is your friend. It's fine to be creative, but make sure you're driving your point home and the campaigns that succeed are going to be the ones that do that.

Andrea Chalupa: Yeah, and Elizabeth Warren, she's got a plan for that. She's got a plan for that. What are we saying when we say Elizabeth Warren has a plan for that? We mean we're living in a time of unprecedented crisis hitting us all at once. So what do we need? We need solutions. We need safety. We need somebody who's going to get the job done. Elizabeth Warren has a plan for that. That is what we're saying. We're up against a transnational crime syndicate masquerading as a government. See how repetition works?

Andrea Chalupa: Sorry, I'm saying it again and Elizabeth Warren has a plan for that because what her plans are doing is going down to the root cause of the issues that allowed Trump to come to power in the first place—that allowed Putin to take advantage of our weaknesses. So that's why we talk about her so much on the show, because no matter who wins this primary, Elizabeth Warren with her plans is giving us a roadmap on how to Trump-proof our country, because it was our own weaknesses—like growing income inequality, Hedge Fund greed, taking over newsrooms and shutting down newsrooms and laying off all these journalists, shrinking the journalistic watchdog that we need to fight corruption on a local level, failing public schools. It's people who can't afford healthcare that go bankrupt going to the hospital. When people are driven to bankruptcy over their healthcare bills, they do not have time to be civically engaged. They don't have time to be good citizens.

Andrea Chalupa: So we're crippling the very foundation of what our democracy depends on. And so Elizabeth Warren is coming in and strengthening our social safety net so people can be engaged and informed citizens and not fall victim to this age of propaganda that we're living under and then vote against their own interests. So Elizabeth Warren has a plan for that. We will keep saying that because her plans are the roadmaps we need in order to Trump-proof and Putin-proof our democracy.

Sarah Kendzior: And if Warren is not your candidate that is fine. I feel like we need to emphasize this. I want to make sure that people know this is not like we are sponsored by the Warren Campaign. It's obvious this is the preferred candidate of both

Andrea and me. But, we will vote for who the nominee is and what I would recommend for our audiences, look at the candidates directly. Listen to their speeches, read their policies, read their plans, use critical thinking, use your own mind, put things in historical context and make an informed decision because you're not going to get, I think, great context from the media. You're going to be bombarded with propaganda and bots. So take your time. Think critically and go by your conscience.

Andrea Chalupa: Well, yeah I want to add to that. I think the journey that you and I have been on, and it's captured on the show, especially in the early episodes of Gaslit Nation, was this full question that you and I've had all these years is, "Is anybody coming to save us?" "Is anybody coming to help us?" "Are we alone in this?" And I think you and I felt so alone for so long and we started this podcast to shine a light out there to bring people together. So it's not just us anymore. It's like we now have this community, and I think our attraction to Elizabeth Warren, whether she wins or loses, is this feeling of there's a leader out there that's showing smart, strategic leadership and moral courage—what the world needs right now and she gets it. And so we're behind her as a leader. We're behind her as somebody that's presenting solutions on how we get out of this..

Andrea Chalupa: And I think on Gaslit Nation, when we stuck our necks out and said, "No, Nancy Pelosi, you're wrong on impeachment." In fact, impeachment was desperately needed and here are all the reasons why and we're going to do three shows about it. When the Mueller Report finally came out, Elizabeth Warren read it right away and her reaction to the Mueller Report, she came out and said, "Impeach him now. We need an impeachment." And we're like, "Oh, thank God someone, here's this massive credible voice in the Senate that gets it." And that started an impeachment bandwagon. More people started jumping on because she showed that moral courage, she stuck her neck out too. Elizabeth Warren gives us a feeling of safety and security that we've been desperate to have. And so for us, it's not an endorsement for her as a primary candidate, it's more like an endorsement for her as a much needed leader in this generation, in the next generation coming.

Andrea Chalupa: So take her plans very seriously. If you're thinking of running for office anywhere large or small, office does not matter. Read Elizabeth Warren's plans to understand what your platform needs to be because we're telling you from people that have looked at what the Kremlin took advantage of to help bring the Trump Crime Family to power, her plans will close the holes in the sinking ship of our democracy. So we all need to fight on a grassroots level, grassroots being the only reliable power we have left to make sure that we Trump proof and Putin proof our democracies on the local level. The all important, all-powerful local level, the state level, because that is guaranteed protection against the Federal Government should Trump steal another election?

Sarah Kendzior: So yeah, today is Tuesday, December 17. We're recording this in the morning. This is important because by the time you hear this, God only knows what will have happened. Currently, impeachment articles are scheduled to be voted on

in the House tomorrow. And judging by the Democrats who've spoken out so far, which includes a number of moderates, Trump will indeed be impeached by the House. And so we now arrive at one of the most dangerous junctures in our modern history, which is what will happen if these articles are brought to the Senate? GOP Senators are not even pretending that they will listen to the House evidence or give Trump a fair and serious trial. They have already announced their intent to exonerate Trump preemptively and more than that, they're planning their own show trial in the Senate aimed at persecuting witnesses. We at Gaslit Nation called for impeachment long ago in part to avoid this very outcome we said over and over, if you don't hold impeachment hearings, you will end up with show trials.

Sarah Kendzior: The most important part of the impeachment process are the hearings which allow Americans to get information about the criminality of the Trump administration in a neutral venue that Trump cannot control. This is a rarity in our media landscape where reporters either supplicate themselves in exchange for access or are threatened or litigated into silence. The impeachment hearings were a rare opportunity for the truth to be told and under oath at that, and they should have gone on and should go on for as long as humanly possible. The reason they should go on for as long as humanly possible is because Trump has committed a multitude of impeachable offenses and the American public deserves to know the truth about all of them. The American public deserves to know what its government is doing. Never forget that and never accept anything less, but instead of opting to present the full truth and illuminate the conspiracies and crimes of the Trump Administration, the House Democrats chose not only to limit the length of impeachment, but the scope.

Sarah Kendzior: They settled on investigating a major impeachable offense—Trump's 2019 Ukraine shakedown—but discussed it almost as if it exists in a vacuum instead of being an extension of the 2016 Russian election heist and the Transnational Crime Syndicate that is the current government. Pelosi correctly stated that quote, “All roads lead to Putin.” But she will not investigate all roads and her refusal to do so hurts the Democrats’ own case. But more importantly, it hurts our Republic. A crisis cannot be resolved when it is not fully exposed. It will only linger and fester if partially examined and we are seeing that right now with the flagrant crimes of people like Rudy Giuliani who is bragging about how he ousted ambassador Marie Yovanovitch so that he could continue his Ukraine crime spree, or Devin Nunes who is implicated in the crimes of Giuliani's henchman, Parnas and Fruman, yet oversees the impeachment hearings, like he's a neutral observer instead of a criminal accomplice.

Sarah Kendzior: Meanwhile, the masterminds of this crisis, like oligarch Dmitryo Firtash, were almost entirely unmentioned during the impeachment proceedings. Very few of the Democrats are addressing the extension of this criminality bluntly, although credit to the ones who are, like Eric Swalwell, who we featured a quote from in the beginning of this episode. And when Pelosi does things like announce that the Democrats are going to collaborate on bills with the Trump Administration on the very same day that the two articles of impeachment are announced, it

sends the message that this is not really serious, that our sovereignty and security as a nation is not at stake, but it is. We are not safe right now. And one of the reasons that we're not safe is because the democratic donor class insists on playing it safe. They insist on using language that minimizes the severity of the crimes and at play acting at collaboration with Republicans who do not respect them and do not respect the United States and have broken their oath to honor the Constitution and serve the American public.

Sarah Kendzior: And it is these very traitorous Republicans who will commence a show trial in the Senate if the House sends them the articles, instead of drawing the investigation out and continuing the hearings. Experts on authoritarianism, experts on law and Watergate veterans like John Dean are all recommending the same course of action—vote on the articles in the House this week if you must, but do not send them to the Senate, and keep the investigations going at all costs. Impeachment proceedings are one of the only points of leverage that the Democrats have left and they need to use it to the fullest extent possible. Andrea, any thoughts?

Andrea Chalupa: I really hope that the Republicans and the Senate don't take the strategy we recommended here on Gaslit Nation for the Democrats, which is keep impeachment in the House as long as you can up until the final minute of 2020, just have turned the House into a hit cable series on fighting crime and people love a good crime fighting show. And I'm really worried that Mitch McConnell is going to do that and turn the Senate into a reality show, an infomercial on how great Trump is and bring in all these witnesses and preachers to praise All-mighty Trump. It's going to be a show trial of witness intimidation and witness harassment and all of that. And on top of that, you're going to seize on the cable news ratings to produce their own Trump Crime Family infomercial, starring Ivanka, hawking her wears. Here are the earrings that this witness wore defending me, my great family.

Andrea Chalupa: And I think also the lesson here is that we're living in a time of unprecedented propaganda. And as we started this show, we called for self-reflection because if you deeply care about saving the environment, stopping losing any more endangered species and human rights, it's self-reflection, humility, committing yourself to becoming better at what you do and doing your part. All of us need to do that, including people in the media, including journalists, because everyone now in media needs to be humble to the fact that this is unprecedented propaganda and it's innovating and it's insidious. In reaction to the UK election, Carole Cadwalladr, an Orwell Prize winner, Pulitzer shortlist investigative journalist, who's brilliant, was talking about how journalists in the UK need to wise up. They're now operating in this horrible environment that's constantly working against them and bombarding people through social media and so forth with fake news.

Andrea Chalupa: And on top of that, you have Mark Zuckerberg refusing to address how Facebook is contributing to dismantling democracies by spreading propaganda. He had dinner with Trump at the White House in October, and so Facebook is

going to do in 2020 what it did in 2016 which has helped the Trump Crime Family win the White House. Natasha Bertrand, a journalist that we love and talk about a lot in the show, she just wrote on Twitter that hackers suspected to be Russian hacked into a Spanish TV channel and broadcast on RT a RUSSIA Today interview with a Catalan Separatists Leader and the Chief Editor of RT said, "We don't know who did it, but it was beautiful." It was you, obviously, this is what you do. The Russian Government has a history of hacking TV networks themselves.

Sarah Kendzior: Yeah. I want to just remind people about this, that in January, 2017 when Maxine Waters was on C-SPAN talking about Trump's criminality, talking about Trump's Russia ties, I believe C-SPAN suddenly was in their words, "Interrupted by RT." So for the first time in C-SPAN history, it was interrupted by what they kept referring to as a glitch by RT at the very point that Americans were really wising up about what had happened in terms of Russian hijacking of the 2016 election. This was right around the time when the Steele Dossier was published on BuzzFeed. Everybody was talking about Trump and the Kremlin and they keep saying, "Oh, this is just like an incredibly amazing coincidence that one of Trump's main enemies, Maxine Waters, voice of clarity on the situation, was speaking and then was interrupted by the state propaganda network of the tyrannical regime that enabled Trump." This is all supposed to be taken as just an amazing coincidence. I don't think it was.

Sarah Kendzior: They like to do these symbolic actions. We've seen this kind of perverse symbolism in other things the Kremlin has done, like bringing our representatives to Russia on July 4th or on 9/11. People refer to it as trolling. It's more dangerous than that. It's flaunting power. It's mocking. It's attacking institutions. And so I want people to make this connection because I do think that that was an intentional act and you're foolish if you don't at least consider that a possibility. Anyway, go on.

Andrea Chalupa: Yeah, I mean this has been going on for years. I mean French ... So Russian hackers took down a leading French broadcaster in 2015. I mean all the warning signs have been there. They've been doing things like this, but it's becoming more and more brazen. You also had Ivanka Trump at an event in the Middle East. She was interviewed by her own spokesperson who asked her forwarding questions. This is like a live human re-enactment of a press release. Okay. One Russian journalist as reported by BuzzFeed commented that even Vladimir Putin doesn't get interviewed by Dmitry Peskov, Putin's press secretary. We're dealing on two different fronts.

Andrea Chalupa: The propaganda is becoming more brazen and it's also becoming more sophisticated, where you have the New York Times, well thanks to Ken Vogel getting a bump up and getting hired by the New York Times, even after his harmful reporting at Politico, creating that whole Ukraine collusion nonsense, which the Far Right is seizing on relentlessly. Ken Vogel goes on in the New York Times and does the Biden-Ukraine scandal-fake scandal-article and waits until like the 17th paragraph to say, "Oh, there is no scandal there, actually." So

we're dealing on two fronts a more sophisticated propaganda and more brazen propaganda and even Russia's Defense Minister at the start of 2017 gave a speech where he said, and this is Russia's Defense Minister. This is the guy in charge of their military talking about propaganda because that's where propaganda falls under. It's a weapon.

Andrea Chalupa: So he's saying that "Russian propaganda has become even more sophisticated." So journalists have to be so humble and so careful of all of this because it's a brave new world for all of us. And to this point, one weird thing that I wanted to share breaking some news here on Gaslit Nation is that when we were making *Mr. Jones*, my film about propaganda and how propaganda kills and how leading journalists helped Soviet censors cover up Stalin's Genocide Famine in Ukraine, which deliberately starved to death millions. The vast majority of the victims were Ukrainian. When we were making this film, we asked the New York Times if we could use an article where their Pulitzer Prize winning Moscow Bureau Chief Walter Duranty wrote in the New York Times, "There is no famine." "There is no famine." He wrote that during the height of The Famine and we asked them, I'm thinking, "No big deal."

Andrea Chalupa: We're going to use the actual words, your article. The New York Times said, "No." And I remember being on set, sitting in across from Agnieszka Holland, and both of us just looking at each other, "Why would they say no?" This is a piece of history. This is a moment for redemption. This is a moment to confront and heal from and learn from. Journalists are aware of who Walter Duranty is. He's a cautionary tale of how even journalists who, maybe start off with the right intentions and they want to serve the public or whatever, even journalists can be corrupted. So anywhere power exists—and power exists in media—anywhere power exists, there also exists the potential to abuse power. And that's the cautionary tale of Walter Duranty of the New York Times. And the fact that the New York Times refused to allow us to use the article for the film shocked us to the core because we didn't understand that decision whatsoever.

Andrea Chalupa: My opinion is that it falls into a larger pattern of the New York Times refusing to confront some of the big mistakes it's been making. It got to the point where, we have this wonderful comradery in the media between all of these leading outlets and legacy papers that does exist because all journalists everywhere are under threat, increasingly so, around the world. And the Washington Post even went to the point of doing an article on Ken Vogel, Ken Vogel as a cautionary tale and some of his fishy, odd reporting and the harm it's done. And the New York Times stood by Ken Vogel. So I think what we're seeing is the New York Times is falling into this trap, which I think is sadly a strong trait of Americans generally, which is this need to dominate, a need to dominate. And if you need to dominate, then you can't be wrong and you can't address your mistakes.

Andrea Chalupa: Like for instance, when you look at the Nordic countries that people hold up as a really strong example of a strong social safety net, really low levels of corruption. All the Nordic countries are at the top of the list for the least corrupt countries in the world. And also they rank very high when it comes to happiness

rankings. The Nordic countries are doing something right. I couldn't, for example, imagine the New York Times of Denmark not allowing us to use an article of a journalist, 85 years ago that did something awful. I couldn't imagine that coming from any of the Nordic countries. And I could be wrong, I'm not a historian of leading newspapers across the Nordic countries, but the New York Times doing this feels like sort of this horrible trait that exists in America, which is this need to dominate, dominate, dominate and it's what our country was built on.

Andrea Chalupa: It's subjecting others and benefiting off the pain of others. And exploiting others. And out of that dominance comes this sneer of arrogance. And I think in order for us to move forward as a country, we need to learn from our mistakes and we need to heal from them. And we need to improve ourselves and there's no shame in that. There's only something to be gained from growing together as a nation and committing ourselves to doing better and doing better for each other.

Sarah Kendzior: One of the things that the New York Times and other elitist media legacy-type organizations do is they side with power. And it doesn't matter what power is doing, it doesn't matter to them that power is separating migrant families at the borders. That power is supporting Nazis. That power is devouring democracy and stripping citizens of their rights. They will side with power because that is what they crave and the old dirge of journalism being something that comforts the afflicted and afflicts the comfortable, that doesn't apply to outlets like the New York Times. And of course there are exceptions within that paper. There are still some people that are left there doing good work in really horrible conditions. But honestly, every day on Twitter, everyone is like, "Oh my God, look at the New York Times, they're at it again." It's because they've done something terrible, whether it's promoting Nazis or promoting sexual assaulters or something more common and nuanced like both sides seeing impeachment in a very literal way.

Sarah Kendzior: I think Nate Silver pointed out that an article about impeachment, which contained a bunch of lies about what the Trump administration is doing, had the words both sides in it themselves literally four times. They gave examples like Trump actually did have some sort of great interest in battling corruption around the world. They're presenting that as a legitimate argument instead of a myth and they are portraying myths that Trump had propagated as facts. And that is propaganda. That is very savvy propaganda. And so at this point I encourage people to unsubscribe. There's no point in going on and on about how consistently awful a paper this is. Treat it like Fox News, treat it like Breitbart, treat it like an appendage of the Trump Administration because that's what it is and that's not a category I would apply to very many outlets.

Sarah Kendzior: Most outlets are a mix of perspectives. Are there good places that make mistakes? There are no perfect places, but there are some that are primarily acting as propaganda venues and unfortunately, The Times falls in that category. We see the results of this in things like the mythology of Trump's



popularity. Unlike the New York Times, I live in a Red State. I live in a state that voted for Trump. He was never as popular as people claimed. What we had in 2016 was kind of analogous to what happened in the UK where we had two very deeply unpopular candidates, at least where I live, with Hillary Clinton and Trump, and a lot of people staying home and a lot of people holding their noses and a lot of people voting for someone they didn't necessarily like and they were willing to overlook their bad qualities and just kind of being like, "What a shitshow, hope things work out."

Sarah Kendzior: And I definitely think people sorely underestimated how badly they were not going to work out. These media outlets behave as if Trump holds some kind of a mandate that he doesn't actually have. Impeachment is more popular than Trump. Impeachment and removal is more popular than Trump. And this extends into the coverage of protests. By the time you hear this episode, there will have been protests. There are protests scheduled for tonight, on Tuesday, against GOP obstructionism and in favor of the impeachment of Trump. And I constantly get people querying me and my mentions and Twitter, especially for foreign countries saying, "Why haven't there been any protests against Trump yet?" "Why are Americans not on the streets?" The truth of the matter is, the biggest protests in American history happened during the Trump Administration. They happened with the Women's March, with the March Against Gun Violence, with the March to Support Migrant Families and stop their abuse.

Sarah Kendzior: The March for Science, the March for Truth, which Andrea was an organizer of, and on and on and on. We have groups that are regularly marching against ICE, marching against the brutal dictatorship that has been evolving in the US. As someone who covered Ferguson and as a St. Louis resident, it is so offensive to me the way people behave as if, one, there's not a tradition of protest and there's not people out in the streets, and two, that when there are, somehow they're lauded, somehow they're appreciated. That is not what happened. I was there for all of Ferguson, which meant I was out at the protests that the non-local media barely covered. Protesters were derided, protesters were spit upon and yes, there emerged a little cottage industry out of Ferguson. I wrote an article called Ferguson INC. for a reason, where a lot of out of town activists came and capitalized on the situation.

Sarah Kendzior: But generally speaking, this was not a great or pleasant moment and no the protesters did not have the support of the media and the current protesters don't either. And I think one reason for that is that the protests tend to be led by women. They tend to be led by people from marginalized groups and that is not who runs the political media. Who runs the media is primarily white men who are seeking power and so don't let these narratives fool you. Is America divided? Yes, but not into halves. America is and always has been divided into many, many, many, feuding parts that have managed to work together to varying degrees over time. I don't think that Trump has this mandate. I do think that popular support for impeachment and for ousting him is larger than is generally claimed and it's a both sides thing.

Sarah Kendzior: It's not just inaccurate, it's profoundly dangerous in this time. I really worry that a lot of these elite journalists will not understand what they are going to lose until it actually happens. I really thought that the murder of Jamal Khashoggi was going to bring that home for people about how dangerous this situation is for them, for the freedom of the press, for the safety of journalists, yet this continues. They are digging their own graves and they are digging ours and you should really chime in here and say something uplifting to end this episode because I can't end 2019 on that note.

Andrea Chalupa: Okay, how about this, given what we're up against, we're doing a lot better than— but imagine if we didn't have these forces—but so yeah, no, I will just end by saying that grassroots power is the only reliable power we have left. And to find your community, go to [gaslitnationpod.com](http://gaslitnationpod.com) and check out our action guide, because if we're doing this well, imagine how much better we can be if we all show up and bring more people with us and refuse to abandon each other.

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

Andrea Chalupa: We want to encourage our listeners to donate to RAICES, a Texas-based nonprofit agency that provides free and low cost legal services to underserved immigrant children, families and refugees. They're helping with the crisis facing migrant families at the Texas border and need your support.

Sarah Kendzior: We also encourage you to donate to help critically endangered Orangutans already under pressure from the Palm Oil Industry. Donate to the Orangutan project@[theorangutanproject.org](http://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.