

Gaslit Nation Transcript

17 June 2020

“Protect the Election: Impeach Barr”

Mr. Jones:

Hitler and Goebbels are both there. Next thing you know, we're strapped onto Hitler's plane, the Richthofen, fastest and most powerful plane in all of Germany. On the flight, Goebbels is reading the papers while Hitler studies a map of Europe, and I couldn't help but think, if this plane should crash, the whole history of Europe would be changed.

Speaker 2:

Well, thank you, young man, for that passionate presentation, but the Germans have their own unrest to worry about.

Mr. Jones:

The Reichstag fire was not unrest. It was a tactic. The Nazis now have an excuse to end all opposition.

Speaker 2:

But how can you be so certain?

Mr. Jones:

Goebbels told me.

Sarah Kendzior:

I'm Sarah Kendzior, the author of the bestselling 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*, which you can check out by going to the website, [samuelgoldwynfilms.com](http://samuelgoldwynfilms.com). And yeah, find it there. Thanks.

Sarah Kendzior:

And this is *Gaslit Nation*, a podcast covering corruption in the Trump administration and rising autocracy around the world. So, we're going to be discussing that corruption going to unparalleled lengths today. But before that, Andrea, you had a little PSA you wanted to do.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yes, the weather is warm. People are going out and about, which means it's never been more important to wear a mask to protect yourself and others from the spread of the coronavirus. We are still very much in an actual pandemic, and Dr. Fauci warned us that there will likely be a second wave come fall. So wear your mask when you're out in public. And one great place you can get a mask, where I will be getting a mask, is from a New York-based organization.

Andrea Chalupa:

And I'll read from this campaign that they're launching, where you can buy a mask and proceeds go to supporting their important work on the ground. And so reading now from their site. "GMHC, a New York City-based non-profit, has been on the front lines of fighting hate and helping marginalized communities since the earliest days of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In partnership with theCollectiveShift, GMHC is joining forces with leading voices in the arts, entertainment and fashion industries to launch the Distance Yourself From Hate campaign. You can buy a mask, designed in collaboration with the wonderful Jason Wu. More info, [here](#).

Javier Munoz:

Distance yourself from hate. What does that mean to me?

Gigi Desir:

It means seeing the end of systemic racism.

Bobby Berk:

Doing everything you can to stop hate.

Cecily Strong:

Never using my voice or my energy to empower bigotry or oppression or discrimination.

Javier Munoz:

Making sure that energy is helpful and inclusive.

Bebe Neuwirth:

Living one's life in compassion and empathy.

Sarah M. Gellar:

Because kindness costs nothing and means everything.

Ash Foo:

Being the change that I want to see in the world.

Diane Kruger:

Because I want my daughter to grow up in a world with diversity and cultural differences.

MJ Rodriguez:

It is also about Black Lives Matter and Black Trans Lives Matter.

Colin Alexander:

Hate does course through people's bodies.

Tom Farrelly Rogers:

Anything that denies you your identity is as good as an act of hate.

Barbra-Lee Grant:

Let's make a change now that other generations can follow.

Tommy Ton:

By speaking up, standing up and taking action.

Jason Wu:

I want us to be united as a community.

Latrice Royale:

And heal the world one person, one city, one state, one country at a time.

Samantha Bee:

Because the only way we'll get through this as if we all stand strong together.

Jason Wu:

Help provide food and protective masks to people in need by purchasing a mask at [distanceyourselffromhate.org](http://distanceyourselffromhate.org).

Sarah Kendzior:

All right. Thank you. So, now we're going to get to the current heart of the coronavirus story, which unfortunately is looting and the deprivation of resources to citizens who deserve it in favor of mysterious corporate beneficiaries. So the Chicago Tribune says, "Treasury Secretary, Steve Mnuchin, outright refuses to disclose recipients of a taxpayer-funded, \$600 billion-plus coronavirus aid program."

Sarah Kendzior:

Mnuchin is covering up details about this no-strings-attached bailout of multinational, multi-billion dollar companies, and he is using the tragedy of the coronavirus as the pretext for a kleptocratic heist. 4.5 million businesses have received this funding and we still do not know where it's going. Meanwhile, unemployment is through the roof and ordinary citizens are getting pittance checks from the government.

Sarah Kendzior:

This is what we predicted would happen, both when the coronavirus emerged and we saw who was in charge of it—which includes not just Mnuchin, but also Kushner, Pence and the core of the crime cabal in the Trump administration—but it's also a scandal, or a crime, I should say, that's particular to Mnuchin himself. We've been warning you about Mnuchin for a long time, and you could listen to many past episodes of Gaslit Nation for more details on his record.

Sarah Kendzior:

But to just summarize quickly, Mnuchin, like Trump and like Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, emerged from The Wall Street corporate raider culture, pioneered by Carl Icahn—who was also a former Trump administration member and a Trump mentor before he had to resign in scandal, back when that kind of

thing actually happened—and Mnuchin shares Icahn's objective of loot and redistribute, which means redistribute the money to themselves.

Sarah Kendzior:

This is how the ultra rich get richer. On that note, Mnuchin was one of the few people to profit off of Bernie Madoff's Ponzi scheme in 2008. He was also the finance chairman of Trump's deeply corrupt campaign, which includes several people who have since been indicted, including Paul Manafort and Rick Gates. Mnuchin has spent his tenure as Treasury Secretary appeasing Russian oligarchs like Oleg Deripaska, who was sanctioned by the U.S. government for his role in the 2016 election interference.

Sarah Kendzior:

Mnuchin at one point was being investigated by Congress for his own financial relationship with Deripaska, back when the House of Representatives actually investigated things. Here is an excerpt from a January, 2019 article from BuzzFeed on an investigation led by Representative Jackie Speier: "Speier said she wants to learn more about Mnuchin's involvement with Leonid Blavatnik, a Ukrainian-born billionaire, with whom he co-owned a Hollywood film company up until 2017.

Sarah Kendzior:

Mnuchin had to divest from RatPac-Dune Entertainment as part of his confirmation process and disclosed the sale of his shares, but the exact prices and purchasers are unknown. However, the Hollywood Reporter reported that Mnuchin sold the shares to Blavatnik for approximately \$25 million. In the letter, Speier wrote that she had serious concerns about the alleged transaction, adding that it is especially alarming, given a recent New York Times report saying that Deripaska might've gotten a better deal with Treasury than has been publicly disclosed.

Sarah Kendzior:

Blavatnik, the letter notes, co-owns SUAL Partners with another sanctioned oligarch, Viktor Vekselberg, and SUAL is a major shareholder of Rusal, one of Deripaska's sanctioned companies. It also notes that Blavatnik formerly served on Rusal's board and that one of his companies donated \$1 million to Trump's inaugural fund. 'Blavatnik had a clear financial interest in the outcome of the treasury actions,' Speier wrote. The letter acknowledges that Mnuchin disclosed the sale of the shares, but argues that Mnuchin's relationship with Blavatnik and involvement in easing sanctions is clearly a conflict of interest." And there's a lot more where that came from.

Sarah Kendzior:

So if you're wondering why you haven't heard about this investigation, why it was seemingly stopped dead in its tracks and Steven Mnuchin is still in the Treasury, taking your money and giving it to his corporate partners, one place to look is at the massive, record-breaking donation that Blavatnik and his wife gave to the Democratic Party in 2019, part of which the DCCC had to return after public outcry that they had taken funds from the associate of a sanctioned Russian oligarch.

Sarah Kendzior:

So as you can see, the corruption at play here is not limited to the Republican Party. In fact, the original corruption of the Treasury itself happened in 2015 during the Obama administration, but was not revealed to the public until 2018, for reasons we still don't fully know. And what I'm talking about, of

course, is the fact that Russia infiltrated the U.S. Treasury in 2015. This was revealed through a whistleblower in 2017 and 2018.

Sarah Kendzior:

And these articles were detailed on BuzzFeed by Jason Leopold and Anthony Cormier. I've said many times, I think this is some of the most seminal reporting to come out of this era, and at the heart of a lot of the Trump-Russia crime comes from this hijacking of the Treasury that has never been fully explained. What's important to note here is that whomever Trump selected for the role of Treasurer back in 2016 was selected for their ability to work with the Russian mafia and with oligarchs.

Sarah Kendzior:

That is the real reason that Steve Mnuchin is viewed as indispensable, unlike other Trump administration officials, who have gone through cycles of appointments over time. He is part of that core circle of corruption that has now hijacked a pandemic, hijacked a national tragedy, and is doing so at a scale previously unimaginable, because we've never had circumstances like this. Andrea, do you have thoughts on that.

Andrea Chalupa:

My thoughts on this are as follows: this is what kleptocracy looks like. Taxpayer money lines the pockets of the corrupt leaders and their circle of friends. We saw this in Ukraine. Of course, there was Putin's puppet, Yanukovich, that came to power with the Kremlin's operative, Paul Manafort, who's also the longtime friend, longtime neighbor and campaign chairman of Donald J. Trump, the meltdown King in the White House, Putin's Trojan horse.

Andrea Chalupa:

So Yanukovich, during his time in power, where he was like Trump, inspired a lot of protests, a lot of riots that turned violent because people were desperate. Riots, of course, are the voice of the unheard. Ukrainians sacrificed their lives. They camped out in the bitter cold to get rid of this guy, because he was a tyrant. His corruption came from stealing tens of billions of dollars from the Ukrainian state, estimated at \$30 billion to \$100 billion dollars from the Ukrainian state.

Andrea Chalupa:

Ukraine called the FBI to investigate all of this. So in early 2014, when Yanukovich eventually was forced to flee town and hide out in Russia where he's been ever since, Yanukovich, with those stolen billions, expanded on his Versailles McMansion that has since been turned into a museum of corruption. And that's the lesson for us here in the U.S., with Donald Trump as president. That's part of America's history.

Andrea Chalupa:

America's history is a story of white supremacy. It was a story of genocide. It's a story of black people, native Americans, brown people, being exploited, brutally so. And as shocking as Trump's time in office has been, it's also part of our history. America's history is about moments of burning it down and building it back up again, and confronting our demons in the process. And hopefully we do a lot better this time and really clean up our act so it doesn't have to get this bad again.

Andrea Chalupa:

Like any post Civil War country, we're still dealing with the deep wounds of that Civil War. And a lot of this hasn't been confronted for so long. One part of confronting and finally healing from all this, especially to protect ourselves from this happening again, is to create our own museum of corruption, just like the Ukrainians did with confronting and healing from Yanukovich's corruption.

Andrea Chalupa:

And my proposal would be, obviously, a traditional museum, maybe turn one of Paul Manafort's seized properties from the Mueller investigation—that would make a great museum of corruption. We could even do fun, easy projects like create a standard 52-card deck of playing cards designed so that each card showcases a different corrupt official who was complicit in all this, who got rich off the Trump regime and helped further all this corruption.

Andrea Chalupa:

In this deck of cards, you'd of course have Steve Mnuchin, who'd be the king of diamonds. And what's so important to remember about how we got here, it was the little things that led up to the bigger things. It was the silly little antics of these guys that we all ridiculed on Twitter. But these were clear signs that we were always ultimately headed here. So I just want to remind everyone from the story from 2017, and I'm reading now from The Guardian.

Andrea Chalupa:

"The U.S. Treasury chief, Steve Mnuchin, has sparked a wave of criticism and mockery after photos appeared of him and his wife, Louise Linton, holding up a sheet of new dollar bills. Mnuchin was visiting the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to see production of new dollar bills, which will bear his signature for the first time." Gross. "The couple have previously been targeted for the way they spend money. They were heavily criticized in September when it emerged that he had asked for the use of a U.S. Air Force plane to fly him and his wife around Europe for their honeymoon." All right?

Andrea Chalupa:

And then of course, Louise Linton was infamous for posting on social media a photo of herself getting off a government plane and highlighting the brands she was wearing in this image as though she was hawking those wares. So all those ridiculous antics that we saw and were all horrified by at the start of the Trump regime, those were already five-alarm fires that our democracy was in serious trouble and American taxpayer money was in serious trouble.

Andrea Chalupa:

And what was the ultimate outcome of this? Hundreds of millions of dollars given away with zero transparency and accountability. So all of this is to say that if we're lucky enough to have a free and fair election in November—and I don't think we will, because you have a fascist Attorney General Barr there to ensure that Trump stays in power and that they all avoid accountability—but if we're lucky to have a free and fair election, with Putin not hacking the machines and creating all types of cyber attacks and creating chaos and scrubbing people from the voter rolls.

Andrea Chalupa:

If the Democrats and public officials, doing their role to protect what's left of our democracy, if we manage to have a free and fair election and Biden is sworn in as president, Biden's entire four years, it has to be spent identifying every person across the federal government that was complicit in aiding and

furthering this corruption. And they have to be banned from government roles. They have to be named. We have to know who they are, because they cannot be trusted in any capacity.

Andrea Chalupa:

These are people who have to be outed. It's the whistleblowers; it's the brave people like Natalie Mayflower Edwards, that Sarah mentioned, the whistleblower in the Treasury, that did all she could, going through proper channels, to alert officials into a dangerous money laundering investigation that wasn't really going anywhere in the Treasury. She wasn't getting anywhere, so she went to the Press because the government officials were failing her.

Andrea Chalupa:

And in a stable democracy, the Press picks up the slack and does their job and balances things out and alerts the public and everything functions and whistleblowers are protected. Instead, she was forced to plead guilty and is now facing a prison sentence. That's authoritarianism. That's what it looks like. And it just accelerates from here. So, we have a lot of work ahead of us to confront the demons of this moment and assure that this can't happen again.

Andrea Chalupa:

And that includes naming and shaming those who furthered this corruption and putting on a pedestal the brave patriots, a lot of women, the brave patriots, the whistleblowers that risked their lives, risked their careers, risked financial ruin to do whatever they could to protect our democracy and, quite literally, slow the rise of authoritarianism in America.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah, exactly. I mean, we cannot have a repeat of what's happened with every other administration that has been run by GOP crime, whether Watergate, where Nixon was pardoned, whether the aftermath of Iran-Contra, which Bill Barr of course helped clear up, but then the Clinton administration looked the other way, whether the crimes of the Bush administration, including war crimes, but especially in the case of someone like Mnuchin, the 2008 financial collapse and the Wall Street bailout, and the fact that they got away with that.

Sarah Kendzior:

There was never a recovery. It wasn't even quite a recession. It was a restructuring. It was purposeful. They took advantage of the collapse of the economy, which in some cases they helped accelerate, to restructure it in a way so that basically no one had a chance. So you had opportunity hoarding and wealth hoarding by an incredibly narrow sector of elite Americans, who then went on to dominate our political system. I write in my book, *Hiding in Plain Sight*, about this and about how Jared Kushner in particular is the embodiment of this sort of culture, this purchased merit, this credentialism.

Sarah Kendzior:

And I think what we're seeing in the streets, it's a reaction to racist police brutality, but it's also just an expression of such incredible pain. What we're seeing on the streets is decades—and for some, centuries—of bottled up anguish at the total lack of accountability, at the incessant elite criminal impunity that we see embodied locally through police departments, which have the protection of people like Trump and of Bill Barr, and we see at the highest levels of government with people like Steve

Mnuchin, Blavatnik, the oligarchs with whom they work, and the refusal of our officials to seek accountability.

Sarah Kendzior:

It's just been failure after failure, whether it's Comey's failure, or Mueller's failure, or Pelosi's failure, the failure of the court system to which now the law is apparently a malleable plaything in which the ultra rich have a completely different system than anyone. That's always been true just to some extent in America, but it's certainly much worse now. Biden needs to go in hard. They need to name names. They can't just, for the sake of not being divisive or smoothing things over or moving forward or whatever euphemism they're going to give this, they cannot excuse elite criminality.

Sarah Kendzior:

They have to actually prosecute it. There needs to be consequences and we need to make sure that these recurring people, people like Bill Barr or Roger Stone or Manafort or the rest, are not able to seek office again. It's disgusting. And I think Biden to some extent does understand the stakes here. He's been more forthright lately in terms of just evaluating the danger that we're in. Things like Trump refusing to leave office, things like the election very likely not being a free and fair election—in the past, in 2016, they refused to talk about this in a straightforward way.

Sarah Kendzior:

They refused to warn the public in advance. Biden has been warning the public and I appreciate that. And I hope that that kind of honesty extends to an explanation of what exactly happened to the Treasury under the second term of the Obama administration, because we're not saying that the Obama administration colluded with Russia or partnered with Russia to hijack it. It seems that they had no involvement at all, except for a lack of oversight and a refusal to investigate it deeply, and certainly a refusal to alert the public at the time.

Sarah Kendzior:

This should have been a story that broke a long time ago, because it endangers our national security and it endangers our finances. It endangers our daily lives. And so I hope that somebody asks Biden about that as these months towards the election go on.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah, it's just a lot of work. And that's why we keep pointing out to people that you have to fight locally. You have to clean up your own backyard. We've been pointing, for most of our shows, to resources on how to do this. The Gaslit Nation Action Guide has a whole section on how to join a community locally. If we each clean up our own backyard, get rid of corrupt officials, vote in community-committed officials, who accept the science on the climate crisis, who accept human rights and want to put an end to the oppressive, brutal system of racial inequality.

Andrea Chalupa:

If we do that all locally across this country, that is a huge, huge, not just a defense against Barr and Trump and their vicious corruption, it's an offense. We overwhelm them. So everyone has to go and check out the Gaslit Nation Action Guide and join a community where you live and clean up your own backyard, because we're in this for the long haul. We have to dedicate the rest of our lives to rooting out this corruption and ensuring that America never, ever comes this close again to losing its democracy.



Sarah Kendzior:

Yep. And on that note, looking at our little plan for the show, which is basically a long list of white supremacists who have inserted themselves into executive power. I'm kind of like, where shall we begin? Shall we talk about...

Andrea Chalupa:

You're shuffling the deck of corrupt white supremacists that I pitched earlier.

Sarah Kendzior:

I mean, yeah, we could just rename the show that. To Andrea's point before, you can't separate white supremacy from this kleptocracy. You can't separate race from economics. The more that this kind of elite criminal impunity is expressed, it's white people that are doing this. It's white people who are stealing this money and asserting this kind of corrupt control and obliterating the rule of law itself in favor of their own devices. And this takes place not just on a national scale, but on a transnational scale. And there's some people like Trump who are just purely in it for the money, purely in it for his own enrichment. There are others that-

Andrea Chalupa:

Ivanka and Jared as well, Don Jr, Eric Trump,

Sarah Kendzior:

Basically that family. And then there are others with ideological pretenses. The ones that they fancy themselves intellectuals of some kind.

Andrea Chalupa:

Grand wizards.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah, grand wizards that get invited to party with the editors of The Atlantic and to go to cocktail parties in D.C.. That's all that is, is a grand wizard in a suit. And so the person I'm thinking of is Steve Bannon. And we had a little bit of a minor revelation for people who follow these things closely which is that, as suspected, Steve Bannon has a relationship with Aleksandr Dugin, who some have deemed his Russian counterpart. A lot of people have tried to play down these connections, play down Alexander Dugin's influence on the Kremlin or on Putin. They doth protest too much, in my opinion. But I'm going to read a little bit of a review that Luke Harding, the reporter, wrote of a new book by Benjamin Teitelbaum.

Sarah Kendzior:

He didn't really like the book too much, but this part is interesting. "In late 2018, two far-right figures met in a Rome hotel. The first is Alexander Dugin, a Russian philosopher. With his long, wispy beard, Dugin looks as if he might've fallen from the pages of Crime and Punishment. The second is Steve Bannon, former advisor to Donald Trump and an unashamed nationalist. The pair speak for eight hours. On the face of it, they have much in common: both are leading exponents of radical anti-liberal thinking who serve powerful masters."

Sarah Kendzior:

"The list of mutual dislikes is long: globalism, international institutions, universal human rights. Neither is exactly a fan of immigration. Their vision is a world of sovereign and culturally specific nation states. It has a religious element too, with lots of talk about the Judeo-Christian West. Bannon has repeatedly mooted an alliance between the U.S. and Russia, seeing both states as natural partners in the struggle against 'godless cosmopolitanism'. According to the U.S. scholar, Benjamin Teitelbaum, the Russian-American duo share another hidden bond: both follow traditionalism, a 20th century philosophical and spiritual school. 'It was once obscure' Teitelbaum rights, 'but it now has an outsized influence in far-right politics and Dugin and Bannon have avidly studied its texts.'" So thoughts on this, Andrea?

Andrea Chalupa:

Well, the FBI calls white supremacy, white terrorism, whatever you want to call it, one of the greatest threats that America faces today. It's a global movement and this global KKK, they're all united. They support each other. And a lot of their funding comes from the Kremlin or Kremlin-linked politicians and groups. So it's not surprising that Dugin and Bannon would have an eight hour slumber party together, both of them gushing over each other's morally corrupt and evil ideas.

Andrea Chalupa:

To all those idiots, the useful idiots that like to downplay Dugin's influence and muddle the truth about that, Dugin represents a larger pervasive culture in Russia. Putin's State TV is xenophobic mania. There's racism against even immigrants from former Soviet States. There's this Russian chauvinism that's fanned and supported by Putin, and it's from the top down. I've written about this. There's even a report of an immigrant that was brutally attacked on a street in Russia and the doctor refused to treat him because he was an immigrant.

Andrea Chalupa:

And so Dugin is influential because Dugin is representative of the larger xenophobia that the Kremlin itself promotes. That's what makes him influential, is that he is essentially an ambassador for all of these evil ideas and destruction and imperialism that is coming out of the Kremlin. As we've always said, Russiagate itself was a perfect marriage between Russia's idiots and America's idiots. They found each other, they enforced each other, and they grew stronger in numbers.

Andrea Chalupa:

That's why we had video of the Duma erupting in applause when Trump managed to squeak by in stealing the 2016 election with the help and influence of Putin's operative, Paul Manafort. So, all of this matters because it's a shared ideology. That ideology is not just white supremacy, it's corruption at the expense of innocent lives, innocent people. And you have corporations, including media corporations, that turn a blind eye because they're profiting in the process.

Andrea Chalupa:

So you had people that were reluctant to sanction Hitler's Germany. You had people that were reluctant to sanction Stalin's Soviet Union for its mass murder, because there was money to be made with these aspiring empires. And you have that today with European officials and American officials reluctant to

sanction Putin's Russia, because there's money to be made with Russia. But what we're telling you is, is that you cannot do business with hate factories.

Andrea Chalupa:

You cannot do business with mass murdering regimes, because they will always go too far. They will always want everything. They will always want total domination and they'll always want you to submit to them, always. We saw that with Secretary of State Kerry, naively trying to negotiate some sort of resolution with his counterpart, Lavrov, in Russia, when it came to Syria. The Russians completely played the Americans when it came to Syria and Assad and Russia's atrocities continue in Syria to this day.

Andrea Chalupa:

So when people tell you who they are, always, always believe them. That is the whole story of this. And to all the useful idiots in the fashionable, dirty left or whatever, stop trying to normalize Bannon. Stop platforming Bannon. Stop thinking you're being edgy, or whatever you think you're being, with Bannon. He is a KKK grand wizard. He is someone who would take an innocent black child and hang him from a tree, if he could, if he would have a white mob, including white modeled police officers there to protect him. That is what you are giving voice to. So stop doing that. It's evil. It's vile. We must shout it down and make it go back into the hole from which it crawled out of.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah, absolutely. And I can't emphasize enough that these are people with worldwide ambitions. We've talked about a transnational crime syndicate masquerading as the government, about that being the Trump administration. The people who are operating behind the scenes, including former members of the administration like Bannon, are just as dangerous and they are leading their own movements, which run parallel and benefit from the Trump administration or Boris Johnson's administration or Viktor Orban or Putin, or all of these other proto-fascist administrations abroad.

Sarah Kendzior:

And we're seeing Bannon do things like trying to build a fascist academy in Italy. We see him branching out beyond Europe and North America to places like Brazil. And they're doing this in the midst of climate change, in the midst of a pandemic, in the midst of the kind of massive catastrophes and shocks to the system—like what Naomi Klein has described in *The Shock Doctrine*—that are extremely beneficial to restructuring a society and its economy and its political system to the benefit of a wealthy elite that are not held accountable. And then in this case, have just murderous ideas.

Sarah Kendzior:

These are deeply sadistic, deeply cruel people, who get off on inflicting that cruelty and never being held to account. And so you may look at Dugin's blog or you may listen to Bannon and you laugh and you think these are ridiculous people, these are cartoonish villains. That is to their benefit when they do that, especially if they're directly implicated in state crimes and especially if they're trying to reach out to younger people, to people who maybe don't have a sense of history and don't realize the danger at hand.

Sarah Kendzior:

People who maybe buy-in to the mainstream media coverage that this really isn't so bad, it really isn't so scary. Those become the people on the street that are beating up innocent protesters, that are, under

the cover of Antifa, committing violent acts in the hopes of getting the police to arrest or brutalize Black people. That's what you're helping uplift. So you're little cocktail party culture, your smug dismissal, that's who you're ultimately helping in the end.

Sarah Kendzior:

So moving along on our white supremacists countdown, we're at Stephen Miller. As you've likely heard, Trump is getting ready to deliver a speech in Tulsa that will be written by Stephen Miller about race relations in America. The speech was originally scheduled for Juneteenth, the holiday that commemorates the freeing of the slaves, and is being held in Tulsa, the site of the Black Wall Street massacre nearly a century ago. And of course, this was intentional. A lot of people like to think, "oh, well, Trump doesn't have the historical knowledge or geopolitical acumen to put that kind of thing together."

Sarah Kendzior:

His advisors do. People like Bannon and people like Miller, people like Bill Barr, they do have that knowledge and they get off on these sorts of symbols and they get off at this kind of sadistic cruelty. And to that respect, Putin has done this as well. It's not a coincidence that he flies U.S. representatives to Russia on the 4th of July or on 9/11 or on other dates that have significance. So yes, that was intentional. In a rare case, the backlash to this was intense enough that they have moved the speech to January 20th.

Sarah Kendzior:

It's going to be held in a stadium that's basically a giant Petri dish for coronavirus. Trump's people are making those who want to attend it sign a waiver that they will not sue if they get sick and die. So yeah, that's happening in the background. But then you have to kind of think, well, what is the goal of this? Why are they being inflammatory beyond just for the more overt reasons of purposeful racism for the sake of racism? One of the things that I've seen debated a lot on Twitter and elsewhere is, are they going for full fascism or are they going for Civil War II?

Sarah Kendzior:

And what I think is that they are going for Civil War II. They're basically trying to create a race war so that people will be more likely to embrace full fascism because they crave law and order. And by this I mean white people who were already sympathetic or open to the Trump administration, or we simply have such an environment of chaos that they're more easily able to do things like insert their foot soldiers or subvert institutions like the military to their benefit.

Sarah Kendzior:

And so when you're talking about people who are more ideological in this administration, not purely in it for the money aspect, I think one of the most understudied people is not just Miller, but Miller's mentor, David Horowitz, who is a white supremacist extremist, who mentored Miller back when Miller was a high school student and then a college student. And it was David Horowitz who then introduced Miller to Jeff Sessions and installed him in the Trump campaign.

Sarah Kendzior:

You may remember that Jeff Sessions was the first Senator to endorse Trump. Jeff Sessions, the Neo-Confederate racist. And Sessions, though his focus had previously been on domestic affairs, was

part of Trump's foreign policy team, meeting with officials from Russia. And both Sessions and Miller had lied about those foreign contacts when they got their security clearances to work in the administration. And neither of them was ever punished. I say better late than never.

Sarah Kendzior:

So maybe yeah, go on that and remove the white supremacist from the speechwriting position. Anyway, the Horowitz connection is very interesting when we see these individuals in the administration trying to basically recreate a Civil War. Horowitz was a former socialist back in the 1960s and supporter of the Black Panthers, until he did a severe 180 during the Reagan era and became a hardcore racist conservative whose articles and books proved very popular with a certain audience.

Sarah Kendzior:

The most brutal Trump administration policies, like the separation of migrant families and putting migrant families into concentration camps came from Miller, but their ideological origin lies with David Horowitz and his intense hatred of immigrants who aren't white. And I'm going to give you a very small biography of Horowitz from The Guardian, which also mentions their relationship with fellow white supremacist ideologue, Steve Bannon.

Sarah Kendzior:

“Sessions and Miller share more than policy views. They share a mutual friend in Horowitz, who first met Miller when the younger man was still in high school, spoke at Duke University at Miller's invitation in 2006, and who ultimately put Miller forward for a job in Sessions' office when Sessions was a Senator from Alabama. Miller, Sessions and another key figure in Trump's orbit, former Breitbart chief, Steve Bannon, were together at a 2014 award ceremony in Florida, hosted by Horowitz, who separately conferred an award on Bannon after he left his role as chief White House strategist.

Sarah Kendzior:

The intersecting paths connecting Trump-world figures to Horowitz, once a leading intellectual of the New Left, who studied in England under the Marxist sociologist, Ralph Miliband, before a midlife political conversion, would not seem to bear the same significance for policy as the president's own leadership. But the astringency of Horowitz's rhetoric on immigration and other issues, which has won him censure for extremist speech by the Southern Poverty Law Center, is readily recognizable from the podium in the White House briefing room, on television on the lips of Trump proxies such as the former campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, and in the policy of separation on the Southern border.

Sarah Kendzior:

And so this is interesting to me, because Horowitz is still a prominent figure. He's still a bestselling writer. And you hear very little about this connection, about why he sought out a high schooler in the form of Stephen Miller, about what kind of influence he wields today. And especially, we're seeing this giant myth being created about Antifa, where basically the Trump administration and Bill Barr have designated Antifa a terrorist group, but have expanded that definition of Antifa so widely that anyone who opposes fascism, who participates in the protest, who is in the wrong place at the wrong time, can be labeled as that and potentially prosecuted.

Sarah Kendzior:

And as we mentioned in previous episodes, this is a classic move of authoritarian states in order to control dissent and to persecute the political opposition. This all smacks to me of something that David Horowitz would come up with, or at least that Stephen Miller would maybe draw inspiration from. And so, yeah, that's my information about that.

Andrea Chalupa:  
Thank you, Sarah.

Sarah Kendzior:  
Yes. All right. Any thoughts? What's left? What's left?

Andrea Chalupa:  
And what do you have to say for yourself? Yes, Stephen Miller... So speaking of Stephen Miller, should we talk about the middle aged version of Stephen Miller, which is Attorney General William Barr?

Sarah Kendzior:  
Oh, please do.

Andrea Chalupa:  
So, interesting report. So all these people who were drawn to Trump like a moth to a flame, there's very good reason for that, obviously, because they're fascists. They love it. They love all of this. They're having a grand old time. It's like a Sizzler buffet for them. There's a report from the wonderful Andrew Feinberg in The Independent, where he writes about William Barr, our attorney general, who got little green men, soldiers without insignia.

Andrea Chalupa:  
These mysterious militia men from the federal government, standing around with big giant rifles, refusing to tell reporters or anybody where they were from and intimidating protesters who were exercising their freedom of assembly and the right to free speech and so forth. They look like a bunch of Erik Prince Blackwater-type operatives. It was very scary. This was all under Barr. He did this intentionally.

Andrea Chalupa:  
And it turns out that his flirtation with fascism, his interest in fascist sympathies or leanings, or having a fascist personality disorder, could be spotted in his younger, more formidable years. There's a great report here in The Independent, which I will read from, which shows that Barr is essentially using Trump for his own fascist fever dreams. I'll read now.

Andrea Chalupa:  
"Jonathan Smith, one of Barr's high school classmates at New York's Horace Mann School, suggested that Barr's decision to offer himself to Trump was the result of the once and future attorney general recognizing a kindred spirit in the 45th president. Smith said that even as a young man, Barr had a reputation as a hard line conservative whose beliefs were infused with a heavy dose of religiosity and added that he does not seem to have changed or moderated his beliefs in the intervening decades."

Andrea Chalupa:

"He seems pretty much the guy he was in high school. It's like his whole life has been a straight line, informed by a radically right-wing conservative strain of Catholicism,' He said. 'I think he's someone who believes in fundamental Old Testament values'". Basically. "'And he sees his mission as pointing the country back in that direction.'" Dear God, we're headed to Handmaid's Tale if Biden doesn't win the election.

Andrea Chalupa:

"Trump's presidency,' Smith posited, gave the semi-retired Barr 'an opportunity to put himself in a position to assert his own political agenda' and 'shape the legal establishment to suit his own political ends.'" Another quote, "'I don't even know if Trump has an ideology, but I think Barr does.'" He continued. "I don't think he's uncomfortable with the idea of a certain kind of authoritarianism being wielded toward those ends. And he sees Trump as someone who isn't going to be circumspect about it.'

Andrea Chalupa:

"Another of Barr's former Horace Mann classmate, criminal defense attorney, Jimmy Lohman, was alarmed enough by Barr's rise under the first Bush administration, that he penned an op-ed in a local Florida newspaper in which he revealed that Barr and his brothers had picketed a school function because it was serving as a fundraiser for the local chapter of the NAACP, the civil rights organization that works to protect Black communities from a racial injustice and the violence and oppression of white supremacy in America."

Andrea Chalupa:

That's what the NAACP is, for our listeners who are not familiar. "Lohman said Barr presented as a standard issue conservative, in the mold of National Review founder, William F. Buckley in his younger days. But, like Smith, suggested that the 77th attorney general was inspired to offer himself up to be the 85th attorney general because President Trump embraced a vision of himself as all powerful." So if they manage to steal another election and Trump's staying in there—

Andrea Chalupa:

And I don't care what you've seen Trump doing on video, which shows that he's melting down. That he's not all there. That will not stop them. They will do Weekend at Bernie's, where they just prop Trump up in the Oval Office. They do not care. Trump is a vehicle for their own ideological aims, and those aims are authoritarianism and they are winning. They were able to steal the election in the first place.

Andrea Chalupa:

The election was so close in the first place because America has a long history of authoritarianism towards Black and brown people, and they coasted in on that. And Putin, of course, promotes white supremacy and xenophobia and all of that, so that's why they were able to all come together and make this all happen and that's how we got here and that's what you missed on Glee.

Andrea Chalupa:

All of this is to say that we're in for Gilead. We're in for Handmaid's Tale. We're in for white male dominance on a whole new violent level that we haven't seen yet, if they manage to pull this off and

steal the election like they're clearly gunning to do. And the best way to help prevent this—because even Biden himself came out and called it out—the best way to try to prevent this is to put them on the ropes.

Andrea Chalupa:

This requires Democrats in the House to force Barr to appear before them and to get started—I don't care if the election is months away—get started now on impeachment hearings for Barr. Put them on the ropes, because he's already given us a test run on how he will create some legal jargon to steal the 2020 election. We saw that test run with how he released his four-page cover up letter, trying to say that Mueller exonerated Trump, and the mainstream media fell for it.

Andrea Chalupa:

That was a test run of what Barr is going to try to do, using some legalese that he'll invent and he'll force a lackey to sign off on in the DOJ or whatever to legitimize Trump's stealing of the 2020 election so they can all stay in power and further America's descent into authoritarianism so they can all enrich themselves and show us women and communities of color and beat us all down.

Sarah Kendzior:

They need to impeach Barr. They need to impeach Mnuchin. They need to be investigating this bailout as well as Mnuchin's actions regarding sanctions with Russia and all of his other related financial crimes. Hearings on that would help bring that information to the public. They should have gotten this information a long time ago. They need to get rid of Stephen Miller. You can get rid of Stephen Miller because he lied on his security clearance forms. I mean, that's the amazing thing with this administration, is that they have this incredibly long list of publicly committed crimes, crimes that you can objectively identify as crimes.

Sarah Kendzior:

With Kushner and Ivanka, you also have two individuals who lied on their clearance forms, and in past administrations that would force a resignation, or it would force prosecution. In Kushner's case, he lied more than any person in U.S. history. So you have it all there. And you can impeach Trump again, by the way. You can just keep on impeaching everyone. Because the point of this, as we've now been saying for a year and a half, is to expose them. It's to get that information out there.

Sarah Kendzior:

That is what they actually fear, is that they will be exposed and that it will have consequences. If you look at what Trump says about coronavirus, where he basically said, "If we don't test anybody, then there's not going to be any cases." That's his philosophy of life! And so if you don't have hearings, then there'll be no knowledge of the crimes, and therefore the crimes don't exist. That is the kind of thinking that he hopes other people will share.

Sarah Kendzior:

That's the kind of behavior that he hopes other people will emulate. He creates his own reality. He came from the world of tabloids and reality TV and propaganda and PR. And he now is ensconced in that at an executive level, trying to create our reality as we're fighting off a pandemic, mass unemployment, fascism, white supremacist mobs, and all of these things that we can see objectively with our own eyes are destroying this country.



Sarah Kendzior:

But we need congressional oversight. We need actual accountability. And they need to see actual consequences for their behavior, or they're just going to keep back again and again. We're now dealing with baby boomer Barr, who was around when I was a little child. Now I'm an adult and he's there for my kids. I don't want my kids to grow up and have Stephen Miller in office.

Sarah Kendzior:

I don't want them to have President Ivanka or President Jared or President Barron Trump at this point. We need to avoid a dynastic kleptocracy. We need to avoid our spiraling downfall into a mafia state, which has been going on now for years. And that means you need to play hard ball. You need to name names. You need to press charges and you need to kick these motherfuckers out of the White House and out of U.S. politics for good.

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](http://directrelief.org), which is supplying much needed protective gear to first responders working on the front lines in the U.S., China and other hard hit parts of the world.

Andrea Chalupa:

We encourage you to donate to the International Rescue Committee, the humanitarian relief organization helping refugees from Syria. Donate at [rescue.org](http://rescue.org). And if you want to help critically endangered orangutans already under pressure from the palm oil industry, donate at the Orangutan Project at the [orangutanproject.org](http://orangutanproject.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.

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 Visonberg, 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...