

Gaslit Nation, Transcript  
The GOP is a Registered Foreign Agent, Part 2  
9 October 2019

{theme music}

Sarah: 00:00:10 I'm Sarah Kendzior, the author of the book *The View From Flyover Country* and the upcoming book *Hiding in Plain Sight*.

Andrea: 00:00:17 I'm Andrea Chalupa, a journalist and filmmaker and the write and producer of the upcoming film *Mr. Jones*.

Sarah: 00:00:23 And this is Gaslit Nation, a podcast covering corruption in the Trump Administration and rising autocracy around the world. This is Part 2 of our two-part "welcome back" special episode originally recorded on September 30th.

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Sarah: 00:00:45 It is surreal and it's frustrating. I understood why people were confused in 2016, even though you had, for example, Hillary Clinton on a debate stage explaining how all of this works. You had you and me and other journalists warning that is serious, this is a national security crisis, and that the Kremlin as logical objectives here. As do oligarchs. Are they evil objectives? Yes. Are they illegal objectives? Yes. But they want money, they want power, they want territory, they want a weakened US. In the case of Putin, I think he wants revenge. He wants humiliation. And it's easier to conquer territories when you beat it down, when you split it up, when you break those alliances. When you have institutions that had already been rotting inside, in large part in America as a result of the recession from which we never recovered, and from our many wars, especially Iraq and Afghanistan. We were already beaten down by the time they came swooping in. But it is now 2019 and I really, really don't understand why people cannot see corruption and complicity in plain sight when certain actors just do the same crimes or do the same complicity in those crimes over and over again, whether it's the Trump Administration – and Bill Barr, everyone was like "oh my god, how shocking, Bill Barr isn't following the rule of law", like, that's literally why they hired him. Bill Barr was known all the way back in 1992 as the clean-up general, as the Iran Contra guy. William Safire, a conservative columnist, called him out on that. Everyone should have seen that coming. And he was a columnist for the New York Times. So to kind of get back to that, last week there was a somewhat successful grassroots boycott movement of the New York

Times because immediately upon Trump calling for the death and the arrest of the whistleblower, within an hour, the New York Times puts out enough information that people in the know could guess his identity. And so this also came, they did that on the same day that they had released what has become the prototypical New York Times story where they go out and they find what they called “6 swing voters” – just like, total randos hanging out at a diner or whatever – that turned out to be Trump fanatics, you know, including people working for the GOP, including someone who had written a book about Trump, including someone who went to 23 Trump rallies. And we know this because the New York Times had interviewed those same “swing voters” over and over again for years. They are constructing the narrative of Trump’s reality. They are really, in many ways, no different from Fox News or Breitbart or any other media outlet that you instantly know is a Trump partisan. They are doing the bidding of Trump. They are putting out propaganda. All New York Times is at this point is high brow Breitbart. And that doesn’t mean I think everyone there is in on it. I actually think there are good writers and good reporters at the New York Times and I feel bad for them, that they’re swimming in this cess pool. And I hope that they can find other opportunities because it’s also unfair to them.

Sarah: 00:04:00 The New York Times has such a long and consistent track record of backing up Trump and his cohorts going all the way back to their email obsession, to their collaboration with Steve Bannon, with their infamous article about investigating Russia, FBI Finds No Ties to Trump or whatever the actual headline is, where they denied this collaboration that was playing out in plain sight. This is not a publication that needs your money. That doesn’t mean burn your copies of the New York Times. That doesn’t mean censorship. It just means think about who you’re giving money to. Think about what exactly you’re funding and ask why is this happening? Why would a paper with all of these resources, with many talented people on staff – why are they doing this? Why are they working for oligarchs and mobsters? What actually lies at the bottom of this? That’s a question I’m certainly curious about and have been for years. And I don’t have a clear answer to it but I certainly can see the problem because it plays out all the time. So, I’m very tired of this sort of “oh, I’m so shocked. I can’t believe they’re at it again.” I think what happened last week with #cancelNYtimes and all the subscription cancelations that came in is people finally reached the breaking point because they’re like “if I pay for this paper, I’m paying for an assassination, or a desired assassination, from Trump” and I think people just don’t want to be a part of that and I encourage them not to be a part of that.

Andrea: 00:05:24      At the end of the day it's money, right? It's money. I made a movie about this, *Mr. Jones*, exactly about what's happening now. It's like we're all living in some elaborate simulation that I created to promote my film. That's how awful this is, this level of cruelty driven by greed. Just to tell you the plot of the film, *Mr. Jones*, it's the story of a whistleblower. It's the story of a journalist. That's like my sister and Serhiy Leshchenko. It's that story where they stumble upon an international conspiracy – something so big that most people wouldn't even be able to begin to accept it – and this young Welsh journalist blows the lid off of Stalin's genocide famine in Ukraine and how the Kremlin's profiting off of it, stealing Ukraine's wheat, selling it abroad to raise capital to modernize the soviet state and make a big empire for Stalin. And guess who leads the cover up of that? The New York Times. Walter Duranty, the Moscow Bureau Chief for the New York Times writes in the New York Times "There is no famine", covers it up, muddles the truth, really aggressive on this. Meanwhile, he brokers a deal bringing the US and the Kremlin together, finally brings them together, because the US was boycotting the Kremlin because of the bloody Russian revolution. And it was because of Walter Duranty, the coverup artist for the New York Times in Moscow, that the US and the Soviet Union finally came together. Big Business in America was so excited because they could finally get their hands on that big, fat Soviet market, and help the Soviets build their empire. So at the heart of all this is blood money. At the heart of Paul Manafort is blood money. At the heart of Giuliani is blood money. At the heart of the Trump crime family is blood money. At the heart of the Republican Party today, which is propped up by the Russian-funded terrorist organization, the NRA – the heart of the Republican Party is blood money. This is all about blood money. So if you're wondering why Putin is meddling in all these democracies – he has to escape accountability because he wants to hold onto his blood money. When the Western Alliance stays strong and united and passes sanctions, that's crippling on his economy. That hurts his oligarchs. His oligarchs can't be fancy and free spreading their blood money around in Western capitals because there's suddenly a stigma on them. And that's why you're seeing such an overlap of all the same players, because it's the greed and it's the money that unites them all. And they're putting all this money above human life and above our fragile planet.

Andrea: 00:07:42

I know we're talking in a lot of broad terms. A lot of it is because we've told you all this before and it kind of feels like we're repeating ourselves again. This is like Gaslit Nation Greatest Hits. So the specifics of the Zelensky story – the really interesting dynamic here is he's stuck with this anti-corruption mandate. He has to give the people what they voted for. So he's got a lot of pressure on him to deliver. And here you have Donald Trump forcing him into corruption. And you have these guys like Trump's envoy to Ukraine, Kurt Volker, trying to help Zelensky navigate this perilous, forced dealmaking by Trump and Giuliani – I'm sure doing it out of sympathy to Zelensky because it's an illegal situation. It's an untenable situation. And so Zelensky's stuck here. He's trying to fend off an invasion by the second most powerful military in the world. He needs that defensive aid that was promised by America – that \$400 million package. That defensive aid united Congress. Republicans and Democrats were overwhelmingly united for this. And here Trump is being a mob boss about it. We've covered this before and it's all playing out as we knew it would. And what's really interesting here is that it very much feels like an echo of what happened in 2016 when the Trump camp, under Manafort, watered down the Republican Party platform in regards to defensive aid for Ukraine. And in that situation, there was a Republican whistleblower, a Republican delegate, that said "that's not right" and notified the press and so forth. And so I think, in regards to Ukraine finally being a bridge too far for Nancy Pelosi, I think that's because this entire time, when Nancy Pelosi has been shrugging off impeachment, frustrating her base, she's been waiting to speak the enemy's language, and the enemy's language is Ukraine. Republicans, for all of their corruption, they do have a soft spot in their heart for Ukraine. You know, Reagan gets a lot of credit for bringing down the Berlin Wall and for standing up to the Soviet Union, and Ukraine was a big battleground of that. And, you know, John McCain, there's that iconic photo of him in Kyiv staring out at this sea of protesters. So, Democrats and Republicans were very forceful, even under Obama, demanding that Ukraine get the defensive aid it needs because, as we've said, the military was depleted, especially under Yanukovich. So, Ukraine was very much a bridge too far and Nancy Pelosi seized on that to speak the enemy's language, because Republicans simply would not care about kids in cages because they're the party of racism. Republicans would not care about corruption, the self-dealing of the Trump crime family, Ivanka and Jared. Republicans would

not care about white supremacy and Trump being, essentially, the cult figure of the global threat of white supremacy, one of the most dangerous terrorist groups that America faces, according to the FBI. Republicans would not care about that because Republicans are the party of protecting white supremacy at all costs. So finally, Ukraine was an issue that Nancy Pelosi could use to break through to Republican colleagues to really directly shame them and finally pull the trigger on impeachment. Obviously, if Sarah and I were in charge, we would've had impeachment from day one, backing up all those women of color in Congress that were outspoken from the very beginning and having constant impeachment hearings under a broad, wide umbrella, naming and shaming all of the President and his family's many crimes, including the murder of Jamal Khashoggi alone and whether Jared was complicit in that in proving intel in any regard to the Saudi Crown Prince and so forth, and Ivanka getting a big promise of money from Saudi Arabia for her gaslit women's fund, which probably does nothing but serve Ivanka's interests. There's a whole list of crimes – an encyclopedia of corruption that could be done just in regards to impeachment – coming out of the Trump crime family. But Nancy Pelosi choosing the scenario of focus on Ukraine is she's very much, clearly, choosing to speak the enemy's language here because the Republicans understand Ukraine and it's a way to shame them on this very important national security topic.

Sarah: 00:11:46

I mean, I'm not completely sure I buy that. If the Republicans cared about Ukraine – and I agree with you that they did care in the past in that Reagan's great achievement was helping bring down the Soviet Union and backing revolutions in Eastern Europe for democracy. That had begun to change already in 2015. You began to see this really abrupt flip which we've discussed, where when Russia invaded Crimea, at first it was rightly viewed with horror, but then you began to see the GOP turning and trying to justify it, and justify it as a referendum. I think, as you pointed out, the Republican Party is funded, to a great degree, by the NRA. The NRA has been taking money from the Russian mafia and possibly from the Kremlin. And so they became baked into that bed of interests. The same is true for Evangelicals – Republican Evangelicals and their links to the Kremlin. The same is true for all the white supremacists that have joined up for the GOP and joined up with the Kremlin. There are all these layers of

overlap, and if I think if they were truly concerned about Ukraine's fate, they would've spoke up earlier. I think we've seen a pattern of intimidation (very overt) of the Republican Party when they tried to speak out. When John McCain opposed Trump, he would be beaten down by Trump and his goons and occasionally by other members of the Republican Party. We saw Lindsey Graham's flip. So I'm not completely sure why Pelosi flipped, but let's say it did, let's say you're right, and she chose this –

Andrea: 00:13:23

– no I think you're misunderstanding me. Chuck Grassley just called for an investigation again into my sister by the DOJ. So, yes, I'm fully aware that the Republican Party only cares about blood money, even at the expense of Ukraine. That's what's going on here. That's plain as day. But what Nancy Pelosi chose to pull the trigger on was Ukraine for the simple fact that, historically, it's been an issue that's united them. Even as far as defensive aid was concerned. Because when it came to the defensive aid package, Obama blocked that. Yet you had Democrats and Republicans overwhelmingly united. So what Pelosi is seeing here is that same congressional map of votes. Well, if these guys all voted to arm Ukraine, she's basically shoving that vote in their faces when it comes to impeachment by finally pulling the trigger on Ukraine, why Ukraine is the issue here.

Sarah: 00:14:10

Right. No, I think that's possible. But what bothers me about this is that she is being beholden to the Republican Party. Not to the Constitution. Not to the law.

Andrea: 00:14:20

Oh, without question. Without question.

Sarah: 00:14:21

Like, not to corruption. She's thinking, "oh, we have to please the Republicans. We have to please the crime syndicate" that's been out there impeding all these investigations. That's been out there threatening her own colleagues, threatening them with imprisonment, with execution. This is such a pattern for Pelosi. For the whole year, as activists and lawmakers – Democratic representatives in the House – have been calling impeachment, she's been attacking them. As people like AOC or in particular Rashida Tlaib who keeps getting held up as this person who said "let's impeach the motherfucker" which, yes, she did, but she also wrote articles of impeachment. She also brought forward the biggest petition I think in US history, 10 million signatures for impeachment, to Congress. And they have had their lives

threatened. Ilhan Omar has had her life threatened. We've had people like Al Green and Maxine Waters who have been calling for impeachment forever. And I think if you're going to be beholden to something, be beholden to a principle. Be beholden to your values. Be beholden to the law. And then after that, if your job as the Speaker of the House, as the most powerful Democrat, you need to listen to your constituents and you need to listen to your fellow members of Congress. And you certainly, especially at this very vulnerable time in American history and in the year before an election whose security, as she admitted, as Nancy Pelosi admitted, is not necessarily in tact, you should not be trying to divide your base. And if you realize that you're splitting your own party, you should try to remedy that. Things that split the party are, for example, her many previous claims about impeachment – that it's "not worth it", that he will self-impeach, that he secretly wants to be impeached and therefore we can't do it, again, kowtowing to Trump even though that's bullshit. "It needs to be bipartisan" – then Justin Amash comes out, then we don't have enough bipartisanship. At one point she said we needed Mitch McConnell's permission. We do not need Mitch McConnell's permission because impeachment is in the House. "The Senate won't convict." – okay, yeah, that's 'cause the Senate sucks because it's dominated by the slimeball Republicans, so of course they're not going to go and indict themselves. "We can impeach in the ballot box" and then in the same breath she says, correctly, that the election is not secure, that we are facing foreign interference, which we sure as hell know now because of the whistleblower's complaint. We're also facing domestic voter suppression. It's been a very frustrating time.

Sarah: 00:16:45

You may be right that she thinks this is the language that the Republicans understand because it's something they they previously have said that they valued. But I think that – oh my god. You know, at this time, where literally the fate of the world hinges on this – because it's not just about corruption and it's not even just about autocracy. It's about things like climate change. It's about policy decisions that are going to be made by whoever the next Administration is, and by this one, that are going to impact our lives and our children's lives and our grandchildren's lives for decades to come. What we do now is so important that you cannot mess it up. You cannot double-talk. You cannot lie. You've got to just be honest and straightforward and true to the

rule of law. If it means swallowing your pride, then you swallow your pride. And to be clear, I'm very glad that Nancy Pelosi changed her mind about impeachment. You know, she came out in March saying she just never going to do it and that was a devastating week. That was the week that a judge proclaimed Manafort someone who had "lived an otherwise blameless life". That was the week that we found out in retrospect that Barr had basically shut down the Mueller probe, and that was beginning to become clear. It was a very rough time for her to make that announcement. You can go back and look at our March episodes where we discuss that. And so it's great that she turned the corner, but let's not forget that we could be in a better position now if she had simply done her Constitutional duty and not blocked the efforts of all of these people who had worked so hard and at great risk to themselves. And I have to say it – the people who called for impeachment were mostly people who weren't white. It was Black representatives, Latinx representatives, it was also Muslim and Jewish representatives. It was people who are persecuted by this Administration and it's vicious, xenophobic and racist policies. So perhaps they're more attuned because they actually have something at risk and they're not from a political dynasty of multi-millionaires operating out of San Francisco. You know, not everyone can live that Pelosi lifestyle. At the same time, I mean it's – again, I'm glad we're all ostensibly on the same team. I want us to all remain on the same team. That team is called Democracy and Fighting Corruption and Following the Rule of Law. But I'm not extremely confident, at this point, in the Democrats' ability to do what is needed to be done because I think it requires tremendous courage. I think we're going up against a transnational crime syndicate. We're going up against a very tough opponent, against people who have been attacking this country, from the inside and the outside, for decades. So, it's not like it's easy. It's not like just with a snap of a finger she can fix it, but you've gotta try. And the first real trying is to be honest about the situation and the severity of the threat.

Andrea: 00:19:32

The bad guys always move faster than the good because the good have to deliberate, they have to build consensus, they have to maintain the norms. Meanwhile, the bad guys are trampling all over the norms. So that's why, in recent years, we've had this acceleration of the bad guys winning, the good guys are just too slow to catch up to

because

what's really going respect. You know, you Johnson, that idiot who is only likes the sound of his own voice. Prime Minister and right away just dismiss Parliament. And what you putting country above party and going joining their political opponents against Boris his illegal, illegal maneuvering which was struck down by the Supreme Court in the UK, thank Boris Johnson is just once again the laughing stock Britain, and he deserves to be, and hopefully his days numbered as Prime Minister of Britain and he'll be the Scaramucci of Prime Ministers.

on. They are finally catching up in some had pushback we saw with Boris Prime Minister because he Boris Johnson, he became tried to dissolve Parliament, is several conservatives to the other side, Johnson and ultimately God. And now of Great are

Andrea: 00:20:40 I wish our conservatives had that backbone. Instead, what you're seeing is several members of Congress just not seeking reelection. We saw that with Paul Ryan. It's like they don't – they know how bad this is. Paul Ryan is even on tape in this conversation a couple years ago just saying how Trump is owned by Putin. Paul Ryan, The Speak of the House of the Republicans, a major Republican leader, knew that Putin was invading our country through Donald Trump and yet did nothing to stop it.

Sarah: 00:21:10 If you're new to this show, our very first three episodes were actually an overview of 2016, and one of the things we talked about was Brexit as this precursor for the Trump Administration. You know, as this referendum, which no one thought would pass, that people kept dismissing the people backing it as cartoonish and ridiculous and therefore unable to do anything actually damaging or violent. We talked about the assassination of Jo Cox. And so now we're at this point where the poor UK –

Andrea: 00:21:40 – I just wanna say, the assassination of Jo Cox, okay, here was a woman that could've been killed, like any of us could've been killed, like Heather Heyer was killed, of this frothy outburst of the Far Right driven by the vicious lies of Far Right media, which includes the Kremlin bot system. And here she was, killed by this Far Right racist that bought into all these lies and propaganda, just like that kid from North Carolina shot up a pizza place in the heart of Washington D.C. because of Pizzagate. And here you have Boris Johnson saying that in order to honor the memory of Jo Cox,

we have to get Brexit passed. That is... cruelty. Cruelty. I mean that's not just gaslighting, that's cruelty. We have to get these people out of power. Our entire mission... our entire mission in and organization, large or small, is to keep the idiots out of power. And so, it's a moral obligation to each other, to the future of this planet, that we organize, together, and we self-educate – we educate each other, organize and work as smart as possible to take these idiots out of power from the very local level of dogcatcher all the way up to President of the United States. We are in the fight of our lives right now. This is political warfare. This is a stealth invasion by Far Right forces. This is what this is. Just look at the gaslighting of Crimea. You had so many in the Western media falling for it and calling it a “referendum” when it was a stealth invasion. People were kidnapped and killed. And human rights abuses, especially against indigenous groups in Crimea, continue to this day. You have a tax on media and human rights groups in Crimea to this day. That plan to invade Crimea reportedly goes back to 2006, 2006. And you had Manafort helping the Kremlin interests going that far back and all these organizing anti-NATO protests. Manafort has been Putin's operative on the ground from the beginning of this huge turn in world affairs that we've been undergoing. Manafort is Putin's operative on the ground. This entire narrative to the flip the script and attack the whistleblowers and attack the investigative journalists began with Manafort. He had it in play to cover his tracks because he knew he would get caught eventually. This is such an obscene crime getting this Kremlin puppet elected. He knew he'd get caught. So he had this whole strategy, this media narrative, in place to attack the whistleblowers, attack the investigative journalists, and brand them – and brand them as the traitors. Brand them as the criminals. You even have Serhiy Leshchenko, as I mentioned before, one of the country's top investigative journalists, one of the top performers, he had to step down from Zelensky's campaign. He had to step down and not serve in Zelensky's government because of what Manafort has done, along with Giuliani and the Trump crime family, and labeling him, and creating all this scandal around him through their lies. So, good job, America. You're keeping one of Ukraine's top performers out of this current government because of this. Do you understand how heartbreaking that is? Serhiy Leshchenko said, he's like, “this is ruining my life, the targeting.” It's holding him back. And if you're holding back the top talent in a country that stands on the side of justice and transparency. That has a very dangerous ripple effect

for the rest of society. So I cannot tell you how heartbreaking and how maddening this crime is. It's a crime against our morals. It's a crime against our world's future. It's a crime against the Western Alliance. And even in this transcript that was released showing the smoking gun, showing Donald Trump and his mafia boss tactics in trying to extort Ukraine, saying "hey, if you want us to save you against invasion against the second most powerful military in the world, you better invent dirt on our political opponent. Okay, even in that transcript, that was so dangerous. I'm glad it's released because it's a smoking gun transcript. Imagine if the June 2016 meeting in Trump Tower with idiot Don Jr. and Manafort and Jared Kushner and representatives of the Kremlin, imagine if that had a transcript. That's basically how damning this President Zelensky transcript is because it shows Donald Trump is admitting to committing crimes here on paper. We have it. We have the smoking gun, finally. This Ukraine transcript is it. It's huge. It is absolutely huge. But unfortunately, a casualty of it is that you have Zelensky on record joining Donald Trump, being led by Donald Trump, to bash Germany. The EU is one of the largest funders, one of the largest donors, of Ukraine. So this drives a wedge between Zelensky and the EU, and that of course also delights Putin as well. And that was Trump that led him into that conversation by bashing Germany first. And Zelensky of course agrees because Zelensky clearly went into this conversation being coached by God knows who on the ground, maybe Volker or whoever saying "just play along", because that's what they all do. That's what all the adults in the room have been doing this entire time, is playing along with Trump's reality. And that just creates all these casualties, actual casualties and political casualties, along the way. You need to stop playing with his reality and thinking that you can manipulate him in that way, because you can't. He's warping you into his reality. He's pulling you in.

Instead,

you need to put an end to this.

Sarah: 00:26:55

Absolutely, and I'm glad you made that point about why releasing the transcript was advantageous because I think that to the Trump Administration and to Trump and especially to Putin, who is Trump's primary back – and, you know, we've gone into this many times on the show but a quick review: Trump has had years of dirty dealings with the Kremlin and 30 years of political ambitions, and has been funded by Kremlin-associated oligarchs since at least the early '90s. So this is a longstanding relationship. We've

already gone over this a billion times. You can go listen to our transcripts if you don't believe it. So yes, yes, Trump would carry out Putin's bidding in regard to Ukraine. Yes, Trump would do something to make the President of Ukraine look bad in a transcript and, yes, Trump's focus is not on the United States. It's on his own personal wealth and power. And if he's considering the fate of a country after that, he's going to be considering the fate of Russia, and then secondary probably Israel and Saudi Arabia, and somewhere way down the end of the list is America. You know, he's basically put a sign on the White House lawn saying "America, going out of business sale". That is his attitude towards our country. That is the attitude toward the country he leads, is just be a corporate raider, tear it up for parts, and sell it off to foreigners. So, this makes sense. A lot people were like "oh my God, it's the smoking gun, he's incriminated himself". It's like, yeah, he incriminates himself all the time. He's been incriminating himself for three decades and he doesn't care who knows it because nobody actually brings consequences, and that's why he surrounds himself with other criminals, with people like Bill Barr – you know, and his long history of corruption and coverups. With people like Pompeo, who everyone seems to forget was illicitly meeting with Russian spies. Back in I think early 2018. These were sanctioned individuals who nonetheless came to Russians on US soil to meet with Pompeo. Shortly after that, Pompeo was installed as Secretary of State and Tillerson, the recipient of the Order of Friendship Medal from Putin so, you know, not much better, he departed. They figured this stuff out and they don't think normally. They're not thinking of protecting the public. They're not thinking of protecting institutions. To kind of bring this back to Brexit, there was an interview on BBC with Boris Johnson's sister who was basically like yeah, a bunch of plutocrats and oligarchs want a no deal Brexit because they want to make money off of the collapse of Great Britain. They want to make money off of the collapse of the economy. And this is a desire that you can see mirrored all the way back for decades. That was how Trump and many American plutocrats reacted to the Great Recession. It's how they react to wars. It's why they were so stoked to go to war in Iraq. They truly don't see any sanctity in human life, and this is also unfortunately how they view the climate crisis. They see it as an opportunity. They see every disaster, everything where ordinary people are suffering because our institutions have failed us and our leaders have betrayed us, they see that as their golden moment to shine. And that's what

they're going to continue to do unless they're held accountable and unless the stakes are made clear to the public and all of this dirty business – and I don't care what party you're in or whose side you're on or whatever – if you did the crime, you need to be exposed, because we're never going to be able to come together as a country. I sometimes think to myself, like, what brings this country together? I'm like, okay, we all hate Jeffrey Epstein, we all hate the Sackler family, you know, the peddlers of opioids who are going unpunished. We all hate this unfettered criminal elite impunity where if you're a billionaire and you've got the right friends and the right connections, you can get away with crime for decades on end. And you can get into the political system, you know, weasel your way inside and control it through dark money, through donations, through intimidation, through mafia connections, like, all of that needs to be aired out. We try in our small way to do that on this show. I wish that it was happening more broadly because what I tend to see is more what we were discussing previously about the New York Times and its complicity, or I was thinking of Brexit, so of course I was thinking of Carole Cadwalladr, the investigative journalist on Brexit, a real trailblazer in that respect. She's unrooted all of this corruption done by actors like Nigel Farage and Boris Johnson, and is decried by her opponents as an hysteric or unreliable. When a US media outlet, The Atlantic, wrote a profile of her, they played up those smears. They tried to bring her down. They also tried to delegitimize her. And that's one of the things that's been very frustrating about this moment in time, is that the crimes are in plain sight, they're very blatant, the actors are routinely confessing to them in the public sphere (Trump does that all the time), and you still have the reporters that dare to just identify what is happening, who's doing it, and why, in the most direct terms possible, with the hope of engaging the public to care about it and to pressure their representatives, even just to expose the truth for its own sake because that has its own value, they're denigrated, they're demonized, and people try to destroy their careers. And, yeah, that's what it's like being a political journalist on the quote right side of history at this moment in the present.

Andrea: 00:32:23

And Carole, we have to add, is being sued for her reporting by, I believe Arron Banks who is the largest financier in any election in the UK's history. He put in something like \$9 million or some obscene amount of money into the Brexit vote. And Carole has

her pointed out, sidelines and sneer at those personal cost. So this something that can be cruel and thoughtless that to see that after all of the lazy people in media, ego-playing those dumb, shallow stake right now in the world.

been working really hard to expose where that money came from, especially given that Arron Banks has had all these meetings with Russian oligarchs and Kremlin-linked individuals and so forth. So Carole was called all sorts of ridiculous names and smeared for exposing the Kremlin's attack on British sovereignty in the Brexit vote and the willing complicit greedy players of British media and politics who went along with it so they could cash in and get their blood money. Ultimately, she was awarded the Orwell Prize for fearless reporting, but now people like her, as Sarah are targets for those in media who are sitting on the just trying to make a name for themselves and doing the incredibly important work at great Atlantic misogynistic hit piece on Carole is used in court against her. That's how was. And I was just so disheartened crimes that have been exposed, that driven people in media, are still games when there's so much at

When we did the press conference for the *Mr. Jones* film, Peter Sarsgaard, the brilliant American actor who play Walter Duranty, was asked about playing that role – something like “where do you see Walter Duranty today?” And Peter Sarsgaard said “I see Walter Duranty everywhere in the media today.” And that's the truth. That's the truth. Especially as the New York Times is concerned. I began this screenplay 14 years ago. Never in my life would I have thought that the New York Times would go back, go back to that immoral behavior. I thought Walter Duranty was a thing of the past. But the closer I examined how complicit the New York Times was when it came to Walter Duranty, then I realized why it was inevitable that the past would repeat. Simply put, every time the New York Times announces their list of Pulitzers, Duranty is included! Duranty is included. They might put an asterisk saying “well, some people dispute this Pulitzer.” – yeah, no kidding, of course they do! But yet you still count him along with all your other Pulitzer Prize winners. That's a moral failing. The New York Times hired a consultant, hired an expert out of Columbia University, professor Mark Von Hagen, to investigate the articles that won Duranty the Pulitzer. He was awarded the Pulitzer in 1932, the same year Stalin's genocide famine against Ukraine was accelerating. The Famine wasn't something that started over night, it was a series of attacks against Ukrainians specifically, banning their language. Terrorist repressions against leading

Ukrainian thinkers and organizations. There was this whole machination, this machine put in place, for years that led to the final tipping point in, like, 1932, 1933, where in that year alone, several million people were killed from starvation from the state taking away their food and watching them die and searching their homes for food. And we've all these witnesses and independent reports of it – this was a genocide. Tim Snyder, historian of Yale, "This is a genocide." Norman Naimark of Stanford, "This is a genocide." Serhii Plokhii of Harvard, "This is a genocide." This was colonization of Ukraine. This is why Putin can invade Eastern Ukraine now, because there's all these Russian speakers, he claims, you know, that he's trying to protect. And the New York Times still counts a Pulitzer Prize by their Moscow Bureau Chief who joined the Soviets in trying to cover up this genocide.

Andrea: 00:36:01

And when professor Mark Von Hagen did his research, he did a whole report saying that the articles that won Duranty the Pulitzer, essentially praising Stalin, were deeply suspect. And when he was questioned, you know, "do you think Duranty should have his Pulitzer Prize revoked, professor Mark Von Hagen said "Yes. Yes he should." The New York Times responded by being

manipulative  
Pulitzer Prize but  
a person from history,

and saying sure you can take away Duranty's  
wouldn't that just be like, you know, erasing  
just like the Soviets did?

Sarah: 00:36:30

Oh, God.

Andrea: 00:36:32

Can you believe that?

Sarah: 00:36:34

It's disgusting and that's the – the thing I'd like everyone to get accross is like, prizes don't matter, awards don't matter, status doesn't matter, prestige doesn't matter. Like, that shit is what is holding people down. People keep banking on legacies. They keep banking on peoples' past reputations. They keep assuming that if some sort of organization is fancy and has some sort of lofty history, that they're currently not remotely - yeah - MIT Media Lab, I'm sorry, they're all gross! Judge people by their actual actions. What are they doing? Who are they working with? Are they funded by a sex trafficking pedophile? Are they covering up for a transnational mafia? Maybe take those things into consideration instead of some fucking prize. I mean, honestly, this is one of the reasons that Trump's cohort tends to win, is because the people

that are kind of on, you know – not the people on the Democratic side in terms of ordinary people, but in terms of well known people, they're very hung up on this world of institutions and prizes and access and prestige and all this bullshit. And so then, on the other side, you've got, for example, Bill Barr. Bill Barr does an interview where they're like oh no, what will history think of you, what about your wonderful reputation? And Bill Barr's answer is, well, we're all gonna die. I'm sorry, like, I'm actually with Bill Barr on that, like, I don't give a fuck. If I have a bad reputation, I personally don't care. I care though – where I really, really depart from Bill Barr and these Trump goons is I care about right and wrong, and I care about my principles, and I care about my country, and I care about whether people are suffering. But he's right in the sense that these issues of reputation don't matter. And especially when we're staring down the barrel of a gun of climate change and we don't know whether we will have a future. And we're staring down the gun of autocracy and we do not know who the victors of history are going to be. And the victors of history are always the ones who write the history. This is why things like the 1619 project, one of the few good things the New York Times has done, or all these other stories of slavery, of Jim Crow, of brutal abuses toward Black Americans, they come as a revelation a lot of the time to White Americans. We're now 100 years from all of these White mob violence incidences that happened in 1919. Often White Americans didn't know because the victor writes history. So all this shit. All this, oh no, like history will not look kindly upon them – Bill Barr doesn't give a fuck. I also do not give a fuck and honestly you shouldn't either because what matters is how you treat people. What matters is what you bring into the world. What matters is what kind of person are you and what are you doing for others? That's what it comes down to. And I don't care about your fancy name, or your fancy degree, or your, you know, Epstein-funded activity. It sucks! And we need to just be honest about that. And where corruption is found, you point it out. And don't get all, like, sentimental and don't get all hung up on, I don't know, fancy shit. Just be real about it. We're all gonna die, so, you know, live a good life while you can... The End. Happy Gaslit Nation Return (laughs)...

Andrea: 00:39:46

Well, I don't – I mean, it's a moral obligation to join Greta and all those other children out there and listen to them and fight for our future. And that's always how progress has been won. You've

always had people that were tenacious, that were defiant, and refused to accept things the way they were. People that took great personal risk to stand in their truth. And that's how progress gets made. And I have full faith that there are a lot of nameless people who are not fancy like The Atlantic, who are not fancy like the MIT Media Lab, who are not fancy like the Department of Justice of the United States of America, but they are doing the serious work. They are doing the great work at a lot of personal expense. And it's up to each of us to support them and to show up and to stay engaged, because we are in the fight of our lives right now. I mean, we're lucky that we don't have to put on uniforms and go to Europe to fight fascism. I mean, I guess it sort of is convenient that the fascists are here. They're homegrown. They're on our own soil. Donald Trump, President of the United States, the son of a KKK member who was arrested at a KKK rally in New York City, I mean I guess it is convenient that the fascists are in our own back yard and that's how we have to fight them now. But this is a fight for survival. This is a fight – as we're always saying on the show, don't wait for that horrible tipping point, because as Ukraine's own genocide famine shows, it's the years that lead up, it's the constant chipping away at the societal fabric, it's the drip, drip, drip of the trauma, year after year. And that just accelerates. That accelerates. So we have to stop it now. And the way we stop it is to stay engaged. Things are going to get worse before they get better. It's going to be horror. It's going to be horror. And you have to stay engaged. You can't look away. You can take breaks like I took a break to get to know my daughter this Summer. I took maternity leave. So take breaks, yes, but stay engaged and come back. And then look at our action guide on our website, [gaslitnationpod.com](http://gaslitnationpod.com). We have an action guide right there for you. There's a whole long list of groups that you can join. And the #1 rule is, when you have abusive autocrats in power, community is going to save you. Community is the only power we have left. Community is what funds Gaslit Nation. Community is what keeps us going. So in any situation of abuse of power, large or small, turn to your community. Build a coalition. Get everyone together. Get to know each other by name, and that's your sense of security. Show up together. Show up for each other. Hold each other accountable to keep showing up. That is the power. Being defiant, being defiant, being defiant. And I pointed earlier to the Russian protests. Russians should have just given up a long time ago, right? According to Putin. But they refused to. No matter what you do to them, the Russians now are awake. It was sadistic what

was going on to Russian protestors this Summer. You had the riot police just purposely breaking people's legs and dragging them and just.... Vicious. Like we always say, the people that are in charge of carrying out the violence of the regime are attracted to those jobs because they're inherently sadists. It was like that during the Soviet period. You had a chief sadist in charge of Stalin's Secret Police. And it's like that today with ICE in America. You have all these people attracted to Trump's war on brown people because they're racist and they enjoy being sadists. It's like a big branding for them to be a part of that. They're excited. They relish in it. And so, the battle lines have clearly been drawn. It's not the civil war that the NRA hopes to cash in on, where all these crazies get guns – and of course that is happening, that's always been happening. That was happening in 2016 and it's going to continue to happen. But the way we counteract that is we find our groups, whether that's an Indivisible group or Move On group... just join a group and keep showing up with them. Occupy your senator's office. Run for office, even if you don't stand a chance. Just get a platform to be public and to speak our truth and stand with your truth and be defiant. No matter how they try to discredit you, or whatever lies they throw at you, just factcheck them. Your job now as a citizen of this world is to factcheck, factcheck, factcheck. And to show up and be public about it. And our action guide walks you through all these other steps now. But it's up to us to save each other.