

Gaslit Nation Transcript
Democracy in Chains: The Nancy MacLean Interview - Part I
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[intro theme music]

Sarah Kendzior:

I'm Sarah Kendzior, the author of the bestsellers, *The View From Flyover Country* and *Hiding in Plain Sight*, and of the upcoming book, *They Knew: How a Culture of Conspiracy Keeps America Complacent*, available for pre-order now.

Andrea Chalupa:

I am Andrea Chalupa, a journalist and filmmaker and the writer and producer of the journalistic thriller, *Mr. Jones*, about Stalin's genocide famine in Ukraine, a film the Kremlin doesn't want you to see so be sure to see it.

Sarah Kendzior:

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

Andrea Chalupa (00:00:48):

Welcome to our special spring series, *Gaslit Nation Presents... Rising up from the Ashes: Cassandras and Other Experts on Rebuilding Democracy* [Bowling a strike SFX]. Our bonus episodes available to Patreon subscribers at the Truth-teller level and higher feature our esteemed guests taking the *Gaslit Nation Self Care Q&A*, so for fun ideas, sign up to hear that.

Sarah Kendzior:

Joining at this level also gives you access to hundreds of bonus episodes on topics in the news today. We'll be back with our regular episodes in July. If you're signed up any time between now and then at the Democracy Defender level or higher on Patreon—

Andrea Chalupa:

You'll get special access to watch a live taping of *Gaslit Nation* over the summer. More details to come.

Sarah Kendzior (01:37):

This interview is recorded on January 11th, 2022.

Andrea Chalupa (01:41):

Today we're joined by superstar Dr. Nancy MacLean, an award winning scholar of the 20th century United States, a distinguished professor of history and public policy at Duke University, and the author of an essential read, if you haven't read it already, *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Rights Stealth Plan for America*. Booklist called it, "perhaps the best explanation to date of the roots of the political divide that threatens to irrevocably alter American government". A finalist for the National

Book Award of nonfiction, it won the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize in Current Interest, the Lannan Foundation Cultural Freedom Award, and the Lillian Smith Book Award. Dr. MacLean is the author of four other books, including *Freedom is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace*, called by the *Chicago Tribune*, "contemporary history at its best", and *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan*, named a *New York Times* Noteworthy Book of 1994.

Andrea Chalupa (02:50):

Her articles and review essays have appeared in *American Quarterly*, the *Boston Review*, *Feminist Studies*, *Gender and History*, *In These Times*, *International Labor and Working-Class History* and many edited collections. Dr. MacLean's scholarship has received more than a dozen prizes and awards and been supported by fellowships from the American Council of Learning Societies, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Humanities Center, the Russell Sage Foundation and the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowships Foundation. In 2010, she was elected a fellow of the Society of American Historians, which recognizes literary distinction in the writing of history and biography. Welcome to Gaslit Nation, Dr. MacLean, where I'm sure many of our listeners are already very familiar with your work.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (03:35):

Thank you. It's such a pleasure to be with you two and in conversation with you. So, looking forward to it.

Andrea Chalupa (03:42):

So your book summarized so much of what we talk about on this show. In a nutshell, what we'd love to go down with you on this list of many questions we have here. I'll try to get through as many as we can today. We're currently living in times of historic income inequality. Since before the pandemic, life expectancy has been declining in America, the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poor, and the systems that empower the super rich are designed that way at the expense of non-white people in America and are increasingly threatening our democracy. We'll of course go into all of this history, but we want to start with just to look at where we are now. What are some ways far-right billionaires and their networks are currently trying to dismantle our democracy and what do they want to put in its place?

Dr. Nancy MacLean (04:35):

Yes. Well, we are meeting, or talking rather, the week after the anniversary of the January 6th insurrection and attempted coup, so that's probably as good a place as any to start. And while most of the discussion of those events, you know, understandably focuses on Donald Trump and those who immediately surround him, or surrounded him on that day, I think it's also really important for people to understand that his presidency was a culmination of many developments that I talked about in *Democracy and Chains* that included this capturing of the Republican Party by arch-right billionaires convened in the network of donors brought together by Charles Koch and the literally hundreds of organizations they fund, from the Cato Institute to the Heritage Foundation to the Federalist Society, Americans for Prosperity, Independent Women's Federation... We could go on and on and on.

Andrea Chalupa (05:36):

US Chamber of Commerce.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (05:38):

Yes, the US Chamber of Commerce is also a crucial part of this and works closely with the Kochs on a number of things.

Andrea Chalupa (05:45):

What about the Federalist Society?

Dr. Nancy MacLean (05:48):

Charles Koch has been funding the Federalist Society since its creation in the 1980s. He boasts that he provided seed money to it and the Koch network of donors who often now work through dark money operations, such as Donors Trust, and Freedom Partners Chamber of Commerce is what they used to call themselves, Stand Together they now do, but they've provided a great deal of money to the Federalist Society, which as our wonderful sitting Senator from Rhode Island, Sheldon Whitehouse says, "has captured our courts". And he points in particular to the Supreme Court conservative majority now of six to three, all of those six having deep ties to the Federalist Society and some of them being there illegitimately, if we go back and remember how they came to be seated. So this is really a tremendously powerful operation and members of this Koch network, kind of Koch insiders, were part of Donald Trump's administration from the very beginning.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (06:48):

We could get into detail on that, but bringing the story back to January 6th: seven of the eight senators who voted against certifying President Biden as the victor of the 2020 election had been generously funded by the Koch donor network and nearly all of the 147 members of the House who refused to certify the election were also products of that spending—political spending—and of the think tanks and messaging operations and membership organizations funded by this donor network. So really what we're seeing in the January 6th events and in all that's followed since; the voter suppression and more arch gerrymandering, attempts to pass laws to change the way that elections results will be counted and recognized, all of that is the product of literally decades of investment by Charles Koch, in particular, and in more recent years, the hundreds of donors that he has convened behind this arch-right strategy to basically undermine government as we've known it—and here I'm not exaggerating, I'm a historian—undermining government as we've known it over the course of the 20th century and into the 21st.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (08:01):

So they basically aim to use a kind of stealth strategy—and we can get into what I mean by that—but a stealth strategy to rewrite the rules of governance in America up to and including the *Constitution* in order to enable the kind of government that prevailed in the United States at the turn of the 20th century, a situation in which workers had no rights to collective voice, there was no social provision like social security, Medicare or Medicaid, disenfranchisement was perfectly fine with the Supreme Court and so forth. It's a vision so radical that no one could imagine that it could be brought into being because it's such a minority vision, but that is why disinformation is central to this enterprise and also this very, very systematic rewriting of the rules of governance and law at the most detailed levels that would make most people's eyes glaze over but enable these billionaires to advance their project.

Andrea Chalupa (09:14):

Wow. So obviously stealth, I wanna talk about that because I feel like Democrats have not had a response to this, a good response, and that the Koch network has been winning all these decades and

they're just building upon their victories. And every victory opens the door to more victories, as we keep saying. So what do you mean by stealth? What has been going on in terms of their stealth strategies and when did this all start? Because we've heard of all sorts of things, like there was in the 1930s a rich far-right attempted coup against FDR. There's always been that communist scare, there's the Powell Memo. There's all sorts of these shadowy far-right networks that have been widely documented. There's of course ALEC. There's the whole movement of the gaslighting, deeply funded far right movement for Citizens United, but how are the Kochs different and how do they stand out in this whole crop of essentially like socialist hysteria that's determined to keep money in the hands of the few, which you document so brilliantly in *Democracy and Chains*?

Dr. Nancy MacLean (10:28):

Yeah, really important questions. As for the stealth—and I want to here make sure too that we don't demoralize people because that's one of the dangers we're seeing right now in American politics where it feels like, you know, I think the expectations of what could be done with the narrow margins the Biden administration have, unrealistic expectations then produce some feelings of demoralization now when the Right is so active, so I want to start by saying that I think the most important finding of my research is that this Koch network and those they work with chose this stealth strategy precisely *because* they understood that they would always be vastly outnumbered in a representative democracy. So the only way to get their agenda was, in effect, to work behind the backs of the People in the ways that I'll talk about.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (11:25):

So I think that that is really important because their whole effort wants to operate in the dark, so the more sunlight we can bring to this, the better we all understand it, the better activists who are out in the trenches understand it, journalists, you know, commentators and podcasters like you all and the people who listen, the better off we are. So what I mean by stealth is a number of things, is basically this effort to advance a transformative agenda without being honest with the People. And again, that's something that I found in the course of my research. It seemed that that stealth strategy, from my findings, really began to take off with the Koch network in the 1980s and that was after the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile had come to power and had managed to privatize social security, education and healthcare, by and large, with the People not having any power or freedom.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (12:28):

Charles Koch made social security privatization the top priority of the Cato Institute, which just moved to Washington, at the outset of the Reagan administration and this was something that they knew they would never pass. One of the people I wrote about advised them on this and we can come back to the details, but basically understood that social security was so popular across so many different demographic groups in America; north, south, Black, white, Latino, men, women, young, old, etc. Everybody loved social security so there was no way they could attack it frontally, so what they came up with in those years was what I called a crab walking strategy to kind of get there sideways and that involved misinforming people, putting out disinformation about the stability of social security, also trying to break up the coalition behind social security by dividing young people from seniors, by dividing current recipients from others, etc.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (13:31):

So lots of shenanigans, basically, to break up this solid pro social security phalanx. And that was really an illustration of something that then seemed to have become second nature to this network as they moved forward with other projects and began to develop their apparatus. One key element of this stealth strategy is disinformation and as I mentioned about social security, they used disinformation about the stability of social security and whether it would be there for future generations to try to undermine popular support for it. Well, they also began to develop what is now Americans for Prosperity in the 1990s with a group called Citizens United and that group, too, relied heavily on disinformation to protect corporate power. So they worked closely with the tobacco industry to spread disinformation about the harms of tobacco when they were facing pressure for regulation and various kinds of anti-smoking measures.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (14:41):

Although we didn't know the Kochs at the time, so nobody really commented on them per se, Citizens United (this group that they had created) led the fight against the Clinton healthcare plan. And they did that, of course, by disinformation and other such measures. So then kind of moving into the more recent period where they really surged forward after President Obama was elected and really rode the wave of kind of racist reaction to that, that we can see now in hindsight, you know, the whole birther phenomenon that wouldn't accept that this was a legitimate president and a lot of that congealed in the Tea Party that came into being in 2009. And so using the strength of that Tea Party movement, this Koch network worked very hard to get control of state legislatures in the 2010 midterms as a lot of people who had voted for President Obama sat out the elections. You know, people talk about the enthusiasm gap.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (15:45):

Well, through that they managed to get control of, I think at the time it was 28 state legislatures, and in those state legislatures, every single one that they got control of, they engaged in radical rules change, again with a kind of stealth framing of what they were doing, not really saying what they were doing and why. So a classic example was Governor Scott Walker in Wisconsin who suddenly took away collective bargaining rights from public sector workers. This was something he hadn't campaigned on and he put it into a budget bill claiming that it was about the budget. So again, you know, that kind of stealth misrepresentation. And then Walker, in Wisconsin, the state legislature in my state of North Carolina, you know, all of these Tea Party-oriented legislatures put in power by huge infusions of donor money from the Kochs and like donors engaged, first of all, in the most radical gerrymander we've ever seen in political history in the US, radical and sophisticated, using all kinds of new social media data, etc., to misrepresent the voters.

Dr. Nancy MacLean:

So that's, again, another aspect of stealth, right? To make it so that our votes don't really count because of the way they've cracked and packed districts. Another element of the stealth strategy was pushing voter suppression measures under this covering rubric of combating voter fraud, but of course there was no such thing. But this helped to steer into passage a number of voter suppression measures. Also, undermining the power of public sector labor unions and teachers unions in particular using all kinds of fraudulent claims about them. So that's what I mean by stealth. In terms of when it started, you know, you're absolutely right that their, well, reaction has been part of this country going back to the founding and the deep south slaveholders and their impact on the *Constitution*, later the crushing of Reconstruction, etc.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (17:54):

So there's a lineage here, but as you pointed out in your question, in the 1930s, the first kind of modern version of this kind of corporate-led reaction was the American Liberty League that opposed the New Deal and the labor movement of that period, particularly the unions of the CIO (the Congress of Industrial Organizations), but they were actually quite ineffective, partly because they were so visibly self-interested and corporate. I may not get the exact quote, but there was one person in Texas that said that it would be... [laughs] No, I'm not gonna get it, but like, better to have, you know, a hundred Reds from Moscow defend American industry than let American capitalists do it because they were so bad at it. [laughs] So they really alienated people. You know, they tried very hard to defeat the president in 1936 and in the midterm elections of 1934 and his margins just kept getting bigger and bigger.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (18:57):

So they were really discredited at that point, the American Liberty League, but some of the same kinds of people and ideas then became part of the John Birch Society after world war II, developing in the late 1950s, and that body, of course, um, had Fred Koch (Charles Koch's father) as one of its key inner circle of directors. And Charles Koch himself joined and ironically left over the war in Vietnam later, but continued to have the economic ideas of the John Birch Society and some of the measures. But in any event, so Koch kept going, looking for a way to break through. In the 1970s, he started funding think tanks like what became the Cato Institute. It started with another name. He thought that the Powell Memorandum that you mentioned, that basically advocated this corporate mobilization to transform American politics—it was done as a memorandum for the US Chamber of Commerce—Koch thought that the Powell Memorandum didn't go far enough. [laughs] You know?

Dr. Nancy MacLean (20:04):

That it was essentially kind of too reformist. So he continued investing. In 1980, his brother, David, ran as a candidate for the Libertarian Party. And if you look up the platform of the libertarian party of 1980, basically you get the kind of Koch vision of what a good country would be and it's really terrifying. I mean, it's no public schools, no national parks, no postal service, nothing that we would recognize. It's just government stripped to what libertarians see as its legitimate functions, which are only three. And they basically amount to armies, courts, and police. So providing for the national defense, ensuring the rule of law and guaranteeing social order. That's the radical vision but what Koch struggled with for decades was how to make that vision a reality when the overwhelming majority of people in this country and around the world would oppose it if they understood what it was and what really began to change things in the new century was that he took the ideas of a figure that I wrote about in *Democracy and Chains*, a man named James McGill Buchanan, and turned those into a strategy for affecting this change, again, through rewriting the rules at every level, through disinformation, etc. So that kind of brings us to where we are.

Andrea Chalupa (21:34):

Wow. So we've been running this series with various experts on how to save our democracy and one thing we've heard is how the decline of education in America helped get us here. Why does this all seem to coincide with a dumbing down of America? How did that happen? How does that play into this?

Dr. Nancy MacLean (21:55):

Yeah, well, wow. That's a big question.

Andrea Chalupa (21:59):

Well, our experts keep bringing it up.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (22:03):

Yeah, so I think it's, you know, in some ways overdetermined because there are causes coming from multiple directions, but one of the elements that's crucial that I found in my research for *Democracy in Chains* was what had been a longstanding hostility to public education on the part of the arch right. And again, you could chase that all the way back to Southern slaveholders who didn't wanna fund public schools for the omenry much less for the people that they enslaved. But certainly that was the case for the 1930s. The right wing of that day, they couldn't find a way to explain how all the kids were coming home with these kind of New Deal and social democratic liberating kind of ideas and so they said, "Oh, it must be communists".

Dr. Nancy MacLean (22:53):

"We've gotta get kids out of the public schools and put them in proper private schools and religious schools." So that impulse has been there for a long time, but it wasn't really until after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954 and the reaction of the white conservative South to the Brown decision in the wake of the New Deal and as this civil rights movement was really taking hold in large numbers in the late '50s and '60s do you start seeing people on the political right really pushing for defunding public education and shifting resources to private schools. So in a sense, that has been a project now for 70 years. In the wake of all of that and all of the agitation from the right against desegregation, schools have struggled to be adequately funded for the needs that they face.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (23:56):

So we're living with some of that now and you can see that crisis in COVID where there aren't even substitute teachers anymore. The occupation has been attacked from so many directions that a lot of people are leaving education, so that's a piece of it. But then I will say also—and I'm hearing this from people in many fields that I work with, including social work, school directors and people in other fields—that we kind of dropped civics education. So if you talk to Americans today, and particularly young Americans, people don't really have a good idea of, If you wanna see a change in public life, how do you do it? And how do social movements interact with getting legislation passed? How does litigation work? So I think there was a version of civics that was kind of silly and boring.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (24:48):

And I can't even remember the version I learned when I was in elementary school, but I think recapturing that or substituting popular education through all kinds of community organizations and such would be important. But another element I think, to the dumbing down of the American public and to the number of people who believe in things that are outright false, that can be easily disproved with facts, a key element of that, again, I think, has the fingerprints of the folks I wrote about on it because the Koch network and a number of these allied organizations—including Grover Norquist, Americans for Tax Reform and so forth—they all pushed for ending what was called the Fairness Doctrine in broadcasting. That happened in 1986. And when the fairness doctrine ended, you know, that required accuracy for use of the public airwaves and balance and so forth. That's when you really saw, like, Rush Limbaugh and right-wing talk radio take off.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (25:48):

That opened the way to Fox News and all of these other outlets that are worse than Fox News that actually, you know, people have shown, studies have shown that people who watch these networks regularly have wrong ideas, right? You know, some of the documentation started with the Gulf War but it's continued since and certainly we see it with COVID, the COVID misinformation and the anti vaccine efforts ideology that's spread. A lot of that is kind of the combined fruit, I think, of the weakening of our schooling and also the growth of a very, very profitable industry of disinformation. So, the incentives are kind of all wrong for enabling the People to have the information they need to make informed decisions in a reasonable way.

Andrea Chalupa (26:45):

How does the Reagan Revolution play into all this?

Dr. Nancy MacLean (26:50):

Yeah, so Reagan, it's very interesting. Ronald Reagan went back quite a ways on the political right and had actually first been exposed to the public and first gained popularity—in politics, he had been an actor before that—but gained popularity when he made a speech for Barry Goldwater when he ran in 1964. And ironically, Barry Goldwater, he was a real military hawk of course but in his domestic policies, he really was the first person to run on the kinds of ideas that this Koch network and the wider Republican Party support today. And it really was a catastrophe when he started saying what he thought, because, like he went to New Hampshire, which is a state that had more retirees than than per capita than other places, and talked about the need to privatize social security and how people would be better off that way.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (27:47):

He went to the South, to the area of the Tennessee Valley Authority, which had brought rural electrification in the 1930s and called that program socialist and said that he would get rid of it if he came in and he would give power back to private power companies. He spoke against the minimum wage. He said that Walter Reuther, who was the head of the Auto Workers Union was a... I forget the language used, but like a worse Red than anybody in Moscow. [laughs] I mean, it was just a catastrophe. And in the end, he got a lot of small contributions and laid the groundwork for today's modern right. I think it was maybe 24 million, if memory serves, votes that he got. 24 or 30 million, so a significant sum. But as far as the electoral college, a catastrophe.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (28:32):

It was one of the worst losses in American political history and he ended up with only his own state of Arizona and the deep South where voter suppression was still being practiced aggressively in places like Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, etc. That was a bit of a digression on Barry Goldwater [laughs]

Andrea Chalupa:

N, it's fascinating.

Dr. Nancy MacLean:

So that's kind of Ronald Reagan's background, but he kinda had a much sunnier way. Anyway, he became governor of California and really proved himself to the political right through that, particularly with his response to the student unrest of those years and to Black activism in California. He was really an

advocate of essentially repressing both. And so Reagan, when he was elected in 1980, he really talked the talk of this cause in saying things like, "Government is not the solution to our problems, government is the problem."

Dr. Nancy MacLean (29:33):

He was very effective in framing this cause. But ironically, he did not walk the walk. I mean, he did a lot of radical changes, but nothing near what the Koch network types wanted. And so again, going back to social security reform, I have some stuff in the book from his budget director, David Stockman, and the language is just, you know, I just had to quote him at length because he says, you know, basically Reagan didn't understand the kinds of cuts that would be needed to push through the kind of budget that they were talking about for his first budget. He wanted to cut government, but I think he had in mind, you know, he'd always had this antipathy to, you know, he's the one who brought us the language of "welfare queens" and so forth.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (30:21):

And he seemed not to understand that the kinds of budget cuts that he had asked for would require attacking veteran's benefits, farmer's benefits, social security benefits, all these benefits of people who voted for the Republican Party. When he saw that, he's like, "Oh my God, I don't wanna do that. I'll be unpopular!" So essentially what he did is just let the deficit surge. So he continued spending but not taking in adequate tax revenues to cover that spending, so that was one of the many experiences that led this Koch network to think, We cannot rely on these elected officials working within the system to do what they say they will because if they want to be popular—as they saw with Reagan—they will back up from this extreme agenda because the People won't want it and the People will vote them out of office.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (31:19):

So that Reagan presidency was actually quite important as a pivot in this radicalization of some of these arch right corporate figures like Charles Koch. And then the administration of George W. Bush really confirmed that in the new century because he, too, even though he was the most conservative president to date at that time, he also wanted to be popular, so he enacted a prescription drug benefit for seniors and that made these guys crazy. He also failed at social security reform.. Even I'm using their language. They'd call it social security reform. It's actually social security privatization. But in any event, a series of experiences made them realize that whenever elected officials were accountable to majorities, were accountable to a fully enfranchised, accurately represented public, they would pull back from the brink and they wouldn't do what the donors wanted them to do. So that is why they turned to stealth and to this radical rewriting of the rules of governance, including things like, again, gerrymandering, voter suppression, trying to destroy the power of labor unions and so forth, because they wanted to insulate elected officials that they were pushing out to do these things from the reaction of the public. And of course their ultimate way of insulating elected officials from public pressure is a push to rewrite the *Constitution*. So we could also talk about that at some point today, if you would like to.

Sarah Kendzior (33:06):

Yeah, I would like to know about that now because we've heard, for years, plans for a constitutional convention, overriding of long existing laws and precepts. Can you get into what their plan is?

Dr. Nancy MacLean (33:21):

Yeah, so you're absolutely right that there had been talk from different quarters about doing this. And I actually remember some of that when I was... [laughs] Once, I was young. And in the 1980s, when the religious right was getting going and attacking reproductive rights, they wanted to get a human life amendment into the *Constitution*. So there's long been different moments where people have talked on the right about a constitutional convention, but what really put wind in the sails of these efforts was, again, this Koch network wanting to rewrite the rules of governance. They'd been talking about how to do this and what they would seek and what their vision of the *Constitution* was and what they thought needed to happen for some years, but it was in 2013 that this really took off, when the American Legislative Exchange Council, ALEC, whom you mentioned in the introduction, which is basically... People sometimes describe it as like a corporate bill mill.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (34:27):

But they bring in state legislators—almost only Republican legislators—along with corporations who actually provide templates for legislation to be passed out in the state. So that's how we got all those voter suppression measures. They came from ALEC. The Stand Your Ground laws that were instrumental in the killing of Trayvon Martin and the releasing of George Zimmerman for that murder, those came from ALEC. There's a ton of stuff that's come from ALEC. And one of the things ALEC began to push in 2013 and ever since is lining up authorizations from state governments to enable the holding of the first constitutional convention in the United States since 1787, since the *Constitution* was crafted. So it is an incredibly radical undertaking. It is an incredibly reckless undertaking. But they are hell fired and determined to get this. The way that you count the authorizations can vary.

Dr. Nancy MacLean:

But most people who look at this now say that they have... Well, they actually had 28 until recently and they lost one, but 27 of the 34 states authorizations are needed to call a constitutional convention under Article Five of the *Constitution*. And if they were to get such a convention, they would use it to lock in these restrictions, essentially, on what the majority wants government to do in America. So it is really a breathtaking effort and it is one that, if they were to succeed in winning more state legislatures in the '22 midterms and winning Congress back, you can be sure that Mitch McConnell and McCarthy in the House would authorize such a convention. So that's another reason why it's really important to make sure that large numbers of voters who don't like what I'm describing here turn out in 2022 to stop this.

Dr. Nancy MacLean (36:40):

If people want more of a sense of what groups are pushing this, the most active one is called the Convention of States. They have a quite elaborate website, so people can look that up to get a sense of the operation, but it's pretty creepy. I mean, it's led by former Tea Party officials who recruit at gun shows, very much committed to kind of biblical citizenship, as they call it. And in fact, one of the people who is in the leadership of it, this guy Mark Mackler, said on one radio show that their goal was to reverse a hundred years, he said, of progressivism.

[outro theme music]

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 Oil Change International, an advocacy group supported with the generous donation from the Greta Thunberg Foundation that exposes the true costs of fossil fuels and facilitates the ongoing transition to clean energy.

Andrea Chalupa:

We encourage you to help support Ukraine by donating to Razom for Ukraine at razomforukraine.org. We also encourage you to donate to the International Rescue Committee, a humanitarian relief organization helping refugees from Ukraine, Syria and Afghanistan. Donate at rescue.org. And if you want to help critically endangered orangutans already under pressure from the Palm oil industry, donate to the Orangutan Project at theorangutangproject.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:

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Andrea Chalupa:

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Sarah Kendzior:

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Andrea Chalupa:

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