

Gaslit Nation Transcript
Fight back with The States Project - Part I
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<https://www.patreon.com/posts/fight-back-with-63967557>

[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* [Opera 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.

This interview was recorded January 7th, 2022.

Andrea Chalupa (01:39):

Today we're joined by two experts on the front lines of fighting for our democracy on the all important state level. As you're always hearing on this show, if you want to fight for our democracy and prevent the slide into authoritarianism, clean up your local state government. Walking us through how to do that, including explaining the gerrymandering crisis in America and what to do about that, we're joined by wonderful, wonderful The States project and their experts/representatives are Melissa Walker, who is in her other life a widely read author for teen novels and the Head of Giving Circles for The States Project,

and Aaron Kleinman, the Director of Research. Please, please, please check out their group, support their work. The. States. Project. <laugh> I know I sound very determined here to get everyone to pay attention to all this but it's because we cover a lot of heavy topics on this show and there is hope, there are solutions, and those solutions are with groups like The States Project. They are a group that focuses on winning governing majorities in the states. Our state governments determine the all important quality of life issues from clean water to strong public schools to voting rights. Trump and his Big Lie army are targeting state governments with the hope of suppressing the vote and ensuring that their coup is successful next time. In 2022, it's all hands on deck. Melissa and Aaron of The States Project are here to explain how we protect our democracy this year and beyond. Welcome to Gaslit Nation, Melissa and Aaron.

Aaron Kleinman (03:22):

Thank you for having us.

Melissa Walker (03:24):

Yeah, it's great to be here.

Andrea Chalupa (03:26):

And Melissa, I must point out this is your second time on the show. I learned a lot last time you were here. Thank you so, so much for the important work you both do.

Melissa Walker (03:34):

Absolutely.

Andrea Chalupa (03:36):

All right. So, questions for you both. Why are state governments so critical in the fight to protect our democracy? I'm always harping on about this, but it's important to repeat it again, and then we're gonna go into a deep dive on where we are currently with our state governments.

Melissa Walker (03:52):

Sure. Well, I'm happy to kick that off because I really am someone who came to discover the power of state governments kind of late. I will admit that before 2016, I did not know who my state representatives are and was not tuned into what was happening in Albany—my state capital—even though it affected my life so much. So what I started to understand after 2016, when I was looking around for the best possible way for me to plug in and take action, was that everything that I was worried about and everything that I cared about was being decided in state capitals. And that meant all the kitchen table issues like education funding, climate change, choice, healthcare, those types of things, civil rights. These were all laws that were being passed in state capitals, but also there were huge power issues; federal level power with things like voting rights and gerrymandering, which I know we're gonna talk more about today. I started to see that these state capitals were incredible power centers and places that if we could focus on them, we could make change at the foundations of our democracy as opposed to from the top down. And that's what really drew me in to working on state legislatures.

Andrea Chalupa (05:10):

Karl Rove, as you pointed out the last time you were on this show, engineered a massive push to take over state governments during the Obama years. He was so successful that Republicans came dangerously close to controlling so many state governments that they could have called a constitutional convention to edit our constitution, a far-right dream, of course. With the blue wave under Trump, Democrats pushed them back and increased their power in the states. What's the current landscape like now? How are Democrats doing?

Aaron Kleinman (05:41):

The project on the right to take over state governments dates back decades. It actually dates back to something called the Powell Memo, which I don't know if you've talked about on the show before.

Andrea Chalupa:

No.

Aaron Kleinman:

Yeah, so Lewis Powell, who later served on the Supreme Court, was the general counsel of the Chamber of Commerce and in, I think it was 1970, he wrote a memo basically laying the groundwork for how the far right could take over the country because it was in the middle of kind of a post-war liberal census. He said, "There are three main ways that we need to take over this country. One, we need to build our own separate media organ. Two, we need to take over the judiciary. And three, we need to take over state legislatures." That memo became kind of, you know... Really, the new right—especially led by people like Paul Weyrich—really followed the lead of that memo and built organizations like ALEC which, over decades, really built out this massive right-wing infrastructure to support candidates who would support their political project.

Aaron Kleinman (06:45):

There was just never anything like that on the other side, you know, really kind of trying to represent the people of the country. Until really after 2016, I think a lot of people took a hard look at where we were in terms of state legislatures and saw just how far things had fallen away from really having lawmakers representing the interests of the country. We started in 2017 and we have been able to push back a little bit, but we're also pushing back on 45 years. They have a 45 year head start on us, more or less.

Andrea Chalupa (07:19):

So when did the Powell Memo come out?

Aaron Kleinman (07:22):

I believe it was 1970. You had kind of new right luminaries—I use that term loosely—like Richard Viguerie and Howard Phillips and Paul Weyrich, really kind of read that. And also Phyllis Schlafly as well, especially during the fight over the ERA. They really saw how important state legislatures were. So, they've more or less had a 45 year head start on us. We've been able to accomplish a lot in the past few years, pushing back on that 45 year head start, but I think every swing state legislative chamber is still controlled by Republicans, if you look at kinda the six closest states in the 2020 election.

Andrea Chalupa (08:08):

Wow.

Aaron Kleinman (08:09):

The good news is that the margins there are incredibly close and there are states where really, if just a few hundred or a few thousand votes had flipped, Democrats would control a chamber. So we're dealing with really tiny margins. We're dealing with really kind of inexpensive races. So if you want to think about, you know, how can I save democracy? State legislatures are really where kind of your resources go the furthest.

Andrea Chalupa (08:31):

Right. The return on investment is really high. So 2016 was a wake up call on so many fronts, especially how Democrats seemed to be caught off guard by decades-long efforts like the Powell Memo. What have Democrats done, if anything, over the decades to address this right-wing onslaught on our democracy?

Aaron Kleinman (08:55):

There was a very DC-centric strategy for a very long time and ultimately I think what happened after 2016, just looking at the country, I think the kind of DC first strategy I think is mostly... A lot of people in the party, I think they've realized the folly of that. That said, there are still, you know... Habits are ingrained and there are a lot of organizations and groups that maybe still think DC first. We are a part of a movement that is really trying to get people to pivot more to focus on the states. It has been heartening to see we've been moving a lot of people who previously didn't care about or know about state legislatures to kind of realize their power. It is a process, but I'm hopeful that people are waking up to it. If you look at the political landscape, now Democrats control the White House. They narrowly control Congress.

Aaron Kleinman (09:48):

But you can see in all these state governments there are really impediments to that progress. You can look at things like voting laws, for example. And if you look at what happened after the 2020 election, where the, I think it was the night of the third, Rick Perry texted Donald Trump and said, "Just declare victory and have state legislatures throw their electoral votes to you." And that was part of their strategy because they controlled the state legislatures in those states. So it really shows you that we need to win back state legislatures as a bulwark against tyranny.

Andrea Chalupa (10:31):

Exactly, and it's not enough. I know, Melissa, you and I were catching up on the phone the other day and you made the point that it's not enough for Congress just to pass the voting rights legislation. That's the big debate in this country right now with, I believe it's Sinema who's really holding up the filibuster reform needed for that, because even if Congress passes this legislation, it's the states that have to implement it and they could slow it down. They could resist it just like they did with Obamacare. Could you speak a little bit about that?

Melissa Walker (11:03):

Yeah, absolutely and that's exactly right. I mean, of course we hope that this legislation passes and we think it would do a great amount of good, but when you have radically dominated legislatures, they're the ones who are implementing what happens, what's coming down from the federal level and they can

find ways to avoid what they don't wanna do and get around certain things. The ACA is a perfect example because there are still a dozen states who haven't expanded Medicaid and that is kind of radical right-wing non implementation of federal law. So, we can see it with that. We can see it with COVID. Federal law in terms of COVID mandates, in terms of things that are happening around that, because it really is when the will of the majority in the legislature is opposed to what the federal law is handing down, they can really slowwalk things. And I think that Aaron, you know a little bit more about what is, and is not in that federal law, I think, that state legislative districts actually aren't included. Do you wanna talk a little bit about that?

Aaron Kleinman (12:14):

Yeah. You know, the law, it would be great if it could pass but it's not a panacea and the fact of the matter is that states still have a lot of power over implementation of election laws and ultimately what federal laws do. Basically, they give people a right of action to sue in federal court if they think a state is not abiding those regulations, but the federal government ultimately can't actually run the elections. And so what happens then is people are given a right of action and the courts are, you know, right now, incredibly right-wing. So I'd hope that they would follow the letter of the law, but it's not a guarantee. Lawsuits can take a while to resolve and so really the most effective way to actually get kind of fairly administered elections and fair districts and make sure everyone can vote is ultimately by flipping a state legislature.

Andrea Chalupa (13:20):

Mmhmm [affirmative]. Absolutely. So if you could walk us through a recent "case study", everyone was looking, for instance, at Virginia, the recent elections there, as sort of a bellwether for what Democrats can expect in 2022. Obviously, that election night was not so bad because New Jersey broke the curse by holding onto a Democratic governor and did well with its state government. So what were some lessons in Virginia? How much of a warning sign do you see there for Democrats in 2022?

Aaron Kleinman (13:54):

I would say there were a lot of lessons to take from Virginia. I think one of them was actually that investing in—I know it's kind of counterintuitive because of the result—but it really is that investing in state legislative candidates works. And that's because if you look at what happened just in 2017, the average Democratic candidate ran about 5% behind the gubernatorial candidate. But if you look at 2021, you know, we endorsed nine candidates and the median candidate of our endorsees actually ran ahead of the gubernatorial nominee. Going into election night, the conventional wisdom was, "Oh, if McAuliffe loses, then we're losing so many seats because there's no way that Democrats can run ahead of the gubernatorial nominee." And then Democrats ran ahead of the gubernatorial nominee.

Aaron Kleinman (14:46):

And I think there were certainly issues with the gubernatorial campaign, especially around... They were actually kind of taking resources from state legislative candidates. And I think one thing we really need to see in 2022—and that I think we will see—is gubernatorial nominees who really understand the importance of having their state legislative candidates do well and sharing resources with them. Even in spite of the result, investing in state legislative nominee candidates works. If a hundred votes had flipped, Republicans wouldn't be the majority right now. I mean, it was so much closer than the gubernatorial campaign.

Melissa Walker (15:23):

I want to put a fine point on that, Aaron, because I think it's incredibly important. We are talking about these types of margins. If a hundred votes had changed hands, Democrats would have control of the House of Delegates in Virginia. A hundred votes. That's the kind of margins that we're working with and that our team works on all the time. And honestly, those types of margins give me so much hope because that shift in power is so consequential and it is *so* close.

Andrea Chalupa (15:57):

Yeah, it's excruciating. If you don't mind, I'm just going to vent for a second [laughs]. Why aren't we seeing more of the governor's race and the state races, like in Virginia, why aren't we seeing more of like a team effort there? Like, a united front where it's up and down the ballot that comes together, strong coordination, strong support. Why does it seem so antagonistic, sort of like the central command of DC versus the grassroots?

Aaron Kleinman (16:30):

That I'm hoping was just a problem particular to the gubernatorial campaign there. We have seen in other states where our gubernatorial nominees really do support the rest of the ticket, but I think that was hopefully just a problem that really was unique to Virginia, where there wasn't that coordination. Again, it was a more DC-focused strategy. I also think that the messaging there from the top of the ticket did leave a little bit to be desired in terms of, you know, you can't just talk about Trump all the time. It was an off off-year election. In 2022, when federal offices are up, maybe Trump becomes more of a factor because of the role that Congress will play in the next election. But in Virginia, it was kind of hard to tie a campaign that was largely about education and prices going up to bringing up Trump all the time.

Aaron Kleinman (17:26):

It might help motivate the base a little bit, but it's not really winning as many people over. You need to kind of run on your own record. And to their credit, our candidates, especially the ones who out-ran the top of the ticket, they were able to run on their record. They were able to run on things like lowering prescription drug prices and the candidates who did that outperformed the top of the ticket, which was really more focused on kind of a national message. And so I think the lesson there in Virginia is really, you know, if you have a record to run on, if you can run on the everyday things that can improve people's lives, you can outperform the political environment.

Andrea Chalupa (18:01):

Mmhmm <affirmative>. And Melissa, you've made this point to me before where, when people get together on the grassroots level, on the local level, you're talking about a community of neighbors and you've said this before, where when it's Americans talking to Americans, they share a lot of the same concerns and issues. You've said something along those lines.

Melissa Walker (18:24):

Absolutely. I mean, I think something that gives me a lot of hope in working in state legislative races is that these are still local races. These are still neighbor talking to neighbor and a state legislative candidate who knocks on doors in their districts and shows up on people's porches and in their yards and, you know, at their baseball games, those are the people who are gonna cut through the national noise. And so we as an organization really prioritize candidate door knocking. That is incredibly important for getting the word out because there is a shiny object problem, and it's not just with

DC-focused groups and maybe even candidates. It's also with voters. I mean, I think the media covers DC, people are paying attention to the names that they've heard of, and the truth is that they're not seeing as much of the people who are actually influencing their daily lives, which are their state representatives.

Melissa Walker (19:26):

And so getting people and voters to pay attention to state legislatures is part of the work too. And when people join our States Project and start giving circles and start tending to their corners that way with the awareness and the education piece, it can really change things. And again, the candidates who are in these kind of tipping point districts, when they knock on doors, they can absolutely win because they're talking about a water issue in the community, a particular traffic problem. These are issues that all Americans care about and can relate to neighbor to neighbor.

Andrea Chalupa (20:04):

So knocking on doors is, of course, very effective. Are people doing that in the pandemic? How can that be done safely?

Aaron Kleinman (20:12):

So it is being done. In Virginia, you know, it was really before Omicron spread everywhere so they were able to do it. It's standard, you stay six feet apart. Thankfully, when you knock on someone's door, you are not actually entering their home, you're staying outside, so the risk of transmission is pretty low. One thing we saw in 2020 was that Republicans were knocking doors, going door to door canvassing, and Democrats largely weren't. And we think a big portion of the Democratic under-performance in 2020 can be related to that, especially, we think, among Latino communities. The experts on Latino voting have said not canvassing door to door in 2020 really cost them. And so mask up, stay six feet apart, stay outside when you're canvassing and you can do it safely.

Andrea Chalupa (21:12):

Yeah, I absolutely think that's right. I love canvassing. I love it and I always have interesting conversations and it gives me a lot of hope. I did not do it, obviously, in 2020, like so many others. But I think in 2022, I will be going back out there and knocking on doors because it's all hands on deck this year. So what are some state races you'll be following closely this year and why?

Aaron Kleinman (21:36):

We've already announced that we're going into a few states. One I really wanna flag in particular is Michigan because they actually, for the first time in decades, have pretty fair maps in place. And that's because in 2018 they got a ballot initiative in place that implemented a nonpartisan redistricting panel. Now, the maps that the redistricting panel passed, they still actually slightly lean Republican, but only by like a percentage point or two as opposed to to like, you know, 8% or something like they are today. And so because Michigan has gotten so much fairer maps, there is a real possibility that even in kind of a not great year, the maps, you know, if we can get good candidates and Governor Whitmer can... She tends to be more popular than President Biden and so with her leading the ticket, there's a real potential for us to flip a chamber in Michigan.

Andrea Chalupa (22:34):

Fantastic. And how can people get involved in these big state races this year?

Melissa Walker (22:41):

So I wanna mention some of our other states too, just so I can lift them up. The ones where we've already started working do include Michigan, as Aaron said, definitely. Also Arizona, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Maine, and Texas. Those are the states where we're currently kind of on the ground and we'll be adding some more targets. We do a 99 state chamber analysis—which Aaron is actually in charge of—and look at where we think there can be meaningful power shifts. The way that folks can get involved really is through joining us, going to statesproject.org and signing up to follow our newsletter and learn about what we're doing. I am the Head of Giving Circles and what I hope is that people will, with their communities, start giving circles and choose one of these states to support.

Melissa Walker (23:36):

Because I think it's difficult to figure out... When you start realizing how much power state legislatures have, it's like, "Okay, great. Well, how do I support the candidates that can actually shift power? And how do I figure out where to work in the state?" And so that's the type of thing that our research team does with great precision and mind boggling detail. And so that is kind of what we offer in terms of with giving circles, when they choose a state, they're then supporting a program in that state which focuses on various strategically targeted districts, the districts that we need in order to shift power in the state capital. The giving circles team really does provide a ton of support in terms of how to start a giving circle, how to get people involved, sample language, ways to reach out and start educating yourself and your community, which was really the journey that I took. It was really a self education journey.

Melissa Walker (24:34):

Then friend by friend, by friend, by friend, learning about this and starting to understand it. And one thing that I just wanna say is that this is a real path to hope because I know that we are seeing incredible doom and gloom in the news, and it feels overwhelming. It feels like there's no way we can cut through the Koch brothers and dark money and all of these efforts to potentially steal 2024 which are happening via state legislatures. But the truth is that there *is* a way to cut through and the good news about the way to cut through is that it's one seat in each chamber in Arizona, three seats in each chamber in Michigan, 12 seats in the Pennsylvania House with better maps. And I can go on and on, but these are not many seats that we need. And again, it is often cheaper to change the balance of power in a state chamber than it is to win a single competitive congressional seat.

Melissa Walker (25:37):

And so we're talking about giving circles that can form and raise \$1,000, \$10,000 or more—there's no limit—but have real impact with those types of races. Something that we sometimes mention is that Sarah Gideon, who ran for the Senate in Maine, ended her campaign with a loss and with \$15 million left over, right? And The States Project was the top contributor to defend the Maine State Senate in 2020 and we invested \$160,000 and successfully defended a Democratic majority that's done a ton of things for the people of Maine, including lowering the cost of prescription drugs, raising teacher pay, expanding access to abortion. That's the kind of comparisons we're looking at and the kind of things that people can get together and learn how to bring attention and resources to something that they care about and something that has real impact on the foundations of our democracy. It has given me such hope to be involved in this and a real path to change inaction in a power center that is too often ignored. Sorry, I've been going on for a little while.

Andrea Chalupa (26:51):

No, I love it. [laughs] I'm hanging on every word. So what is a giving circle and how do you get started and how do you choose which state? Let's say you're in a safe blue state, how do you pick a state to focus on? Walk me through the nuts and bolts. So if my friends and I wanted to get together and be like, "We're doing a giving circle this year", what is that and how does it work and how much money do we need to get that started?

Melissa Walker (27:14):

Yeah, absolutely. So, what happens is we have a website where you can start a page and then everyone gets their own giving circle page. So it's called something. Some examples are Derivators, or Fighting for Change.

Andrea Chalupa (27:29):

Oh, so you come up with like a band name, basically.

Melissa Walker (27:31):

Yeah, exactly. Exactly. You get your band name. Some folks have a logo or a picture of them up on the pages. And what happens is you then kind of gather with people—and we have a lot of research and documents and things that you can read about state legislatures and you can learn as much as you want—but we always say to people, "What you really need to know is why did you start this? Why did you decide to do this project with us?" Because for a lot of people, it's because of the moment their kid came home after their first lockdown drill, or the death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a huge moment for giving circles because people suddenly realized, "Oh my gosh, this is not protected anymore. Choice is not protected anymore. It's gonna be decided in the states. I've gotta do something about state legislatures. Where can I do that?"

Melissa Walker:

There are these emotional moments that bring people to the work and I always tell people, "Remember those moments and tell the story of those moments because that is what's gonna get your friends involved—" Not—although Aaron does a great job—not talking about the Powell Memo. That's a good thing to do if you want to, too, but you don't have to learn the history of state legislatures and the radical right takeover if you don't want to. What you have to know is what got you involved. So we kind of encourage people to learn how to storytell their own story of getting involved and then start talking to people. And the truth is that there's a lot of kind of easy action steps to fundraising that I was not aware of.

Melissa Walker (28:59):

I had never done any fundraising before, but the truth is it's a math problem. And so if you're like, "You know what? I'm gonna get together with five of my friends and we're each gonna try to raise \$1,000 for this giving circle," then that's about asking 25 people for 40 bucks or 40 people for 25 bucks or, you know, 10 people for a hundred bucks. It all depends on what kind of a network you wanna build and what you think your network can do. But once you start building that math problem, you'll find that someone who gives 40 bucks is like, "Hey, how can I help?" And it's like, "Could you pledge to raise \$1,000? Cool." And giving circles start to grow that way and they start to get to numbers that are incredibly impactful in these races. The truth is that watching people do this and recognize how much power they walk with when they walk with their friends and their family in their own network is incredible.

Melissa Walker (29:49):

Because when you learn the skills of how to bring attention and resources to something that you care about, you can do it for this project, you can do it for your PTA, you can do it for another area of your community, and that type of skill is the type of thing that's gonna really—corner by corner—make us all recognize our own power and really tend to democracy. So I'm really inspired by giving circle leaders who take this path with us and keep walking and keep saying like, “Oh, I hit a part. I'm not sure what to do.” And we hand them some more resources and coach them along the way because our real work: We're raising our electoral dollars, of course, to try to change the balance of power in these states, which is so consequential for democracy, but we also want folks to realize that they have the power to plug into this and they are not helpless and they do not have to witness the destruction of their democracy. And this is such a power center to plug into and, again, so much cheaper than trying to impact federal races. You're not just a drop in the bucket. You are moving the needle with your people in your living room or on zoom at this moment in time.

Andrea Chalupa (30:55):

One thing I wanna address is the psychology of fundraising and asking for money. I had a mentor who helped me with that. She started her own small business—a media company—and loved raising money, loved asking investors for money. She just got so excited over it, whereas I would go into a panic attack with the idea of asking anyone for money. And so from working with her, just like seeing her enthusiasm really was what set it off, I found my enthusiasm when it came to fundraising and it's addicting. It's so much fun. And that is what empowered me, little old me, to raise—I kid you not, I'm not making this up—\$10 million to make my film. I had to go out and ask for that money. \$10 million! I got rejected from one investor for 1.5 million euros.

Andrea Chalupa (31:51):

I came back and asked for 3.5 million euros after retooling my pitch and got it. So what I learned from that whole experience is the whole psychology of raising money, fundraising, is simply throwing an amazing dinner party. If you like to have people over for dinner and you like to think about like, who do you wanna invite this night? What are you gonna serve? What music are you gonna play? Candles. All that. That's fundraising. It's about throwing a big party, inviting people in, and you're gonna be part of this important event. You're gonna be part of this important experience. You're gonna be part of this important movement. So everyone has to understand that asking for money and fundraising. And it's about like, come join me on this party, come join me in this experience. It's gonna be amazing. We're gonna have so much fun. It's gonna change lives. It's going to change the conversation. Let's all be a part of it. That's what you're doing. You're throwing an incredible dinner party with your friends and meeting new friends along the way. That's what fundraising is.

Melissa Walker (32:48):

I love that so much. And I will add that when I paused on writing teen novels and started consulting with The States Project, I had been doing it for a couple of months before someone said to me, “Oh, how's the fundraising gig going?” And I was like, “What? I'm flipping state legislatures.”

Andrea Chalupa (33:07):

Exactly.

Melissa Walker (33:08):

And they were like, “Through fundraising, right?” And I was like, “...Oh my gosh, I think I'm fundraising.”

Andrea Chalupa:

[laughs]

Melissa Walker:

Every time I walked into a room, the way that I walked in was like, “I'm about to tell you something, a way that you can have a political impact that you had no idea you could have. And I know everyone's looking for that right now, so you're welcome.” That's what I felt like, I was like, I'm bringing value to you and offering you a way to join this hugely impactful movement. And I really had never thought of it as fundraising. And you're right that the psychology of doing it that way, of saying, “I'm bringing you something of value” is incredible. And people really meet you there when you enter with that kind of energy. Absolutely.

Andrea Chalupa (33:53):

Yeah, exactly right. Fundraising is all about joining together in something greater and it just lifts the vibe in you and them, and that spreads. And that's what we need right now for this whole country,

[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:

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

Andrea Chalupa:

Original music in Gaslit Nation is produced by David Whitehead, Martin Vissenberg, Nik 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 and higher—oh, and by the way, if you don't hear your name on this list and you've signed up, we're going to say your name starting in July and it keep it going for how long you've donated, FYI. So, we'd like to thank...Patreon supporter list...]