

Gaslit Nation Transcript

21 September 2022

“Special Master of Puppets”

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/special-master-72262523>

[intro clip - audio excerpt from Sarah’s book *They Knew*]

Sarah Kendzior (00:00:00):

They stay quiet because this is the terrain of conspiracy theory or the terrain of national security. The two are treated interchangeably these days as terrain on which the humble citizen is not supposed to tread. We are supposed to pretend that the government would not be so cruel or maniacal or incompetent as to let masses of people die. As we ride out a global plague in which the government was cruel and maniacal and incompetent enough to let masses of people die. We are supposed to accept somehow a pre-ordained scorched earth future, and think it is normal that there is no urgency within the US government to mitigate it, and accept somehow that other governments—in particular, Russia—see the melting of the Arctic as an economic opportunity. We are supposed to ignore that the only condition in which the actions of elites make sense is one where they need to call the herd before climate catastrophe rearranges the global order. We are supposed to treat the worst people in the world as good faith actors in defiance of logic or compassion or history and deny the obvious grim conclusions.

Sarah Kendzior (00:01:31):

For oligarchs and plutocrats and dictators, a depopulated earth is easier to control. For accelerationists and religious fanatics, the end of the world is desirable in its own right. These are mainstream objectives held by people in positions of enormous power. If the reaction to COVID is a test for how the powerful deal with climate change—let the plague spread, deny people, resources, and hold no one accountable for the damage—we are in tremendous trouble. Everyone is assured that a savior is coming, an agent of the Lord or the law. I cannot attest to the former and I am pretty sure the latter broke down long ago. but I understand the rationalizations. It is a horrible feeling to be a pawn in someone else's plot masquerading as prophecy. “Wouldn't somebody do something if it's really that bad?” Yes, they would. They would stand back and let you die and profit off the pain and other people would stand back and let them. Inertia is action. Complacency is complicity. Normalcy bias is more destructive than paranoia. It encourages people to rationalize abhorrent behavior, to ignore open evidence of sadistic plots, and to dismiss the emotional resonance of an end times narrative as something intriguing only to fools. The most logical conclusion of why this is happening: Powerful corporate and political actors have aligned to profit off predictable catastrophe and what writer Naomi Klein has called “disaster capitalism” is also the most horrifying. There is no way out but through, and that's the crux of the fear. The apocalypse takes longer than you thought.

Announcer (00:03:40):

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[intro - theme music]

Sarah Kendzior (00:03:56):

I'm Sarah Kendzior, the author of the best sellers, *The View from Flyover Country* and *Hiding in Plain Sight* and of the brand new book, *They Knew: How a Culture of Conspiracy Keeps America Complacent*, which is out now and which you just heard a clip of as the opening clip for this show.

Andrea Chalupa (00:04:15):

I'm 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 does not want you to see. And they keep shutting down screenings.

Sarah Kendzior (00:04:32):

And this is *Gaslit Nation*, a podcast covering corruption in the United States and rising autocracy around the world. We're going to be discussing quite a lot of that, but first a few announcements: I wanna thank everybody who has shown up for the first part of the tour for *They Knew* and who purchased the book. If you liked it, leave a review. Tell your friends. I'm just gonna announce a few tour stops for the next week because I'm gonna be on tour for *They Knew* throughout September, October, November. This week, I will be in Lawrence, Kansas on September 21st talking with author Sarah Smarsh at Raven Bookstore. Then I am heading to Columbia, Missouri on September 22nd, where I'll be speaking to Alex George at Skylar Bookshop. There will be books there to be signed and personalized and all that. On September 28th, I'll be at the Book Loft of German Village in Columbus, Ohio and then I will be off to Canada on October 1st for Wordfest in Calgary. I'm on a few panels there, so Canadians, get ready. I have other book stops coming up. I'll give more information about those in the weeks to come. And again, thank you so much for your support and your feedback. It has meant a lot. And on that note, speaking of scary stories, Andrea, you have an announcement for our audience.

Andrea Chalupa (00:06:06):

We are going to be doing another *Gaslit Nation* Halloween radio play. Halloween is a national holiday here at *Gaslit Nation*. Sarah and I met for the first time and our partnership bloomed in the horror of Halloween Night, 2016, all those years ago.

Sarah Kendzior:

Oh God, six years.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yep. And we've been trapped in Halloween American-style ever since. So to celebrate this day, we're calling on our audience to make art, have fun, be creative, get your friends and/or your kids around the table and do a read through of your very own radio play. And once you're happy with it, submit it to *Gaslit Nation* and we're gonna be reading through them and selecting one that we're gonna produce into a good old fashioned radio play to play on Halloween. The writing prompt this year is going to be just a good old fashioned spooky ghost story around the campfire about today's political crisis. You could have the scary monster be Posh Trump, Jared and Ivanka, or What's in Trump's Basement at Mar-a-Lago? Any of those things will work. Just have fun, be creative. Your deadline is October 20th. October 20th. Get them in by October 20th. And you can send your radio scripts to us at [gaslitnation@gmail.com](mailto:gaslitnation@gmail.com). [gaslitnation@gmail.com](mailto:gaslitnation@gmail.com). And our advice is just have fun and keep it short and sweet. Think of it as a spooky story around the campfire that you tell your family and friends, but it's about what we're all living through. [laughs]

Sarah Kendzior (00:07:50):

And we're gonna air it around Halloween, right?

Andrea Chalupa (00:07:53):

Oh, yes. Which also happens to be around the time of Ivanka's birthday, so that's always fun. That's why we like this tradition here.

Sarah Kendzior:

[laughs]

Andrea Chalupa:

The the other thing we're doing is if you are out there in your community, if you're helping candidates that you believe in, if you're helping organizations that you believe in like, let's say, Run for Something, the Sunrise Movement, States Project, Indivisible, Swing Left, whatever group you're a part of wherever you live, if you're helping strengthen our democracy wherever you live, let us know about it. Tweet at @gaslitnation on Twitter. And from the people that send us what they're up to this big important election season, we'll select a handful of these folks to come on the show and we'll have a *Gaslit Nation* Slumber Party and we'll talk about what we did to get through this critical time, because remember, *Roe v. Wade* being finally overturned by the wannabe theocrats on the Supreme Court, that changed the map.

Andrea Chalupa (00:08:51):

We now have a good chance at expanding our majority in the Senate, which would finally make Manchin and Sinema irrelevant, which would be wonderful. And we have a strong chance to hold onto the house—barely—but we could do it. So imagine if President Biden, given all the big things he's done already, if we can all give him by coming together and doing what we can wherever we are to get out the vote, we could possibly expand majorities in the Senate and the House. That would be a huge game changer, not just for us, but the world because America still remains at this point in time the number one global superpower, so what we do has a big ripple effect. Remember: The races we win in these midterms, especially the all-important governor races, the all-important secretary of state races in states like Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Nevada, those races help determine protecting the White House in 2024.

Sarah Kendzior (00:09:47):

If you want to hold onto the White House in 2024, which is so crucial because you're also protecting Ukraine against a massive genocide, right? Because if you keep a Democrat in the White House, you're gonna be protecting Ukraine, and you're going to be ensuring that we have a strong White House to take on Russian fascism. So if you wanna protect the White House, if you wanna protect global democracy, fight like hell now in these midterms, because those officials that are elected in all these key states, they're going to be protecting the integrity of our elections in 2024.

Sarah Kendzior (00:10:21):

Alright. And now for the news. We weren't off last week, but we ran a pre scheduled interview with me about *They Knew* and a lot of things have happened since. One of them has been taking forever. And that

is the death and funeral of Queen Elizabeth, which has been going on for about 11 days. I think that it's ended. I'm not completely sure it's ended. My question is whether the monarchy is going to end because, you know, this has been something to watch. Andrea and I are both fans of *The Crown*, the TV series. We've watched it and we've actually learned some things from it like that there were Russian agents hanging around Buckingham Palace and they kind of just decided, Eh, we're gonna look the other way. So some very familiar stories there. But it's been really interesting to see the reaction to the death of Queen Elizabeth because there's never been a British monarch that has died in the social media era.

Sarah Kendzior (00:11:22):

I mean, there's really never been one that died in the mass media era, period, and there's never been one that died after the colonial empire that Britain had created had been disbanded. And so for the first time, people from colonized lands that had to fight for their independence—from India, from Pakistan, from Kenya and Nigeria, Caribbean countries, so on and so forth—they're not necessarily mourning the Queen. They're in fact putting forth a lot of very assertive and, in my view, very accurate critiques of imperialism and colonialist abuses. And then getting incredible flack from the Murdoch-run publications, from the Piers Morgans of the world, you know, from these British royalists and monarchists. And it's been really interesting to watch. There are of course people in Britain truly grieving, sometimes in very deep emotional ways.

Sarah Kendzior (00:12:28):

And, you know, I don't judge that. I think though it's interesting to think, Well, what are people grieving about? Because Britain has faced the same intense loss of stability in the last six years that the United States has as a result of Brexit. And they've also had an enormous number of horrific crimes come to light; state crimes, acts of corruption. And some of those have been linked to the Royal family. For example, Prince Andrew and the fact that he procured the services of child rape trafficker, Jeffrey Epstein. And there's always been dirty, nasty, horrific stories about the Royal family, both on a personal level and also of course on a political level because this is a monarchist empire that used brutal tactics around the world. I keep wondering, Is this the end of the monarchy and what does it mean that in certain circles, in very rarefied elite circles, Prince Andrew—a pedophile—is treated with more respect than Prince Harry, a man who fell in love with and married a Black woman, one who has done in my view nothing wrong.

Sarah Kendzior (00:13:45):

He is demonized and Meghan Markle is also demonized. I feel like this all says something alarming about cult mentalities, about racism, about elite criminal impunity and about this willingness of very powerful actors to look the other way when they're confronted with all of this. And the way that Queen Elizabeth would look the other way was masterful as an art of kind of public relations. You know, she did her job. That's what *The Crown* is about, is how she could be more of a symbol than a person. But of course that means you're also shirking some of the moral obligations that you would have as a person responding normally to any kind of situation, like, say, your son is a pedophile hooked up with the world's most infamous trafficker. Most parents would probably react in a stronger way but, you know, people loved Queen Elizabeth.

Sarah Kendzior (00:14:45):

Because she was able to play the role, you know, play the cards that she was dealt so well. They do not love King Charles. I guess we have to call him that now. Americans are being very serious about this, by

the way. It's incredibly weird because I just keep thinking, you know, we fought a war precisely so we don't have to do this and I keep wondering how much of this weird reverence is linked to the stan culture that has developed around American political officials, you know, around Trump, obviously around Biden, also around Mueller and Fauci. It's weird. This is what happens when a country's democratic system has eroded, when people are living in fear and when they are dealing with chaos. They cling to these personality cults and they build them up. But it's hard to have a personality cult around King Charles. I mean, my first thought of King Charles is always gonna be watching TV when I was about, I don't know, eight, and hearing the tampon story, the infamous story about how Charles wanted to be Camilla's tampon.

Sarah Kendzior (00:15:50):

That is always gonna be the first thing I think of when I look at him. The second thing I think of will be, of course, the horrible death of Princess Diana and how he cheated on her and treated her terribly. And I think I'm not really alone here. I think a lot of British folks are on the same page as me; they don't have particular reverence or respect for King Charles. And given that the monarchy is such a retro concept, the fact that they have these billions of dollars—much of it pilfered from other parts of the world through brutal means—maybe it's finally going to come crashing down. Maybe Queen Elizabeth was that glue and there may be a change. I don't know. What do you think, Andrea?

Andrea Chalupa (00:16:30):

Well, you know, any excuse to talk about one of our favorite shows, Sarah, *The Crown* [laughs]. I have a lot of respect for the people of Wales and Scotland and England and Ireland. [laughs]. I didn't say Northern Ireland. Look, I think the times they are a changin'. And I think the Queen is a fascinating person, given that through her strength of character brought a consistency to a time of radical change. And I think that was comforting on a deep psychological level for so many people. And that's why you see this outpouring of grief now. Obviously, Charles doesn't have that charisma. I do appreciate his wonderful activism for the environment. He's always had a passion for that and it's genuine. And I think that will bring a meaningful element for the times that we're in. But I do worry that it's going to be radical because *The Crown* is supposed to know its place or else.

Andrea Chalupa (00:17:44):

What if you have a future king who has fascism as a passion and tries to insert that?

Sarah Kendzior:

Mmmhmm [affirmative]

Andrea Chalupa:

As much as Charles' wonderful climate consciousness is welcomed and sorely needed, there are ways that he could exercise that without creating a slippery slope that would endanger the wonderful separation, as I understand it, exists. I'm not like an expert on this [laughs]. Sarah and I just love having these conversations in general for fun and we're very much team Meghan Markle, through and through. And team Harry. I think all of us, no matter where we are in the world, have to be sensitive to the fact that people are hurting. People are traumatized. The generation of young people that's coming up is going to grow increasingly impatient because they're the ones that have to grow up and exist over this next century when there's going to be massive impacts of climate change and massive destabilization

brought on by that; by the shifting world order, shifting industries, the necessary and inevitable end of oil.

Andrea Chalupa (00:18:51):

It's going to be just a time of constant disruption over the next century and I have a hard time seeing The Crown surviving that. And we'll talk about this in the show in relation to Russia. Russia is seeing a big pushback against its empire and a lot more cultural autonomy of a lot of states that they thought were securely under their thumb. We'll go into that. And I think obviously countries like Wales and Scotland are going to want to reclaim their independence, especially given the exit from the EU. Scotland voted overwhelmingly against that and now they're forced out of the EU against their own will. I think that's going to have a lingering impact in the years ahead. So what we're not only seeing is possibly potential for the end of the Monarchy due to just changing attitudes, due to massive income inequality, due to decolonization, which is a global atonement that is necessary for us to heal. You're having greater consciousness, greater conversations around trauma, generational trauma. You have science playing a role in that and understanding how trauma is carried in our DNA and so on. So I think it's going to be a time of great disruption and I don't see how the Monarchy, the Royal family in the UK survives that. And I don't see how the United Kingdom itself survives that. So those are the two things that we might see in our lifetime, those two big changes.

Sarah Kendzior (00:20:25):

Yeah, it's scary to think about in a way. I mean, not the end of the Monarchy but just sort of the broader effect of the UK because we are seeing pushes for secessionist movements made by very bad faith actors. This is happening within the United States. It's sometimes being exploited within the United Kingdom. There of course was Brexit breaking the United Kingdom from the EU. There are pushes to do this with Ukraine through conquering. So, you know, it's a tumultuous era. I don't know. A lot of this is just... It's hard to process. I've been on the road for like a week, sort of half paying attention to the news, half not paying attention to the news, and I always feel like it's like returning to a soap opera that you follow, but check out of for a couple weeks, and you come back and all of the plot lines are completely insane, but they're insane in this way that's a mix of chaos and inertia.

Sarah Kendzior (00:21:22):

It's like, "The Queen is still dead and we're still watching her funeral" and there are still secret documents with nuclear material information taken from the basement of Mar-a-Lago and the individual who stole them—Trump—is out having rallies to try to boost his stormtroopers into violent action. And there's still an "ongoing investigation". Or is there? We don't know. We don't have any transparency or seemingly integrity within the DOJ. So it's like, you're just revisiting the same plots over and over. It's like watching a slow death. It's some sad shit, man. I don't know. [laughs] But anyway, on that note, there have been some developments in the United States over the last week. I'm not quite sure why this one surprised people, but the Trump-appointed judge, the unqualified Trump-appointed judge Aileen Cannon, ruled on behalf of Donald Trump to appoint a "special master" to review the documents that he stole.

Sarah Kendzior (00:22:33):

Like, I'm sorry. I'm still stuck on this. I'm still stuck on the fact that he committed a major act of espionage and treason, an act which intelligence—former operatives and experts on intelligence—have all acknowledged that this is what it was, one that was portrayed as an incredibly severe offense when it

was first discovered because it is an incredibly severe offense. So the reaction to that was obvious. And people were like, "Well, this has to be it. This is the end. He's going to be indicted for it." And of course he should be indicted for it. But what happens is when there's no action to contain him, when he's in fact going out and planning a presidential run, planning to return, facing no recriminations, not being contained, his backers, his elite power backers, people like Flynn and Manafort and Stone and so forth also facing no repercussions, Kushner facing no repercussions.

Sarah Kendzior(00:23:33):

So of course people are not asking, "Hey, what happened to the documents? What did he do with them? Why did he steal them? Who else saw them? What else did he steal? When did he steal? Was some of it digital? How has it affected international relations? How has it jeopardized US national security? Those are all extremely serious and pertinent questions which our media on the whole has decided to ignore in favor of just legalese blather meant to kind of lull you into a sense that, "Oh, well, there's a way that these things are being done." No. This is treason. The way that things are done is you stop the treason. This is a profound threat to our national security. The way you respond is with urgency or else your country gets destroyed. That is the pattern that we have witnessed over the last six years.

Sarah Kendzior (00:24:22):

It's not hypothetical in the slightest. So, as this played out, all these legal folks on cable news kept telling everybody, you know, Judge Aileen Cannon of course is not gonna allow Trump to get away with this." But that's why she was put in. It's like the famous maxim from Roy Cohn: "I don't need to know what the law is. I only need to know who the judge is." And Trump as president was able to preemptively appoint his own judge and his own jury. And so now another member of this jury—I'm just gonna give a little background, then I'll get some commentary from you, Andrea—is Raymond Dearie. We have yet another member of the geriatric pool surrounding Trump. This is not an ageist comment. I'm gonna explain in a minute why this is important.

Sarah Kendzior (00:25:09):

Raymond Dearie is the special master, a new term that we've gotten introduced to just like the parliamentarian that we suddenly discovered had such amazing power despite never knowing that this position existed. He worked for many decades in the Eastern District of New York as a judge. He then was appointed by Ronald Reagan in 1986 to serve on the federal bench. But I'm very interested in Raymond Dearie's time working in the legal system in Brooklyn because he was around at the exact same time that Trump was building (or taking over his father's) real estate empire and expanding it in tandem with the mafia, with organized crime, first with the Italian American mafia and then making room for mafiosos from what was it that time, the USSR to come in and push the Italians out with the help of prosecutor, Rudy Giuliani, Trump's dear friend, and then fully integrate themselves into New York business culture and kind of merge white-collar crime and organized crime together.

Sarah Kendzior (00:26:21):

Raymond Dearie was who was hanging around, witnessing all of this. I've been trying to get a deeper background on him and honestly, there's not that much. People are kind of writing the same bios over and over. I am curious if he's connected in any way to the Brooklyn DA at the time in the 1970s, Eugene Gold, who I've spoken about in previous episodes because he too was a mafia protector. He went to great lengths to protect the mafia and its activity in New York. A lot of that wasn't revealed until he left the DA post. Why did he leave the da post? Because he's a pedophile who raped the 10 year old, the 10

year old daughter of another prosecutor. That is Eugene Gold, who oversaw the DA, the head of the DA for Brooklyn from 1968 to 1981. That is the type of person who rises to that position of power.

Sarah Kendzior (00:27:15):

Did he go to prison? Of course, not. Of course nothing happened. He got probation, a psychiatric evaluation and he got his Israeli passport revoked because I guess he was maybe planning to flee. So there is so much corruption within the system, particularly in the '70s and '80s, but it really continued obviously to the present day. And this is the world from which Giuliani emerged. It's the world from which Trump emerged. And it's the world from which Raymond Dearie emerged. And I do not take any comfort from the fact that Merrick Garland's DOJ thinks that this guy is a great special master, a great pick. You know, these are the same people who vouched for Bill Barr. They're the same people who were mentored by Jamie Gorelick. You know, these are career cover up operatives for elite offenders. It's all very dangerous. I don't know. I have some... It's not news. I guess, historical anecdote about Dearie, but do you have any thoughts about this special master situation?

Andrea Chalupa (00:28:22):

It's legal warfare. It's the same instrument of legal warfare that the Republicans are so good at wielding. I mean, that's why they set up the Federalist Society, which has packed the courts, which now has all these judges that are protecting Trump. Plus, it gives the lackies inside the DOJ a polished excuse of normalizing what must never be normalized, which is treason, which is the weakening of America's national security to such a crisis level and therefore our allies. And personal profit off of nuclear secrets in a time when we're being threatened by nuclear war. So don't let this legal warfare, the back and forth, fool anybody. I mean, not that it is. What's at the core of all this is a five alarm fire. It's just all this stupid fancy talk, right?

Sarah Kendzior (00:29:28):

Absolutely

Andrea Chalupa (00:29:29):

It's nonsense. Trump should be in handcuffs. Trump should be in prison. Everybody who touched these documents, who moved them around in any way, should be investigated and potentially locked up. There needs to be a full-on crackdown on these criminals. And the fact that there isn't, that the people involved in this are all still wearing dainty gloves and sipping tea through all this legalese nonsense, is part of the crime..

Sarah Kendzior (00:29:55):

Yeah. It's honestly terrifying. And I really try hard not to scare our audience. I know they end up scared anyway, just by the facts that we're relaying, but I try to leave my emotions out of it. You know, obviously some things will terrify me, like when COVID first appeared, that was genuinely very frightening. But on a political level, I am more frightened now by the lack of repercussions for the Mar-a-Lago secret classified documents, the fact that we all know it, that the evidence is online. You know, Trump is freely admitting to it. It's the latest in an endless series of profound national security threats and violations. It's decade number five of Trump committing crimes. And it's the normalcy. It's the feigned ignorance or just the illusion of protocol, the illusion of, "Oh, this is just the way things are."

Sarah Kendzior (00:30:52):



"It's just how we're handling treason these days." That is very terrifying. If you're inspired to participate in our Halloween storytelling contest, write a zombie story, because I don't understand this. I'm just looking at this very clearly. We're going to lose the country unless you act. We really are. We could do all the things that need to be done that we should continue doing anyway; vote, protest, document, speak out. But this is such a power imbalance and there's obviously things that are determining the outcome of this situation that are far beyond what representative democracy can provide. This is obviously an espionage situation. This is very likely a blackmail situation. This is possibly a weapons-oriented arms trading threat of using nuclear weapons—or any kind of weapons, it doesn't have to be nukes—situation.

Sarah Kendzior (00:31:46):

And we're just sort of sitting here, like, I don't know, listening to these people prole on and on. And so whenever I'm in that situation and it's very stressful, you know, I have lots of different hobbies. I like to do embroidery. I like to go hiking. And I like to vet people. I'll go on a vetting spree and I feel so sorry for the people in my life who have to listen to me and be like, "Guess what else I found out?" But, you know, there's something... I don't know if I'd say comforting. I mean, it is comforting to me to know the backstory of something. You see a situation like this. You see people behaving so wildly against common sense and against the collective good and often against their self-interest that you wonder, why? Why are you abandoning your country in this way?

Sarah Kendzior (00:32:31):

Why are you abandoning human existence in this way? This is some strange behavior so I tried to look up stuff on Dearie. Folks also sent me some stuff via Twitter. So thank you if you're one of the people who did that. I just want to highlight how incestuous and long-brewing these networks of politicians in New York City are and the impact that they've had on our national politics. It's very funny to me a lot of the time when I see the Trump phenomenon blamed on the Heartland, because when I think of, you know, where I live in St. Louis, I think of people from New York City people like Carl Icahn, for example, coming to places like where I live in St. Louis and literally stripping us down and selling off for parts. He did that with TWA. Other Wall Street people or sometimes foreigners, you know, oligarchs from abroad, come in and they just buy us up.

Sarah Kendzior (00:33:26):

I mean, this is why I've been worried about this on a national level. And New York City and Wall Street, but also the political legal system of New York City is where a lot of this corruption comes from. So I'm just gonna read an article from the *Washington Post*. This is from January, 1983. And I'm just gonna see how many names you recognize in terms of key people that are active in politics today. So the article is called "Justice ponders charge against Representative Schumer". And then it says, "Justice Department officials are reviewing a US attorney recommendation that the federal government seek an indictment of representative Charles Schumer (D - New York) for allegedly misusing New York state funds to pay the salaries of workers in his 1980 congressional campaign, according to department sources." So that's very interesting. I did not know that Charles Schumer was under investigation by Reagan's justice department, but moving on: "As an alternative to federal prosecution, department sources said officials are considering the possibility of giving the details of the investigation to local authorities."

Sarah Kendzior (00:34:33):

“The use of publicly paid staff and campaigns from congressional to presidential long has been a sensitive political issue and one that law enforcement officials sometimes have ignored. Justice Department sources said that a number of attorneys are watching the Schumer matter for the precedent it may set for the Reagan Justice Department. At issue for some prosecutors is the broader question of the degree to which federal authorities will probe financial and other practices in political campaigns, according to justice officials. During the administration of President Carter in 1978, former representative Frank Clark (D - Pennsylvania) was indicted on federal mail fraud and tax evasion charges for putting people on his congressional staff to do private and campaign work. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to two years in prison.” And here we go. “The question of how to handle the Schumer matter currently is in the hands of associate attorney general Rudolph W. Giuliani. A decision is expected within a week.”

Sarah Kendzior (00:35:34):

“Giuliani declined to comment. Schumer, 32 has been under investigation by the US attorney's office in Brooklyn for more than a year because of allegations that he used his staff on the payroll of the New York State Assembly's Committee on Oversight and Investigation, which he then shared to work in his congressional campaign. Neither Schumer nor his New York attorney, Arthur Lyman, could be reached for comment. Sources say that Raymond J. Dearie,”—This is Trump's special master—“the US attorney for the Eastern District of New York, forwarded a recommendation to seek an indictment of Schumer to Washington for review several weeks ago. This is a normal procedure in sensitive political matters before asking a grand jury to vote an indictment. If the federal case is not approved, one official said the evidence could be turned over to a local prosecutor, perhaps Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau.”—I'm just gonna interrupt here and say Robert Morgenthau is who hired Jared Kushner to be an intern in the New York City legal system—“who would have jurisdiction because Schumer's campaign headquarters is in Manhattan.”

Sarah Kendzior (00:36:42):

And then it uh... My gosh. You know, this just goes on for a while. They reference a *Village Voice* story in 1980 called “Chuck Schumer's staff scandal” which is supposed to explain this in detail. I haven't been able to locate this story. If anyone's found it, please send it to me. I'm wondering if it's one of Wayne Barrett's. Anyway, what a cesspool, right? I mean, it's just the same people over and over again. It's Chuck Schumer, age 32, almost getting federally indicted by Reagan, by the special master currently Raymond Dearie, by Giuliani, you know, Trump's little pet who's involved in many, many crimes of his own. I just keep thinking all these folks at the DOJ saying, “Raymond Dearie must be so objective.” How? I mean, this is just one article. He's already tied to Giuliani, who is very much wrapped up in Trump's international intrigue espionage stories, particularly with Russia and with Ukraine. He was nearly involved—I guess it fell through—in the federal indictment of Schumer.

Sarah Kendzior (00:37:51):

I mean, how would things have turned out differently if Schumer had been indicted? I wonder how the Senate would be run today. Yeah. So anyway, fascinating report there. One of the few things that I've really found about Dearie, and you just kind of wonder, like, there's this principle within Trump's world where, yes, they may have dirt on Trump, but Trump has dirt on everybody because he's connected to all of these people. You know, he is someone who donated to Schumer. He's someone who is very close to Rudy Giuliani. That's a very long standing relationship. Schumer is very close—or knew at least, was close with to some degree—Roy Cohn, would go to Roy Cohn's birthday parties at Studio 54. Roy Cohn, of course, was Trump's mentor and also a mafia lawyer. This is just a mess.

Sarah Kendzior (00:38:40):

And this is just what I found from the early '80s. I'm gonna keep looking around. I do not have any faith that this is an impartial actor. I think this person has been installed to protect not just Trump, but the broader institutional rot. These recurring characters. That's why I referenced the age. That's why I referenced the fact that this guy is 78 years old. Not because it's bad to be 78 years old inherently. I mean, often that's a wonderful thing. It's a sign of accumulated wisdom. But it's because that means you've been in the crime network, even if you're not an active criminal yourself, for a very long time. It means people have decades of information on you. It means you have long established relationships with very bad people. That's why the ages of all these individuals—Manafort, Stone, Giuliani, Trump, Dershowitz, etc.—that's why they're so crucial.

Sarah Kendzior (00:39:31):

It's also crucial to look at who is going to replace them. We see that with these young unqualified judges, the Aileen Cannon's and the Brett Kavanaugh's and so forth. We see it in the sheer nepotism that's happening with Jared and Ivanka, with Bill Barr's children, both of whom to my knowledge are still working within the White House, including, believe, at the Treasury. And the children of many other corrupt politicians. They're there just like in any autocracy—or kleptocracy in particular—because they can keep secrets. They'll keep the circle of insularity going. They're not gonna talk about insider trading. They're not gonna talk about illicit financial relationships. And they're definitely not going to dredge up the past in the way that I just did by digging through these old articles, which of course are paywalled for most people. I had to pay to read this thing.

Sarah Kendzior (00:40:23):

So a lot of this information goes unnoticed, but it is always worth getting the backstory, particularly with this group of people. You will find answers to our present day crises, especially the crisis of why is no one doing anything? If you look into the past, you're also going to find things that, you know, it's like looking at a Hieronymus Bosch painting on CSpan. That's what it feels like to me to delve into this mixture of bureaucracy and just pure cold Luciferian evil, but it still provides the answers you need, so I recommend it. Speaking of evil, do you have comments to that or should we give the Russia update?

Andrea Chalupa (00:41:04):

Yeah, well there's a lot going on with Russia, so let's move on to that. Are you ready?

Sarah Kendzior:

[laughs] I'm ready.

Andrea Chalupa:

Are you ready?!

Sarah Kendzior (00:41:11):

I'm ready for the news because I've only been listening to blowhards prattling about how justice is coming so I have no idea what's actually going on in the world. So please, break through.

Andrea Chalupa (00:41:21):

Yeah. So, there is some justice. In recent weeks, Ukraine has been announcing to the whole world and putting out all sorts of really funny videos, trolling Russia, saying "We're coming for you. We're coming specifically for an area in Southern Ukraine called Kherson, the region of Kherson." And there's a big city there called Kherson. And it's one of the first areas that Russia grabbed in its full scale invasion starting from February. And so why would Ukraine keep announcing, "We're going there. We're gonna get you there. We're coming for you." What is the point of that? Well, what the idiots in the Russian military then did was, this was basically a trap that Ukraine set. They were baiting Russia and Russia fell for it because they're one of the worst militaries in all of human history, as we're about to see.

Andrea Chalupa (00:42:15):

So Russia takes the bait, moves their elite, the best that they have, their only hope. They move the best forces they have over to Kherson to defend it. And as Ukraine is getting ready to chip away and putting all of their focus on Kherson, the Ukrainians then unleashed a blitzkrieg in a different direction, going into a different region to the East called Kharkiv, which is a very important region as well. And they start picking off the Russians in this rapid advance, shocking the Russians, sending Russians fleeing for their lives back across the border and just causing all sorts of chaos and self destruction across the Russian military in that region. And it was just a shock for the whole entire world because no one saw this coming and the Ukrainians were extremely skilled at this whole bait and switch operation.

Andrea Chalupa (00:43:13):

So long story short, the Ukrainians advanced in two significant directions, including this massive push in the East, and that advancement continues as we speak. The Russians are on the run. Unfortunately, as has been playing out in all other areas where Ukrainians have liberated formerly Russian-occupied areas, what comes now after the victory: the gut wrenching, heartbreaking inevitable discovery of mass graves, which, unfortunately, these mass graves are extremely important investigation sites for the war crimes, the genocide that Russia's carrying out. Several of the bodies and uncovered from these mass graves show signs of torture, signs of violent death. There are witnesses, survivors who are now important witnesses in these investigations describing torture. It's all very Stalinistic. It's all very KGB, very Soviet, because that is what Russia's trying to cling to. They're trying to cling to the Russian empire during the Soviet days,

Andrea Chalupa (00:44:25):

There have even been Soviet flags that have been uncovered in some of these areas that have been brought down. What is Russia's reaction to not only losing in Ukraine, but losing badly? Well, out of desperation, Russia is now scrambling to call these fake referendums like they did in Crimea. Crimea was a referendum by gunpoint. Crimea was annexed by soldiers. People were tortured. People disappeared, people were kidnapped and taken to Russia as political prisoners. It was not a referendum, even though so many in the Western press fell for it and used this gaslighting, Kremlin propaganda language, calling it a referendum. It was an invasion, an annexation plain and simple. And so now Russia is desperately trying to hold referendums in the areas currently occupied in Ukraine, even though it makes no sense to do this because the Ukrainian military is on the march and is going to continue to chip away at liberating these areas.

Andrea Chalupa (00:45:27):

It's almost like holding a referendum in Kyiv. You know what I mean? It's like, yeah, you can say you did it, but it's absolutely meaningless and those areas are going to be liberated along with Crimea. I have to

point out it's extremely important that Ukraine liberates *all* of its land, every single inch of its land, including Donbas, the Eastern edge of Ukraine, and Crimea, the Black Sea peninsula. Why is it so important? Well, because now is the time. The Ukrainian military is warmed up. The Ukrainian military is armed. The Ukrainian military is trained. They have to now complete the job. If they do not complete the job by liberating every single inch of their territory, then the Russian military is going to use these occupied areas in Donbas and Crimea to regroup and relaunch a genocidal invasion 10 years from now. Russia needs time.

Andrea Chalupa (00:46:19):

Russia needs to buy time. Russia's losing horribly. What's happening right now with Russia is considered already one of the worst military disasters in modern history. Russia is putting itself through the humiliation and the impressive speed and strategy of Ukraine's military. These are events unfolding now that are gonna be studied generations from now by military historians. It's extremely spectacular what's happening. All of us that were watching these events unfold that were completely caught off guard by this surprise advance were just like witnessing history in the making. It was just shocking, just village after village, city after city with the Ukrainian flag going up, mothers hugging their Ukrainian soldier sons who have come to liberate the area. You know, people just greeting the Ukrainian soldiers with flowers. You hear in these liberation videos a mix of Ukrainian and Russian being spoken among fellow citizens, people just crying, old people crying and hugging and kissing these soldiers and the soldiers saying, "Okay, we gotta move on."

Andrea Chalupa (00:47:25):

"No, we're not gonna drink vodka with you. We gotta keep going. We've got a job to do." So it was a very uplifting time and it just points to more danger on the way for Russia. What's happening now is that there's now talk of a serious effort to mobilize troops, to do a mass mobilization in Russia, something that Putin cannot afford to do politically because right now the Russian population, especially in St. Petersburg and Moscow, they're content to just club the night away, you know, just dance the night away, go to bars and just live their lives as long as this genocidal war doesn't affect them directly. They had a bit of a panic when Ikea and other big stores left and they did a big run on the Ikea stores to make sure that they were stocked up. Other than that, they're basically trying to acclimate as much as they can to the horror show of sanctions, on top of a pandemic, on top of a global inflation and so on.

Andrea Chalupa (00:48:17):

But if the war starts coming to them in terms of European visa bans to Western European countries, or they're forced to go be cannon fodder for the Kremlin, that changes things. That starts to really alienate Putin and his court of oligarchs. We are already seeing elected officials in St. Petersburg and Moscow risking jail time by speaking out saying that Putin is outdated and that Putin is out of touch, that his war is useless. You're already seeing a lot of frustration on Kremlin TV. You're seeing a lot of people pushing back on Kremlin TV saying, "We're losing. We're losing. Maybe Ukrainians don't like to be told that they don't exist or don't matter as a country. Maybe Ukrainians don't like a genocide. We've gotta really rethink things." You even have the biggest, most respected pop singer in Russia speaking out against the war.

Andrea Chalupa (00:49:11):

And now on top of that, to add a mobilization where people are forced to fight or they're thrown in jail, or their families are thrown in jail, that's going to be a powder keg moment to an already destabilized

moment for Putin. So Putin's done. The best thing Putin can do right now is try to orchestrate an exit, try to find a country that will let him basically live out the rest of his life in peace somewhere in his stolen fortune. That's the best chance Putin has right now, because there's no other way to survive this. One of the reasons why so many people didn't see this total war invasion coming, even though US intelligence was saying, "No, no, no, they're going for it." The reason why so many, including in Ukraine, including a lot of military experts in Ukraine, a lot of Ukrainians were like, "What is the US going on about?"

Andrea Chalupa (00:50:02):

"There's no way Russia's gonna launch a full scale invasion." The reason why that seemed so preposterous is because of what we're seeing play out now. It's sort of like, Wait, you're telling us, Putin is winning, Putin has the world in the palm of his hands, Putin has bought off everybody he needs to have bought off, he's had 20 years of spy craft where he's increased Russia's corrupt influence around the world where, you know, he's still going to the Olympics, his oligarchs are owning all these football clubs, oligarchs are getting their names on universities and cultural institutions and all these fancy Western capitals, he owns all of these Western politicians, he's got the Republican Party, he brought a president, Donald Trump, to power... You're telling us that Putin is going to throw all of that away and become a pitiful global pariah to take a massive gamble on a war he could absolutely not win?

Andrea Chalupa (00:50:59):

You're saying that Putin's gonna throw all that away and basically be a Napoleon at Waterloo? That's not gonna happen. I remember talking to a Russian friend and saying, "What do you think's gonna happen? Do you think the US intelligence is right?" And my Russian friend, who's active with the Russian resistance, was like, "No, there's no way Putin's gonna unleash total war because that would be the end of Putin." So what we're watching right now play out is the end of Putin. It's going to be painful. It's going to be scary. He's never been more dangerous. And the big Trump card—and yes, I mean that very literally—the big Trump card that Putin has to play is us, is the American public, is the British public, is the French public, the German public, the Canadian public.

Andrea Chalupa (00:51:41):

It's all of these Western democracies that tend to sort of work together to send united support, sanctions and all these things. We just had this report coming out of the *New York Times* that the Kremlin has spent \$300 million in buying influence and funneling money through think tanks, through all sorts of institutions, buying politicians all over the world to spread its corruption. This *New York Times* report is all part of this State Department cable that went out to embassies around the world. And it's all part of this larger attack on democracies around the world, on elections around the world, including bringing Trump to power and the Republicans to power in 2016. So that larger Kremlin operation is still something that we're very vulnerable to. This report outta the *New York Times* from the State Department was saying that the Kremlin is committed to spending hundreds of millions of more dollars in doing these influence campaigns.

Andrea Chalupa (00:52:41):

That's their hope is if they could buy off the White House, if they can install their guy back into the White House, if they can get the Republican Party back in power in Congress, and they can do that to all of these far-right groups, if they can further inflame far-right movements around the world, that would weaken democracies from within. What does that do? That erodes meaningful support to Ukraine, which is allowing Ukraine to win this war. That would erode any accountability for the Kremlin. And that would

allow Putin to make a comeback. Is it possible for Putin to make a comeback? Yes, absolutely, because people are greedy and people are very easy to buy off. Greed is a hell of a drug. We're seeing that now with Trump walking around free and doing rallies, continuing his big operation, right? That's allowed to happen because enough people have been bought off, enough people see a personal financial benefit to being part of that operation in some way, shape or form. Putin's been isolated before. When Obama was president, there are these funny videos of Putin being forced to eat his lunch alone at the high school cafeteria of some big global conference. So we're seeing those videos emerge again under Biden where Putin looks very awkward, standing there being forced to wait like a sucker for some world leader to come meet with him, and he's just standing there looking awkward.

Sarah Kendzior (00:53:59):

I just have to point this out. He had to meet the leader of Kyrgyzstan, which was very symbolic because that of course was a colonized nation that they hold an incredible disdain for, a very small central Asian country, and Putin had to sit around and he was the lower ranked individual in that exchange as well.

Andrea Chalupa (00:54:18):

Yeah. So all the countries that historically Russia treats like little bitches, like colonies, they're now treating Putin like a little bitch and there's video [laughs].

Sarah Kendzior:

Mmmhmm [affirmative]

Andrea Chalupa:

And so you see Putin wandering aimlessly in these conferences alone and these other world leaders suddenly pretending to fall in a conversation with each other to avoid him. The level of humiliation is just off the charts. And in Russia, the way the psychology works in Russia is they need a strong leader. They want a strong, tough guy leader. When you had Navalny's documentary come out, called *Putin's Palace*, the reaction of many Russians was like, "Oh, that's badass that our czar lives in some big sprawling mansion and has all that wealth and power." Well, now Putin looks impotent. Putin looks scared. Putin looks sad. Russians don't like sad Putin. The KGB dictatorship that rules Russia, you know, this is a big blow to these guys.

Andrea Chalupa (00:55:15):

And so that's why you're seeing a lot of these deaths, these mysterious murders of all these Gazprom executives and all of these executives across the board, because the going is good now. You've got these turf wars that are coming up because the strong man is now weak. There's no central cop to hold things together. And so people are grabbing. People are going for what they want and they don't see Putin as a barrier to that anymore. That's happening not only internally across Russia with these mysterious deaths, but it's also happening in the region. So in Russia's neighborhood, you have Russia's answer to NATO, which is an organization called—some super catchy title—the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)—that's Russia's answer to NATO. It's six post-Soviet countries; Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. Well, you know, some of these countries are at war with each other now. Armenia is under attack from Azerbaijan over a disputed area. Let's see, what else?

Sarah Kendzior (00:56:19):

Tajikistan attacking Kyrgyzstan.

Andrea Chalupa (00:56:21):

Yeah. Another border dispute. Guess who is coming in to meet with Armenia and Azerbaijan? Normally, it would be Russia. Normally Russia would be brokering this peace deal. It's their coalition of countries. It's their backyard. They feel this historical colonial ownership of this area, but guess who's been brought in to talk peace because the situation's becoming increasingly desperate? Our own secretary of state, Antony Blinken, was called in to try to broker some peace deal because Russia can't keep its shit together anymore with this organization. It's completely spread thin and these other countries are responding to the Russian vacuum, the Russian decline of Imperial power, by going loose basically. People are wilding out. That's what happens when you have the decline of empire. When you remove that structure, when that structure weakens, it's a big Pandora's box of issues now and it's destabilizing. That's what's playing out now.

Andrea Chalupa (00:57:18):

As part of that big push, you have decolonization efforts. You have leaders of some of these countries speaking their own native languages other than Russian and pushing back against Russian. You have videos of Russian tourists in places like Kazakhstan getting harassed for having the Z symbol supporting the fascist invasion of Ukraine. So, Russia's losing. Russia's losing across the board. On top of that, Russia has been pulling out its shitty troops from Syria so they would fight in Ukraine. And so their little pet Assad is vulnerable now. And Iran is trying to come in and fill that void. Well, what's happening in response to Iran filling up that Russian void in Syria? You now have Israel regularly bombing Syria, taking advantage of the Russian vacuum, the Russian retreat. And so the whole point is that no one believed that Putin would be so stupid to do what he did because it's self destruction.

Andrea Chalupa (00:58:10):

And that self destruction is playing out across the board. The Russian empire is receding. The Russian empire is self-destructing. And this whole idea of now they're gonna mobilize troops, they're gonna force more Russian citizens, the poor of the poor, the colonies inside the Federation of Russia, they're gonna force these poor kids to be cannon fodder for their war. They're forcing prisoners to go die this horrific death. Imagine prisoners being forced into an army to go fight a genocidal war. What do you think those prisoners are gonna do once they get there? They're gonna be shooting their commanders. They're gonna be shooting the other soldiers. They're gonna be stealing from each other. We're already seeing turf wars among the different factions of the Russian military of these Russian forces fighting each other over the loot. They're stealing from the Ukrainian people over the washing machines they're famously stealing from the Ukrainian people as they're carrying out these war crimes.

Andrea Chalupa (00:59:03):

It's this *Mad Max* wasteland and when you have a situation like that, it just signals self destruction and a ticking time bomb. On top of all that, Russia still suffers from massive logistics issues. Russia suffers from outdated equipment. Russia suffers from sanctions designed to bite into its big war machine, so they can't rebuild all the equipment that they need. They lack all of the stuff they need to have this well oiled, functioning, military industrial strength because of the sanctions. So they can't replenish. You have massive corruption. Simply put, Russia is being hit with several crises and it's attempting quick fixes that will inevitably fail. Essentially Russia as we know it, the days are numbered. It's going to be very painful in the years ahead.



Andrea Chalupa (00:59:59):

And the best way to ensure that Putin is either forced into exile or that Putin gets a trip out of a three story window... I don't know, basically, to hurry it up and put Putin's dictatorship out of its misery, there needs to continue to be full scale support for Ukraine. The US support, especially with long range missiles that Ukraine is using brilliantly to destroy the Russian war machine, all of that needs to continue. Russia needs it to stop. So what you're going to see is massive disinformation and it's going to be the usual broken record that Russia likes to use against Ukraine. You're going to see, "Ah, the Ukraine Nazi" bullshit. Listen, if we woke up tomorrow morning with Ukraine's far right problem instead of America's far right problem, we would all sleep at night like babies. Every country on this earth, including the utopia of New Zealand that all the billionaires are trying to buy citizenship to, all the countries on earth, including the Nordic nations, the socialist democracy paradises like the Nordic nations, every single country on earth has a far right problem. They're everywhere. It's a virus. It's everywhere. Ukraine is no exception. Yeah, of course. They're there. They are everywhere. It's about orders of magnitude. America has the crisis. Ukraine does not have a far right crisis, America has a far right crisis. Any of us would switch the far right problem with Ukraine any day and we'd all have a much more stable and healthy place to live. If you ever see those stupid videos pop up, the "oh, look at these Nazis in Ukraine", a lot of them are obviously photoshopped or they're blatant lies. A good expert to lean on to find out what's real and what's not is an expert who has been on the whole far-right Europe case long before it became, unfortunately, a fashionable area to research.

Andrea Chalupa (01:01:56):

He was there since the beginning. His name is Anton Shekhovtsov. He's the Director of the Center for Democratic Integrity and the author of *Russia and the Western Far Right*. He's a wonderful person to follow on Twitter. We'll be adding a link to his Twitter profile in the show notes for this week's episode. God bless him because any time some idiot on the far left or the far right posts some Ukraine Nazi video that's clearly bullshit, he'll pop into the comments and be like, "actually, I'm here to fact check this. It's not. You're making shit up." You know? So he's a wonderful expert to follow during this time because Russia really, they have disinformation. That's what they have. It's cheap and it's unfortunately effective. You're also gonna see corruption stories coming out of Ukraine. No shit. Ukraine is a country that's struggling to come out of Kremlin corruption, just like America is speeding towards Kremlin corruption.

Andrea Chalupa (01:02:51):

There's inevitably gonna be corruption there. It's a country that's fighting for survival right now. Of course you're gonna have pirates in that mix. But overall Ukraine's institutions are strong all things considered. And the military as we've seen is making history. So all the money that nations around the world are investing in Ukraine, we're getting a massive return on investment and that's all of us together making that history, given the support we're giving the country. The Kremlin is even saying that monkeypox came out of Ukraine. That's how off the wall things are going to get in the disinformation space on Twitter, on all the places we like to hang out. So keep an eye out for that. Be vigilant, amplify credible experts, and remind people, why are we supporting Ukraine? Because Ukraine is fighting for all of us.

Andrea Chalupa (01:03:42):

And because for far too long, countries around the world allowed Russian fascism and corruption to flourish and spread and go unchecked, and we've paid the price for it. We paid the price for it with Trump, right? We paid the price for it with the refugee crisis outta Syria. We're paying the price for it

with the refugee crisis out of Venezuela, those poor vulnerable people that are now being abused by governors DeSantis and Abbott in Texas. Who's propping up Venezuela? Russia. Russia is propping up the failed state, the dictatorship in Venezuela and those poor people now are being used in this horrific stunt. They're being trafficked by wannabe Kremlin autocrats in Florida and Texas. So remember, Ukraine's war is a global war. It's a fight of freedom and democracy versus fascism and all of us need to do our part by being vigilant and being aware because Russia has had comebacks before. Bringing Trump to power in 2016 after Putin was isolated under President Obama, that was a comeback. It could happen again.

[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:

Pakistan has been decimated by record floods and people need help. To help the victims of the floods, donate to Pakistan Emergency Flood Aid at [https://www.launchgood.com/campaign/pakistan\\_emergency\\_flood\\_aid#!/](https://www.launchgood.com/campaign/pakistan_emergency_flood_aid#!/). Climate and economic crises are everywhere so please consider supporting your local food bank as well.

Andrea Chalupa:

We encourage you to help support Ukraine by donating to Razom for Ukraine a [razomforukraine.org](http://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](http://rescue.org). And if you wanna help critically endangered orangutans already under pressure from the palm oil industry, donate to the Orangutan Project at [theorangutanproject.org](http://theorangutanproject.org).

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