

Gaslit Nation Transcript

18 January 2023

"The Real Story of the Biden Documents

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/real-story-of-77386532>

[intro theme music]

Sarah Kendzior (00:10):

I'm Sarah Kendzior, the author of the bestsellers, *The View from Flyover Country* and *Hiding in Plain Sight* and of the book, *They Knew: How a Culture of Conspiracy Keeps America Complacent*.

Andrea Chalupa (00:22):

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—the film the Kremlin literally does not want you to see, so be sure to watch it.

Sarah Kendzior (00:00:36):

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

Andrea Chalupa (00:00:44):

So, Sarah and I are going to have a suspenseful live taping of *Gaslit Nation* on which is next Tuesday. It's coming up, Sarah.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yes, mmhmm. <affirmative>

Andrea Chalupa:

Dun, dun, duuuun. [laughs]

Sarah Kendzior (00:00:55):

Suspenseful is a euphemism for chaotic but entertaining.

Andrea Chalupa.

Yes.

Sarah Kendzior:

Chaotic in good way.

Andrea Chalupa (00:01:02):

So that's going to be Tuesday, January 24 at noon Eastern. That's when we typically record. And I wanna put this out there, Sarah: Over the history of our show—we've been around for five years now, knock on wood—I always throw stuff at her like in the middle of recording [laughs]. So my proposal is this, that you and I get on early as we normally do, like 11:45 AM, and figure out what we're gonna talk about. And any of the early birds who wanna watch the show can witness that, see what it's like, how Sarah and I just throw stuff at the wall, throw stuff at each other, and then punch the record button and just go for it.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yes.

Andrea Chalupa:

Every recording of *Gaslit Nation* is like that moment in *Thelma and Louise* where they just gun it.

Sarah Kendzior (00:01:47):

Yeah, it's the eternal cliff. It's the Cliff GIF just playing on a loop. Alright, so yes. If you wanna witness that [laughs]—

Andrea Chalupa (00:01:54):

And then there's more. Okay, then we're gonna hit the record button whether we're ready or not at noon sharp, right? Because people have things to do. And we're gonna record. And then when we're done... We're normally done with either Sarah says something that really hits home, or I do. It's just something that just comes up organically. And then once we get that moment... We call it the money shot. No, we don't. [laughs]

Sarah Kendzior (00:02:17):

You're literally making this up but okay, go on.

Andrea Chalupa (00:02:20):

THEN, once we're done, then we'll do a Q&A—a live Q&A—so the event will go from noon to 1:30 Eastern. We'll stick around and answer questions as long as folks have questions, but for those early birds who wanna see that awkward moment where Sarah and I fumble through like a “what do you, what do you got?”, you know, that sort of thing, that will start at 11:45 AM. Now, to get tickets to this, it's going to be for our supporters who keep the show running so we can, you know, have everything we need, the resources to keep our team together and chug along and fight the good fight, is for the Democracy Defender level and higher folks on Patreon. So you can get a ticket to this live taping by supporting the show on our Patreon.

Andrea Chalupa (00:03:04):

And you can just visit [patreon.com/gaslit](https://patreon.com/gaslit). [patreon.com/gaslit](https://patreon.com/gaslit) to sign up at the Democracy Defender level or higher and shortly before we open up the Zoom room—Sarah and I will be joining you all at this exact same moment—we'll put out to our Democracy Defender level and higher folks the Zoom information shortly before we record on the morning of Tuesday, January 24. So you can sign up for that at [patreon.com/gaslit](https://patreon.com/gaslit). [patreon.com/gaslit](https://patreon.com/gaslit). And wish us all luck. It's going to be, like I said, suspenseful, not for you, but for us [laughs]. And we're gonna get through it together.

Sarah Kendzior (00:03:51):

Yes. All right. Well, we have a lot to talk about today. The main subject I'm going to get into is the special counsel—the second special counsel—appointed to investigate Joe Biden. So we have dueling special counsels. We have been criticizing this DOJ for a very long time. You can go back to, I think, February, 2021 and March 2021 to find, you know, our first exposés into Merrick Garland and his corruption and his background. We did so many of them that we combined them into a montage show. Anyway, so... We've reached a kind of apex with this, and I think a lot of folks are confused and worried about what's going on. There are many reasons for that, and I'm gonna just get into them now. So, first, a timeline of what has happened with Joe Biden and these classified documents.

Sarah Kendzior(00:04:51):

On December 20th, Biden's personal attorneys inspected the garage at Biden's home in Delaware and identified what they said was a small number of potential classified records. They told the DOJ and Biden's team turned over the documents to them. On January 9th, Biden's team announced that even more documents were found at the Penn Biden Center, which is a think tank in Washington, dc. On the 12th, Biden's team announced that even more documents were found back in his Delaware garage and on that day, Merrick Garland appointed a special counsel, Robert Hur, to investigate Biden. Later, Andrea will tell you a bit about him. And then on the 14th of January, the White House announced that five more pages of the documents were found. So what is going on here? Well, the most important thing to know is that this is not about Trump or Biden. This is about the DOJ and their unwillingness to confront elite criminal impunity.

Sarah Kendzior (00:06:00):

This is about the DOJ's willingness to abet elite criminal impunity because they are complicit as an institution. And it is through their assistance that a crisis of national security and sovereignty has been allowed to fester for a long time. This is just the latest chapter in an ongoing disaster book. The second thing to know: Merrick Garland does not want to hold Trump accountable for anything. The Mar-a-Lago raid, which you may remember, Trump announced in advance. He hinted at it on his social media account. He posted August 8th with this sort of dire picture and then he was the one who afterwards was providing the most information about what happened. The Mar-a-Lago raid tested the limitations of the public and the ability of DOJ propagandists to make excuses of Garland. This crime was so over and so egregious that it reminded everyone of the vast number of literal foreign agents in Trump's fear—

Sarah Kendzior (00:07:09):

People like Manafort and Tom Barrack and Michael Flynn—as well as central figures like Jared Kushner, who were accused credibly of selling state secrets. They were reminded that Merrick Garland had been in his position as Attorney General and had done absolutely nothing about any of these ongoing national security threats, and had indicted no one, much as he failed to indict any of the organizers of the January 6th attack, an attempted coup. And that group of people overlaps very much with the group of foreign agents and foreign assets who I just named. So this is a very damning moment for the DOJ when, true to form, they failed to act. The third thing to know—we've gone over this many times on *Gaslit Nation* and it's also documented in my book, *Hiding in Plain Sight*—the FBI, Trump and transnational criminal organizations have been in a mutually beneficial relationship that spans over 40 years.

Sarah Kendzior (00:08:14):

At this point, Donald Trump likely has more leverage over the US government than they do over him. He knows what crimes the US government has carried out because he or people in his orbit—lifetime friends like Roger Stone or mafia associates like Felix Sater, for example—were involved in them or were witnesses to them. As we've noted, former heads of the FBI went on to work for the Russian mafia

directly after they left office. Two prominent examples of this are William Sessions and Louis Freeh, although we also saw actions from people like James Comey, who took the head of the Russian, Semion Mogilevich, off of the most wanted list. And, of course, we saw how Mueller failed to investigate or prosecute any of these individuals when he was heading the FBI. And this is information that is no longer really covered in the media and tends to not really be widely known.

Sarah Kendzior (00:09:14):

Most people know about the dark side of the FBI when it comes to domestic abuses of power—things like COINTELPRO, other attacks on civil rights, trying to get Martin Luther King to kill himself, attacks on privacy, surveillance of private citizens—but they do not know the extent to which the FBI has been embedded with organized crime, in particular, the Meyer Lansky syndicate, to which Trump and his operation appear to be an heir. You can trace that lineage back through Roy Cohn and others. You should note that J. Edgar Hoover, during his time in office, did not want to even admit that the mafia existed. So this has been a problem of American political culture for a very long time. Okay, the fourth point: Merrick Garland, who was trained by corrupt operative Jamie Gorelick, and we've gone over her record many times; this sort of modern day Roy Cohn who I guess most pertinent to this point was Jared Kushner's "ethics lawyer" and got him into the White House where he was able to access national security secrets.

Sarah Kendzior (00:10:27):

Merrick Garland has been searching for a pretext to not indict Trump for the entire time he has been attorney general. Garland was appointed by Biden precisely because he would not indict Trump, given his connections to Gorelick and the fact that they overlap so much with the Trump circle. It's notable that Garland was suggested by Mitch McConnell back in 2017. He was praised by Joseph DiGenova, another Trump attorney and he was also somebody vouched for by Alan Dershowitz. And then of course by Gorelick, you know, who was this lifelong friend, mentor, person who appointed him to the Clinton administration, and she herself is a protégé of [Dershowitz] so he is part of this circle. The problem that Mayor Garland has had is it's very difficult to come up with a reason why Donald Trump should not be indicted, considering he's been committing a litany of crimes and confessing to them for about half a century.

Sarah Kendzior (00:11:31):

So the DOJ propaganda team came up with QAnon-type platitudes about secret plans and secret saviors and the need for endless patients. They also deployed a Merrick Garland propaganda template in the mainstream media. This is a template that they've been using since 2010 when operatives were first trying to install Garland into a position of high power. Among those they considered for him was head of the FBI and also Supreme Court. They tried that one again in 2015. Months ago, I wrote on Twitter that I can tell you what will be in any Merrick Garland article before it's published because it has these three qualities: It has quotes from Jamie Gorelick, who shapes the coverage; it has a false portrayal of Merrick Garland as someone deeply involved in prosecuting Timothy McVeigh—he was not actually involved in this.

Sarah Kendzior (00:12:28):

This is a lie. The actual prosecutor of the case was Joseph Hartzler; and you will see things like the use of the word "cautious" as a euphemism for cowardly, which is what he is—cowardly and complicit. These puff pieces emerge whenever the public starts to see that complicity clearly. For example, when people were starting to get upset about the lack of action over the Mar-a-Lago documents, *The Atlantic* dropped a puff piece on Merrick Garland with all of these qualities. And this week *Politico* dropped one because of course people are concerned about both of the special councils. And they follow the template. They're

as interchangeable as Garland's bot brained cheerleaders, and you should really be concerned about the pervasiveness of these lies and the collusion between the state and the media in spreading them.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah.

Sarah Kendzior (00:13:23):

So anyway, that's a side note. I'm gonna get back to the Biden documents. We have seen over the years, how the media tries to both-sides every issue as a way of playing down the severity of threats; in this case, the threat that Trump and his crime cult pose. They do this to relieve themselves of their own complicity because they have long treated a mafia authoritarian threat as entertainment using Trump for their own greedy purposes or arrogantly asserting that he would be caught. They do not want to look at the decades-long interconnected networks that birthed this crisis; networks that initially coalesced around Iran-Contra in the late 1980s which is why you see so many players from around that time—most notably Bill Barr. The emergence of national security files held seemingly illegally by Biden allows the media to create a both-sides narrative, much as they did with Hillary Clinton's emails in 2016.

Sarah Kendzior (00:14:28):

But perversely, it also allows the DOJ to attempt to do this, and that is the end game here. That is why Garland jumped to appoint a special counsel to investigate Biden while refusing to investigate Trump for two years, and then belatedly appointing a special counsel to investigate two of Trump's major crimes; the theft of classified documents and the insurrection—which is ongoing and now has been exported to Brazil—that Garland should have looked at himself. Alright, so then let's talk about the future here. What comes next? There are two possibilities. One is that the DOJ decides to drop both the Biden and the Trump document cases. This is the one that I think Garland is shooting for here. First, I want to note that these cases are not remotely equivalent despite the both-sidesing in the media. Biden and his team turned over the documents promptly.

Sarah Kendzior (00:15:35):

And while I do not like Joe Biden, he is not a career mafioso who launched a coup against his own country, surrounded himself with foreign agents, and is still surrounded by people who illegally sell or trade US intelligence. He's simply not a threat in the same way. The Trump situation is far more dangerous. The biggest way in which Biden is a threat right now, at least in terms of politics, is that he does not want to prosecute Trump. He does not want to prosecute Trump and does not want Garland to prosecute Trump, both because he's scared of Trump's transnational mafia network but also because there is overlap between Trump's mafia network and his own corrupt network within the Democratic Party. Jamie Gorelick is the most relevant example, but there are plenty more. The Democratic Party is deeply corrupt and its leaders are funded by the same oligarchs and oligarch proxies who are funding the GOP.

Sarah Kendzior (00:16:40):

Everyone's freaking out right now about George Santos being funded by the oligarch, Veckselberg, and by his proxy Andrew Intrater, but another proxy, Len Blavatnik, has been funding Pelosi, the DCCC, and also Republicans like Kevin McCarthy for about a decade, so that oligarch money has been rolling in, that mafia money has been rolling in, to both parties. And they do not want any of this to come to the attention of the American public. They want a very narrow version of this story to be told; one that benefits their fundraising and cloaks their complicity. But we know what they've done. And so that's one

possibility; that both cases get dropped. The other possibility—and I think this is likely regardless whether Garland drops the cases—is that this document alleged theft will be used to launch impeachment hearings against Biden by the House GOP.

Sarah Kendzior (00:17:43):

We knew that these impeachment hearings were going to happen from the moment that the GOP took the House; it was only a matter of what charge the GOP would come up with and whether that charge would have any basis in reality. It turns out this one does. There is there there, however [laughs], there's some things that kinda make you raise your eyebrows. The timing of when they found these documents—shortly after the GOP took the House—is enormously convenient, especially considering that the documents have been apparently lying around in Biden's residence and in this think tank since he was the vice president under Obama. So that's interesting. And so, you know, here's a scenario that I'm worried about: Most people assume the GOP is going to impeach Biden on something—probably this, maybe something else—and then afterwards the Senate will not convict because the Senate is majority Democrats and you need a 2/3 vote. So, a very similar situation to what happened with Trump. What I'm worried about is that Joe Biden is gonna pull a Nixon and that if impeachment is even raised as a prospect, or if he is impeached and not convicted, he will decide to step down for the sake of unity or peace, or moving forward, or some sort of other bullshit pretext. In reality, the reason Biden would step down is so the mafia backers who run Trump can get back in; maybe through Trump, maybe through elevating Kevin McCarthy, maybe through someone else, but they do not want any kind of break in their power and in their plan because the ultimate goal of this operation is to strip the United States down and sell it off for parts.

Sarah Kendzior (00:19:36):

They do not care if the United States exists and they don't care if the people who live in it live or die. This is something that I've been trying to explain to everybody for about eight years and though a coup and a plague and many other events have happened, it's something that's difficult for folks to accept because it's terrifying. It's actually more convenient for these operators if we die, given the resource shortage that's emerging as a result of climate change. And this is also one of the reasons that both the Biden and the Trump administration's have refused to take meaningful action to counter covid or to do anything about long covid. This is also why Biden let a violent attack on the Capitol go unpunished and kept on accomplices like Chris Wray at the FBI or Louis DeJoy in the Postal Service, both of which he could remove.

Sarah Kendzior (00:20:31):

I believe this is also why the Democrats of New York—the state that is currently the nexus of the American corruption crisis—threw the House race, allowing the GOP to swoop in and take power. Andrea has described how they did that in previous episodes. We're probably gonna be talking about that more in the future. I'm gonna link to those episodes in the show notes because I know this is quite a claim, but it's a long story and it's a true story. My point here is Biden is not powered to protect the United States. He is in power to allow the GOP and their billionaire backers to destroy it. He is a placeholder president between an emerging autocracy and an entrenched autocracy; one that on some level craves internal collapse.

Sarah Kendzior (00:21:27):

Biden is not the architect of this plot. He is not someone who was involved in its design, but he is an accomplice. I'm getting to the end, I swear. This is like the Martin Luther of Biden era corruption treaties here. Alright, point number nine. This goes with what I just said. It's important for you to understand the Democratic establishment—what we at *Gaslit Nation* have been calling Vichy Democrats—they are not

trying to win anything. They were surprised when they won the 2020 election and immediately two rotating villains—Manchin and Sinema—appeared to stop the Democrats from passing any meaningful policies, in particular voting rights. And so you need to look at the big picture. A party that does not go out of its way to contain coup plotters or to protect voters is not one that cares if the country survives since the foundation of the nation hangs on those rights. It apparently is not really one that seems to care if its party survives, at least as a liberal progressive force. And so it's therefore possible that Biden simply departs and allows the GOP to formalize the power that they've been wielding, even while the Democrats held the House, Senate and the presidency. And of course they have more now that they have the House. If you look back at what the GOP has been doing for the past three years, you know, they had a plan. The first part of the plan was to hijack the judiciary. That was one of the reasons they put in Trump, to be their steamroller, was to hijack the judiciary and fill it with far-right partisan extremists. And this was a long-sought goal of the GOP.

Sarah Kendzior (00:23:12):

It's why they've spent billions of dollars pursuing it since the 1970s. They achieved it in 2020 with the Trump-appointed Supreme Court takeovers. The next move—this is what they were doing while the Democrats actually held power—was to win the “culture war”. What people call a culture war is actually a battle for civil rights, but it's framed for the public as a petty feud over human behavior. And so, for the past 25 or so years, I'd say liberals were basically winning the culture war and we saw real gains in matters like LGBT rights and we saw much more attention to issues like systemic racism, police brutality, the roots of poverty. All of that is being rolled back now. We are in a backlash that has been weaponized on social media and made much worse by the trauma of the pandemic and the exhaustion of the American public.

Sarah Kendzior (00:24:11):

And the GOP exploited this. They spent 2021 through 2022 focused on “culture war” matters and their partners in the entertainment and media industries are reshaping culture, political culture as well. They are firing creators of color. They are destroying archives in both media and entertainment so that Americans lack a shared pop culture, so that we lack a sense of history, and so that we have difficulty digging out the truth. The next step in this was that, of course, they won the House. And I wanna be clear: It doesn't matter that the GOP won by a narrower margin than many anticipated. And I'm gonna say the reason that margin was so small is like everyone hates the GOP, so as I'm going on about how powerful they are, you know, don't mistake power for approval. This is tyrannical one party rule.

Sarah Kendzior (00:25:05):

Anyway, they won, which means they get to do hearings. This win—this House win—was meaningful enough that they did not feel the need to do a bunch of January 6th attack sequels around the country challenging election results. They got what they wanted. And so one of the things that they wanna do, as I said, is begin hearings against Biden and other members of the Biden administration. And it is a great irony to me that the GOP is following the exact path that I recommended for the Democrats many times, which is to use examples of the Keyfauver mafia hearings of the 1950s or the Church Committee of the 1970s to gut out institutional corruption and to highlight the infiltration of organized crime. I wrote about this quite a bit in my book, *They Knew*. And so ironically, it is now the GOP running around vowing to do this.

Sarah Kendzior (00:26:03):

But you should not trust this because their only goal is to replace the current malleable lackeys with absolute fanatics. If they get rid of the FBI—and a large part of me thinks the FBI needs to go, that they're beyond reform—they will replace it with something akin to the Stasi. That is what they are

fantasizing about; impunity for themselves and oppression of everyone else. And they're not shy about this. And so the next year will be interesting as the GOP targets people who are possibly corrupt and possibly criminal, but they're very likely to go after them for things that they didn't do, instead of the things that they did do, because the things they did do are often things that the GOP approves of like abusing migrants, for example, who crossed the border, or child separation.

Sarah Kendzior (00:26:57):

All that's still going on, by the way, under Biden. So you have to ask, you know, why is Merrick Garland going along with this since you would think it's not in his self-interest? Why did Biden appoint Garland? Why are they not taking even the most basic measures to drop this anti-American anti-democratic plan in its tracks? The answer for most questions these days is usually, "It's the mafia stupid," but it is more complex than that. The cold hard truth is that transnational organized crime in the US government long ago merged and people like Biden, who have been in power for decades were witnesses to this, if not outright participants. And so it is the preservation of this system and its secrets that is their foremost agenda, not the survival of our country or the welfare of our people. Alright. I will now turn it over to you.

Andrea Chalupa (00:27:55):

Well, well, well [laughs]. I've got a lot to say on all of this.

Sarah Kendzior (00:28:00):

Go. Take all the time you need because I clearly did. [laughs]

Andrea Chalupa (00:28:03):

No, no, no, that was lovely. So I obviously agree that there's this larger architecture that we're up against, which of course is elite criminal impunity. And we'll get into all that, especially when we talk about who is special counsel Robert Hur? He's basically a poster child of how the sausage gets made, the sausage being elite criminal impunity. One thing I do wanna say though is I like Biden. I genuinely like Biden. And as somebody who, my first job out of college, I was a community organizer when it was a very nerdy thing to be a community organizer, and Obama running for president, giving all those powerful speeches made it a cool thing. And then AOC came along in her documentary where she was one of many faces, new faces, young female faces running for office. She also then again made it a very cool thing.

Andrea Chalupa (00:29:02):

So I've been at this for a very long time and I'm actually very optimistic and heartened by all the massive progress that has been made in terms of reforms and making our country more progressive. And what you saw, for instance, in 2020, you did see Biden lead a diverse coalition and you did see Biden run a very disciplined presidential campaign. For instance, I still remember some of the most moving moments of the Democratic National Convention that we all watched during the height of a pandemic, where you had the daughter who lost her father to Trumpism. You know, he believed all of the disinformation of Trump and she said, you know, "My father's cause of death was Trump. My father's preexisting condition was believing Trump." And Jen O'Malley, who ran Biden's election in 2020, she followed us. She followed *Gaslit Nation*, followed me.

Andrea Chalupa (00:29:59):

I know Jill Biden's last spokesperson followed us as well. And so what I'm saying is when Sarah and I were fashionable [laughs] back when we were all fighting Trump, the Biden team knew of us. We were on their radar, very much so. And since we've been calling them out on Merrick Garland, you know, we're



kind of the goth girl table now, which is fine. That's kind of our comfort zone anyway. But what I wanna point out about 2020 is it was also the very first year when progressives outnumbered moderate Democrats in the House, which was a big rebuke to Nancy Pelosi, who disastrously pumped the brakes on impeaching the most impeachable president, right?

Sarah Kendzior:

Mmhmm. <affirmative>

Andrea Chalupa:

So I just wanna say that we've had a lot of big wins. We've had a lot of progress. And the fact that the idiot moderates, like Max Rose of Staten Island, who came out with a big statement saying, "Here's why we shouldn't impeach Trump", the fact that those guys got spanked and the progressives who were calling for justice and were early calling for impeachment right off the bat, because that's what all the Americans wanted, the American public and also Biden's low-ish approval ratings, especially going into the midterms, all of that is pointing to the fact that the American people are far smarter than DC gives them credit for. We see what's going on. When you had Gerald Ford pardon Nixon, then losing reelection, Nixon destroyed Gerald Ford politically. And so that's what Biden is suffering from. That's what Nancy Pelosi and her moderates suffered from back in 2020. People want justice. The American people overwhelmingly want justice. We want an end to elite criminal impunity. We want reforms. We want to live in a stable democracy. And you're not going to get that with business as usual.

Andrea Chalupa (00:31:55):

And unfortunately, one thing that Biden does suffer from is business as usual because he's been at this for so long. But he himself personally has evolved. He has come a long way. And even when that whole Tara Reade investigation went on, you know, when Tara Reade made her claim saying that Biden whatever, you know, gave her a neck massage or came onto her or whatever, NPR—I believe it was NPR News Hour—did this exhaustive investigation, interviewed something like 75-plus people, and all of those interviews exposed what a fantastic boss Biden was, especially if you were a woman. So I genuinely like Biden. And as somebody who has covered Ukraine, and as I've said on this show in the past, he was right about Ukraine. He used a lot of *Gaslit Nation* arguments telling Ukraine's own parliament, "You need to clean up your corruption because the Kremlin is using it against you."

Andrea Chalupa (00:32:46):

And that is why, as we've always said, Ukraine has been a laboratory for Kremlin aggression that they then used on us here in the US. He was always farther ahead on greater support for Ukraine during the years when Obama and Merkel were pumping the brakes on that. One of the things I do fear very much is, as you pointed out, that this could lead to Biden stepping down. This could lead to Biden being pressured not to run in 2024 and that's a very dangerous thing. I don't see, like with his age and all that he's been through in life... Biden is a man who personally has withstood a lot of loss. He lost his wife, he lost his children, he lost Beau Biden in recent years. He's been through... Biden has been through a lot. If he wants to step down and retire, he's earned that right.

Andrea Chalupa (00:33:36):

And what worries me is who comes next because Kamala Harris, somebody that I was initially excited about—as we all know, on the show, I came out the gate endorsing her early. She has the most progressive voting record in the Senate. She's somebody that represents a community in Oakland, that has been ahead culturally in terms of community organizing and progressive values, so I really had a lot

of faith in her. But since she's been vice president—and I know vice president is sort of an asshole role. [laughs] There's a really great story where Teddy Roosevelt's enemies tried to neutralize him and get rid of him by trying to force him into becoming vice president because it's like you're in a straight jacket. You really don't get to flex your own muscle and you're very contained.

Andrea Chalupa (00:34:22):

So there's a bit of that that Kamala Harris is sort of limited to and that's a very famous trap of the position of vice president. But at the same time, I mean, representing this groundbreaking, history-making position as the first woman vice president and the first non-white person/woman vice president, it is disappointing to see a lack of conviction coming from that role. She should be a full-throated crusader for voting rights and the government pulling out all the stops to bring back whatever we legally can through executive order or whatever is available to us, using the power of imagination and creativity and legal brain power—just like the criminals, mafiosos, consigliere lawyers do—to protect the voting rights across the country, to strengthen voting rights, to strengthen protections, to strengthen abortion rights, you know, allow abortion on federally-owned land in these red states.

Andrea Chalupa (00:35:17):

Kamala Harris hasn't shown any conviction that we've seen publicly since becoming vice president. She also has had a rotating door of a lot of hires. People don't stick around working for her. That's not promising. If you are a good boss, if people wanna work for you for a very long time, that's a really good sign that you're a good person and that you're going to be a good leader. Just to give a quick anecdote: When I was trying to figure out who to marry when it came to making *Mr. Jones*, because when you choose a producer for your screenplay, you're entering a marriage. You're going through thick and thin together. And in a meeting with the producer in Warsaw, he put our meeting on hold to take a call from his housekeeper who was in the hospital for some sort of treatment.

Andrea Chalupa (00:36:04):

And he wanted to make sure that she was okay. And I was really touched by that because this is a woman who works for him and he was really concerned about her wellbeing and like supporting her and reassuring her when she was in the hospital, and was very peaceful and pleasant and genuinely concerned for her. And I commented on that and he said, "Yes, of course, she's like family. She's part of my family. I wanna make sure she's okay." And that's how I knew this was the right producer for me. And I was absolutely right because I became part of his family and he treated me remarkably well and I felt respected, even though he had decades of experience over me. So I do have concerns that Kamala Harris isn't up for the job of president.

Andrea Chalupa (00:36:46):

She has time to change that. And why should that matter? It's because we're at war with Russia. The very existence of Ukraine, where I have family and friends, is on the line. Can she meet that moment? And being a progressive, I like that on the domestic front but as we keep saying on the show, the foreign policy is lacking when it comes to progressives. It's naive, it's naive. We see these horrific stories coming outta Ukraine. Just the other day, Russia, you know, orphan-maker Putin bombed a residential building that killed over 40 people and it was in an area where a lot of refugees of the war have rebuilt their lives. It's considered a safe region and it's one of the greatest civilian disasters since the start of the all-out genocide last February. Okay? It was a horrific, horrific crime against humanity that Putin just carried out.

Andrea Chalupa (00:37:34):

When you see bloodshed like this, a lot of progressives just wanna make it stop and they resort to Chamberlain tactics as though they have no sense of history. They say things like, “There needs to be a peace deal. Just give Russia Crimea, just give Russia Donbas. Make it stop.” We all wanna make it stop. But that's like forcing a trans person to make peace with DeSantis or something, or a non-white person to make peace with the Klan. There are certain people in this world that just went genocide for the sake of genocide. They're just wired that way. The leading Nazis were just wired that way. Genocide creators, genocide-makers are just wired that way. There is no negotiation with terrorists. And the only way, as the historians have pointed out, the only way to defeat a genocidal imperialist empire is through a military defeat.

Andrea Chalupa (00:38:25):

Can Kamala Harris do that? I don't know. I don't know anything about her since she's become vice president because she's not stood on any sort of matter of conviction. I hope to God she keeps Lloyd Austin as the Secretary of Defense. I hope to God whoever comes next after Biden keeps Lloyd Austin. I think Lloyd Austin has been great. I think Biden has been great. I think Biden has done a lot of fantastic things as president. I think his first two years in office have been some of the most productive and extraordinary. I really do. And he was rewarded for that with this remarkable showing in the midterms. And at the same time, I understand it was a reactive midterms against the loss of *Roe v. Wade* and a rebuke of Republican terrorism. I understand that as well. But Biden has generally been very effective as a president.

Andrea Chalupa (00:39:09):

And I wanna point out something that I don't hear anybody bringing up. I've been listening to the radio all long weekend and not a single person I've heard has brought this up. Maybe you've heard this. I haven't. But look at the years where, in these documents at Biden's homes or whatever, look at the years of when this happened. The years when Biden had these documents, you know, held onto these classified documents or whatever, those years coincide when he was mourning the loss of his son Beau. His son, Beau Biden, died in May of 2015, which was the end of Biden's term as vice president. And here was Beau, who was a rising star in the Democratic Party. He was Attorney General of Maryland. He was an Iraq war veteran. And he had a beautiful family and he dies of brain cancer.

Andrea Chalupa (00:39:58):

And there's very strong reason to believe, as many do, that that brain cancer was linked to the burn pits in Iraq; burn pits being a really hazardous way to get rid of waste of all kinds, including chemicals. And the horrible fumes that they create can harm people. There's been legislation passed signed by Biden to help those veterans who were impacted by burn pits. So, you know, imagine losing a son who was such a bright light and made you so proud and was a hope for the country as a rising star, losing him like that. And what a devastation that would be for your grandchildren, for Beau's children. So Biden was going through grief again and going through mourning again in his final term as vice president. That's why it was Hillary's time to run because Biden wasn't running.

Andrea Chalupa (00:40:50):

Biden was busy mourning, right? He's a human being. Imagine the devastation that would cause losing your child, outliving your child. Again. So when you hear about this story of Biden's documents, please, please remember that. Think of him as a father, first and foremost; a human being that was grieving the unimaginable. He's not superhuman. None of us are superhuman going through all of this and figuring things out. The public officials that we rail against every single day, none of them—as far as we know, unless all these UFO stories are pointing to something we don't know about—none of us are superhuman to handle what's happening today. And Biden is a human being first and foremost. And he's

a father going through grief when these documents were left there, okay? What really bothers me just in general about all the shots that the fascists are taking at Biden is they all tend to go back to his kids somehow. You have Hunter Biden and the laptop.

Andrea Chalup (00:41:45):

And I thought that was gonna be the star of this Congress. But now you have these documents coming up, which I think they're going to jump on because not only does it score them points against Biden, but it's an equalizer with Trump and his documents and it muddles the waters there, as Sarah pointed out. But the document story also goes back to Biden's child, because these documents again got lost when Biden was in mourning. Please, please, please keep that in mind and spread the word on that because I'm tired of hearing this story all the time and people not pointing that out. It's weird and tone deaf that they don't.

Sarah Kendzior (00:42:20):

No, I mean, that's an interesting point and I certainly think you're right to look at everybody, regardless of their position, first and foremost as a human being and to take account, you know, tragedies they endured. I still have a lot of questions though about the documents. I mean, you know, there is no comparison here between what Biden did or Biden's staff did—it's not completely clear how these documents ended up where they did and why they were found now—and what Trump did repeatedly on a daily basis for four years in office which was of course preceded by 30 years of career criminal activity. But in the end, Biden is responsible for this. He did do this. Not with the intention that Trump did, not with this sort of deliberate, you know, "I'm gonna sell information, I'm gonna steal information," that kind of thing, you know, but it's... I don't know.

Sarah Kendzior (00:43:15):

I mean the jury is out on whether it is a crime. And one of the things that's incredibly frustrating here—and this would be frustrating regardless of what he's going to be impeached or investigated for—is that we cannot trust the people doing it. So whether you like Biden—like you do—or you don't like—Biden like I do—we can basically agree that Biden isn't going to be able to get a fair trial in this government because the government itself is so deeply corrupt. And of course with the House GOP, you know, it's a fill-in-the-blank witch hunt. It's a Madlibs court case. They went in with the intention of impeachment or getting him out of office and then they're looking for a reason. And then this seems like a much stronger case than the Hunter Biden laptop story, which I also thought was going to be the topic.

Sarah Kendzior (00:44:04):

Maybe they dropped that one because it didn't have weight, but this does have weight. And as horrifying as it is that he lost his son, I don't think it's going to work, you know, on a legal level to excuse him from that. What I worry about more honestly, if that's brought up, is cruelty, is the kind of abuses that anyone who's lost a child is going to have to watch that play out in this abstracted, manipulative political sphere. Anyway, I don't know. I mean, all of that, you know, it's like [laughs] I agree with you on a lot of it. I definitely agree with you on 2020 candidate Biden and the 2020 progressive platform and the spirit of unity and defiance that a lot of us had at that point which was, of course, tempered with the spirit of fear from Covid and from Trump, who was plotting a coup in front of our eyes that nobody was stopping.

Sarah Kendzior (00:45:02):

But a wild thing to do is to look back at folks' old tweets or articles if you can get past the paywalls or interviews, including the ones we did on *Gaslit Nation* in Spring 2021, where there's absolute outrage that Biden hasn't enacted on basic things like prosecuting the coup plotters, firing Christopher Wray, firing Louis DeJoy... God, I'm trying to think what else. And you see people being like, "I can't believe it's

been three months, five months, nine months, a year, blah, blah, blah, that this, you know, incredibly necessary act has not been done.” Or, “I can't believe he hasn't spoken out more forcefully about things like voting rights.” And eventually late in the game Biden did speak out about things like the need to preserve our democracy and it's wild to me this isn't just the de facto mode of an American president to be pro-democracy. But because of Trump and the GOP and the Tea Party and all of these predecessors, it now is. It's now a stance you choose and it's good that he chose it.

Sarah Kendzior (00:46:06):

You're right of course that he's been good with Ukraine and that there's a grave danger if he leaves, especially if McCarthy or somebody else ends up being the President. I also agree with you on Kamala. I don't know what she would do—that that war, you know, will, I don't know, sink into a quagmire or that Putin will be honestly aided by the Republican Party because I could envision that too. A giant mess either way. One thing that makes me feel sad about the year to come is that all of these issues, all the little buzzwords the Republicans are now throwing out—accountability and corruption and saying things like “the Biden crime family”, it's like they're piquing the phrases that you and I have said and that I've used in my books and they're just inverting them, flipping the script. And of course we've seen them do that before, but we really are in an institutional crisis. These institutions are deeply, deeply corrupt. And within that corruption, they usually favor the Republican Party. They sometimes favor the Democratic Party, but they should be working for the American people. And that's what I don't see at all. I just see personality cults and all of us—the public—treated as an afterthought meant to suffer and hand over money and get nothing in return.

Andrea Chalupa (00:47:25):

Yeah, absolutely. And I remember when Rod Rosenstein and Barr, the Coverup King, did their big coverup memo where the Mueller report was ready, they didn't release it and instead they came out with a press conference and released a four-page memo saying essentially that the Mueller investigation exonerates Trump. And all the big nations/newspapers ran with it saying, “Mueller exonerates Trump!” It was so shocking for the famously reticent Mueller that he came out with his own letter pushing back against it, pushing back against Barr, and then held a press conference where he called on Americans saying, “No, this is a big deal. This is a concern.” And the polling that came out after Rod Rosenstein and Barr tried to fool the American public and managed to fool the press—the mainstream press, which is always complicit in these things anyway, and always ready to be fooled—the public polled overwhelmingly wanted to see the Mueller report, overwhelmingly did not buy this. So it's another reminder, just like Gerald Ford got punished for pardoning Nixon, the American public is significantly smarter than the transnational crime syndicate. The only reason why it doesn't seem so is because of all of these systemic imbalances designed to allow elite criminal impunity; the electoral college, the Senate, those systems have always been established to protect the criminal elite who were criming at the foundation of our country by enslaving human beings. It may have been legal at the time, but it was against natural law to do that, to rip babies and mothers apart. It was a holocaust for centuries. That's crime. And so we were founded on crime, built on crime, and the political system we're currently trapped under protects the criminals.

Andrea Chalupa (00:49:24):

They're modern day criminals, the filibuster and so on. But if we were free from those shackles, we would be an extraordinary nation. I truly believe that because of, you know, the polls we always see again and again, the demand for justice, the calling bullshit on the Mueller/Jack Smith brigade that tries to turn utter lack of accountability into cults of personality and so on. So I do have faith in the American public. I do have faith in my country that we're going to get through this, but it's not without

antagonizing, not without getting into their faces, not without building our community, not without demanding better, demanding that we be treated better, demanding that we have a sustainable future for all, and demanding more for our kids. Because I don't understand this. I mean, the feudal lords that are running this show, aren't they worried about their own children in any way, shape or form?

Andrea Chalupa (00:50:16):

You know, not just the climate collapse and all that, but also, you know, given all your squandered wealth that you're building up, what if you have a generation that squanders it all and has to start from scratch? Don't you want them to have some social safety net that protects them? I mean, you know? We need to do better and demand better and we're going to get through this ultimately. And that's why everyone needs to go to the Gaslit Nation Action Guide and find your community and agitate with your community and build best friends with your community because that's what we desperately need right now. But I wanna go into Robert Hur who is this special counsel that Merrick Garland woke up from his nap instantly to appoint.

Andrea Chalupa (00:51:01):

This is really scary stuff. Researching Robert Hur made my stomach twist. Who is Robert Hur? Like I said, he's a guy that represents how the sausage gets made. He clerked for Chief Justice William Rehnquist. He worked with Christopher Wray in the Justice Department's Criminal Division. He most recently worked in crisis management for a big fancy DC law firm called Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher. Who is Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher? Why might that name sound familiar? Well, Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher represents a who's who of evil, including Chevron in their case against Ecuador. Mark Zuckerberg is a client. Oh, and George W. Bush in *Bush v. Gore* in Florida. Remember that? It all came down to Florida and George W. Bush becoming president unlocked the Pandora's box of the horseman of the apocalypse, the invasion in Afghanistan and Iraq, which led to Isis, which led to global destabilization, deregulation on Wall Street, which tanked the global economy and so on.

Andrea Chalupa (00:52:07):

So you've got the braintrust of Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher to thank that. They're also involved in a case where they're working on the side that some critics point out could weaken federal protections of Native American tribes. The genocide that keeps on genociding here in America. You all may know the lawyer, Steven Donziger, who helped win a \$9.5 billion lawsuit in Ecuador against Chevron for contaminating the Ecuadorian Amazon. I'm going to read now from *The Intercept*, which points out some of the dark magic of Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher. Again, this is a law firm where Robert Hur, the newly-appointed special counsel, was working when he got this appointment. And he was working in crisis management, which is, as we all know, with just another word for elite criminal impunity. Now from *The Intercept*, and will link to this article in the show notes for this week's episode, which you can find as always on our Patreon page for this week's episode.

Andrea Chalupa (00:53:10):

Alright: "Chevron, which is valued at more than \$200 billion, also invested some of its massive resources in a legal counter offensive against lawyer Steven Donziger. Led by the law firm Gibson Dunn, the company's hot pursuit of the attorney has involved hiring private investigators to track him, creating a publication to smear him and creating a team of hundreds of lawyers to fight him. As a result, Donziger, who spent decades fighting for indigenous communities and farmers, grappling with the pollution resulting from oil extraction, now faces exorbitant fines and legal costs. He has also lost his passport, his income, his law license—though he's fighting the decision—and his freedom." That's Gibson Dunn. This is creepy. Robert Hur is creepy. And there's more on this guy, but I'll let Sarah just chime in.

Sarah Kendzior (00:54:06):

Oh, no, I mean, I'm just taking in this information because I don't know as much as you do. I mean, the main thing that stuck out to me about Hur is that Rod Rosenstein vouched for him. You know, Rod Rosenstein who, of course, was a Trump accomplice that went on to work for NSO, the spyware dealer from Israel that helped facilitate the murder of Jamal Khashoggi among other dissidents around the world. So when Rod Rosenstein is praising somebody, especially vouching for them as some kind of institutionalist, I basically take that word as code for, "He is in on it with the rest of us." So I'm not really expecting anything to go fairly. And like I said, if Biden actually did something, then he actually did something and it should be judged as such. I just... I don't know. I don't see how there's going to be that level of objectivity here. I mean, I guess we'll find out,

Andrea Chalupa (00:55:09):

Just to underline that point, from NPR, I'm gonna read now: "Hur also spent time as principal counselor to Rod Rosenstein, then-Justice's Deputy Attorney General and the Trump administration, to oversee all components of the department. Part of that time as Rosenstein top aide was spent overseeing the special council investigation into Russian election interference." So does this mean that Robert Hur, as the principal counselor to Rod Rosenstein, did he sign off on the coverup memo, Rosenstein and Bill Barr's four-page cover up memo which Mueller pushed back against in his own letter, in his own press conference? As Rosenstein and Barr were trying to jump, seize the narrative, put it out early, saying that Mueller exonerated Trump, did Robert Hur approve that? I mean, one would assume he had to know about it before it happened because he was the principal counselor to Rod Rosenstein who came out with Barr in that press conference to release their big coverup memo.

Andrea Chalupa (00:56:16):

And that's how the sausage gets made. So today's ending is a tribute to Matt Taibbi, who keeps going on and on about Russiagate on Twitter like it's some 15-year-old underage Russian girl back in the 1990s Moscow who broke his heart. This is a tribute to Matt Taibbi, who thinks that Russiagate is a fake moon landing and it is the final signoff of Robert Mueller coming out of hiding to basically defend himself on the Mueller investigation against Rod Rosenstein and Bill Barr's coverup, where he says to the American people that what happened, what we investigated, it was very serious. And we all need to take this incredibly seriously. And yes, Russiagate is real.

Robert Mueller (00:57:07):

And I will close by reiterating the central allegation of our indictments, that there were multiple systematic efforts to interfere in our election. And that allegation deserves the attention of every American. Thank you. Thank you for being here today.

[outro theme music - roll credits]

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 cost 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](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 want to help critically endangered orangutans already under pressure from the palm oil industry, donate to the Orangutan Project at [theorangutangproject.org](http://theorangutangproject.org).

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Sarah Kendzior:

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Andrea Chalupa:

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Sarah Kendzior:

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Andrea Chalupa:

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