

Gaslit Nation Transcript
10 May 2023
The Blood-Dimmed Tide
<https://www.patreon.com/posts/blood-dimmed-82771781>

[intro - theme music]

Sarah Kendzior (00:11):

I am 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):

And 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 doesn't want you to see, so make sure to watch it.

Sarah Kendzior (00:35):

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

Andrea Chalupa (00:42):

And we are having a live taping of the show on May 23rd at 1:30 PM Eastern, followed by a Q&A with the live audience. And also every month for the next year, we are giving away a copy of our brand new book. Drum Roll, please... *Dictatorship: It's Easier Than You Think*, a book that Sarah and I co-wrote all about the life and times that we're in and how we got here and how to get out, told through a zany comic book form. You wanna get a hand on that because it's a great book. It's powerful and it's honest, and it's heartfelt and we love it. We are thanking our community on Patreon. So, all you have to do is make sure that you're signed up at the Truth-teller level or higher and every month we're selecting one member of our Patreon community to receive a copy of *Dictatorship: It's Easier Than You Think* as a thank you tribute to our community. The copy could be yours, so make sure you're signed up at the Truth-teller level or higher on Patreon.

Sarah Kendzior (01:42):

And so on that note, on with the news. Our dictatorship graphic novel will seem uplifting compared to everything that we've had to witness this week. This was a dire week; a tough one to watch; a lot of mass murders and murders with impunity. And so that's what we're going to talk about today. The week started off with the murder of Jordan Neely, a 30 year old Black homeless man in New York City who was strangled to death by a man named Daniel Penny, a former Marine, 24 years old, while he was riding the New York City subway. And before he was murdered, Neely had yelled to the subway passengers about his plight, saying that he was hungry, saying that he would not mind going to prison. He didn't physically attack anyone.

Sarah Kendzior (02:41):

There were reports that, you know, he was angry, he was yelling, he was throwing his jacket on the ground in an aggressive manner. But he did not attack anybody. Whether he made people feel frightened is a subjective matter, but he was not the aggressor. Daniel Penny was the aggressor. Daniel Penny put

Jordan Neely in a choke hold for over 15 minutes and killed him. And as a trained Marine, he was aware of what he was doing, and he was aware that this would result in death. And so you would expect when you hear something like this—or you would hope at least—that the response would be horror at the situation and sympathy, of course, for Neely and for his family and for what they have to endure. Instead, we have seen a horrific race of elite pundits trying to justify this killing, trying to say that it's deserved, that if you are homeless, if you're obnoxious, if you seem aggressive—which often is a code for Black in New York City—then your death is justified.

Sarah Kendzior (03:55):

And, you know, under Eric Adams, it's been a return to the Giuliani era and honestly the Giuliani era never really went away. This is one of the reasons I moved out of there, along with the incredible expense. New York has this Fox News-type pseudo reputation as a dangerous crime zone but that's not the scary thing about New York. The scary thing about New York are all the rich people who live there, living lives of utter impunity; whether Wall Street or the police. And it has become a terrible place for Black folks to live. You could look at the unemployment rate in New York City which is I think the largest disparity between white and Black populations in America. The white unemployment rate is 1.3%. The Black rate is now 12.2%. This surpasses the Gilded Age.

Sarah Kendzior (04:51):

This a city of gentrification, of heartlessness where Black people born and raised there are pushed out of their homes. But more broadly though, you know, this as an incident, is something that could have happened anywhere in America. It's reminiscent of the Kyle Rittenhouse case. It's reminiscent of any case where a young white man feels that he can act with impunity toward, in this case, a Black homeless man—in the case of Rittenhouse, toward people advocating for Black rights—because they feel that the system has their back, the system will not punch them, they will protect them. And that's exactly what happened. Newspapers went out of the way to not reveal Neely's identity. People went out of the way to praise him, to protect him, and to justify via unjustifiable.

Sarah Kendzior (05:43):

And I'll say one more thing before I turn it over to you: I said this during COVID, and I'm gonna say it again now, during this week where, in other news, the Biden administration “ended the Covid emergency” as another thousand people died this week of COVID. They want us used to mass death so that they can get us used to mass murder. That's how I felt during the Trump administration. That's how I feel during the Biden administration. And we are now at the phase where they are trying to get us used to mass murder, to blow off these incidents, to not look at people as human beings. I think that the lack of empathy and constructive action toward people suffering from COVID is what has fueled the state of affairs. As I've said before on this show, the same thing happened after the Spanish flu of 1918, which was followed by the Red Summer of 1919 in which you saw the same thing.

Sarah Kendzior (06:43):

You know, white mob violence, a rise in xenophobia, a rise of mob violence in general. What happens is people witness how governments and media and institutions have abandoned the most vulnerable among us, and they are terrified of being in that position themselves. And so they become frightened and they flock to those who seem powerful, who seem like they would have the ability to protect them, even if those people are cruel. And I would count the police and the government and others in this category. People also become paranoid because they have witnessed a great betrayal and they see that even if the seemingly good people—the people who promise to solve these crises—are this evil underneath, will let them down in such a flagrant way, then anything can happen. Then no one is

trustworthy. And so I think that's why you get this bystander syndrome where people will just sit and they will watch a man die in front of them.

Sarah Kendzior (07:44):

I also think, you know, quite a few of the people on the subway in interviews have said they were afraid not of Jordan Neely. They were afraid of Daniel Penny, who was strangling a guy with utter impunity. They were afraid of what else he might do. So in that sense I understand it, but in the sense of trying to normalize murder; strangulation on a subway... We're in serious trouble. And we're gonna talk about the mass shootings that happened this week as well, which I think is part of the same trend. But Andera, do you have thoughts on this?

Andrea Chalupa (08:17):

Yeah, it's just crazy; the survival guide that we need in order to function daily in America. You have to know, for instance, you have to watch how-to videos and read articles on what to do in a mass shooting when you go about your day-to-day business. For instance, if you take an Amtrak train, you're at New York Penn Station, there'll be a sign. I've read the sign. Just like when you get on an airplane and you have that little card in the front seat in front of you saying, "In case of a crash landing, here's what to do," you have a sign in New York Penn Station saying, "Here's what to do if there's a mass shooting." You know, you shelter, run, fight if you can, whatever the hell the stages of grief... I mean the stages of surviving a mass shooting are, the surreal cruelty...

Andrea Chalupa (08:59):

The absurdity of this situation is being led by absolutely absurd liars in positions of power. Here in New York City, in terms of what just happened with Jordan Neely, I mean, my god, none of us are safe of going about our business here in this country because we've had this culture of mass violence. The violence is hanging in the air and it's been completely normalized. And all of this is stemming back to, once again, seeing a president of the United States, Donald Trump, normalizing mass violence and the people around him normalizing mass death and mass violence. You have the death cult of the Republican Party that is propped up by the NRA, a death cult itself. There's so much to talk about this, but I wanna just call out Mayor Eric Adams, a former cop and I wanna call out the fact that as soon as he won the mayor's race, there was a photo of him with some Republican operatives in Rao's, a restaurant way uptown, which is a New York institution.

Andrea Chalupa (10:03):

It's very hard to get a reservation there. There he was with that look on his face and it was his absolute smugness at the table at Rao's and it very much told you what the power center was going to be under his administration, and it was going to be protecting the rich, protecting the rich from having to pay their fair share in taxes, protecting the rich, the rich being mostly white because we're in a system of white supremacy propped up by inherited wealth and protecting whiteness, protecting the old institution of rich whiteness. And Governor Kathy Hochul is part of this as well. There's always been these figures that will take the side of the Nazis, that will take the sides of the Daniel Pennys. What Daniel Penny did was he broke the law. He should be arrested. He should be facing a judge.

Andrea Chalupa (10:50):

We don't wanna encourage people to execute... Just to go out and assassinate others and be seen as a good Samaritan, be gaslit as a hero for doing so. He needs to face accountability for taking a man's life. And if you don't do that, you're gonna be stuck with more executions; people living out their fantasies. As Sarah mentioned, we're dealing with a time of wilding out. People are at a breaking point. Even good people are at a breaking point, people who do not want to kill or cause harm to anyone. Everybody is

completely afraid right now. We're all undergoing some form of compassion fatigue because we've had to live during times of mass trauma. We've had to be stronger for other people, even when we're having a hard time being strong for ourselves. It's an extremely difficult time to be alive right now, especially in a country like the United States of America where mass murder is legally allowed.

Andrea Chalupa (11:43):

It's legally allowed with the utter lack of gun safety laws in a lot of these so-called red states. And that has no protection against us in these so-called blue states because the guns are coming across our border. And the Supreme Court, packed by a Kremlin asset who came into power with Russia's help, who came into power with Republican James Comey's help, and the Russian assets in the New York FBI, who packed the Supreme Court, who is knocking down/blocking gun safety laws in New York state. Right? We still get these guns coming across our border into our state, including leading to a mass shooting in my neighborhood, which led to my daughter's school, her preschool being on lockdown. So I had a two year old at the time of this mass shooting near our neighborhood. So my two-year-old experienced her first mass shooting lockdown: a two-year-old in preschool. That is the definition of a circle of hell. None of us should be living through this unless this is hell. Unless the theologians wanna come forward and say, Hey, we solved it. Surprise, surprise, we're all fuckin' in hell." [laughs]. You know? I think that's how Sarah and I... Our friendship kind of formed out of this whole debate between the two of us back in like late 2016 when all of our favorites started being—

Sarah Kendzior (12:57):

Raptured. George Michael got raptured. Carrie Fisher got raptured.

Andrea Chalupa:

Prince.

Sarah Kendzior:

[laughs] Yeah, Prince got raptured.

Andrea Chalupa (13:03):

And we were like, we're being left behind. We are left behind. And the existence of the NRA, the Republicans and George Abbott and Mayor Adams of New York, who's serving the NYPD, which I've seen with my own eyes, being somebody that's lived in the city since 2006, being overly aggressive, unnecessary use of aggression. I've seen it. And the NYPD, which endorsed Trump, like, what the fuck Mayor Adams? Everyone needs to be calling for Daniel Penny to be behind bars because he's a murderer. He's a killer. And we don't want more killers. We don't want copycat killers. And unfortunately all of this political violence has been normalized. And there's a whole history of this because, I'm telling you, during the time of the inter-war period across Europe, people looked up to Mussolini, including in Great Britain.

Andrea Chalupa (13:51):

People thought that Hitler was a great idea in Germany and Austria. They couldn't wait. Why? Because you had a rising Left in Austria. You had a well organized Left in Germany, and what was their solution to smashing the Left and protecting their profits, protecting their giant corporations? It was fascism. They hid behind fascism. That's why they celebrated Mussolini. That's why they appointed Hitler to be chancellor: to squash the Left. And they're doing it again today. What they fear most is having to pay

their fair share in taxes. What they fear most is the middle class coming back. What they fear most is closing all of the black holes swallowing up people in our fractured social safety net. People call it hyper capitalism: I don't know what to call it... It's greed. The addiction to greed should be treated just like a sex addiction.

Andrea Chalupa (14:48):

It's not normal. It's madness. In well-functioning democracies that have extremely low levels of corruption and high levels of functioning government and equality and so on, in those democracies—and I'm talking of course about the Scandinavian nations—they see citizens of their countries as human resources to develop. That's why they provide free education, free university, free medical care, and that's why the elites, the billionaire class, the millionaire class—because yes, these Scandinavian countries do have billionaires—they're happy and proud to pay taxes because it's for the greater good, the wealth of the society, for the help of the society. They understand that when you give, you receive. What you put out there, you receive back. And what the elite of the United States are receiving back is what they're putting out there, which is allowing this violence, this violence mentality, this “let's destroy people.” It's a destructive energy that the elite of the United States are putting out there. And let me just give you a clip of this that just sums it all up. Here is Bill Barr, the coverup king. He covered up Iran Contra. He covered up—

Sarah Kendzior:
Epstein.

Andrea Chalupa:

Epstein, the Mueller Report. Sarah goes into Bill Barr in her books, including the fact that Bill Barr's... Was it his father wrote some dirty space porn novels?

Sarah Kendzior (16:10):

Yeah, his father wrote books about pedophile fascists in outer space at the time that he had hired Jeffrey Epstein (who had no college degree) to teach high school at the place where Bill Barr's dad, Donald Barr, was the head of the school. So yeah, we did a special once where I did a dramatic reading, taking one for the team, space relations. Anyway...

Andrea Chalupa (16:36):

[laughs] And you can listen to that in our Patreon. Sarah actually does read from Bill Barr's father's space opera porn.

Sarah Kendzior:
Ugh, God.

Andrea Chalupa:

It's pretty dirty. It's pretty dirty stuff, okay? And it just shows birds of feather flock together, obviously. And that school was Dalton, right?

Sarah Kendzior:

Yep.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yikes. A New York school.

Sarah Kendzior (16:54):

And then they attempted this reputational rehab which went on for like a year. We warned of that back in December, 2020. We were like, "Bill Barr is not leaving because he has seen the light or has a good heart or wants to protect the country. He is leaving because he's in on a greater plot." And of course, you know, the plot was the aftermath of the coup and all of the coverups that you just mentioned. And then we've seen all of these Federalist Society assholes and all of these media people trying to bring him back, pushing his book. And then he goes and—I'm assuming the clip you're gonna play, is it the CSPAN clip? Because I'll just shut up and not ruin the surprise.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yes!

Sarah Kendzior:

Alright, play the clip.

Andrea Chalupa (17:32):

[laughs] Okay, so here's Bill Barr in an interview with C-SPAN, speaking for Bill bars across history, including during the rise of Hitler, when they chose fascism to destroy the Left.

[begin audio clip of [Bill Barr's C-SPAN interview](#)]

Bill Barr (17:45):

I think the people on the Right, uh, are not actually the threat to the democratic system.

C-SPAN Host (17:56):

I feel compelled to ask you though, did you feel that way on January 6th?

Bill Barr (17:59):

Yeah, I did. I thought January 6th was a clown show. I thought that anyone who thinks that the republic was in serious danger on January 6th is out of touch. I mean, you know, you had a control room with Rudy Giuliani and Bannon and those people: the country couldn't have been safer.

[end audio clip]

Andrea Chalupa (18:18):

So there you have it. And I wanna say to Mayor Adams—my mayor—and to Governor Kathy Hochul—my governor—you need to organize your forces together. The power, the immense power that you have as public servants, elected and your salaries, your benefits paid for with our tax dollars, to call for Daniel Penny, the murderer, to face justice.

Sarah Kendzior (18:45):

Yeah, I mean, hopefully they will do it. It's been very distressing to see the reaction of New York officials, especially Kathy Hochul's initial reaction where, you know, she said very ambiguously, "There's consequences for behavior," seemingly referencing Jordan Neely, seemingly saying that if you are, you know, homeless and loud on a subway train, that murder is the consequence for behavior and that we should all just run around expecting that to happen. On that note, I wanna sort of push back a little on—

Andrea Chalupa (19:18):

Wait—

Sarah Kendzior:

Oh, what?

Andrea Chalupa:

Sorry, go ahead. Go ahead.

Sarah Kendzior (19:20):

Look, this is a broader point, so if you have a smaller point, make it now [laughs]—

Andrea Chalupa:

Make it now so—

Sarah Kendzior:

[laughs] Lemme get to the bigger point.

Andrea Chalupa (19:27):

[laughs] Well, I was gonna say, Christopher Wray has to finally be replaced as part of this.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yes.

Andrea Chalupa:

There have been reports for well over a decade that white domestic terrorism, white supremacy terrorism, has been the number one terrorist threat in the United States. It was a fast growing threat. Obviously we had ISIS for a time, but then right on its heels and then surpassing it comes white supremacy terrorism. There's been reports about this for a decade now. It's out there in the open. We

saw their violence coming, headed towards January 6th. We announced a pre special on it before January 6th.

Sarah Kendzior:

Mmmhmm [affirmative]

Andrea Chalupa:

We saw this all. So obviously the men and women in the FBI saw it too. But they chose not to act on it because they come from that same elite white patriarchy that, again, chooses fascism because they don't want to pay more in taxes.

Andrea Chalupa (20:21):

They wanna protect their profits. They're a land-owning class. It's the electoral college... It's an extension of the unfair and unbalanced power structure of the electoral college. But it's permeating our whole law enforcement. And so as part of this, America needs to wake up and say that we have a Nazi problem. America has a Nazi problem. And as part of addressing this Nazi problem, President Biden needs to replace Christopher Wray with someone else. Christopher Wray should have lost his job when he failed to stop the violence on January 6th. That was so obvious. On a personal note, I should be grateful to FBI Director Wray because he didn't go after my sister, the independent contractor, Alexandra Chalupa, who warned every/anybody who would listen, Republicans, Democrats, the media, that Paul Manafort was here: longtime Kremlin operative in Ukraine, Paul Manafort.

Andrea Chalupa (21:09):

He was running Trump's campaign. That means the Kremlin was helping Trump's campaign, right? She was a whistleblower. She stuck her neck out, risked her life for her country, and she paid the ultimate price because the whole Kremlin propaganda and Fox News propaganda machine targeted her relentlessly. And so did Devin Nunes and so on. And when Christopher Wray went before his confirmation hearing, he was asked, "Are you gonna go after Alexander Chalupa?" And he was like, "Yeah, we'll look into it." And he never did. So I should be grateful on a personal level that he upheld the law in regard to my sister. He didn't go full Banana Republic. But at the same time, he had his time in office. He let our entire country down by failing to stop the violence on January 6th. And he's not the man right now. He's not the law enforcement we need in power right now to confront head on, finally, America's out of control Nazi problem. Okay? That's all I wanted to say and get outta the way. We have a Nazi problem and we need law enforcement who will take it on. And instead, the law enforcement is infiltrated, including Christopher Wray at the F B I.

Sarah Kendzior (22:07):

Yeah, 100%. And I'm actually glad you said this because I feel like there's a mentality that's shaping, like, you should not in any way feel like you have to be grateful to Christopher Wray because he didn't prosecute your sister on utterly baseless grounds. The things your sister said, you know, what she told people about Paul Manafort was, like, on Wikipedia. It was public knowledge.

Andrea Chalupa:

[laughs] Yep.

Sarah Kendzior:

You know, she didn't do anything. But I think we've been so brow-beaten.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yes.

Sarah Kendzior:

And people have been so persecuted both in a, you know, the abuse of the rule of law, but also through the media, through a demoralization campaign, through all these things, that your basic dignity, your basic pride is constantly under threat. There would be no justification for Christopher Wray going after your sister and there's plenty of justification for Christopher Wray being fired and also investigated for his own role in letting January 6th happen and not following through on other cases like Epstein, like all of Trump's crimes, like obstruction of justice, like the Mueller Report, like, you know, the many, many things that he's supposed to be doing and isn't.

Sarah Kendzior (23:14):

And this of course also applies later to Merrick Garland as well, and it applies to Biden who could remove both of them and is choosing not to because they are all part of the same broken institutions; institutions that are failing the American people to the point that were supposed to express supplication, in their view, if they don't, you know, kill us or jail us outright. Instead, they should be working for us. We're the ones who pay their taxes. We're also the ones who are very interested in their crimes. And that's one of the reasons that they launch these propaganda-style campaigns of intimidation. But on that note though, when you were talking before about violence being normalized, you know, I was thinking about that because we've reached the point where violence is expected.

Sarah Kendzior (24:02):

You know, mass shootings are expected. Murders like this are expected because we've seen so many of them, so they don't shock you like they would in 1999 with Columbine or something like that. But there's a difference between what is expected and what is accepted. And I don't think that we're at the point where this is accepted. Most Americans, regardless where they live, want far more restrictive gun laws, and that includes the vast majority of gun owners. Most Americans are upset and appalled at these crimes. And again, that crosses political lines. Most Americans are deeply frustrated—to say the least—with our leadership for doing nothing for so long. And I think they want us to believe that this is normalized. They're trying to normalize it. They're trying to get us used to these images. You know, that was something I'm gonna get to, you know, describing what happened in Allen, Texas over the weekend.

Sarah Kendzior (25:00):

But, you know, there are very graphic images of murder and there are snuff videos all over social media to the point that I can't be on there. I can't be on there because I can't look at that. I never want to see that. I don't need to see a Black man get strangled to death on the subway to believe that it happened. I don't need to see a shooting in a mall to believe that it happened. We've seen this before. We've seen this all throughout history. We've seen this far too much in our lifetimes. And so we don't need to see it. And I think seeing it is bad for us. And if you have children, you've gotta tell them to get off the internet and tell them why, because otherwise they get super curious and they just go nosing around for stuff.

Sarah Kendzior (25:43):

You know, tell them there are these graphic videos of extreme violence of real human beings and that they should protect themselves from it because it's bad for your soul. You know, it will break you inside. But I think most people have the reaction that I have; most people cry or feel anger or feel hurt when they see this. And this also extends over into the political scene. We're always told there are two sides, or that there are two Americas, and then they'll use something like support of Trump as an example, where almost everyone hates him. His numbers have always been low, the same way most people hate the NRA, the same way most people hate Congress, the same way most people hate the media. Most people are actually united in their disgust for all of these evil and vicious people and institutions that fail us.

Sarah Kendzior (26:33):

Most people don't want this, but there is a contingent of people—of powerful people—who want us to believe that our fellow Americans want this. That the typical American is someone like Mauricio Garcia, the right-wing domestic terrorist who murdered eight people at an outlet mall in Allen, Texas before he was killed by the police. And so, you know, a little bit of background on this guy: This is a pattern we've seen many times. He had a history of writing misogynistic and white supremacist screeds all over the internet, of praising Nazis online. He wore insignia that indicated he was part of this broader movement of neo-Nazi extremism that, as Andrea pointed out, has been growing really since 2008 once Obama got into office, in reaction to that. But just taking off exponentially after Trump got into office and gave permission to it.

Sarah Kendzior (27:30):

He wore a patch that said “right-wing death squad.” There's no ambiguity here as to what he stands for. And he of course overlaps with other killers where you have these warning signs, you know, a history of threatened violence against women or actual violence against women, a history of reading white supremacist content and participating in forums and stuff. There is a pattern here, there is a prototype. There have been people like Marjorie Taylor Greene and others who've tried to distract from that and make him some kind of exception, saying he can't be in support of white supremacy because he's Latino. As if, you know, Enrique Tarrio, the leader of the Proud Boys, doesn't exist; as if Nick Fuentes, who you may know from that video with Kanye West and Alex Jones during Kanye's biggest white supremacist meltdown phase, you know, is also Latino.

Sarah Kendzior (28:28):

This does not preclude you from being white supremacist this whole country. If you look at the history of immigration to this country, it's founded on anti-Blackness in terms of deciding who gets to be white. For both me and Andrea, when our families came over here... I mean, mine came a few decades before Andreas, like in the 1910s, 1920s, you know, from Poland. They were like borderline white. They were like, kind of white, but not quite white enough; not quite white enough that, you know, Protestant white people would be comfortable with them, or even, you know, at that time, like Irish Americans, you know, other Catholic Americans would be comfortable with them. I wrote an article years ago about how people became white in America and one of the examples I used is that in Detroit there's a Polish neighborhood, an Irish neighborhood, and a Black neighborhood.

Sarah Kendzior (29:19):

And in order to convince the polls that they were white, where they really just saw themselves as a sort of other, as just, you know, Polish, primarily, Polish Americans, Irish people did Black face and then went around committing crimes in that neighborhood to try to create this image of Black Americans as, you know, criminal and savage and all these things. And again, this is during this very xenophobic period right after the Spanish flu, after World War I, when there were anti-immigration laws and all these things. This

is an old, manipulative tactic and I think when a minority group or newer immigrants are in America and they're feeling uncertain about their status, one way to show that they are "true Americans" and that they can be accepted by a certain other type of American is to be viciously anti-Black and therefore put yourself a little higher up on the social hierarchy.

Sarah Kendzior (30:16):

And I think that that is what Mauricio Garcia and others have done. And obviously this is not a typical thing, you know, for a Latino American to do. This is just a method of, you know, if you are going to be involved in a domestic terrorist group, this is the type of belief system that these days has a lot of currency. It's backed by a full wing of our political establishment. It's backed by the Republican Party, it's backed by Trump and his people. You can make money from it, you can gain power from it. It has a lot of appeal. And then there is also, you know, there, there's been some discussion of this. I don't know enough about this individual to know if this is where he is getting it, but right-wing death squad of course evokes Augusto Pinochet, the CIA-backed dictator of Chile who tortured countless people—

Andrea Chalupa (31:06):

Who is featured in our book.

Sarah Kendzior (31:06):

Who is in our book for his torture and massive abuse for over a decade against anybody who he perceived as his enemies, doing things like dropping corpses into the ocean from planes and from helicopters, like a really horrific rule that he took pride in and his supporters took pride in. They liked calling themselves a right-wing death squad and so do these mass shooters. And that's a very frightening phenomenon.

Andrea Chalupa (31:37):

They take body count prizes. They count their wins like hunters, like first person shooter video game players. They glorify online in their little communities over the body counts of these mass shootings.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah.

Andrea Chalupa:

Holy shit. It's like, if we don't pull the plug on this... This is straight... This is dystopian, what we're living through.

Sarah Kendzior (32:00):

Yes. It needs to be called out as such. I knew what you meant about the normalization, but I still see it as an attempt. And so we need to be very vehement that this dystopia that they are attempting to create, it's being forced on us. It's not something that most people are choosing. It's something that almost everyone is fearing. And because we're also afraid of it, you know, we are afraid of being in the wrong place at the wrong time, it comes to be seen as normal; not as in a way of like good or right or something like that, but like more common than it actually is because it's so hard to get it outta your mind, because it really is your worst fear personified. You look at those families doing ordinary things, you know, going

to the mall, going to the movies, going to school, and it's a horror movie. It's a nightmare. But they want that constantly in your mind because they want to be able to control you. But anyway, go on.

Andrea Chalupa (32:52):

Yeah. And it... [sigh] I don't know guys. I don't know how we get out of this. I mean, they have... I remember when people in 2016 were like, "I want Trump to win so they could burn it all down and then we can rebuild in the ashes." You had people on the Left saying this. You had Susan Sarandon using her big powerful platform on television/cable news saying this, that Trump will bring the revolution faster because he'll radicalize people. It is extremely difficult to crawl out of a black hole of corruption, which is where we currently find ourselves with this NRA that has Congress on lock, certainly the House on the Republican side, certainly the Senate because Dick Durbin and other leading Democrats aren't doing enough to force Feinstein to finally step aside—

Sarah Kendzior:

[sigh]

Andrea Chalupa:

—which is holding up Biden's ability to get judges passed in order to balance out the courts that were aggressively packed by Mitch McConnell and Trump, including, of course, as we're all constantly reminded of, the Supreme Court.

Andrea Chalupa (33:54):

And so, yeah, it's obvious that the majority of Americans are significantly more progressive and liberal than the current power structures that are holding us hostage. And as I mentioned at the start of the show, it's all a big extension of the original devil's bargain that founded this country, which was the compromise that allowed the electoral college (the three fifths compromise), that protected the land-holding class, that that protected money, that protected land ownership, that protected genocide, the genocide of Black people, non-white people, and that included of course the enslavement of Native Americans who had their nations, their families destroyed, and then they were enslaved for many generations to build this country. And the original founding, the federalization of our country, came together around that double's bargain. And we've been paying the price for it, and the world has been paying the price for it ever since, including, you know, George W. Bush losing the popular vote, getting electoral college and then unleashing the four horsemen of the apocalypse, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Condoleeza Rice, Bush. It's a whole presidential cabinet of, of course, the apocalypse, which of course led to Afghanistan, which we're still suffering under today.

Andrea Chalupa (35:16):

And not as much as the Afghan people, especially the women and girls who are now under Taliban rule viciously after all of the mass casualties we caused there, the civilian deaths and the instability that we brought and the corruption and so on that we worsened there. And then Iraq, of course, famously, Iraq—so Halliburton can make some money and so on. Again, it all comes down to this hostage situation that we're in with this political structure because the money class, the land-owning class, will always, always, always use fascism to protect their greed, to protect their wealth. And that is what brings us to Putin's Russia because we have this global war of fascism. And America's fascists—the Kremlin contingent in the Republican Party—they are ideologically aligned with Putin's fascists. We have these Republican cheerleaders for Putin, as we all famously know.

Andrea Chalupa (36:15):

And why is that? Because fascism is... They're proudly linked. They're proudly aligned. And... Ugh. Dear Lord, I just... I feel like when I do this show sometimes, I just feel out of words, what to say about how insane our issues are right now as a country and how there's so many more of us than there are them. And even though we have this hostage situation of the electoral college, the Senate—which represents the land-owning class—this other utter imbalance of representation, we have an opposition party that refuses to call for a united movement to expand the Supreme Court. You have, again, as I mentioned, Dick Durbin, the chair of the Judiciary Committee and so on. Our opposition, we have too many people in positions of power in the opposition, including here in New York State, my state, with a very weakened Democratic party, not meeting this moment.

Andrea Chalupa (37:11):

And they don't understand how dangerous it is. Biden can be around to keep the lights on, but after Biden goes, it's going to be a free for all. It's going to be an absolute free for all because the Nazis are at the gate. The barbarians are at the gate, and they're banging through and they're making headway. There needs to be a full-throated, honest confrontation discussion. I mean, you have CNN platforming Donald Trump, like they did in 2016 under Jeff Zucker. It's all coming back around again. And my God, we're in for like 10 years of frog boiling in a kettle madness of what Jeff Sharlet, our recent guest, called “a slow moving civil war.” The death count, the body count is only going to go up if we do not have an honest conversation, force our elected leaders to have an honest conversation that America has a Nazi problem, which brings us to the Russian Nazis.

Andrea Chalupa (38:01):

Today's May 9th. We're recording this. It's famously Victory Day in Russia, which represents the victory of the Soviet Union against the Nazis in World War II. Nevermind that the Soviet Union got World War II started with the Nazis when they signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, the Nazi-Soviet pact which brought the Nazis and the Soviets together in this diplomatic alliance that included a secret deal for the Nazis and the Soviets to carve up Europe together. And what did that lead to? That led to the Nazis invading Poland in September, 1939, followed two weeks later by the Soviets invading Poland in September, 1939. And then the Nazis and the Soviets got together and had a military parade together. And that leads to World War II. That's what got World War II started. And the Soviets were the mass murderers first, right? The Soviets, Stalin.

Andrea Chalupa (38:58):

They all got away with mass murdering millions. Millions. And the Nazis did not start killing on such a grand scale until the Nazi-Soviet pact, the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. Stalin and Hitler joining forces in that alliance, carving up their spheres of influence that they agreed to together, invading several nations, just having a smash-and-grab across Europe together, these two madmen swallowing up Europe, committing genocides, mass murdering, terrorizing and so on. Stalin, joining forces with the Nazis allowed Hitler to really unleash an even worse version of Hitler. You cannot mention that in Russia today. You'll be fined several tens of thousands of dollars, likely arrested. Putin himself personally demanded that any comparisons between the Soviets and the Nazis be criminalized. And he famously, under his rule, has brought back the cult of Stalin. And under Stalin, they worshiped Victory Day.

Andrea Chalupa (39:57):

They worshiped their victory over the Nazis as like this religious fervor. And since then, they have projected that religion, that cultish worship of Stalin and so on, and their war against the Nazis on Ukraine, nevermind that Ukraine has a Jewish leader whose own family perished during the Holocaust, nevermind that it was Ukrainians that suffered some of the worst, worst oppression, terror, and mass

casualties during the Nazi invasion and occupation of the Soviet Union. Hitler defied his own generals, who wanted him to go for the nerve center of the Soviet Union, to go towards Moscow. Instead, Hitler had his eyes on her resource-rich, culturally significant Ukraine, which has always been this jewel for empires. And so Hitler prioritized Ukraine in his invasion, invaded Ukraine in the early hours, just like Russia did in February of 2022 when the first bombs from Russia started falling on Ukraine, Ukrainians on social media were saying, "Oh my God, Putin, Russia, they're invading us just like the Nazis did."

Andrea Chalupa (41:07):

And so I want to play a clip now from three-time *Gaslit Nation* guest, Timothy Snyder. He was also one of the historians on my film, *Mr. Jones*. He is going to bring back some important history that Putin likes to forget in his gaslighting of Victory Day, the cult of Stalin, you know, blaming, creating fascists in Ukraine and so on. So we're gonna play a clip of that now to reveal the real history that people need to keep in mind on this Victory Day and every Victory Day in the future and why it ties into today.

Timothy Snyder (41:40):

It's worth being specific here about the difference between Ukraine and the rest of the Soviet Union for two reasons. The first is Ukraine was the major war aim. Ukraine was the center of Hitler's ideological colonialism. But beyond that, in practice, all of Soviet Ukraine was occupied for most of the war, which is why for Ukrainians today, war is something that happens here as opposed to elsewhere. Hitler never planned to conquer any more than 10% of Soviet Russia. And in practice, German armies never occupied more than 5% of Soviet Russia. And that for a relatively brief period of time. Now, Russians suffered in the Second World War in a way that is unthinkable to Western Europeans, in a way that is unthinkable even for Germans. But nevertheless, when we think about the Soviet Union, the place of the Soviet Ukraine is very special, even by comparison to Soviet Russia. In absolute numbers, more inhabitants of Soviet Ukraine died in the Second World War than inhabitants of Soviet Russia.

Timothy Snyder(42:51):

In absolute terms. And these are the calculations of Russian historians. In absolute terms, which means in relative terms, in proportional terms, Ukraine was far, far, far more at risk than Soviet Russia during the war. In other words, it is very important, as Marielouise Beck precisely and correctly formulated it, to think of the German Vernichtungskrieg against the Soviet Union. But at the center of that Vernichtungskrieg, precisely, is Soviet Ukraine. So if we want to talk about German responsibility for Russia, very good. But that discussion must begin with Ukraine. Ukraine is on the way to Russia. And the greatest malicious intention and the greatest destructive practice of the German war was precisely in Ukraine. If one is going to be serious about German responsibility for the East, the word "Ukraine" must be in the first sentence.

Andrea Chalupa (43:50):

There was a recent drone attack on the Kremlin itself, which some people have debated, "Is it a false flag? Is Putin trying to create some sort of excuse to tighten security or to justify having a scaled down Victory Day parade?" because it was just like one antique tank or so and trucks. The Victory Day parade was pathetic. But, you know, that whole drone attack, it's embarrassing to the Kremlin and Putin, whether they orchestrated it or not. If they didn't orchestrate it, it shows great vulnerability to the state. If they did create this drone attack of the Kremlin, it shows that they are desperate; they are beyond desperate, and they may have even already lost the war in many ways, even though the genocide keeps going. And another other thing people should pay attention to is that the elite Russian warlord criminal civil war is heating up.

Andrea Chalupa (44:46):

You have Prigozhin and his Wagner group (named after Hitler's favorite composer). He's threatening to pull out of Ukraine. He posted a video recently of himself ranting at the Russian administrative defense in front of a pile of dead Russian mercenaries, blaming Ministry of Defense for this. And the latest video... This is how the... This is the real celebration of May 9th today for Russians. He calls Putin a happy grandpa. He went for Putin himself finally in one of his famous rants, which shows you this probably isn't being done by some FSB puppet masters. That this civil war in the Russian mercenary elite is real and all of this anxiety and all of this fear coming out of the Russian side is very much in anticipation of Ukraine's big spring counter push which, hoping to God if Ukraine gets everything it needs from the West, including, Biden, if they get the jets they need, if Jake Sullivan stays out of their way and actually atones for his sins back in 2014 and gets Ukraine the long range missiles, the jets, more tanks, everything it needs, then Ukraine will ultimately get the victory that Ukraine deserves and that the whole world needs in this global fight of democracy versus fascism.

Closing Clip (46:06):

<https://twitter.com/DefenceU/status/1565037514888560641>

[outro music - roll credits]

Andrea Chalupa:

Our discussion continues, and you can get access to that by standing up on our Patreon at the Truth-teller level or higher.

Sarah Kendzior:

We encourage you to donate to help rescue and recovery efforts in Turkey and Syria following the devastating earthquakes in early February. To help people in Turkey, visit the TPF Turkiye Earthquake Relief fund at tpfund.org.

Andrea Chalupa:

To help Syrians in need, donate to the White Helmets at whitehelmets.org. We also encourage you to help support Ukraine by donating to Razom for Ukraine a razomforukraine.org. In addition, we encourage you to donate to the International Rescue Committee, a humanitarian relief organization helping refugees from Ukraine, Syria, and Afghanistan. Donate at rescue.org. And if you want to help critically endangered orangutans already under pressure from the palm oil industry, donate to the Orangutan Project at theorangutanproject.or and avoid products with palm oil.

Gaslit Nation is produced by Sarah Kendzior and Andrea Chalupa. If you like what we do, leave us a review on iTunes. It helps us reach more listeners. And check at our Patreon. It keeps us going.

Sarah Kendzior:

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

Andrea Chalupa:

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Sarah Kendzior:

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Andrea Chalupa:

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