

Gaslit Nation Transcript

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"Israel and Palestine: A Difficult Discussion"

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/israel-and-90745457>

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[opening clip]

Reporter (00:30):

It's hard to even explain exactly just the mass casualties that happened right here. In fact, the Israeli military says they still don't have a clear number, but I'm talking to some of the soldiers and they say what they've witnessed as they've been walking through these different houses, these different communities; babies... Their heads caught off. That's what they said. Gunned down families, completely gunned down in their beds. You can see some of these soldiers right now comforting each other, many of them reserves who jumped into action leaving their own families behind as well, not knowing the sheer horror that they were about to come to. They say they've never experienced anything like this. This is nothing that anyone could have even imagined when you're walking through here; baby cribs thrown to the side... Doors thrown wide open, still some Israeli bodies still here because the fighting in this community just ended just recently.

Reporter (01:32):

So many of these troops are still going house to house, door to door. It's taken them sometimes 30 minutes, 40 minutes because many of these houses also still have grenades in them, booby traps. In fact, as we're trying to get closer to some of these scenes, we're being told, "No, no, no. Get back!" from some of the Israeli military because there are still grenades in the area. I want us to keep walking through, continue to kind of see the destruction that's happening on the ground here. Even something as simple as a soccer net just left to the side here as people were with their families playing. I see in the distance more bodies being covered, all the while as they're covering these Israeli bodies trying to evacuate everyone else from the territory, taking all of the casualties out of here. It's also littered with the bodies of terrorists. So we're hearing from one of the lead commanders here. It was anywhere from maybe 70 armed terrorists who made their way here from the Gaza border fence, which is less than a quarter of a mile away. And as I said, the atrocities that they committed; violence with guns, with grenades, with knives, targeting these innocent civilians inside their homes.

[end clip]

Andrea Chalupa (02:43):

Welcome to this very special episode of *Gaslit Nation*. I am Andrea Chalupa, a journalist and filmmaker and the writer and producer of the journalistic film, *Mr. Jones*, about Stalin's genocide famine in Ukraine; film that Josh Hawley—the asshole of Missouri—absolutely needs to watch because he's tweeting about how Ukraine doesn't matter and "Let's give all the support to Israel." We're living in a time where the fascist kleptocrats and their lobbyists in the halls of power around the world, especially here in the US, want to pit victims against each other and we're not going to let them do it. Genocide anywhere is a risk to all of us, as we keep seeing throughout history. So we need to stand united, side by side with the civilians who are on the front lines of some horrific wars right now. And we're going to be talking about

the mass trauma, the mass slaughter that went down this weekend across Israel with a surprise invasion by Hamas terrorists, and now the war that Netanyahu, who has installed deliberately around him in power known terrorists who want to genocide Palestinians is now unleashing bombings and likely a ground war of Gaza, which is considered by the United Nations and other human rights watchdog groups as the largest open air prison.

Andrea Chalupa (04:09):

This is a conversation that requires a lot of nuance. Terrell, my dear friend in life, is here. He's somebody who is in my heart. We spend holidays together. He's family. Terrell is the host of the must-listen-to podcast, *Black Diplomats*. He has been to the West Bank. He did an incredible series on Iran. He's going to join me in this conversation. If we get anything wrong, if there's anything that we say that triggers you or you think we needed to provide greater historical context, or you want to join the conversation anyway—because we've all gone through a greater escalation of the hell we were already living with in the massive instability in the world right now and the dangers that this is breeding—so if there's anything we've said that you want to add to build upon correct, whatever your thoughts may be, please join that conversation.

Andrea Chalupa (05:00):

You can leave a comment as always on our Patreon, on YouTube, on Mastodon, on Spoutible, on Threads, on BlueSky. Email [gaslitnation@gmail.com](mailto:gaslitnation@gmail.com). That's [gaslitnation@gmail.com](mailto:gaslitnation@gmail.com). Please keep your comments obviously civil, fact-based, provide sources, provide whatever you want to flag for us. I will read all of them. I will look at some to consider sharing on the show. We want to be as sensitive as possible to everyone who's impacted here. And as always, as we always say on the show: in a time of rampant disinformation and elite far-right violence, what we need to do is center the people caught in the middle, the people who are being targeted here, and that's what we intend to do in this conversation. I want to point out there's been many reports that Elon Musk, Apartheid Barbie, his Twitter is monetizing and therefore financially incentivizing the spreading of disinformation.

Andrea Chalupa (05:55):

As a result, you have accounts making money off of making clips of shoot 'er up video games, violence and video games going viral, claiming it's from Israel and so on. And Musk's Twitter also stopped using software that detects disinformation campaigns. And so it's become, as the UN said, "the largest disinformation outlet in the world," specifically Russian disinformation but all sorts of bad actors are now trying to monetize off of lies, spreading lies. So as a sort of pushback against that, please look out for the [show notes](#) of this week's episode where I collected a lot of important, widespread analysis of the situation in Israel and Gaza. And so I strongly urge you to check that out and read it. And again, you can email me at [gaslitnation@gmail.com](mailto:gaslitnation@gmail.com) if you come across anything that isn't important to share with our audience. Okay, so I want to just start this conversation by saying I was supposed to appear on a podcast this morning that we all know and love, but the hosts could not do it.

Andrea Chalupa (06:56):

They called me up and said, "We cannot record today. We do not have it in us. We do not want to talk during this time of mass grief and collective shock. We're going to sit this conversation out" and they encouraged me to do the same here on the show, but I'm going to go ahead with Terrell because this whole show exists to help each other through this time of shock and collective grief. We are really grieving together. Like many of my listeners, I had to put on a brave face for my children all weekend when I did not feel like it, and I had to really force that smile for my kids when all I was thinking about was how haunted I was by these images coming out, just like an ISIS-level attack on our collective psyche. It's the worst loss of Jewish life since the Holocaust.

Andrea Chalupa (07:41):

You saw videos of women's bodies being dragged with blood clearly between their legs, reports of babies being beheaded. There's a video of a family whose 18-year-old daughter was killed by terrorists. You can watch this video of the father's hands covered in blood, the mother having to comfort her two surviving children—a boy and a girl—while in complete shock. And you watch this video and you think, What happened to them? What happened to them? Did they survive? I still don't know. I was looking for reports. I don't know what happened to them. Around a thousand people were killed by the terrorists; over 150 taken hostage into Hamas-controlled Gaza. Those are just the numbers so far. Hamas, to be clear, is a terrorist group that carried out this invasion that included paratroopers, which clearly signals that this attack had sophisticated planning and sophisticated assistance.

Andrea Chalupa (08:33):

The *Wall Street Journal* reporting pointed to the obvious: that Hamas had support from the terrorist regime of Iran where a 16-year-old child was recently beaten into a coma by Iran's so-called morality police. I want to say to the DSA folks or anyone on the so-called progressive left cheering on the ISIS terror coming out of Israel—and you are the same people that like to both-sides Russia's genocide in Ukraine and try to blame the victim of Russia's genocide in Ukraine—I am all for fighting for a progressive America, for raising the quality of life in America through all the social programs that we need to desperately reverse the morbid, troubling trend of life expectancy plummeting in the US right now. I'm all for the progressive movement, but your foreign policy is so fucked up. That's why *Gaslit Nation* exists: to provide the left, to provide progressives with a sensible, common sense, based in reality, humanistic foreign policy.

Andrea Chalupa (09:38):

You simply do not cheer on... There's no justification for the ISIS-level terror that we saw coming out of Israel. There's none, none, none, none. And everyone involved in that DSA nonsense should be ashamed of themselves. And that's another hit on New York City politics here locally. I don't give a fuck if I'm not fashionable or I'm not going to get invited to your bullshit parties. Really, you guys have lost the plot on that. This is such a fucked up situation. We're going to go through it all now. This is one of the first times since the launch of Russia's full-scale genocide in Ukraine in February, 2022 where I'm seeing researchers, analysts, journalists, talking to each other about PTSD, about how to do your jobs, how to collect the information you need and analyze it for your audience without yourself succumbing to PTSD and grief. That is something that is an important conversation we need to continue to have because we are first and foremost humans. It's impossible for me to look at what's happening there in Israel and Gaza and not see my own kids.

Andrea Chalupa (10:48):

[long pause] So we're going to move on in the conversation. So I want to just sort of preface this, just a summary of today's discussion Terrell and I are going to go into all the nuance of it. The reality is whatever you think of Israel, whatever you think of Israel, I want to remind people on all sides of this issue, I know we have people listening who are waiting for Terrell to go into the Palestinian point of view because he's been in the West Bank, he has a lot of Palestinian friends. I want to just say to everyone, you cannot understand Israel without understanding generations, going back centuries of just normalized, normalized antisemitism. If you look at the Dreyfus affair, that was a lynching of a Jewish French officer in France. If you look at financial instability in the 1800s, 1900s, who were blamed for that?

Andrea Chalupa (11:42):

The Jews, right? If you look at the... Before there was Twitter, Elon Musk's, Twitter, there was the Elders of Zion; the disinformation coming out of Russia back then that the Jews had some big Illuminati that they were controlling us with and they always became the scapegoat. Jewish communities for their own survival debated among each other how to protect themselves, how to organize self-defense, how to overcome this. They tried to keep their heads down, they tried to stay in their ghettos. They would even have conversations. They would debate whether they needed to follow a policy of keeping their head down and not shining too brightly in society, or they would risk drawing attention to themselves and becoming a target and inciting another pogrom, more antisemitism rage. There were discussions over building a Jewish homeland, a Jewish state, somewhere in South America. The whole idea that Israel was inevitable... The creation of Israel was actually a very controversial topic among Jewish groups themselves.

Andrea Chalupa (12:44):

It seemed completely farfetched, it seemed unrealistic. It seemed like something so out of reach and extreme. It was debated, it was argued. It wasn't ever inevitable. It was something that was finally made possible because the world allowed the Holocaust to happen, because the world turned away Jewish refugees and sent them back to slaughter. And it was really the shock of all those films and eyewitness testimony and the allied soldiers investigating concentration camps that were being built and operated right out in the open, right? People knew about the Holocaust. Hitler, the Nazis killed significantly more Jews during the entire Holocaust before the US even had a chance to enter the war. And so Israel was really born out of that. Israel was created as an act of self-defense and protection. So I want people to keep that in mind. And that same antisemitism is prevalent today. So wherever Jews are in the world, there is a heightened sense of danger that they are living with, whether it's in the US or anywhere in Europe, because we have this blatant antisemitism being pushed by Donald Trump who lifts rhetoric straight out of Hitler.

Andrea Chalupa (13:57):

He uses the same "impure blood" language of Hitler. So I just wanted to make that clear. And unfortunately what's happened in Israel, especially in recent years, is that it's succumbed to the seduction, to the corruption of the religious extremists; the same band of idiots that we're up against here in the US like Tommy Tuberville, who's holding our Senate, our national security, hostage in the Senate, like the Matt Gaetz in the GOP chaos, which is holding aid for Ukraine hostage, the Moms for Liberty dark money billionaire-funded groups that are trying to take over school boards across this country so they can indoctrinate children with their far-right Christian extremism. So the same forces that have taken over Israel's government—Netanyahu's government—where he has surrounded himself deliberately with the worst of the worst; just think the Michael Flynn's of America. That is who makes up most of Netanyahu's cabinet.

Andrea Chalupa (15:00):

Netanyahu—the Trump of Israel—has been so narcissistic in his hold of power and coming back to power. Thanks to a divided opposition, he comes back to power even though he's been indicted for corruption. And he then continues to surround himself with extremist loyalists like Steven Millers, like Ben-Gvir, the Steven Miller of Israel who is a known terrorist, who as a teenager was harassing former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, trashing his car, stealing the Cadillac emblem off the car, bragging about it and saying, "Next time we're going to get to Rabin." That was all because Rabin had signed the Oslo Accords, which didn't even promise a two-state solution for Palestine, for Palestinians, okay? It didn't even go far enough, the Oslo Accords, and what happened? A terrorist like Ben-Gvir assassinated Rabin two weeks later. And Ben-Gvir goes on to continue his racism, to continue his terrorism, vowing to kill all the Arabs, vowing to kill all the Palestinians.

Andrea Chalupa (16:00):

And their whole mode of operation, what they want to do, is they want to terrorize and kill and push out and take over the homes of as many Palestinians as they can to force them out and into Arab nations. It's a genocide what they're trying to carry out. And Netanyahu elevated this person to his government at the same time where he's trying to desperately dismantle democracy and checks and balance in Israel by taking away the power of Israel's Supreme Court. And Netanyahu, in doing this, in looking out for his own survival has also allowed this culture of impunity across Israel where the Ben-Gvir types can go in and destroy mosques, mock Palestinians openly, and celebrate those who commit violence against Palestinians. You see these Israeli settlers who are going into land that they should not be going into who have these broad smiles on their faces in court because they know they're going to be protected by the political structure in Israel.

Andrea Chalupa (17:02):

And all of this, we have to point out that Netanyahu clearly, I believe, wanted this war. If you look back in 2019, he was saying to his Likud party that they had to elevate Hamas, they had to fund Hamas. They wanted Hamas to come up and do something dramatic like this. Why? Because then it gives them—Netanyahu's government—the excuse to go to war with Hamas and wipe out Gaza and continue their genocide. And by being a wartime prime minister, that creates a situation where everyone's forced to rally around the flag, rally around the leader. If they can't get rid of him, they will deal with the corruption later. They'll have to table that for later, but right now they have to unite and the person they're uniting around is a corrupt criminal. And so it's a fucked situation in Israel. And our sympathies, our loyalty are to the civilians on both sides of this issue who are caught in horrific literal crossfire in this.

Andrea Chalupa (17:58):

And I want to make that very clear. What Hamas did was evil. Unfortunately, Israelis have a corrupt kleptocrat in power who weakened the government, producing the worst intelligence disaster in Israel's history leading to the slaughter of countless innocents, all so he could stay in power and all so he could give his rabid extremist supporters the war they wanted so they can carry out their genocide. What you'll see next: They'll likely use their wartime powers to dismantle democracy in Israel and stay in power. But I do believe that there is strong talent rising in Israel now. You have uplifting stories that you could read about in the show notes of this week's episode about Israelis on the left who have been pushing for a two-state solution, who have been calling for dignity and human rights for Palestinians who are now out there risking their lives to save lives, and they're rising up as leaders in this moment of crisis.

Andrea Chalupa (19:00):

So maybe Netanyahu might lose his grip on power. Maybe Ben-Gvir will be pushed out and lose his grip on power. But that's unlikely because Netanyahu is a survivor and he's going to cling on, and the security of Israel is going to suffer as a result. He's not the person that is needed for this moment. He's like a George W. Bush of Israel who's going to lead the country into disastrous wars that are going to be like a Pandora's box for the region and the world. And more support of this are, there's several reports that the Egyptian government had warned Netanyahu's government that there was an attack coming, that there's something big that was in the works. Egypt confirmed this. Sure, people can claim, "Well, it's the Middle East; Egypt could just be trying to put out false information to discredit Netanya and hurt the Israelis." Sure, that's certainly true.

Andrea Chalupa (19:49):

But what is obvious with our own eyes is that Israeli analysts themselves had warned that Netanyahu's chaotic government that was prioritizing holding onto power and dismantling democracy over that Supreme Court battle was weakening Israel. That is a fact. There were warnings that what Netanyahu

was doing was creating a major security threat for Israel. Why? Because he had his eye off the ball. He put all his focus on the West Bank when the attack came out of Gaza and he just was asleep at the wheel. If Netanyahu wants to talk about, if the Israelis want to talk about this being their 9/11: In our 9/11, George W. Bush was told that terrorists were determined to use our own planes as weapons against us. There was plenty of intelligence warning them, and George Bush's White House was completely asleep on the wheel of that. And some could even argue the case that yeah, because they wanted their war, they wanted to make excuses to go into Afghanistan and Iraq even though those that planned 9/11 and were on those planes were Saudis.

Andrea Chalupa (20:51):

But nevermind that the Bushes and the Saudis had a close relationship, which you can read all about in Craig Unger's extraordinarily deeply researched book, *House of Bush, House of Saud*, which we will link to in the show notes for this week's episode. So I just want to say my heart is breaking. My heart is breaking for the people across Israel who are living in terror, who have lost family horrifically to this, who have seen one of the worst days in their history since the Holocaust. And for the people trapped in Gaza who have lost their lives, who feel like they are the walking dead, that it doesn't matter whether they're alive or dead, that it's just a matter of time that they'll be killed by an Israeli missile. There's no easy solution here because Israel has all the power in this situation. And unfortunately that power is being held hostage by a far-right kleptocrat, Netanyahu, who wants to unleash genocide.

Andrea Chalupa (21:47):

And if Israel's coalition could come in and balance out that power and bring a more measured response, and if the Oslo Accords could come back as a starting point for a discussion, even though it was not perfect, and we can push an advocate for a two-state solution to bring back dignity to Palestinians, to free them of Hamas—because remember, Palestinian people are hostages of Hamas in Gaza. There hasn't been an election there in 17 years. So I'm going to step aside now. I just needed to get that all out of my system. And I'm going to now just let Terrell take over the conversation here, and I'm going to put in my 2 cents as we go along, Terrell, because this has been a very heavy time for us. And this is a very big story, and it's going to have major, major ramifications not just for the region, but for Ukraine and the 2024 election, because what this is ultimately doing is it's going to galvanize Trump's base, which is largely evangelical and the evangelicals, being a death cult, believe that the coming of Christ is dependent on blood flowing in Israel.

Andrea Chalupa (22:48):

And so as a result, they're very supportive of Israel. If you think what I just said sounds nuts, again, go to the show notes for this week's episode, [read a report on why evangelicals support Israel](#) and how it's completely self-serving and actually includes a prophecy of the actual destruction of Israel. This war now is going to galvanize a lot of Trump's base. Trump is going to exploit it as being this pro Israel president because he put the US Embassy in Jerusalem when the Oslo Accords had established Jerusalem as for the Palestinians. Plus, his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, is mobbed up with the Netanyahus and has been for life. Netanyahu stayed with the Kushners when he visited the us. They're extremely close. And Jared Kushner's bullshit Abraham Accords was just a bunch of nonsense. It was an effort to normalize relations between Israel and a bunch of kleptocratic Arab dictatorships when the real danger to Israel was the extremism of Israel's government in not reigning in its religious extremists, continuing to build settlements on land that should have been protected for the Palestinians, and creating an apartheid system where to be Palestinian meant daily racism, daily discrimination and degradation, being stripped of your own humanity and just being forced to be like a living dead.

Andrea Chalupa (24:12):

So Jared Kushner, Abraham Accords, gaslighting beyond Belief. It really did nothing except for try to cover up the real cause, the real cauldron of tension, which was Israel having gone too far in its extremist policies and the Palestinians not having a real advocate for ensuring that they would be on any sort of conceivable path to a two state solution, which they desperately need.

Terrell Starr (24:40):

Yeah, I want to thank you for deciding to go on with this conversation, and particularly I appreciate you being my friend because for all of the reactions that I get online, you know me as a person, and when we say we're a family, that's actually, it's not just a loosely expressed term. We communicate every day, almost. And when I'm in New York, we always see each other. And it's important to have this conversation with a friend because we can rely on our friendship in order to work through our stuff and through our feelings. And first of all, my heart just goes out to you for just watching you talk through the first 10 minutes of this. And I live in Ukraine, and a lot of my work is grief as it is. I saw that at the beginning of the war. I've traveled to pretty much every part of this country, and I'm constantly talking with people who have experienced grief, with people who lived in formerly de occupied towns that the Russians took over.

Terrell Starr (26:03):

And thank God the Ukrainian armed forces pushed them out. And the stories that were left behind ring like those very stories that I'm hearing coming out of Israel. And it's just so much grief just compounded. And just as a friend to see you walk through that, it brought me pain as well. And I've also had my own expression, my own conversations with my friends in Palestine and in Gaza, and this pain that everyone is feeling right now, the pain that I feel right now from seeing those images because I don't even spread or look at images or video of Black people being killed, even though I work in Black media, I never watched those videos. So I don't like... Or even here in Ukraine, never shared them, never consumed them.

Terrell Starr (27:10):

I also had conversations with people in Palestine who are already creating their caskets because they feel like they're going to die because the Benjamin Netanyahu-led military is just going to raze them because he's always wanted to do it. And even before this weekend, I've had calls of someone's cousin being killed by the Israeli Defense Forces. 12-year-old children. And the tears and the anguish that I see people expressing now in the world collectively, coming together to say that, "Never again, the Israeli September 11th," I've had these conversations throughout the year. And what really hurts me is that... Number one, it hurts me because I didn't see the world react with these people—and it is painful to even say it because you don't want to think, okay, care about my issue versus mine and getting into these silos, and that's not what we're doing with this conversation. This collective pain that everyone is participating in...

Terrell Starr (28:20):

I just wish that the world would see the pain of the people that I talked to. I've had a number of conversations with people who call me and say, "Well, my family and Gaza, they're just getting ready to die." And those are the people, like you said, the civilians. They're being lost, in particular the Palestinian civilians. And what further frustrates me about the conversation or hurts me is that people don't understand the passion with which I talk about Palestine because I've never conflated Hamas with Palestine. And when people say Palestinians support Hamas and they try to point to these very misconstrued polling data, I can tell you that, number one, there hasn't been an election in 17 years. And the PLO and the other groups, you know, political groups that are in Palestine have been willing to have a conversation that leads to a peaceful two-state coexistence or some variation of that.

Terrell Starr (29:26):

But Benjamin Netanyahu has rejected that. And over the years he's become more xenophobic for the sake of maintaining his power. And I think that what's missing in these conversations is that we really don't understand how Western hegemony has dominated how we view ourselves and which camps that we're in. And at the end of the day, you have the one percenters of political global leadership that are creating these conflicts through their screwed up policies, and they're getting the civilians—us, we're the ones that are suffering from this. And what I really challenge all of us to do is to understand, Why are these structures the way that they are? And that sometimes means that we have to challenge the various systems that we feel benefit us or benefit our side. When people talk about Palestinians, for example, I can think back to the days when Mike Brown was killed. Some of the first people in the world who reached out were the Palestinians who were giving Black activists advice on how to deal with tear gas from police. So when I speak about Palestine, people don't understand that these are relationships that have been built over time. And we didn't get that—and I'm going to be very careful when I articulate this—I will simply say that it was these people who came up and showed Black people love and support. And none of those people were associated with Hamas, which is nothing more than an organized gang. And they also abused the Palestinian—

Andrea Chalupa (31:15):

I don't want to disrupt your thoughts. I want you to keep going on this, so hold that thought. Hamas, a gang. When I told someone, when I broke the news that Hamas had paratroopers coming into the country, they were like, "Hamas does not paratroopers. It's a gang." This was Iran. The fact that Antony Blinken, the Secretary of State of the US can't even come out and say, "This was Iran." It's like... When Hamas has paratroopers, it was Iran. Okay, keep going.

Terrell Starr (31:42):

Yeah, because they don't have enough power to do this on their own. They just don't. They're an organized gang. Let's be quite frank: The Israelis were more than okay with facilitating because it just caused chaos, right? And people just assume that Hamas represents all the people and that nothing could be further from the truth. And when I was in Palestine, I was in Ramallah, I met the PLO leadership. I've met these groups who are not Palestine, and these are the groups of people that the Benjamin Netanyahu administration doesn't want to work with. And we can have all of our criticisms about them because I do. A number of people who care about this region do. But I think that the frustration comes from the fact that the onus is being put on the Palestinians to be these perfect people, to speak out for every atrocity when they see that Israelis too often are not held to that same standard, and it just hurts.

Terrell Starr (32:47):

I try to use my platforms for us to have very difficult conversations. And I know that I'm human too and sometimes because I'm in pain, things are not articulated as smoothly as they can be. But the genesis and the spirit of what I feel is that I really hope moving forward that we take this time to understand when we say "never again," it just can't be this simplistic anti-terror conversation that got us into September 11th; this knee-jerk reaction by George W. Bush to invade Iraq. And what happens is that you have Brown people who suffer from miscalculations, global security decisions. And the Palestinians feel that the civilians will be like cannon fodder for another bad choice to overreact as opposed to going after Hamas. My friends in Palestine feel like the US administration, the European Union, is just going to give them the green light to massacre them.

Terrell Starr (33:56):



I'm speaking on a human level because we can be cerebral about all of this. And there's a point, and you've done a great job of really summarizing things in a way where we can have discussion and discourse. However, I think what really is going to help us make a shift is that we all need to challenge US foreign policy and Western hegemony that creates the value that it is okay to send billions of dollars in aid to Israel—not that they don't need to protect themselves, because they do—we're sending them this money while they're maintaining an apartheid state against the Palestinian people who are constantly stereotyped, who are constantly misunderstood. And we're not doing a good job of holding our own governments accountable. And I do hope that when people listen to me and they listen to you, that they look inside their hearts, not have knee-jerk reactions to what either of us is saying, but do the real difficult work to understand beyond Hamas, beyond those knee-jerk emotional reactions—

Terrell Starr (35:07):

Why is it that the media coverage did not mourn the 12-year-old kid who was shot through the heart by an IDF soldier? Or cry when Palestinian women were sexually assaulted by IDF forces? And this is documented. You can Google this. The last case was about 2018. So I'm not saying anything that you can't Google and verify on your own. I do appreciate the massive slaughter of what we experienced. I really do. And I definitely... My heart goes out to all these people in ways that people don't understand. I know my Jewish friends, when I communicate with them, they're hiding in shelters. I want these people to be safe like I want Palestinians to be safe. When I speak about this subject from a human level, I know people on both sides of the conflict who are sheltering for their lives, and it hurts me dearly.

Terrell Starr (36:14):

And my heart does not bleed any less for one person or the other. And when I come to Ukraine, I know that it's painful for a lot of people when they see me talk about that. I have the Ukrainian flag and the Palestinian flag. I know that it confuses people. I also just want to be open and say that to me, this is a calling. And I genuinely believe that it's my calling and my work's duty to show people that we can do multiple things at the same time. We can seek each other's freedom. People criticized me at the start of the war by saying, "Why aren't you in the United States? Why aren't you focusing on the Black people who are fleeing Ukraine? Why aren't you doing this?" And so at one point over the past couple of years, I got pushback from some Black people.

Terrell Starr (37:13):

And my response has always been, I cannot call for the liberation of one group of people and ignore the liberation of another. And I've had to take people in my own community to task. And what this means for people who are listening is that if we really want to live in this world together, we have to take ourselves to task over things that we miss, over our own passive roles in being silent about other people's oppression. We even have to challenge people within our own social groups in order to move past this because what the power structures want is for us to fight each other. That benefits them. It doesn't benefit us. And I'm so happy, Andrea, that we're having this conversation because I think that it is a real genuine friendship; I don't think that we could have this conversation if we weren't so close.

Terrell Starr (38:14):

You know who I am as a person. And because of this, it's my hope that the audience trusts you that when I talk about Palestine, that it does not beget the tragedy of this weekend. It simply helps us to use this as a building block to understand why tragedies of the previous weekends did not get this attention. And you are the first person... I think we're starting right now with you communicating with me about my social networks, and I hope that this is a great way for other people to learn how to have this conversation. So I'm grateful to you again.

Andrea Chalupa (39:03):

[sigh] Well, you know I love you and we've been through so much together, and we're going to go through so much together. This really is a major turning point for the world, what happened this weekend. And we're going to continue to have conversations around this. And as I keep encouraging our listeners: comment, join the conversation, direct our attention to what you're reading, what you want us to know, what context do you think needs to be included in this discussion as we keep going. It's not Terrell and I talking at you. We are two real-life friends trying to help each other through real grief, real anxiety, real anger. And we're feeling how you're feeling. If you wanted to curl up in a ball and cry, that's how we've been feeling all weekend long. And so join our conversation, comment on what we're saying, share your own insights with us, please, because you're not alone in feeling how you're feeling.

Andrea Chalupa (39:51):

We're feeling it alongside you. We're all in this together. As somebody that is an expert on the year 1933, the year Hitler came to power and turned Germany into a dictatorship in just six months, and Stalin got away with mass murdering millions in Ukraine and normalizing relations with the US, I'm telling you that the world has been going through an escalating crossroads that's extraordinarily dangerous and that humanity has never had to face before. And technology's making it worse. The people in power who are sleepwalking—like, they're doing a Chamberlain sleepwalk through all this—are endangering us. I'm of course talking about Merrick Garland. And it's us, it's the grassroots, it's the independent journalists who are caught in the churning machinery of history that are trying to hold onto each other and not allow anyone to fall through the cracks and carry each other through this historic moment.

Andrea Chalupa (40:46):

And so I do want to talk about Ukraine in the context of this because the big news story is that you have a nonpartisan effort right now in Congress to try to make Ukraine aid conditional on greater anti-corruption protections in Ukraine. Now, when Russia's full-scale genocide broke out in February, 2022, that was a rallying around the flag moment. Blank checks were just written to Ukraine, as they had to be in that moment because the country was fighting for survival. The country faces a genocide. So in that moment, they needed to get what they needed. But it worked. It absolutely worked. Ukraine is standing because of the world's rally-around-the-flag moment. But now that Ukraine fatigue has set in, nevermind that Ukraine has made major advances in this counter offensive—you have the Russian Navy moving its fleet of ships from Crimea because Crimea is very much in play of being liberated.

Andrea Chalupa (41:45):

That's a real thing. What happened with Ukraine's slowed down counteroffensive is you had one of the generals that Putin purged because he was seen as a Prigozhin loyalist put up all these dragon teeth in these big old trenches and minefields that made it extremely treacherous and slowed down the Ukrainian counteroffensive. They've been pulling porcupine needles out of the mouth of a dog. They've been doing this cumbersome, extremely dangerous and mass murdering genocidal resistance of the horrible minefields and dragon teeth that Russia put up. But it has been effective and it is continuing to make an impact, and it urgently needs further investment. So right now, what's going to happen is we have a rally-around-the-flag moment with Israel. Israel's going to get the aid it needs, and I think that's a good thing because Israel needs the resources right now. You have 300,000 soldiers who have been called in, who are in shock right now leaving their families.

Andrea Chalupa (42:39):

That must be very scary for them because their families are left vulnerable because you have terrorists inside the country who have been taking hostages, and they're believed to still be there by the hundreds, by the thousands, who knows, because this is an intelligence failure. But what you have is you have

Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon that has been responsible in part for dragging that country (Lebanon) into economic despair, economic catastrophe. And then of course you have Gaza that's locked in, with the border closed with Egypt and being bombarded. So the concern now is that Hezbollah in Lebanon, backed by Iran—and Russia as well, because it's a partner of Russia in Syria—is going to be opening up a second front. So yes, Israel in this moment needs its rallying around the flag moment to get the aid it needs to just stop the bloodshed, secure its borders and create—

Andrea Chalupa (43:30):

So there's no more of those videos, no more of that terror, no more of that mass rape and mass murder of babies and so on. That needs to end. That needs to never happen again in Israel's history. Okay? But moving forward, if Ukraine funding now is conditioned on Ukraine's anti-corruption war, which I think is a good thing. As somebody who has been a long time Ukraine analyst, I have spoken out directly to the faces of Ukraine's largest donors in State Department-funded meetings, in Lindsey Graham-funded meetings saying, "Get your act together, Ukrainians." I've spoken directly to the faces of Ukrainians' top reformers saying, "You need to fight harder against corruption. Don't be demoralized." I've ruffled a lot of feathers among Ukraine analysts, saying things I shouldn't say because they don't want to talk about corruption. So Terrell, that's part of our bond is you and I will say what needs to be said, consequences be damned.

Andrea Chalupa (44:27):

And so I think one of the best things that could come out of Ukraine's inevitable victory against Russia and its fight for literal survival is that corruption is weakened. The hold of corruption in Ukraine is weakened. And so I do think moving forward, as time goes on, Israeli funding needs to be contingent on Netanyahu getting rid of the extremist terrorist elements like Ben-Gvir and stopping his assault on judicial independence, the Supreme Court of Israel. So if the US government is going to make funding for Ukraine conditional on that country's fight against its corruption, then the same must be said for support for Israel moving forward, because you are securing the very democracy and survival of Israel by doing that. You are helping Israel, you're helping the reformers, the reformers across Ukraine by making that funding condition. You're going to help the human rights activists, the peace activists in Israel.

Andrea Chalupa (45:28):

You're going to help the coalition, the Unity government bringing together leaders across Israel across the political spectrum if you stop the extremist far-right assault on Israeli democracy and make that funding conditional. And you're going to have a lot of people speaking out against that and a lot of pushback against that. But it's Netanyahu who played his own role in weakening Israeli security. He needs to go. Flat out, he needs to go. But that's highly unlikely to happen. So as a result, Israel's own allies, the US, must push back. And there must be a road path to a two-state solution. There must be greater dignity, and there must be a vision that a different future is possible and it's not just going to be Palestinians trapped and living the walking dead. They need to be shown that another future is possible. "Here is the roadmap. Here is the coalition that's going to help you. Here are the international observers and international mediators that are going to help you. Here's how we're going to ensure transparency and peace in the process and make funding to Israel contingent on those road marks being met as time goes on," because if you don't, we're only going to end up back here and there's going to be mass slaughter of innocents on both sides.

Terrell Starr (46:43):

I totally agree with you 100%, but I'm less optimistic that in this current climate lawmakers on either side are going to want to put those conditions in because what's ironic about all of this is that for all the talks of corruption that are weighed against Ukraine—and they definitely deserve it—Ukrainians have done a

better job from my view of addressing this issue than Israelis. And you have to remember that in the past, let's say, 20 years, there have been two revolutions here in Ukraine. And one that has continued to push Ukraine forward. That hasn't happened in Israel. And so now in Ukraine, you have the most pro EU body of politicians ever. And you have a country that just two years ago, before the war, no one was talking about them being an EU member. Now, there are some reports that it's possible that they could get status by 2030, that they would be NATO members eventually.

Terrell Starr (47:51):

And Biden came here to Parliament and chastised the Ukrainians. The activists here encouraged Biden when he came during the Obama administration to chastise our parliament about corruption and challenge Poroshenko. So that's the irony of it. In fact, I would argue that it's unfair to have these standards for Ukraine, but not for Israel. Highly unfair. And what's also troubling about this is that the Israel angle is going to be vastly different in Ukraine for this simple reason. And you mentioned this earlier, and Ukraine aid has been bastardized along with immigration, the border and crime; these very complex issues that deserve nuance have been chopped down into campaign points that center a campaign around white nationalism and then taps into the worst fears of white MAGA voters. The situation with Israel, I think, is going to be different in that this is the evangelical dream, so to speak, this tragedy.

Terrell Starr (49:01):

And as sick as that sounds, I think for people like you, we understand that that's in many of our listeners, definitely is true. This is a white supremacist, white evangelical Christian fantasy. This is their time to show up and really be the beacons of hope that will lead Israel to victory. And so this is going to be a very different campaign rallying call than Ukraine. What I worry about is that in both cases, we're not talking to our public about what America's responsibility ought to be, because the question is what have we learned? What this tragedy that happened this weekend, what we haven't learned, what I don't see us really talking about is that because we did not pressure Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli administrations before him forced him to make deals not with Hamas—because they're an organized, glorified gang, not a political entity—but the other groups; Fatah, PMO, to talk about this two-state solution, to talk about these two states coexisting.

Terrell Starr (50:09):

The United States hasn't done that. And if they're not going to lead towards that, then we're just going to run into this issue again 10 years from now, 20 years from now. What have we learned about Ukraine? What have we learned that if we don't support one of the biggest countries in Europe that borders NATO on four different fronts, you know, as far as countries, then you're going to continue to have this destabilized country on NATO's doorstep and live through a Russian genocide that we could have prevented. I don't see the learning lessons in any of these conversations, whether it be Israel or Ukraine. And so you're right: With that money, there needs to come these standards of how with this money comes a great responsibility for you to enhance the overall quality of life for your citizens. Who wants to live in a country—and I'm talking about Ukraine where I'm at right now—where you can pay a judge a certain amount of money and the case will go your way.

Terrell Starr (51:14):

It runs rampant. I have personal friends who tell me these stories. And I'm not talking over... tThis year, they tell me about these issues. This is something that the US can do and make conditional with their aid. But with Israel, it's the same thing with corruption. But in order to do that, America has to disassociate itself from this decades-long policy of allowing Israel to run Gaza like an open air prison. And so I definitely agree with you, but I think that this election cycle, this should be the most important

foreign policy cycle ever. But what I fear is that it's going to be bastardized. We're not going to learn anything, and the American people are not going to learn what our responsibility is to both of these countries, and the very difficult work that we need to force our policy makers to do to not let Israel off the hook in order to ensure that Russia will not be able to come in here and commit the genocide against the Ukrainian people once the Ukrainians pushed them out.

[outro theme music, roll credits]

Andrea Chalupa (52:39):

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

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Since Matt Gaetz and the rest of the Kremlin Kaucus want to hurt Ukraine, Ukraine needs all the help it can get as Russia's genocide continues. Donate to Razom for Ukraine at [razomforukraine.org](http://razomforukraine.org).

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](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 [theorangutanproject.org](http://theorangutanproject.org).

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