

Gaslit Nation Transcript

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“Russia and Hamas: What You Need to Know”

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[intro, theme music]

Andrea Chalupa (00:00:10):

Welcome to *Gaslit Nation*. I am your host, 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 that the Kremlin and its useful idiots across the EU do not want you to see, so go out and see it. We're going to be talking about some of those useful idiots today because on the show, helping me stare into the dark abyss, are Olga Lautman and Monique Camarra, two brilliant analysts of *The Kremlin File* podcast. And we are going to be looking at the larger manipulation of the dynamics at play today in the world; how Russia is driving and working with bad actors in the terrorist realm; and, of course, I'm going to include Hamas, Iran, the Russian-linked/Russian-backed politicians and astroturfing protest groups in Europe and elsewhere, and how this mind manipulation threatens to divide Americans even more than we're divided now, leading into probably the worst year of our lives, 2024, the election that is going to determine the fate of the world. So that's a lot that we're going to cover, but this is the stuff that we talk about anyway, and I had to stop our conversation so we could finally hit record because Olga and Monique were cooking and I wanted everyone to hear it, too. So ladies, thank you so much for being here.

Olga Lautman (00:01:42):

Thank you.

Monique Camarra (00:01:43):

Thanks, Andrea.

Andrea Chalupa (00:01:44):

Monique is joining us from Italy, where she is covering the Italian press. And I want to start with Russia. So what is Russia's role, do you think? The timing of Hamas' super sophisticated terror attack where people had cognitive dissonance, where they heard that Hamas used paragliders... This was sweeping, well-funded, well-organized, and the timing could not have been better for Russia. They're losing the war, their economy is shrinking, Putin faced his first meaningful threat to his power; a military coup, and so on and so on the list goes. The sanctions are biting and Trump's being arrested left and right, and he needs Trump to win the White House in order to get the Russian White House back. So the timing of this is really suspicious. Hamas was in Moscow this past week. They were there earlier this year. What are your thoughts on Russia's role in Hamas' terrorist attack and how Russia benefits? Do you see the hand of Russia in this? And if so, why?

Monique Camarra (00:02:51):

Oh, big time. But Olga, why don't you roll and then I'll add.

Olga Lautman (00:02:59):

Where do I begin? That night, I happened to be up as I saw the paragliders coming in and watch the attack unfold on October 7th. And, I mean, I've monitored Hamas. It's not my expertise, but I just monitor anything that Russia is involved with. And these are not their tactics. Russia is the one who has the expertise to breach borders and to carry out invasions. Even Iran doesn't have this. So, historically, just to give a little background, Russia for decades—back to the Soviet Union—has been very close with Hamas. I mean, they have meetings. I mean, they were there last week, but they come to visit Russia at least once or twice a year over the years. At the same time, another key factor is Hezbollah, because Russia worked very closely with Hezbollah, which is another terrorist organization. And they worked so closely together that they set up an operation center in Syria in Latakia to carry out the mass murders of Syrians, which by some accounts can amount to close to a million Syrians that Assad and Russia and Iran have murdered over the past 13 years.

Olga Lautman (00:04:26):

Russia has also been selling weapons to both organizations. Syria has been a transit point for the past year and a half—which is actually very, very frustrating—of Iranian weapons and components making their way to Russia that are being used to kill Ukrainians. When I watched this attack unfold, my first question literally, and I even, I think, as I saw the paragliders coming the first thing I put on Twitter was, “Where is Russia's role in this?” Because... I am sorry. This was a very coordinated attack. Very, very coordinated. This was very well-planned. You saw Iranian fingerprints. Despite what Israel and the US is saying, you saw the Iranian fingerprints in it. But Iranians have limitations into what their expertise are. For instance, even just paragliding into another country: where did Hamas learn to use these paragliders? Where did they train for this?

Olga Lautman (00:05:34):

Because if there were people paragliding over the past two years in Gaza, then obviously we would've seen/heard some kind of reports of, “Oh, look, people are in the air.” But there was nothing. So these people had to be trained offshore. And if I was US agencies and European agencies and Israeli agencies, I would check to see the travel of who traveled to Russia over the past few years to receive the training. And Russia is known to train terrorist organizations. al-Zawahiri, the Number Two of Al-Qaeda, in '97, I believe, was trained six months inside of Russia in an FSB camp. So Russia has a very, very long history of not only providing weapons to terrorists, but also providing the training and everything else; the logistical support and then obviously with it, the information warfare operations that they help conduct, as we're seeing that. You can't step on any platform right now without just seeing a bunch of bullshit mixed in with actual facts.

Olga Lautman (00:06:44):

So I definitely would think Russia has a role in this. And as with Russia's, you know... I mean, again, going back to the Soviet Union, both the Soviets—and actually you could go back to the tsars—I mean, the antisemitism operations over the past centuries have been rampant. I mean, this is the whole exact point of why half of Ukrainian Jews are here and Russian Jews are in the US because in the '70s, the pressure inside the Soviet Union was so great for the Jewish population that the KGB, which Kalugin, who at the time was heading counterintelligence, had told me that he went to a Andropov and said, “Yes, we should sign on to the Jackson—Vanik amendments and let the Jews out so we can ease the pressure here inside of the Soviet Union and at the same time, we can send out Trojan horses and potential KGB operatives who, after they assimilate in Israel and in the US, that we can tap them in a few years and remind them of the motherland and where their loyalty should lie.”

Olga Lautman (00:07:59):

They've conducted these operations for decades. And as with everything Russia does, they have run this well-coordinated global disinformation and hate operation so well that now it bounced back into Russia, as with everything they do. They did this with Covid. They spread so much Covid disinformation and ran such a well-organized campaign against Covid with, you know, all the conspiracies and microchips and whatever. But Russia's not immune to it because they're not shut off from the internet. It came back to them and they ended up having a whole population who did not want to take the vaccine because they thought that there were microchips and some other garbage inside the vaccine. Same thing is happening now. Now you have the whole Muslim community in Russia—it started with Dagestan who attacked an airport, and now they're putting out calls for the whole Muslim community across Russia to unite. And you have to remember, there's close to 25 million if not 30 million Muslims inside of Russia. And now from their global operations, they blew right back to inside of Russia. And it'll be interesting to see how Putin handles it because he cannot tamp down these operations because then he's going to have Kadirov and the Chechens and the Dagestanis and the Ingushetians and everyone who will even bring more challenge to his power and more earned rest inside.

Andrea Chalupa (00:09:37):

You referenced that story of a flight from Tel Aviv landing in Russia and being stormed by a mob, essentially.

Monique Camarra:

Yeah, in Dagestan.

Olga Lautman (00:09:46):

They were hunting for Jews for two days. They were hunting to kill Jews. And the thing is that people think this is some kind of well-coordinated FSB operation. No, it's not. Dagestan... Russia couldn't care less about Dagestan. This is the blowback from the operations they're fueling globally. And, I mean, this is not the beginning. These are the same people who are coming out who have argued over the years how—

Andrea Chalupa (00:10:14):

Yeah, and it's important to point out that Russia is essentially a house of cards. It's made up of all of these different ethnic republics that the Russian forces are squeezing for bodies to feed into its meat grinder. It's not the hipster Russians in St. Petersburg and Moscow who are being sent to war. It's the ethnic republics like Dagestan and elsewhere.

Olga Lautman (00:10:38):

Well, yeah, and that's... Even last year I had said that Russia's conducting ethnic cleansing because the huge proportion, when you look, of how many of these republics were being sent into the meat grinder versus the ethnic Russians. I mean, the figures are staggering when you compare the ethnic Russians to the minorities that are being sent to basically execution.

Andrea Chalupa (00:11:05):

It's ethnic cleansing that could absolutely backfire because they're getting real world combat military training that they could then use against the regime to break away.

Monique Camarra (00:11:15):

Well as a policy. Just to add, okay, a little something just in case anybody wants to read up on these kind of things—what Olga was talking about before from the 1950s, there's a lot of people that have written about it, it being an actual military, economic *and* political strategy that Russia had used and instituted in the 1950s. If anybody is at all interested in reading about it, there's Joseph D. Douglas who wrote a great piece on why the Soviets violate arms and control treaties. And it gives you a very detailed description of how they see treaties and what it really means—and this is really important if we're going to touch on, let's say the protest movements and all the BS that we're seeing online and in the streets—what they mean by peace and what they mean by disarmament, because this is a big, big topic, especially when it's tied to Ukraine as well, because we've seen protest movements about disarmament and “let's call for peace treaties,” but what does it mean in, let's say the Russian mentality and what does it mean for us?

Monique Camarra (00:12:26):

And this is something that if anybody wants to take a look at, it's a great piece. So that's that part there In Dagestan, from my knowledge, they've been having protests for all sorts of things in the past few months; oil prices, the gas prices that have gone up, so every once in a while they torch something. So it's a really destabilized area, which, this is something that the Russians fear and this is also a topic of what it means globally, these kind of small, localized proxy wars in different areas, which is what I think is going to happen, let's say eventually. Eventually. We're starting to see it. We're starting to see it. So I think that's one of the effects of what we're seeing and what it will do to the war in Ukraine, which is what I'm really worried about, especially. I don't know whether you guys have anything to add about that or not.

Andrea Chalupa (00:13:29):

The way I see it—I want to follow up with Monique—is I see it as Russia with its close alignment and very practical collaboration with both Hamas and Hezbollah; Hezbollah controlling southern Lebanon, which has been firing rockets in Israel and threatening opening up another front; Russia completely owns Syria. Syria is now a Russian military base, the first ever it's been able to capture on the Mediterranean. And Russia uses Syria as a staging ground for all of its imperialist operations across the continent of Africa, including sending their proxies over to Sudan where they full on fomented a military coup.

Olga Lautman  
And Niger.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah, and Niger and so on, and the whole Africa operation. And I want to talk to the idiots on the far left; my family, my ideological family, because we agree on domestic issues by and large. But back in the day when so many on the left harassed Syrian human rights activists and turned their back on Syria and amplified Russian disinformation, blaming the victim in Syria and full-on just... It was a horrible capitulation, moral capitulation.

Andrea Chalupa (00:14:47):

And Obama, representing this big, muddled death of truth when it came to Syria, refusing to support the red line that he drew in Syria, which is weakness that invites further tests by Russia. And all that did was allow Russia to capture Syria when we should have had a strong US presence there back in the day. And then if we had, maybe Ukraine wouldn't have happened. And if we had, maybe Russia wouldn't have

been able to push even further militarily across Africa, slaughtering innocent civilians caught in the crossfires of its imperialist ambitions. So, there you go. That's why we talk about these things and that's why we have to focus on this.

Olga Lautman (00:15:28):

I could add on the Syria angle because I work on Syrian issues and I work with Syrian human rights organizations. After the Arab Spring, peaceful protests by I would say 2012 at the earliest, Russia started sending, when Assad's power was being challenged by peaceful protest. These were teenagers—teenagers—who were being slaughtered. Russia gave the green light to Kadirov to send Chechens there. So eventually in 2015, Russians did enter officially, but from 2012 there were Chechens. There were Russian military advisors assisting/working alongside Iran, all the Iranian proxy groups and Assad. And, frankly, Isis, to make sure and quell these protests. And this resulted in close to 1 million Syrians being slaughtered; chemical weapons used against kids and women and elderly. I know people who ran underground hospitals to treat these chemical victim patients. And at the same time as this was happening, Russia had illegally annexed Crimea.

Olga Lautman (00:16:50):

Same thing, little green men. I'm shocked they didn't come in on paragliders. I guess Russia perfected their tactics after, but same exact thing. They annexed Crimea, they occupied (illegally) Donbas. And then you saw the same exact Russian military personnel shuffling from Crimea and, well, from Ukraine because at the time they also tried to take Kharkiv and Odessa and Mariupol and Melitopol and others. You saw the same people shuffling back and forth from there to Syria. And back. And forth. And, I mean, Ukrainians have a huge, huge database of every single person who has operated in Chechnya, their soil and Syria. And at the same time when this was happening, Russia carried out a very, very, very organized disinformation operation and campaign and, frankly, information warfare across the whole globe trying to convince that Crimea and Donbas was legitimately Russian, which it's not. It's Ukrainian territory. Always has been.

Olga Lautman (00:18:07):

And at the same time, running disinformation operations for Assad to cover for his mass murders, to cover for the use of chemical weapons and to cover for the slaughter of innocent Syrians who were being pushed off their land and had to give up everything to move and get squeezed further and further and further. And now these are the same organizations that you see... I'm sorry, I'm not going to say every single protestor. The majority of protestors have extremely good intentions. They are seeing horrific images come out and they are standing up for them. And that is fine. I'm talking about the drivers behind it. And these are the same people who whitewashed Assad's chemical weapons, who whitewashed the execution of Crimean, execution of Tatars. If they're so concerned about Muslims, what happened with the Tatars that were being executed in Crimea who were being put into concentration camps? And that's it. These same people were being repurposed because Russia, back to Soviet days, historically, has always aligned with the extreme left. I'm not even going to call it the far left. It's the extreme fringe left. It's straight up

Andrea Chalupa (00:19:25):

It's straight up horseshoe theory. It's what that French philosopher came up with.

Olga Lautman:  
Yeah.

Andrea Chalupa (00:19:29):

The extremes are so extremes that they meet in the middle.

Monique Camarra:

Yeah, this is something that goes back to the Second World War.

Olga Lautman (00:19:35):

And Russia used these same groups to lie about annexation of Crimea, to lie about MH17, to frickin' glorify Stalin and Lenin, who murdered... I mean, talk about mass murderers. These were mass murderers. And to lie about Syria, lie about Syrian chemical weapons being used and say that this never did happen, when obviously there is more than ample enough evidence that Syrians were subjected to chemical attacks by Assad with the help of Russia's forces. And, frankly, then you saw them being repurposed in various things with US elections in 2016 and then on and on and on. Again, not all the protestors. The protestors legitimately are seeing scenes and they're coming out and voicing their support for Palestine. And I mean, it's the same thing when we saw, you know, what was happening inside of Mariupol—carpet bombing of cities—but the puppet drivers behind this are the people that need to be looked into.

Andrea Chalupa:

Absolutely.

Monique Camarra (00:20:42):

Yeah. And on that, exactly. I mean, we know in London, for example, it was Stop the War that organized a big protest. I listen every single day to radio just to hear what people are actually saying; normal people, the call-in shows and stuff like that. I have it on in the background as I'm working away. And they keep repeating, like Olga said, these are the same narratives that have been carried forward from years and years, all the way back to the early '60s, late '50s anti-American disarmament arguments that they used at that time for anti-nuclear. So it's the exact same. There's no difference whatsoever. You could draw a line all the way through it. And the drivers—as Olga was saying and I mentioned Stop the War—which we saw against Ukraine in Washington supporting Assange and supporting others who are actively and that we know are affiliated with Russia.

Monique Camarra (00:21:49):

So this is what we're talking about. So now they've transposed themselves. In London, they've taken up the mantle of doing this kind of thing. I can tell you that here in Italy, they're using the student unions. They've gone to a micro level. This was a group of people that had formed, I would say probably the first years... I caught them before that, but the first years of Trump's White House. His presidency, 2017, I would say. 2016... No, 2017. I was looking at all the stuff for QAnon at that time when it started to appear and I noticed these crazy Italians talking and I said, "Who the hell is this?" They had YouTube channels set up. They went from very few followers all the way to explosions as we see today, where they take a certain personality, a kid who's in, I don't know, Texas or whatever, playing on his keyboard, and all of a sudden he's got 500,000.

Olga Lautman (00:22:48):

Send them a Russian escort.

Monique Camarra (00:22:52):

[laughs] Okay? Who the fuck is he? Oh, sorry, can I say that? So all of this kind of thing. The Italian, this guy that nobody, who is he exactly? But anyway, the point is that these people started, as Olga was saying, right from early on, and they're just being recycled and they move from one—it's the same narrative, but they move from one crisis point to the other. And I wouldn't say coordinated. It's sort of like they've learned what they have to do, and they probably don't even have to be told or they're given instructions. I have no idea at this point. Not yet. But this is the way, okay, what we're seeing.

Olga Lautman (00:23:31):

No, they're indoctrinated.

Monique Camarra (00:23:33):

Exactly. Well, the ones that are on the absolute left, like, we're talking... I wouldn't even consider them... They're not even mainstream. These people are really dangerous, okay? And they have, let's say fame and access to media. They're punching way over their actual weight. In terms of representation, I can tell you that in the last elections this whole group got something under 4% of the vote, which means they're not even represented in parliament, but they were splashed all over the news, talking anti American, anti NATO—which is really dangerous—and reusing all of those narratives that we've seen for years and years and years. And they're repurposing them. And they just use it. Okay, “Oh, now it's Hamas. Okay, here you go.” Alright. And it's the same thing. I mean, it's absolutely incredible. What's really dangerous in my view as well is that now Russia has more partners.

Monique Camarra (00:24:39):

So we've seen, for example, all sorts of meetings with... I mean, okay, let's put Orbán aside for now, but I mean we've seen them with Vietnam, North Korea. I don't know how much they're getting from these countries. China, okay, constantly. I mean, this is already maybe the third time that Lavror, he's traveling all over the place. So this is what I find dangerous because they're now expanding, whereas before, they were a little more isolated than. Or at least we didn't know. It wasn't public. But now we see them overtly with lots and lots of connections. And this is why I had said before we have to be careful because this means an extension of smaller wars that pop up here and there; little proxy wars and stuff like that.

Olga Lautman (00:25:30):

Russia has been setting off global hotspots. I mean, look at what's happening in Armenia and Azerbaijan. Frankly, everywhere you look, there is chaos unfolding. And again, this would be a completely different podcast episode to have a discussion on the actual issues between Armenia and Azerbaijan, between Israel and Palestine. That, you can sit and have a whole podcast series for a year to discuss all the things that were done incorrectly in these regions. But this is more of Russia if not being directly involved—which I frankly think someone really should investigate—at least coordinating with Iran, with China, with North Korea, and frankly every autocratic regime that wants to see the destruction of the West and wants to see the destruction of human rights, equality and whatnot. And that's where it's dangerous.

Andrea Chalupa (00:26:42):

Yeah. Russia's brand is chaos. It is a terrorist state that is backing terrorist regimes around the world. And why are they doing this? To enrich themselves. To stay in power and enrich themselves. It's a smash-and-grab for wealth and power, and it's just so they can have a whole fleet of super yachts and die in power. That's why they're doing it. They're modern day pirates in a sense, but way worse. And they

torture and carry out just sadistic acts of inhumanity, just like Stalin did. It's the OGPU, it's the NKVD, it's the KGB, it's whatever you want to call it. It's a terror police regime. And it's the anti-imperialist Left that falls for it every time.

Monique Camarra (00:27:29):

Every single time.

Andrea Chalupa (00:27:30):

Like Lucy's football, they just are there. I want to turn to you, Monique, about the reporting that you were mentioning before we hit record out of Italy on the Russian SVR agents that were in Gaza in the lead up to Hamas' big terror attack. Could you speak on that?

Monique Camarra (00:27:48):

No. [laughs] No, it's very brief. They had visited, they had hooked. They had linked these visits with what we know about Hamas and Iran, which had already visited this year; once in October and once in March that we know officially. So this is what. There's seven SVR agents, basically.

Olga Lautman (00:28:17):

And just a reminder that Wagner operated in Syria since 2014, since its formation, which by the way was formed by a GRU colonel who had Nazi paraphernalia stamped on his neck and is a Nazi worshiper. But before that, he came from Syria from the... What was it? Slavonic Corps. So you have had Russians beside Chechens and Russian advisors, you had mercenary groups operating in the region for at least the past decade. I mean, for God's sakes, Malofeev; the king of the far right who runs operations across Europe and through evangelicals and other religious affiliates in the United States to sow division had a freaking mercenary group in Syria. There are so many of them that were there. And also the tactics used, I mean, Hamas, what we saw October 7th unfold; the beheadings, the setting people on fire, the rapes, the executions, the kidnappings.

Olga Lautman (00:29:30):

This is exactly what Russia's been doing since 2014 in Ukraine. I mean, the only thing Hamas missed out is taking children and then erasing their Jewish heritage to reprogram them as Middle Eastern. That's the only thing that's missing because Russia did that on a wholesale scale, taking Ukrainian children, erasing their Ukrainian heritage, making them forget their Ukrainian anthem to repurpose them, brainwash them to be Russians. So I mean, the tactics are very, very similar. And here you have people who overlook what Russia does because they're a country with a supposed leader. They overlook all of this, but then they're very quick to call out the Hamas terrorist attacks. And that's where I want to know what is the difference between Hamas and the Russian military, because frankly, I don't see this in Western militaries. For all the wrong we have done, and God knows I have a lot of criticism of US policy and European policy, but we do not go house by house in towns massacring people, raping women and children in front of their husbands, executing them, cutting their tongues out, setting them on fire. We don't do this. This is not part of our military policy. This is part of, however, the Soviet policy, of the Soviet military, This is what they did in the Afghan wars, first and second, and this is part of the Russian military.

Andrea Chalupa (00:31:08):

It definitely looks like Wagner terror tactics.



Monique Camarra (00:31:12):

Yeah.

Andrea Chalupa (00:31:13):

Militarized terror tactics. Industrialized terror. That's Russia.

Monique Camarra (00:31:18):

Yeah. And you know what we keep forgetting too is that the Wagner... Wagner, I mean all of the irregular troops, the Russian irregular troops are all through the coup belt. We're talking, they're all there and they're still there. They're in 22 countries. I think that's the last count, probably more. They're entrenching themselves in these areas with these kinds of tactics. And we should be looking at the larger picture. And I'm asking, and I have been asking, what are we going to do? We've got the European Union who is basically lagging behind. They still haven't got their act together, still the 12th package they haven't been able to decide on. We've got Slovakia now.

Andrea Chalupa (00:31:58):

And Slovakia's new government is pro-Russian, anti Ukrainian.

Monique Camarra (00:32:02):

Slovakia now. Fitzo. Okay, there you go. You've got Orbán who every once in a while, just takes everybody and is using himself, as Italians say, ricatto, where he threatens in order to get something for himself. The last time, I think it was to take off sanctions from OTP, the bank.

Andrea Chalupa (00:32:25):

There's an Italian word for that?

Monique Camarra (00:32:26):

Ricatto. Oh yeah, of course. There's always... Remember, we're Machiavelli, the Romans. We're really good at this kind of stuff.

Andrea Chalupa (00:32:35):

Is ball-busting an Italian word? [laughs]

Monique Camarra (00:32:36):

You know what? Italians and Russians, that's why they understand each other. This kind of stuff is like, "Got it, okay. Mafia tactics, here we go."

Andrea Chalupa (00:32:46):

There's a lot of love there.

Monique Camarra (00:32:48):

[laughs] It's easy to understand. You know what I mean? So this is the kind of thing. They still haven't put those sanctions or any mechanism whatsoever on Russian diamonds. We've been going after them for months and since the beginning of the war, Alrosa is still operating without any problems and they've

been able to sell their stuff all through the markets. And we're talking huge; billions and billions of dollars. So this is the EU, okay? NATO I think is starting to wake up to the thing, but I don't know how much they're doing. They have to increase production of armaments in Europe, but also in the United States. We're falling behind on what we need to provide to Ukraine to get going because we keep forgetting that all of this other stuff is distracting from the real threat of what is going on right now. And it's Ukrainians dying. And Ukrainians that have to fight in order to save their nation.

Monique Camarra (00:33:46):

We keep forgetting this kind of stuff. All of a sudden it becomes important, the protestor who's talking about disarmament or whatever. It's like, "Oh, come on, okay, look at what is happening on the ground." That kind of situation. It's distracting from this kind of thing. In the US, everybody is shaking. I mean, who are they going to put in the White House? Because this is going to be another factor that will come into play at some point... Well, when the elections roll around. I don't know what kind of reaction Europe will have. I'm hoping that they will continue also because the war is right here in Europe, in the center of Europe, and this is the direct effects. But it's pretty scary stuff, you know, having on the one hand where you have Russia that seems to be growing... Seems to, because we don't really know, just like the Chinese who have the BRI, then you go and look to see what actually gets done. They have this big huge scheme and then you look at the satellite photos and they say, "We've developed this port, it's fantastic." And then you look at the satellite and it's like a little boat on a beach. [laughs] Okay? And that's it. Alright? So, you know, we have to sort of be careful and weigh how much, what are they getting? Is it Russia getting armaments that they need from these countries? Free flow of money? Free flow of other resources that they need? What is it exactly? And Olga knows all about this kind of thing.

Olga Lautman (00:35:15):

And speaking of armaments and Netanyahu, first of all Netanyahu was very cozy with Putin until Russia the past few weeks showed him where their loyalties lie, or at least where their financial—

Andrea Chalupa:

There was an Israeli official who went on to Russian TV and just told them off for backing Hamas.

Olga Lautman:

Mmmhmm <affirmative>. And then second of all, Israel, with the knowledge of the Israeli government, has been providing Russia with technology and weapons to kill Ukrainians. I mean, hopefully now this will stop. But this has been going on because obviously Chinese technology is not cutting it. And the technology and the landset and the Orlan drones and technology is coming. I mean, besides the fact that it's coming from the United States, across Europe, and third party countries, Israel has played a huge role in looking the other way as these things make their way into weapons that are massacring Ukrainians. So, you know, this actually... With Russia, I'm a drop more hopeful because Russia carries out their operations and they always use the same playbook. I swear to God, every time I see something, it's like, literally you can envision the same thing happening. I can even write what their next operations will be because of how they really rarely change tactics.

Olga Lautman (00:36:46):

I am a drop more hopeful because as with all Russian intelligence operations, they not only are getting blowback inside of Russia—which is going to be very interesting to see what happens over the next several months and how it weakens Russia domestically—but they're also getting this divide from the

Republicans, who normally have stood loyal to Russia are now, even though granted they're still spewing anti Ukraine nonsense and against providing aid—which I think is going to happen—but Russia seemed to lose this crowd because now they have shifted right over and now they are... I mean, it's going to be very hard for them to reconcile being loyal to Russia and at the same time pushing for Israeli aid. And luckily on the Senate side, the Republican senators are very, very adamant that they want Israeli aid and Ukrainian aid tied together. So I mean we'll see how it plays out.

Olga Lautman (00:37:48):

As of now, I'm not as much worried, and that's it. So with Russia, they always carry out these operations, but they never fully think them through because there's no one exact response. And same thing here. I worry about the US elections and whatnot, but again, we're absorbing this from social media and we're seeing this heated stuff right now. We'll see what happens in a year from now. I mean, it'll be more clear as we approach even next spring, of where US politics sit. But I can tell you that Russia's Number One policy—not Putin, and that's where people need to stop solely putting everything on Putin because this is the Russian system and the Russian agencies I call the Cheka system, their number one goal will be to disrupt every single European and US elections and to cause as much chaos to stretch the United States and their allies thin. And that's it.

Olga Lautman (00:38:50):

But even that might backfire because I really want to see now with the US moving half of their resources into the Middle East, again, how is Russia going to be able to move weapons back and forth? I mean, what about Syrian and Iranian proxies who are hitting US forces? We are hitting right back and we're going to see a lot more of it. And these are all the same facilities that are producing or storing weapons that are making their way to Ukraine also. So we'll see how it goes with this. I mean, it might end up biting Russia and the ass as well.

Monique Camarra (00:39:29):

And you know what too, even you guys had mentioned, right, Netanyahu and all of that, maybe he can also serve as a cautionary tale, too; different leaders who think that they can do business with Russia. Look at what happens when you cozy up to these kinds of people. What do they think, that they're actually going to get something from Russia and that they're going to now have, let's say, a relationship? Do the Slovaks, does Fitzo really think this? Is it just because that way he can make money and that's it? And again, he'll weaken his state from within. This is what happened in Italy. This is exactly what happened in Italy for years and years and years. I mean, we're cautionary tales. People should be looking at how screwed up our countries are. I'm talking about my country here and I'm talking about what's going on in Hungary and I'm talking about what's going on—and will go on—in Slovakia. That was my point. It wasn't so much, we all know that Netanyahu was the worst thing that could have happened to Israel.

Olga Lautman (00:40:32):

It's the same with Trump. Trump would absolutely coordinate with Russia to frickin' even kill several thousand Americans—

Monique Camarra (00:40:38):

Yeah.

Olga Lautman (00:40:38):

—if it served the purpose for him to gain power or strengthen his power or whatever. So, I mean, and Netanyahu comes from the same—

Andrea Chalupa (00:40:48):

I mean, he practically did. I mean, he let all those Taliban fighters go in Afghanistan, like 5,000.

Monique Camarra:

Yeah.

Andrea Chalupa:

5,000. And on top of that, he let his Russian friends put a bounty on the heads of US military in Afghanistan.

Monique Camarra (00:41:01):

Yeah, exactly.

Andrea Chalupa (00:41:03):

So one thing someone in US intelligence said to me once was that the visa you mentioned—that visa policy back in the '70s, Olga—where Russian good old fashioned Moscow antisemitism said, “Let's get rid of the Jews, let's get them out of our country finally and let's sneak in some Trojan horses.” And it's very similar to the operation, for instance, using religion to entrench Russian genocidal power. A parallel would be how the Russian Orthodox Church was allowed to operate during the Soviet Union because it was the KGB church. They would send these priests that were actually KGB agents all over the world on these goodwill missions. Western officials would cozy up to them and that was how they got their foot in. They collected intel that way. And that's also how they spied on the people and kept tabs on the Russian people domestically. And so a parallel to that is the Jackson—Vanik policy where if you're Jewish, you can go abroad, you can go to Israel, you can go to the US. And by the way, we're sending our KGB agents in this big group of people who are fleeing abroad. And one person in intelligence told me that because of that, Israel, in his own words, he said, “Israel got fucked.”

Olga Lautman:

Mmmhmm <affirmative>

Andrea Chalupa:

He was like, “Israel's so deeply fucked.”

Olga Lautman:

And America.

Andrea Chalupa:

And America, well, think about that whole policy rose with Fred Trump.

Olga Lautman (00:42:37):

I know the policy. I came through that policy.

Andrea Chalupa (00:42:38):

You came through the policy. So the policy was a great thing 'cause it gave us you—

Olga Lautman:

[laughs]

Andrea Chalupa;

—and then it also gave us—

Olga Lautman (00:42:45):

And Vindman, the Vindman brothers came through the policy.

Monique Camarra:

There we go.

Andrea Chalupa (00:42:49):

So we're not trying to paint a broad brush. We're not trying to say if you came with this policy that makes you... because that's racism, right? No, but the reality is that the Russians, their old fashioned way of doing things took full advantage. And one member of the IC said that Israel got deeply compromised by that. And in the decades following, you have Netanyahu who full-on campaigns with a giant billboard shaking hands with Putin, and that helps him stay in power. So do you think, obviously Israel's... Just like in the US, our problems are homegrown. Trump did not invent Jim Crow. Putin did not invent Jim Crow. We have our own homegrown problems that Russia then exploits. We've got our gasoline, we've got our fires, and then Russia just pours more gasoline on it. The same dynamic in Israel. So Netanyahu and his whole far-right genocidal coalition, that's homegrown.

Andrea Chalupa (00:43:47):

But then Russia comes in and amplifies it and they work together. They do their deals, they send their... Netanyahu green lights technology to go to Russia that can then slaughter Ukrainians. He sits on the sidelines as Ukraine's first Jewish president, the only Jewish head of state outside Israel, is begging him, *begging him* for meaningful support. And even offering to come over and do all sorts of appearances in Israel at the start of the war to try to build support among Israelis. And Netanyahu really tried to shut that down. And so how much do you think that Netanyahu himself is deeply infiltrated by all this? One of the first people after the Hamas attack that Netanyahu spoke to was Putin. How much do you think that Putin said to Netanyahu, "Let this happen."?

Olga Lautman (00:44:38):

To your second question, I personally don't think he said "let this happen" because Russian intelligence operations are always compartmentalized, even to the point where the same team doesn't even have the full operation at play, because in the case someone gets captured they don't want everyone having the full plot. So if they send five people to assassinate someone using Novichok, they'll tell one person,

“Here, you're carrying this.” They don't know what it is. “You're going to put it on the door handle.” They tell someone else, “This is what you're going to do in order to if,” in the case one of them do get captured, no one can fully reveal the whole plot. I don't think so when it comes to direct coordination. However, I do think Netanyahu has been so focused on overthrowing the Supreme Court, trying to erase his corruption investigations against him and to seize power permanently, frankly, because I think he doesn't have any intentions of leaving; that he was so consumed with those issues that he just overlooked any kind of intelligence or just didn't want to be bothered with any intelligence that came to him indicating that something is happening.

Olga Lautman (00:45:59):

That's one. Now, going back to what you touched on in the Soviet Union. So we came through the Jackson—Vanik amendment through Italy. I was born in Rome on the way. My parents had a choice from Rome—

Monique Camarra (00:46:15):

Brava, brava. [laughs]

Olga Lautman (00:46:16):

Brava. [laughs] My parents had a choice: Israel or the United States. Thank you, God, they picked the United States. This is the best country in the world. But with that wave that we all traveled, everyone in the late '70s went the same exact way. Criminals and good people like us, they went the same way, and this is how they went. A lot of people chose Israel, a lot of people chose America. Then you had a lot of swapping around where people from Israel decide to come to the US and whatnot. Kalugin, again, who was head of counterintelligence, had said that not only did Russia—well, the Soviet Union—empty out their gulags and send a lot of the worst criminals here (and that's why you saw the natural thing that happened as soon as these Soviets arrived here was the formation of the Russian organized crime), so not only did they send the worst, but they also slipped in a lot of spies.

Olga Lautman (00:47:18):

And with that, they let them assimilate. Say they arrived in the late '70s; they let them assimilate, learn the language, get the job, figure out how America works, that and that. And then they would approach them. On Brighton Beach here, right in our lovely New York, across the US, they would approach them and remind them, like, “Hey, you have loyalties to the motherland and you have to come work for us.” Some people did. Kalugin said the success rate wasn't great. Some people said yes and started reporting specifically on vulnerabilities inside of the United States; where are the wedge issues? I mean, there was a whole host of factors that these people were useful; how the financial system works, hence you saw the US financial system turn into the top mechanism for all the laundering of Russian money out of the Soviet Union and then out of Russia and whatnot later on.

Olga Lautman (00:48:21):

And then you had people who said no. And then obviously they didn't approach every single person because there was just a vast amount of people, but they did monitor them and—“ooh, this one looks like he's an accountant and he's going to work for this firm. We might need information from this field, or this one just became a banker and he's going to work there, we want information from that field and whatnot.” So your IC contact is very right. And it's extremely frustrating because at the same time we had the FBI here and they were completely oblivious to what was happening, specifically in the '80s. They viewed Russian organized crime as the five families of New York, the Italian mafia families, viewing all these operations as incidents versus understanding that with the Russian organized crime, that they

were an arm of Russian intelligence—at that point, KGB, later on FSB and SBR—and that whatever they were doing here, at the same time they were collecting information back.

Olga Lautman (00:49:34):

So if they had a shady deal, like, say with Trump, where... What's his name? David... oh my God, what is his name? It'll come to me, David whatever goes and hands Trump \$5 million to buy six apartments in 1984 and Trump overlooks everything and says, "Ooh, cash, a suitcase of cash. Wonderful." They see this as one, a potential person who has no morals/moral compass and that he will for money do anything. Two, they will report these dealings right back to the Russian security services. And that's how you saw the first infiltration. I mean, there were many different points because at the same time, Yakunin, who runs around Europe with his NGOs and propping up the far right, in the late '80s, he was a KGB agent. His department specifically morphed into SVR later on. But he was a KGB agent in the Soviet mission to the UN, specifically collecting and trying to steal American technology and recruit people who work anything with nuclear, with military, with anything with military tech. And then from there, you see he goes back to the Soviet Union and you see quite a few of these. One of his colleagues who worked here in the library, she went back and opened up also a center in... What was it... In France, Democracy of Cooperation or something. Same thing. I mean, capturing politicians, capturing foreign policymakers, capturing former defense officials under the guise of an NGO. So I mean, you see how these operations continue and they obviously shift around and sometimes they go dormant and whatever, but it's a continuation of one long Soviet operation to overthrow the United States and to destroy the United States and to end democracy globally.

Andrea Chalupa (00:51:49):

And that is why the Russian assets, the Russian disinformation machines inside the Congress keep multiplying. It used to just be Dana Rohrabacher, a big old weirdo out of Orange County.

Monique Camarra:

Yeah.

Andrea Chalupa:

We were like, "Putin's groupie over there." Now, it's an entire Kremlin caucus led by Matt Gaetz that just overthrew McCarthy and installed their Trump proxy to be third in line to the White House. It's a crisis point. And they're getting more and more successful because they take advantage of our liberties, obviously. And they take advantage of just... They flood the zone with shit both in terms of the disinformation across the media sphere, and that's all amplified by right-wing media; Fox News all the way down. And then they flood the zone with shit when it comes to all of their corruption and money laundering that the DOJ and the FBI can't keep up with, all of it.

Andrea Chalupa (00:52:46):

I've spoken with FBI and DOJ past and present and they're just like, "It's just constant. It's just constant."

Olga Lautman:

Yeah.

Andrea Chalupa:

This is what a federal prosecutor said: “The more hits you take, the more hits you land.” And that is the Russian and Bannon strategy. You flood the zone with shit. And I want to point out there is historical precedent here in terms of this new Cold War that we're in: democracy versus autocracy and Ukraine being a crucial frontline of that, obviously. We were here before. The Cold War had hot wars, obviously; Korea, Vietnam, but also across Africa. There were several African nations that had planes/bombers in the air, and it was a major hot war over decades in Africa. And if you go to Kyiv, you meet veterans from South Africa and other countries, veterans of this war who will tell you so many stories of fighting agents from Ukraine and Russia and elsewhere.

Andrea Chalupa (00:53:44):

Now they're living there because they feel some sort of war bond with Ukrainians and so on. So we've been here before. We're here now. Where do you think... So we have this monumental year in human history. We're a year away from the 2024 presidential election. Where do you see things going? Do you see this regional war in Israel and Hamas, these two genocidal forces with these civilians, poor civilians on both sides caught in the middle of these genocidal forces, both aligned with Russia. It's an extraordinary crisis. Do you see that going into a regional war? How do you see it tipping the scales in the election?

Olga Lautman (00:54:23):

I personally think that it has all the potential to skyrocket into a regional war. You have Iran who's really, really pushing the strings. On the other hand, you have Jordan and Saudi Arabia who are actually very, very worried how much influence they have. I'm not sure because this has been set off, but I don't know how much effect it will have on elections because I mean, again, Americans are going to hear, “Oh, look, another war, another war Americans are involved in.” I think that the Biden policy is going to be to stand there to protect US interests. People are spinning that Biden sent ships to support Israel and whatever. He sent ships because we have troops in Saudi Arabia and Jordan and in Syria that are under attack in Iraq. I mean, over the past week you've had almost close to two, close to maybe even three dozen injuries among American military personnel from attacks that are being carried out by the Houthis in Yemen, by Iranian proxy groups in Syria and across.

Olga Lautman (00:55:41):

So, of course he's going to send. So I am not sure if it's really going to have an effect. I will say that Americans really need to wake up because this election is important. The next several elections are going to be extremely important until we get the extremists out of Congress and out of government. When we see that we don't have 17 Matt Gaetzes and Marjorie Taylor Greenes running around and shutting down Congress for three weeks, when we get to a point of that, then you can kind of take a breather and say, “Okay, I think we've saved democracy.” And it is extremely troubling seeing the split among the Democrats because for them to say, “I'm not going to vote for Biden” means that they will either vote for Trump or give the vote to Trump. And that means Trump has very clearly not only come out and said he supports Hezbollah, but he also said he's going to nuke Palestine and just make sure in one clean sweep that all Palestinians are erased.

Olga Lautman (00:56:46):

So I think you have one extremely fringe lunatic who is telling us—we don't even have to guess what he's going to do, he's telling us—“I'm going to weaponize the Department of Justice. I'm going to arrest all my opponents, I'm going to arrest every prosecutor who has looked into me, every prosecutor who has filed charges against me. I'm going to strip the FBI and basically shut down the FBI and this and that. And then on the global stage, I'm going to let Ukraine be handed to Russia,” which is not going to satisfy Russia's appetite because then next is going to be Moldova, Estonia, Lithuania. And guess what? American boots



will be on the ground. Right now, Ukrainians are shedding their blood to make sure Europe is secure. And if Ukraine falls, American boots will be on the ground. This is the whole point of NATO. And Trump thinks and is, again, screeching that he's going to take us out of NATO.

Olga Lautman (00:57:50):

Guess what? It's not very simple to do that. And in Congress, he won't be able to maneuver it. So in the worst case, you're going to have one of the most important NATO members working to sabotage all NATO operations to keep Europe secure. And then he's going to obviously use... You saw his policy: "Why should we even have Palestinians? Just nuke them all." So I mean, frankly, you don't want to vote for Biden? This is what you're going to get. And not to mention that Trump already said that on day one, he's putting his Muslim ban and banning any Muslim coming into this country. So, I mean, if this is the alternative you want, knock yourself out. I'm moving to Ukraine. I just came back from Ukraine.

Monique Camarra (00:58:37):

[laughs] Olga! You have the bedroom here downstairs. You can come here downstairs.

Olga Lautman (00:58:41):

[laughs] No, I came back from Ukraine and it was so good, and Kyiv is so pretty, and I'm like, you know what, if this insanity continues in the US and we don't correct our wrongs and get on the right path...

Monique Camarra (00:58:55):

Can I just say that from the European point of view, even thinking of putting Trump back in, for us, it would be the end; the end of NATO, because let's remember that it was the Biden administration that had managed through a lot of talking with allied partners and strengthening those ties to make sure that NATO was on board and that they would wake up because they were all slumbering. The same with the EU. Let's remember that Scholz told Zelensky, "Oh, well, why don't you just give up? You're going to lose anyway." Let's remember that. Okay?

Andrea Chalupa:

The Chancellor of Germany.

Monique Camarra:

The Chancellor of Germany. The strongest economic power in Europe told Zelensky to fold. Now, he has changed, at least on the surface. They're giving lots of weapons and lots of aid. But, I mean, he's got the business community, the industrialists who are down his neck probably calling him every day saying, "Scholzy! Wie gehts?" That's what he's saying.

Monique Camarra (01:00:07):

That's what's going on. So it's really important. I can't interfere. I can't tell you guys how to vote. But from the European point of view, it was thanks to the Biden administration that we finally saw the EU stand up morally, right? Let's remember the horrible stand that they took when Crimea was occupied by the Russians, where Merkel and Hollande were just saying... Or, sorry, whoever it was—Sarkozy or whoever it was at that time—just said... Okay, on the left, Françoise is telling them, "Oh, come on, come to the table. We need that nice Russian gas." Okay, this is what we're talking about. At least now there is some discussion on a moral standpoint seeing that this is what the Russians are really like, and this is what can happen to you. Look at Crimea. Look at what's going on with their population inside; kids

having to do camps, Russian camps. These are war crimes. And Olga knows it better than I do because you've been talking to people in Ukraine for months.

Olga Lautman (01:01:10):

It's been happening since 2014!

Monique Camarra:

Exactly.

Olga Lautman:

Everyone was shoving Russian money through their wallets and ignoring the fact of what was happening.

Monique Camarra (01:01:21):

I mean, look, I just came back from the Crimea forum, okay? The forum itself, and it's so important that we keep in mind the focus, the real things that we need to focus on. That's what I wanted to say. And it's extremely important for European security, that kind of thing.

Olga Lautman (01:01:40):

And my last comment, look: Biden has been good with Ukraine, and I do agree and I sympathize with the Middle Eastern community because he has been good with Ukraine. I think more so for the fact that it is a European country and if we have a European war—World War III—break out because we looked the other way across Europe, it would be a bad policy. But with everything, I am not going to be fake. Biden's Middle Eastern policy has been abysmal. Abysmal. He has completely forgotten that Syrians exist. He has provided no support for Syrians and whatnot. I have a lot of criticism for their Middle Eastern policy over the past four years. But with that said—

Andrea Chalupa (01:02:29):

So would millions of people in Gaza right now.

Olga Lautman (01:02:31):

Yeah, and I agree. But with that said, I will still vote for Biden because if I do not vote for Biden, then I will have a Trump who will probably have people like me arrested or forced to leave the United States to silence us because he's not going to allow any criticism the second time around. And his policies would be so devastating to every cause, to the Ukrainian cause, to the Middle Eastern cause, to everyone. It would be devastating because this is an outright conman, fascist, racist, populist thug who only wants to see how much he can steal from America and arrest anyone who gets in his way, which is basically a carbon copy of Putin—

Andrea Chalupa:

And Netanyahu.

Olga Lautman:

—so that's why I, regardless of my... At least with the Biden administration, you can go and say, "You know what? Your policies are abysmal." And you can continue to put pressure, and no one is going to come into rescue for putting that pressure.

Olga Lautman (01:03:42):

Try that with the Trump administration with Trump 2.0, God forbid. I mean, it's not even an administration. Trump regime. You're going to tell them your policies are abysmal and they'll come and have you arrested on some trumped up charges. So that's why I think people really need to get their thing together. And you know what? Instead of fueling this anger and all these campaigns of not voting for Biden, go and organize and force to sit down to speak with Biden officials, with the NSC and with State department officials to say, "You know what? We support you but not this. And we want you to do this. We don't want you to overlook the carpet bombing of neighborhoods inside of Gaza. We want the United States to have this position across the whole globe; whether it's in Ukraine, whether it's in Syria, whether it's in Gaza, wherever it is, if you're carpet bombing indiscriminately buildings where you know there are women and children, then you say no, and that's it. And you have one solid position across everywhere. Or just shut up and don't push the values." I know he's not too old.

Andrea Chalupa:

[laughs]

Monique Camarra:

Oooh, thank you! [laughs]

[outro music, roll credits]

Andrea Chalupa (01:04:53):

Our discussion continues and you can get access to that by signing up on our Patreon at the Truth-teller level or higher. To help people in Maui rebuild after the fires, donate to the Maui Strong Fund at [hawaiicomunityfoundation.org](http://hawaiicomunityfoundation.org). That's [Hawaiicomunityfoundation.org](http://Hawaiicomunityfoundation.org). 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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