

Gaslit Nation Transcript
25 November 2020
“The Breitbart Senate”

Sarah Kendzior:

I'm Sarah Kendzior, the author of the best selling books; *The View From Flyover Country* and *Hiding in Plain Sight*.

Andrea Chalupa:

I'm Andrea Chalupa, a journalist and filmmaker, and the writer and producer of the journalistic thriller, *Mr. Jones*.

Sarah Kendzior:

And this is Gaslit Nation, a podcast covering corruption in the Trump administration and rising autocracy around the world.

Andrea Chalupa:

We have wonderful, important reminders for you. We have a chance to put Speaker McConnell out of business. It's essential for us to leave it all out on the field to win control of the US Senate in Georgia. Imagine a world where the Democrats fought like hell in 2000 and refused to let George W. Bush steal the election. We would have had no war in Afghanistan, no war in Iraq, no steroids fed to Wall Street that led to the economic crash.

Andrea Chalupa:

Now imagine what the next decade could look like—the lifesaving policies we can get passed—if Democrats win control of the Senate with these two runoff races in Georgia. We can do it. Please give what you can to Jon Ossoff and Reverend Raphael Warnock. Pull up their official campaign pages, make donations there. Sign up to volunteer there. It's essential that we all do what we can while we can and join the Save Humanity for Mitch McConnell Gaslit Nation challenge.

Andrea Chalupa:

Make 1,000 calls, send 1,000 texts or send a thousand letters to voters in Georgia to get out the vote for Ossoff and Warnock. You have until Election Day, January 5th. We're going to select three winners who tweeted us @GaslitNation on Twitter. Tell us how you're getting out the vote in Georgia, and we'll have those three winners on the show in the new year and send them each a signed copy of Sarah's book, *Hiding in Plain Sight* and a signed movie poster by me of *Mr. Jones*.

Andrea Chalupa:

And then, in addition to all that, we're going to have a holiday party with Gaslit Nation and Swing Left—a Zoom party—where we're going to get together and write letters to get out the vote in Georgia. What else? You can join us on Wednesday, December 2nd, 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM Eastern. We are going to share the RSVP link at the top of our show notes for this week's episode. You can also find it on the Gaslit Nation Twitter page or mine or Sarah's Twitter page, but please come write letters with us for Georgia. This is so essential. The fate of the world depends on us taking the speakership away from grim reaper, Mitch McConnell.

Sarah Kendzior:

Well, thank you for those announcements, Andrea, and now back to the coup. We are now on week three of coup-related Gaslit Nation episodes, and there is some speculation that the attempted coup is over, to which we say, not quite, unfortunately. Remember when Biden was proclaimed the winner two and a half weeks ago, and America had a massive weekend block party to celebrate, only to be greeted by an attempted coup immediately after? I am now worried we are in for another round.

Sarah Kendzior:

What we've seen so far is the Trump administration attempting a coup and failing. They have used all the tactics that we predicted, court battles, threats to federal officials, threats to state officials, bribes to officials, getting bureaucrats like Emily Murphy not to do basic, necessary jobs. So far, none of their tactics have worked. There is still plenty left in the Trump crime cult playbook, and every day Biden moves closer to actually inhabiting the White House.

Sarah Kendzior:

The time tested autocratic tactic of running out the clock, which Trump used throughout his administration, is now working against him. On Monday, Emily Murphy, the Head of the General Service Administration, wrote a long and whiny letter defending her reluctance to engage in a rote bureaucratic process and approve Biden's transition after he won both the Electoral College and the popular vote.

Sarah Kendzior:

This came after two weeks of holdups, which prevented the incoming Biden administration from preparing to take over in January and marred their critical efforts in preparing to aid COVID-19 victims and distribute the vaccine next year. Now Murphy has finally conceded, but Trump still hasn't. This morning—Tuesday morning—Trump tweeted, "Remember the GSA has been terrific and Emily Murphy has done a great job, but the GSA does not determine who the next president of the United States will be."

Sarah Kendzior:

He's right about that. The American people choose the president and they chose Joe Biden, but Trump refuses to concede. There are a number of ways Trump and his crime cult continue their attempted coup, including through their main tactic, excessive litigation. His dream is ultimately to get his case to the Supreme Court where his lackeys, Kavanaugh and Barrett, will grant him an illegal second term, but that possibility seems less and less likely now due to his massive losses in the lower courts.

Sarah Kendzior:

Trump and his backers may also turn to actual violence, threats of violence that function as intimidation, continued bureaucratic obstruction or creating a national emergency as a pretext to invoke the military. This is worth considering given all the strange hirings and firings at the DoD over the last month. These are just a few possible measures. Trump may also be cutting a deal behind the scenes so that he is not prosecuted for his long litany of crimes, which would be disastrous for our nation.

Sarah Kendzior:

The crisis that will emerge if the Trump administration is not prosecuted does not have solely to do with Trump, but with the elite criminal impunity as the guiding force of US politics for my entire life, a broken

precept that has destroyed our country more and more every year. This morning, Joe Biden tweeted, "The election is over. It's time to put aside the partisanship and the rhetoric designed to demonize one another. We have to come together." Biden's tweet was vague and unhelpful. One person's truth-telling is another person's "demonization", but we've never let inconvenient truths stop us at Gaslit Nation and we're not going to let up now.

Sarah Kendzior:

For what would actually unite the United States is an end to elite criminal impunity. For four decades, we have not only seen the exact same crimes carried out, but the same criminals committing or enabling them for decades on end, Manafort, Stone, Barr, the Trump and Kushner families and so on. The US operates according to mafia dynasty politics where entire families are deemed above the law—like the mass murdering Sackler family, for example—and child traffickers immersed in massive espionage plots like Jeffrey Epstein or Ghislaine Maxwell now have more of a voice in US politics than the everyday citizen.

Sarah Kendzior:

This is a vile and unsustainable situation and ignoring it is what led us to this point to begin with. The point of cracking down on Trump and his crime cult is not about revenge, and it is certainly not about partisanship; it is about preventing these crimes from occurring again and protecting the American people from dangerous criminal elites who have stolen our livelihoods and opportunities. Andrea, what are your thoughts?

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah, as we talk about all the time, you and I, it's the fear of the under the radar threats that we're up against. Trump did people like us a great service by being so over the top and this extreme model of what we're up against. He was this Frankenstein monster of all the corruption, all the utter lack of accountability, all the blood money sport of Washington and beyond, capitals like London and Brussels.

Andrea Chalupa:

What I'm worried about is that we're going to go back to how it was when we all felt such immense relief and excitement over Barack Obama becoming president in 2008. There was this feeling of hope and that we were turning a new page in America. People went on autopilot and they stopped paying attention, and what happened? Karl Rove engineered a successful takeover of Republican States.

Andrea Chalupa:

He flipped all these state governments red, and then you had Republicans grow stronger and obstructionists in the Senate. Then you had all this corruption flourishing, and Trump is the inevitable rise of that. So, what we really want to warn people is, just because we don't have the benefit of a screaming Frankenstein monster haunting our dreams at night and our waking hours, it doesn't mean that the threat is gone. We are not out of the woods.

Andrea Chalupa:

The only thing that's really happened is that a President Biden is buying us some time. During this time, we need to dismantle the systems that allowed a Trump to flourish. One thing I'm very nervous about is all of these shallow but well-intentioned calls for unity. How can you have unity with people that are

brainwashed to dehumanize you and to attack you? That brainwashing is being driven by the tech fascism of Facebook.

Andrea Chalupa:

Now you have Parler, which is supposed to be a wild, wild west, totally unregulated social media place for conservatives to spout their batshit crazy nonsense. That was of course founded by the Mercer Family, which gave us Cambridge Analytica, which was the militarized propaganda firm co-founded with White supremacist leader, Steve Bannon, and Cambridge Analytica was a key piece of Mueller's investigation of how it tipped the scales illegally by stealing the data of 87 million Facebook users illegally, and then pumping them full of all this disinformation to try to tilt the election towards not just Trump, but the Republican Party in 2016.

Andrea Chalupa:

All of those vile...tech fascism, as it should be called, all of that is continuing. How are we supposed to have unity with people that are stuck in these information silos, that have a completely perverted understanding of the world around them, especially when we need these people to trust a government administered vaccine? All of this disinformation I'm talking about, it's a huge culture that's permeated into the highest halls of power, which is not just Trump's White House but the US Senate. So we're stuck with these cultish clowns in the US Senate.

Andrea Chalupa:

You had a doctor who was focused on this pandemic who testified before the Senate. He was shocked that the Senate committee kept asking the doctor about hydroxychloroquine, a drug pushed by Breitbart and the Trump family among other far-right propagandas. It turns out that Trump had financial connections to people that were benefiting from it. And he was shocked that the Senate, just recently in a hearing, was pushing, pushing, pushing this drug, that all the data shows does not help with coronavirus. It's not one of the treatments at all that we should be looking at. That's all been debunked and that's really a conspiracy theory at this point.

Andrea Chalupa:

He said that the reason why the Senate was grilling him on this treatment is because they were getting their information from their own little information silo, their own little disinformation echo chamber. The Senate is supposed to be above the fray of US politics. It's always been seen as the higher chamber, the adults in the room. It's now a Breitbart disinformation echo chamber on the Republican side, clearly. And so unless we dismantle all these systems that allow disinformation to flourish, how are we going to have unity as a country? How are we going to have a successful rollout of a vaccine, when all of these people can be driven mad into thinking this vaccine is a government conspiracy to insert microchips inside of them?

Andrea Chalupa:

What we're telling you is that, yes, it's a huge relief that Biden is president, but what you're going to see as he comes to power and as he starts making adult decisions, and as he starts rolling out this vaccine that we need to take in order to save lives—save our health care workers, reopen schools, bring our economy back—you're going to see a rabid backlash against all of that and you're going to see it driven by Trump and the cultish army that he has created. It's not going to end until Facebook is broken up. It's not going to end until Mark Zuckerberg is removed from power somehow and Facebook finally does the

right thing or it's forced to break up. It's not going to end until we have laws in place against the harmful, life destroying virus of disinformation.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yes, I absolutely agree and I feel like these calls for unity are so facile because they never say on what premise this should be based on. It's like all these calls that we need to have trust in our institutions, just for the sake of trust, but that trust is without merit when an institution or institutional actor has proven that they cannot be trusted. In some cases—look at William Barr, for example—they flaunt their disregard for their position, their disregard for public service, their disregard for the truth.

Sarah Kendzior:

So I think what we need to emphasize here—and this goes for the Biden administration as well—is honesty over unity and justice over peace. I think whatever unity flows from that will be a true unity, and that is the reason that I emphasized going after elite criminal impunity. Because while I think, in many ways, there is a divide between... I've never felt like our country's bifurcated. It's not like there's two sides, like the Biden side and the Trump side. There's a massive gray area of people who don't fit into neat little political boxes or who like some things about each of the parties but dislike the party apparatus itself.

Sarah Kendzior:

I think disillusionment is the main mood of this country and that disillusionment stems from things like elite criminal impunity, from watching for decades on end wealthy people getting away with whatever they want, whatever brutal action, that does trickle down to us as ordinary people. I mean, that's why I named the Sackler family before, the opioid-peddlers. They destroyed my state of Missouri. They helped to do that. They destroyed so much of the country and they got off scot-free. That's the kind of thing that unfortunately brings people together.

Sarah Kendzior:

I say unfortunate because I wish that none of us had to deal with this problem. I wish we didn't have to deal with the Sackler family, with Jeffrey Epstein, with Harvey Weinstein, with all of these examples of very wealthy, powerful people who get away with crimes for decades on end because people are intimidated into silence or because they're complicit or because there's just this attitude of, oh, well, they're famous, they're rich, they're important, they fund our political parties, they can get away with whatever they want.

Sarah Kendzior:

I think everyone hates this. I think it truly transcends party lines and I think there are plenty of people who voted for Donald Trump who also hate this. Yes, it is a massive paradox that they voted for Donald Trump because he embodies this to such a degree, but it goes back to what you just said about information silos and about disinformation being put through Facebook and Fox News and all of these places where Trump fans or acolytes are going looking for information.

Sarah Kendzior:

It's very easy to get led down this wormhole, which is why I think that we need to have congressional hearings and just very transparent, very open investigations into all of this corruption, into all of these networks. You see over and over again not just the same names, but the same institutions. Places like

Deutsche Bank, for example, show themselves with Trump, with Epstein, with the Russian mafia, with Kushner, with dirty American plutocrats. It happens over and over again. There are things that we need to gut out. There are things we need to air out.

Sarah Kendzior:

I do have some faith that when people know the full truth of this level of corruption and the level to which our institutions have betrayed us and have abandoned the American people, that at least we will be unified, maybe, in that. And we will push for something better. I sometimes get emails from former Trump voters, who read my book or listen to this show and it changed their mind. I mean, I think these are people who are starting to question things anyway, or they wouldn't have been bothering to read my work to begin with, but their suspicions—their worst suspicions—were confirmed.

Sarah Kendzior:

The thing is, is that the corrosion, the rot, it is systemic. It is everywhere and that means it's within the Democratic Party, it's within a bunch of institutions that are supposed to be neutral. It's the whole thing. With the election of Biden, we get a second chance. We would not have had this second chance had Trump stayed in for a second term. Then it would have been the end. It would have been the end of the American experiment. We're in for tough times anyway, but we finally have a chance to kind of dig deep and root out elite criminal impunity, kleptocracy, corruption in the tech industries, the use of surveillance by them, very long rooted problems like poverty, income inequality.

Sarah Kendzior:

Those are possibly things that even people who voted for Trump would get on board with. Where the difference lies, I think, are attitudes towards white supremacy and also misogyny. I think that is why the most diehard of the Trump fanatics cling to him; they're clinging to white supremacy. But what we need is just an insistence on justice, or at least the pursuit of justice. No more sweeping anything under the rug. If you do that, it's just going to come back and harm you. And one of the things that mystifies me about people recommending no repercussions for this incredibly long list of crimes is that it will directly interfere with the ability of the Biden administration to do whatever work they propose.

Sarah Kendzior:

I mean, we know this because the impeachment hearings revolved around the targeting of Hunter Biden. You can say Hunter Biden is sleazy, I wouldn't want to vote for Hunter Biden, whatever. We know that it was based on fantasy claims of criminality, on libel, and on threats. Trump threatened to put Joe Biden in jail. He threatened to put Hunter Biden in jail. He's threatened to put a large number of people in jail. I don't know how, as a father, you look past that. I don't know how, as a president, you look past that when those same types of threats were made towards so many civil servants and public officials and innocent people.

Sarah Kendzior:

Americans have been living in a state of terror and of hyper vigilance. I think it's going to take a while to get out, but it's in their interest to gut out this rot, because if they really believe in the policies that they want to put forward (and we're going to get into that in a second when we go through the new appointees in the Biden administration), they're not going to be able to do it when you have a nexus of white collar crime and organized crime breathing down your throats, inhibiting your movements, pulling you away from the People and into a vortex of dark money. That is what the result will be if they do not

pursue, at the least, rigorous investigations of what's transpired and share that truth with the American public.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah. I want to just caution everyone how to stay grounded over the years ahead, because we're still in for a wild ride. It's going to be awhile before this pandemic is contained and the economy can come back to normal. Meanwhile, a lot of us are hurting and we know a lot of people who are hurting, who are suddenly without work, who have lost people, who are grieving. On top of that, America is the richest country on the planet with the largest organization known as our Defense Department, and yet we have millions of people living in poverty. We have millions of people who are living in hunger and food insecurity, including children.

Andrea Chalupa:

All of the studies have shown that the best way to invest in a person's long-term success are the critical years of their early childhood, the first five years of life. You have children today, living in dangerous conditions of food insecurity, of hunger, of parents who are out of work, there's crises of domestic violence and all of this. This is the future generation that is growing up right now in this trauma, which is going to leave a lifelong mark on them and what kind of adults they are, and whether they're going to fall through the cracks of a system that profits financially in putting them in prisons.

Andrea Chalupa:

We're living with this new Jim Crow of this massive prison system that a lot of people are profiting off of. It is a huge industry. Watch Ava DuVernay's brilliant documentary, *13th*, all about this, how Nixon started this whole new Jim Crow and then President Clinton doubles the prison population because he's trying to pander to Republicans and moderates and be this Law and Order president. He ends up militarizing the police and then you wonder where are all the Black voters when his wife runs for president in 2016.

Andrea Chalupa:

All of us have to understand that if you are breathing a sigh of relief—which we all are, which is understandable—but if you go back to your own version of normal and think that you can just listen to, I don't know, *Murder, She Wrote* fan fiction podcasts. I'm very jealous of you if that's what you go back to, I'd love to join you there. But our point is that, let empathy be your North star. Stay grounded in empathy because none of this is normal. America was already suffering with a normality crisis, and that's what gave us Trump to begin with. So we can't stress that enough.

Andrea Chalupa:

I want to go into this case study for us as an example of empathy and action. You all heard me ranting and raving about the brilliance of the Grant documentary, our first civil rights... [laughs] Well, I've got a new recommendation for you.

Sarah Kendzior:

I knew we would not get through this episode without you bringing this up, go on.

Andrea Chalupa:

We're going to spend the next 30 minutes talking about Grant. That brilliant docudrama series on Grant that everyone should watch on how he was a Nazi hunter that just chased down the confederacy and brought them to heel. He kept sending the army down to squash the KKK. It was only until Grant, near the end of his time in power, gave up his nerve and listened to all the idiot pundits in the North about him being a dictator and squashing all of these violent white mobs in the South, where that's when Reconstruction was lost. But for the most part though, when he stuck to his Nazi hunting guns, that's when he was victorious and became our first civil rights president. I highly recommend everyone watch that and watch it with your kids if you're stuck homeschooling.

Andrea Chalupa:

Another series which I am ranting and raving about today is on PBS and it's called The Rise of Hitler. Watch this with your kids. It is stunning. The play-by-play on how fragile democracy is. The series is described this way: "In 1930, Germany is a liberal democracy. Just four years later, democracy is dead, Germany's leader is a dictator and the government is in the hands of the Nazis. It all happens so quickly." From this series, I learned the incredible story of Josef Hartinger, a German lawyer and state prosecutor.

Andrea Chalupa:

This is a model of empathy and action. This is how we all must be living our life now; I call it Hartinger's Law. As one historian in the series says, "if there were more men and women like Hartinger, the Holocaust would never have happened." Hartinger investigated the death of four men in a Nazi prison camp called Dachau. He visits the camp and the Nazi soldiers show him around and explain that the four men were shot while trying to escape.

Andrea Chalupa:

Then Hartinger sees how the men's bodies are being kept, just piled together like their lives meant nothing. He's shocked by this. How could anyone treat human beings this way? Hartinger carries out his investigation. The four men, it turns out, are all Jewish. Their autopsies reveal that they were badly beaten and shot at close range. They were murdered. Hartinger went to his boss with his investigation, but his boss was already under the spell of the Nazis.

Andrea Chalupa:

Hitler was seen as a man of the People. He had campaigned as a regular guy, not like the big, fancy experts that don't understand hardworking, patriotic Germans, the real Germany of the rural countryside, the hardworking... the farmers, the families. Hitler was going to restore law and order to Germany. He even had his own hardcore group of supporters that liked to get in fights emboldened by his rhetoric. This was a cult and Hartinger's boss was on the side of the cult and dismissed the investigation.

Andrea Chalupa:

Hartinger was determined to uphold the rule of law. He risked his career to go above his boss and make sure that his investigation makes its way up the ranks of government. For a few months, as the process plays out, there are no murders at Dachau. For a moment, Hartinger believes justice will prevail. Then the Nazis, with their influence growing across the government in these first six months of power, shut down the investigation and the murders would continue at Dachau and the camp system grows.

Andrea Chalupa:

The Holocaust began small: violence on the streets by men emboldened by disinformation, propaganda, nationalist rallies. It starts small; the murder of four Jewish people, then eight more and then more arrested and sentenced to the camps without trials. The Holocaust started small, but the machinery that would expand it was put in place immediately. Remember that, immediately. They wasted no time. The Holocaust, the Nazis, Hitler, all of it is an extreme model for the same truth. Empathy must always prevail. The rule of law must always prevail.

Andrea Chalupa:

We must scream to the high heavens over the murder of just four people. That matters because it is the start of something worse, something greater. As soon as Trump came to power, he began separating families on the border with zero care or system in place on how to return children to their parents. The separation of families constitutes torture, according to an investigation by physicians for human rights. Even when they claim to have stopped it, they continued to separate families.

Andrea Chalupa:

How can you treat human beings that way? That is the question we must always scream and be hysterical and alarmist over. We must risk our careers and reputations when lives are at stake. We can never normalize these threats, even in the face of cultish worship and fascist machinery or indifference. Seeing the murder of four human beings or seeing children separated from their families, it's the same ideology of hate and dehumanization that allows that to happen. We must always be outraged by that and get in its face.

Andrea Chalupa:

That's the Hartinger Law. His investigation was killed, but it was used years later in the Nuremberg trials. The Hartinger Law demands that we fight, even if the only way left for us to fight is to bear witness. This is important to talk about because the relief so many are feeling can be misinterpreted as the danger being over. Trump created a cult and the cult is still with us, fueled by rampant disinformation, powered by consolidated far-right media, big tech and American oligarchs like the Mercer family and Mark Zuckerberg, and a mainstream media populated by mostly white people who are not on the front lines of the worst dangers of this cult and its machinations.

Andrea Chalupa:

Keep this in mind, that we still have white supremacy—as we always point on the show and Sarah just discussed—and that remains a threat to the most vulnerable among us. In building their terror regime, the Nazis turned to America for inspiration from the Atlantic: “Especially significant where the writings of the German lawyer, Heinrich Krieger, the single most important figure in the Nazi assimilation of American race law, who spent the 1933-1934 academic year in Fayetteville as an exchange student at the University of Arkansas School of Law.

Andrea Chalupa:

“Seeking to deploy historical and legal knowledge in the service of area and racial purity, Krieger studied a range of overseas race regimes, including contemporary South Africa, but discovered his foundation in American law. His deeply researched writings about the United States began with articles in 1934, some concerning American Indians and others pursuing an overarching assessment of US race legislation, each a precursor to his landmark 1936 book, *Race Law in The United States.*”

Andrea Chalupa:

The Nazis would have also loved Lee Atwater, Paul Manafort's friend. While working in Reagan's White House, here's audio of Lee Atwater in 1981, giving an interview on the Southern Strategy, the same strategy Trump relied on when he kept brandishing the phrase, "law and order", and calling for the protection of suburban housewives. Remember, over 70 million people voted for this. Warning, when you hear Atwater in this clip we're about to play, he uses the N word, which should surprise no one.

Lea Atwater:

Here is how I would approach that issue as a statistician or a political scientist... or, no, as a psychologist, which I'm not... is how abstract you handle the race thing. In other words, you start out and now you all want to quote me on this.

Speaker 4:

[inaudible 00:31:48]. I won't do it.

Lea Atwater:

You start out in 1954 by saying n*****, n*****, n*****. By 1968, you can't say n*****; that hurts you, backlash, so you say stuff like forced bussing, states rights and all that stuff, and you get... you're so abstract now, you're talking about cutting taxes and all of these things you're talking about are totally economic things and the by-product of [inaudible 00:32:11], Blacks get hurt worse than whites. And subconsciously maybe that is part of it.

Lea Atwater:

I'm not saying that, but I'm saying that if it is getting that abstract and that coded, that we're doing the way with the racial problem, one way or the other, you follow me? Because obviously sitting around saying, we want to cut taxes, we want to cut this and we want... is much more abstract than even the bussing thing and a hell of a lot more abstract than n*****, n*****. Anyway you look at it, race is coming on the back burner.

Andrea Chalupa:

Understand that this ideology of hate, this ideology of genocide that founded America, the massive genocide of Native Americans that was so great it literally changed the world's climate, the centuries of the Holocaust of slavery and the mutation of slavery to what we have today of the world's highest prison population, which is a prison industrial complex making a lot of people a lot of money... all of that is the Republican Party.

Andrea Chalupa:

The Republican Party, a lot of them turned on Trump because he gave away the game. He was a crude version of themselves. What you're going to see is a lot of these guys going back to more buttoned up versions of Trump. We're not seeing a lot of soul searching. We're seeing a lot of blame on those that are trying to confront these issues of white supremacy and dismantle these systems once and for all for the safety of all of us, for the safety of our democracy. Because, if you have a system in place that's literally inspiring the Nazi regime, don't you want to get rid of it? That's for the health of all of us.

Andrea Chalupa:

For all those white people who are going to tune out, who are going to just go back to normal: there was never a normal to begin with for people of color in America. Understand that it's a fascist, mass murdering ideology that's at the root of it and it mutates and it gaslights, and it uses pretty language and pretty people to try to button it up and seem respectable and palatable. That threat is still with us and none of us should be comfortable yet. We still have a long way to go to dismantle these systems.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah, absolutely. Just to reaffirm a couple points that you made, there's a variety of crimes that were committed by Trump, his campaign, his backers, this administration, but the two worst ones, I guess, in my mind, are the abuse of migrant families on the border—the separation of children from their parents, permanently, in many cases because they're unable to find these parents, they don't know where they are. That's a crime against humanity.

Sarah Kendzior:

The second one is what they did with coronavirus, where we had a pandemic and they purposefully let it spread. They blocked medical professionals from getting protective equipment. They shook down governors in states they didn't like, threatened them, threatened to withhold care. As a result, we have over 250,000 people dead and it is, again, disproportionately affecting Americans of color, Black Americans, Native Americans, and so forth. This is also a crime against humanity.

Sarah Kendzior:

The coronavirus crisis was preventable and they chose to exploit it and to profit off of it. It is so essential that we have rigorous investigations and, where needed, indictments, prosecutions of those who were involved in these criminal offenses—people like Steven Miller, people like Jared Kushner—in terms of coronavirus. It's important to establish justice in its own right, but it is also critical that we establish precedent here because we don't know what's going to happen in 2024.

Sarah Kendzior:

We don't even know what's going to happen in 2022, because say, for example, the GOP takes the House (which given the massive losses the Democrats had in the house under Nancy Pelosi, could very well happen). Say the Senate is still run by the Republicans (which could very well happen and this is why you need to get out the votes in Georgia). But anyway, say that happens: they will immediately move to impeach and convict Biden. It doesn't matter what the charge is. They're going to make something up. They'll do it again to go after Kamala Harris.

Sarah Kendzior:

Then we're back to a GOP administration. Or it could simply take four years and we might be back to a GOP administration in 2024. We may not get an autocratic GOP figure like Trump, one who blurts out his crimes all the time, is very obvious about what he's doing. We may get somebody slicker, somebody who people might play along with. So what we need is to establish a legal precedent for prosecuting these crimes—in particular, crimes against humanity—so that they cannot *again* separate children from their parents on the border, and they cannot *again* respond to a public health crisis in this way.

Sarah Kendzior:

This also goes for other crimes like emoluments, abuse of the pardon power, obstruction of justice and so on and so forth. But those are the two most inhumane and just blatantly evil cases in this light. If you

drop that, I mean, what kind of person are you to just overlook those deaths and the abuse of those children? How can you live with yourself? I honestly... I don't understand the people who are saying "move on", and this is not really even about Joe Biden because it's mostly just pundits and "analysts" weighing in here.

Sarah Kendzior:

I don't know how you live with yourself. I don't know how you think of those kids, those parents, those coronavirus victims who had to say goodbye to their families through a screen...it was all preventable. You absolutely have to establish precedent here so this can never, ever happen again.

Andrea Chalupa:

We need national healing and we need national reckoning and it's going to take years for us to get through all of these crimes and bring them to justice and force accountability and establish systems in place so none of this can happen again. We're going to fight like hell for this. There's no other way. We're not safe until we go through this process of reckoning.

Andrea Chalupa:

Right now, under Mitch McConnell, we have a Breitbart Senate. Disinformation has infected the US Senate under Mitch McConnell. Every phone call you make, every letter and text you send to voters in Georgia, is punching the Nazis in the face. Donate to Stacey Abrams. Donate to Ossoff. Donate to Warnock. Every donation helps bring the worst of America, which inspired the Nazis, to justice.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yep. I agree. So please, please get out the vote in Georgia, turn it blue and we may have yet another second chance. The more leverage we build up, the better. So, the Biden administration this week announced some of its new members. I guess we can go through those, inform our audience, get your opinion, Andrea, on some of these folks.

Sarah Kendzior:

For Secretary of State, replacing rapture fiend and friend of the FSB, Mike Pompeo, who by the way, you should be keeping an eye on, his dealings in the Middle East. If we have time, we'll get with that, but he's been hanging with Netanyahu and MBS and a whole bunch of criminals while they sell off our military equipment. It's looking very bad.

Sarah Kendzior:

Anyway, I don't think that Anthony Blinken is going to do that. This is the thing, actually, we have to think about when we look through these Trump administration officials. It's like, first Secretary of State Trump brought in was Rex Tillerson, the recipient of the Order of Friendship Medal from Vladimir Putin and an oil tycoon.

Sarah Kendzior:

The baseline standard here for all of these people is so low, so there's a sense of relief like, oh, well, thank God he didn't get a medal from an autocrat, or thank God, he's not trying to bring about the Apocalypse. How refreshing! But nonetheless we need to keep a critical eye on these folks because, as we've said before, the lack of vigilance is what led us into this situation.

Sarah Kendzior:

Here's some info about Blinken. He was the Deputy Secretary of State during the Obama administration. He's a longtime friend of Biden. He has served in foreign policy positions during multiple Democratic administrations, including as a member of the National Security Council in the Clinton administration and Deputy National Security Advisor during the Obama administration.

Sarah Kendzior:

He was also Staff Director for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee when Biden was chairing that panel. Then, later on, was Vice President Biden's National Security Advisor. Much like the other Biden picks, very experienced, somebody Biden personally knows well but who also has a long resume of actual government service. Again, it seems very novel after four years of the Trump administration. Do you have thoughts on this guy, Andrea?

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah, I'm super thrilled.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah?

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah, I am. I am. I think all those years of Obama's foreign policy, which I've always said on the show was spread too thin and you never want to draw a red line and not enforce it, which shows weakness and again, an utter lack of accountability in Syria. Syria is one of the great tragedies, of course, of our time and that karma is on all of us, all the millions of refugees it created and allowing Assad the butcher to stay in power, backed up by Putin, giving Russia a mass murdering regime—a terrorist regime—a big military base now via its proxy state Syria that is propping up, giving it a big military base now on the Mediterranean.

Andrea Chalupa:

So Obama's foreign policy is what also got us Trump. He was weak on Putin. All those ridiculous videos we saw of Kerry and his counterpart, the Kremlin Lavrov, walking around in circles pretending to do diplomacy, when really there's no negotiating with terrorists. Biden during that time was always seen as the one trying to push Obama to be stronger in standing up to Putin and being stronger for supporting Ukraine. With Ukraine's revolution in 2013, heading into 2014, when the first protesters were murdered by Putin's puppet Yanukovich, it was Biden that I heard that got Ukraine into Obama's State of the Union address that January in 2014.

Andrea Chalupa:

That was just such a wonderful moment for all of us Ukraine Watchers, because there was that necessary recognition for this fiery revolution that was being completely mischaracterized, successfully, by the Kremlin's propaganda that was trying to paint it as a far-right Neo Nazi uprising, and a lot in the press were really going with that line. So, good on Biden for being such a strong champion of Ukraine. All the stuff that Biden was saying in Ukraine's own parliaments saying, "Get your act together. Clean up your corruption. The Kremlin is weaponizing it against you."

Andrea Chalupa:

Yes, he's right, and the same goes for the United States. And all the stuff that the Republicans and Trump and Russian propaganda like to try to get Biden in trouble over, which was Biden calling for the firing of that corrupt prosecutor general in Ukraine, that was music to the ears of any Ukrainian civic society leader. That was music to the ears of any anti-corruption reformers in Ukraine. That needed to be done. The guy was corrupt and everyone was calling for him to finally be sacked.

Andrea Chalupa:

I have a lot of faith in Biden's foreign policy. I think a lot of his ideas were getting held back by Obama's foreign policy team and I'm really grateful to see this team that he's putting together, led by Blinken, who famously called out Obama for drawing a red line in the sand and saying, super powers like America, you don't blink. You don't show weakness like that. It creates this vortex of weakness. And Putin's strength and aggression filled that vacuum of power with the utter lack of leadership there in Syria.

Andrea Chalupa:

I want to caution all the idiots out there not to twist all of this into Biden being a warmonger or anything like that. You simply need strength and standing up to bullies. You need to have a common cause. You need to build a really strong coalition. I really do believe under Biden and Blinken, that they're the ones that are going to do it. I think they're going to contain Putin's aggression in really smart ways and using peaceful measures of pressure to do it.

Andrea Chalupa:

What you're going to get over the next four years when Putin doesn't like that medicine is you're going to see a lot of disinformation spread trying to paint them as warmongers, because the pressure is really going to hurt and isolate Putin. No one's going to want to pose for pictures with him anymore on the world stage. With America being hobbled under Trump, I feel like guys like Macron had no choice but to try to release statements with Putin as they did on uncertain joint exercises and world events. But I don't think you're going to see that anymore, now that America is back.

Andrea Chalupa:

I think Macron is going to stand firmly with the president of the United States, and the Western Alliance is going to rebuild and it's going to come back stronger because of all of these horrendous lessons that America was forced to learn. You need to have strength. You need to have accountability. You need to back up your words with action and you need to absolutely stand up to bullies on the world stage or else they just grow stronger.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yep. I agree and I am glad to hear some enthusiasm. I will be keeping an eye on this guy—on Blinken—and on the rest. The next appointment, which is quite-

Andrea Chalupa:

Can I just laugh at Putin for a moment? Because I think we all deserve that.

Sarah Kendzior:

You're always welcome to laugh at Putin. [laughs]

Andrea Chalupa:

Under Putinism, he's created such a hostile business environment for doing business in Russia, even his own people are parking their money abroad for their own safety. What he's done is, economically, he's built up dependence on China, which is happy to do business with mass murdering regimes considering that it itself is an autocratic regime. This dependency on China really puts Putin at a weaker negotiating advantage, just generally.

Andrea Chalupa:

As cunning as he is, and as brilliant as he is with asymmetrical warfare and leveraging the new dark arts of cyber warfare and all of that, a lot of his talent—his leverage—comes from being willing to take shots that are ruthless that most people simply would not take and blatantly lying about it after. Classic example, poisoning people on British soil with a nerve agent invented by the Soviet Union and then denying it, saying that his agents were just there looking at some obscure cathedral as a holiday abroad.

Andrea Chalupa:

I think it's Putin's ability to go there, which is really what we're up against. If you're dealing with someone who's that ruthless, you must always watch your back and you must do everything you can to isolate them, contain them and keep them out of those alliances and the legitimacy that they crave. I do want to say in Putin's face now, that one thing he has done with his successful installation of his asset, Trump, is he's initiated Americans into the club of experiencing firsthand the terror and the horror of Russian aggression.

Andrea Chalupa:

Ukrainians, of course, feel this in a very real way with a very large death count of several thousands killed by Putin's ongoing invasion Ukraine. Syrians as well, all the civilians deliberately bombed by Russians. Venezuelans with their dictator being propped up by Russia with the starvation now in Venezuela, creating a massive refugee crisis that rivals the one in Syria. Those are real lives destroyed. That's real life lost.

Andrea Chalupa:

Americans, of course, are far luckier, but we still felt directly what Kremlin aggression was like with this horrific, corrupt Kremlin proxy that hijacked our White House in 2016 and then continued to destroy our country from within and America's standing in the world. He gave Putin his wish list in many ways, but what Putin ultimately did is he opened up the eyes of so many Americans directly to that direct knowledge that's going to live with us for a very long time of what Kremlin aggression is like and what it feels like.

Andrea Chalupa:

Now we have a deeper understanding of it and a greater sympathy for other countries that have gone through this, obviously more extreme cases of it, but that's really important to understand. There's a reason why Ukrainians and Polish people, despite their decades, centuries of tensions between themselves, of those two people, they united in the face of Kremlin aggression. I feel like now that America is back, the unity in standing up to Putin is going to be even greater now, and countries are going to be working even faster and stronger now. I'm so excited to watch that play out.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yeah, it's a relief. Again, as you're talking, I'm still thinking about these people who don't want any investigation or prosecution, and it's like, it's so obvious we hardly say it: we had a Kremlin asset as our president. We had a Tom Clancy espionage situation played out in reality, and you have to actually deal with that, because one other thing that is going to lead to is an ongoing national security crisis even when Trump and his crime cohort are gone, because they're leaving with classified information and with no loyalty to the United States. They're going to peddle that all over the world. We'll get more into this, I think, in future episodes, because I want to keep going down this list.

Sarah Kendzior:

The next new appointee is Alejandro Mayorkas as the new Secretary of Homeland Security. He was the former Deputy Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. He'll be the first Latino and immigrant nominated to head the agency. He was born in Cuba and came here as a child. He worked as a lawyer, joined the Obama administration in 2009 as the Director of the US Citizenship and Immigration Services Agency where he implemented the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, otherwise known as DACA, which granted protection to immigrants. This is one of the programs that the Trump administration right off the bat set out to destroy.

Sarah Kendzior:

Again, wild, wild departure from what was going on at DHS under Trump. His Homeland Security secretaries were first private prison advocate and advocate of child imprisonment, John Kelly, followed by Kirstjen Nielsen, another architect of the child parent separation policy, although they were both very heavily influenced by Stephen Miller, did Miller's bidding. There's some questions here because DHS, for those who don't know, is a relatively new department. It's a department that was created in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 at the height of fear and paranoia about global terrorism.

Sarah Kendzior:

It's known for its excessive use of force, for its wastefulness, for its unconstitutional actions. We haven't had a secretary of this department since Nielsen resigned in 2019. We've had various acting secretaries and since then, abuses at DHS have gotten even worse. You see, obviously, the abuses in the child migrant cases, but we've also seen them involved in using force against protesters, especially over the summer at the Black Lives Matter protests. There's been some calls for DHS' abolishment. I think that that's a thoughtful thing. I don't think that's something that should be dismissed.

Sarah Kendzior:

I'm not sure whether we actually need this department or whether we should maybe turn it into something different or absorb some of the jobs into other things. At any rate, it will be a relief to not have somebody who's going to carry out these brutal policies. But again, we should note that the seeds of what became Trump's family separation policy under Stephen Miller were planted in the Obama era. People love to have this as a retort. They're like, "Oh, Obama did it too, when it comes to abuse of migrants at the border."

Sarah Kendzior:

While it is not true that the Obama administration purposefully separated children from their parents as both just a form of torture and abuse but also allegedly, their excuse is, "Oh, it's a deterrent. It makes migrants not want to come here," they did not do that. They did mistreat families. They did abuse

families. Those cages were around from the Obama era. I think the whole point of this department, it needs to be reconsidered. I hope that Mayorkas, in leading it, takes all of these criticisms and this really wretched history into account because whatever the future of DHS is, it has to be a hard break from the past.

Sarah Kendzior:

I assume by his own background—his own interests—that that would be the natural thing for him to do, but I've lost all faith in assuming anything, and especially in looking at "respectable institutionalists" as any kind of fail safe mode of correction. For all I know, he's going to wild out and bring back the Trump policies. I don't actually think he's going to do this, but I'm just saying, nothing's off the table here. Take absolutely nothing for granted ever, ever again.

Andrea Chalupa:

Yeah. Without question. Obviously it is a relief to not have people appointed and in power who want to dismantle their agencies. [laughs]

Sarah Kendzior:

Yes. That's a plus. [laughs]

Andrea Chalupa:

Or like a who's who of big fat polluting corporate lobbyists come to power. We still have to obviously fight like hell to hold these people accountable to really build back better as they promise, and that includes strengthening the working class, the middle class, strengthening our school systems. We do have to absolutely demilitarize the police and put that funding back into schools, free universal pre-K for everyone, free healthcare.

Andrea Chalupa:

If you build that strong social fabric, you're building immunity to the fake populism of Trump. When people are hurting, when people are desperate, they want to bash something. They want to bash the system, so they either don't vote—because what difference will it make?—or they vote for some raging anger cathartic vehicle like Trump. The way we protect ourselves from that is by truly, truly building back better.

Andrea Chalupa:

That's not going to happen without free universal healthcare, free college. We've got to build up the minds of our citizens, one of our greatest resources. That's how they're seen in countries like Denmark, where they have free schools, because the minds of the citizens are a national natural resource to develop and you get paid back as a society with more engaged citizens, stronger systems, creativity, innovation, all of it. America really, really needs to Trump-proof our democracy by taking care of the most vulnerable. I just don't want us to just celebrate the fact that we're no longer soon going to be under this constant threat of a Kremlin asset. I want us to really, really Trump-proof our democracy.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yes. Hard agree there. All right. Moving on. We have a new nominee for Secretary of the Treasury and it is Janet Yellen, the return of Janet Yellen. Again, like the other Biden appointees, has a long history with

other Democratic administrations. She was the 18th Chair of the White House Council of Economic Advisors under Bill Clinton. She was the President of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco from 2004 to 2007. In 2014, she became the Chair of the US Federal Reserve, served one four-year term as Federal Reserve chair and then Trump dropped her.

Sarah Kendzior:

There was some speculation earlier that Elizabeth Warren may be the person who was going to be Secretary of the Treasury. The speculation was heightened when Biden came out and said that his pick was going to make everybody happy, moderates, progressives and so forth. I'm not happy because I feel like it is impossible to be happy about this situation. I'm not objecting to Yellen, I am just hoping that Yellen does what the Obama administration refused to do and, of course, what the Trump administration refused to do, because they were carrying out a gigantic heist in the Treasury.

Sarah Kendzior:

But we did an episode long ago in December of 2018 referring to a BuzzFeed article by Jason Leopold and Anthony Cormier about the fact that the Kremlin infiltrated the Department of the Treasury in 2015. You should go back, listen to that episode, read this story. The only person who was punished for this incredible act of infiltration was the whistleblower. To our knowledge, the Kremlin still has had access to our Treasury.

Sarah Kendzior:

What you need to assume about the Trump administration, the reason they gutted all of these departments, they fired all these career bureaucrats, they packed them with lackeys, is because they were using them to carry out massive crimes. It wasn't just being anti-American, it was profiting for oligarchs, for their dirty backers, for the Russian mafia and so on. The biggest instance of this, I think, is what has been done to the US Treasury under Mnuchin.

Sarah Kendzior:

For whatever reason, the House refused to seriously investigate Mnuchin. They refused to impeach him. They kept having these off the books meetings with him about coronavirus and then not actually bringing forth aid. I have a lot of questions about what Mnuchin has been doing. I also have questions about Wilbur Ross, another one who slipped under the radar. It's worth knowing that those two appointees were both recommended to Trump by Trump's mentor, Carl Icahn, the corporate raider of Wall Street, just a very evil man.

Sarah Kendzior:

He was in the administration too, briefly. He left in 2017 in what seemed like a rare moment of accountability. He was actually interviewed by the Mueller probe, but like most things with the Mueller probe, it went nowhere. Anyway, my point is that Janet Yellen needs to dig out the rot and Janet Yellen needs to tell America the truth about what happened to the Treasury and what is our state of its survival, of our national security. We need a full report. We need some honesty and transparency here.

Sarah Kendzior:

I have no doubt that Elizabeth Warren would have done this, because Elizabeth Warren's main issue is corruption, kleptocracy, white collar crime, illicit financial dealings. This is Elizabeth Warren's shit. She gets down and dirty. Warren seemed to approve the appointment of Yellen. She sent out a very

complimentary tweet and I've heard the two are close and I hope that Yellen and Warren maybe work together on this because this is huge.

Sarah Kendzior:

This is such a crisis that it's too much for any person. It would have been too much for Warren. There needs to be commissions and investigations and... oh God, I mean, and I am very glad that Biden picked someone as experienced as Yellen, someone who does not have, to my knowledge, a Wall Street background. I think everyone has gone way too easy on Wall Street, on white collar crime, on the merging of white collar and organized crime.

Sarah Kendzior:

I'm really not thrilled with anyone as you may have noticed from this episode, but at least we don't have a secretary of the Treasury who's coming right out of Goldman Sachs or some other sleazy firm. Good for Biden for picking Yellen instead of one of those people. But, geez, she's got a lot of pressure, a lot of crises on her hands heading in. Do you have thoughts on her?

Andrea Chalupa:

Well, I mean, I think that Elizabeth Warren, obviously we all want her to be president and in the cabinet and all her plans are a path on how to Trump-proof and Putin-proof our democracy. It really is. That's what she was giving us this whole time. We did a whole episode on it, for why we endorsed her: everything from breaking up big tech to fighting corruption and strengthening our social fabric.

Andrea Chalupa:

It's also obvious. Janet Yellen does make everybody—both sides—largely happy. She did hold Wells Fargo accountable for their big fraud. She is somebody that I think will get the job done, and she's friends with Elizabeth Warren. Those two are going to be on the phone and they're going to be obviously engaging, because that's what Janet Yellen has been doing. Even during this crisis, she's been on calls with Congressional leaders and their staff on how the government can be part of the solution in this economic crisis.

Andrea Chalupa:

We're in a time of hunger, like the 1930s. It's a time of massive food insecurity. People are seriously hurting and this is an enduring trauma we're going to live with for the rest of our lives, so you need someone like her and the really strong, solid allies that she has in her corner in navigating this very serious crisis that we're all suffering in.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yep, so, best of luck to her. I'm hoping she's up to it. I mean, there's a lot on the line here. So maybe one more then we'll close it out. Should we close it out with John Kerry? The Special Envoy for Climate?

Andrea Chalupa:

I'm just relieved that John Kerry is not Secretary of State again, let me tell you.

Sarah Kendzior:

Oh, thank God. Yeah, let's go off on John Kerry. First of all, it's good that we have a Special Envoy for Climate. It is very, very crucial that the climate crisis be addressed as exactly that, as a crisis. Biden seems to grasp this. For too long we've had Democrats just thinking they could hold off on the climate crisis problem, they could ignore the effects of it. They would laugh off things like the Green New Deal. You saw Dianne Feinstein—now departed from the Judiciary Committee—

Andrea Chalupa:

Thank God. Let's replace her in 2024 when she's up for reelection in California.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yes. Hopefully she will just retire. Her time has come and gone. She was mocking young people who were just terrified about their future. And anyone who's a parent is terrified about not just our future, but the world that our children are inheriting. So it's great that the Biden administration seems focused on climate and hopefully they will continue to focus on the public above corporations and fossil fuel producing companies and so on.

Sarah Kendzior:

John Kerry, in case you didn't know, was of course the Secretary of State in the Obama administration. Before that he was the Senator from Massachusetts. He ran for president against George W. Bush in 2004 and lost, probably because of Karl Rove. Right after the announcement of his selection, Kerry tweeted, "America will soon have a government that treats the climate crisis as the urgent national security threat it is." Well, that's all good, but as for the selection of John Kerry to be the guy for this, I don't know. What do you think?

Andrea Chalupa:

I think it's a good role in showing that we put a very famous, well-known name in charge of this, and so get your top people to come to the table and let's do some serious work. I think any country around the world is going to want to know that they're meeting with someone important. I think he's going to bring a lot of decision-makers around the globe to the table on climate in a big way.

Andrea Chalupa:

And let me tell you something, even if we get the elusive slow newsweek one day in the coming years, I don't think we're ever getting that again, because the headlines of the accelerating climate disaster are going to be horrific and it's going to create a refugee crisis unlike we've ever seen before. I think even if Biden or Kamala together get two terms, three terms, in the White House—if Biden does one, Kamala does the next two—even if we get 12 years with a strong administration, it's too late for climate.

Andrea Chalupa:

It's not a matter of if but when. There's no reversing it. It's just bracing for impact now and what is left in that wreckage and how we learn to live with the water, how we learn to live with the rising sea levels and the fires and the refugee camps, the displaced persons and all of it. That's going to be an issue that is going to unite us because it does pull strong even among conservatives. The writing is on the wall. The people impacted broke through the disinformation being fueled by big oil and others that are profiting off of the destruction of our planet.

Andrea Chalupa:

I do think that making it a national security issue and putting that front and center was extremely smart and reassuring. It's going to pull out a lot of necessary leadership from other countries around the planet and reassure them and get really strong people together at the table. And God help us all because the climate crisis, when it hits—and it hasn't yet hit yet—it's going to make Trump seem like a walk in the park.

Sarah Kendzior:

Yes. On that happy note, we will conclude this week's episode of Gaslit Nation. I'm sure we'll have more picks for you—cabinet picks—to go through next week, so we'll continue with that as well as our latest updates on the coup. And thank you for listening.

Andrea Chalupa:

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

Sarah Kendzior:

We want to encourage you to donate to your local food bank, which is experiencing a spike in demand. We also encourage you to donate to directrelief@directrelief.org, which is supplying much needed protective gear to first responders working on the front lines in the US, China and other hard hit parts of the world.

Andrea Chalupa:

We encourage you to donate to the International Rescue Committee, a humanitarian relief organization, helping refugees from Syria, donate@rescue.org. If you want to help critically endangered orangutans already under pressure from the palm oil industry, donate to the Orangutan Project at theorangutanproject.org.

Andrea Chalupa:

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