

**OPEN NINTH:
CONVERSATIONS BEYOND THE COURTROOM
RULE OF LAW
EPISODE 71
APRIL 1, 2019
HOSTED BY: FREDERICK J. LAUTEN**

(Music)

NARRATOR: Welcome to another episode of “Open Ninth: Conversations Beyond the Courtroom” in the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida.

Now here’s your host, Chief Judge Frederick J. Lauten.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Well, hello, and welcome to Open Ninth. Today I have the pleasure of sitting down with Margarita Riley, Rita, and Marina Ellis. And both of my guests today are from Russia. Margarita was a judge in Russia, and Marina practiced law in Russia. We met at the lunch -- at a lunch for the Central Florida Association of Women Lawyers. And I found it intriguing that Marina came up to me and said, I was a lawyer who practiced in Russia and I want you to meet Margarita, my friend Rita, who was a judge in Russia. And I thought, that would make a fabulous podcast. So that’s how we got here today, meeting under those circumstances. And we’ve met once since then to talk about the American Judicial System and the Russian Judicial System, and I have a lot to learn about the Russian Judicial System, so -- and I think our listeners would be intrigued by that.

So first let me start by saying welcome to both of you.

MARINA ELLIS: Thank you very much.

MARGARITA RILEY: Thank you very much.

MARINA ELLIS: It’s a big honor for us to be here and talk about, you know, things that we know and, you know, would love to share about Russia and our life there. We are very happy to be here.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Great. So let’s start with where -- why don’t you tell our listeners where both of you are from.

Let me start with you, Marina. Where are you from in Russia?

MARINA ELLIS: We -- well, I can talk for -- say for both of us --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay.

MARINA ELLIS: -- because we are both from the south of Russia.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: All right.

MARINA ELLIS: It's not Siberia. It's the warm part of Russia.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: That's good.

MARINA ELLIS: We both are from the city not far from the Black Sea. That's where summer -- Winter Olympics were, what, almost four years ago.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And you both grew up --

MARGARITA RILEY: Twenty-first --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So what's the name of the city or region?

MARINA ELLIS: I'm from Rostov-on-Don. And Rita?

MARGARITA RILEY: From Stavropol.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And so you lived there and then you moved from there to the United States?

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And about when did you come over here to the United States?

MARINA ELLIS: I came to the United States exactly 10 years ago, December 2008.

MARGARITA RILEY: I'm about 12 years.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Twelve years. Okay.

And how was the transition from Russia to the United States? What was that like for each one of you?

MARGARITA RILEY: From my experience, it was totally different world.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Completely different world.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. Completely different.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. How so? Elaborate on that a little bit. What was the first difference that you noticed?

MARGARITA RILEY: People all the same of too much hospitality, so nice. And I got too many friends. And my relatives -- part of my relatives they're living in L.A. And beautiful nature, the same like in Russia, which was surprised me. And America is so huge too, just like Russia.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: Ocean.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Did you learn to speak English in Russia?

MARGARITA RILEY: We do more not in the practical. We more theoretical, you know, like vocabulary if it's necessary, computer language, law language, something like that.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: But you didn't speak conversationally --

MARGARITA RILEY: We didn't speak conversationally. But in today world, in generation today, they speak pretty fluently, yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Most Russian's learn to speak Russian and English?

MARINA ELLIS: English is part of the required school program starting from middle school, so we all take a second language and most people choose English. But just like Rita mentioned, you know, it's more of a -- you know, in a language, rules, you know, and vocabulary. But because we don't have, like, practice to speak language, it's kind of like just sits

in our head. But, you know, when we moved here, that's where the whole learning process started.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Started.

MARGARITA RILEY: And I would say --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: You got immersed in it when you moved here.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

MARGARITA RILEY: I would say it's more British English.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes, that's what we speak.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: You learned to speak --

MARGARITA RILEY: And -- yes. It's British English.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Yeah, we're a little different than the -- a little different than the British.

MARGARITA RILEY: Right. I have friends who speaking very well, fluent in English. But they not sure if they come to America if they could be -- speak --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Keep up.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right. Do you speak languages other than Russian and English?

MARINA ELLIS: I do not but --

MARGARITA RILEY: I do.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: What other languages?

MARGARITA RILEY: It's more Eastern languages. My Armenian language. I know Turkish language. I born and grew in Azerbaijan, so it's requirement in the school, second language Azerbaijan. So pretty much --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: All right. I'm going to switch gears a little bit to your studying law in Russia. So one thing is, to become a judge in America, you have to be a lawyer first and you have to have practiced law.

So let me start with you. Did you practice law before you became a judge?

MARGARITA RILEY: Absolutely. Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes, you have to. In Russia, the same like in America, I think, you have to practice minimum two to five years at least so you can become in some position -- not exactly a judge, but in any position.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: In some systems, you pick early in your career, maybe even in law school, I want to either be a lawyer or I want to be a judge. That might be true in Germany -- I'm not sure if I have the country right -- in some systems. But -- so Russia, like the United States, you practice law and then you may become a judge. That's what I did too, practiced law, then -- so what kind of law did you practice?

MARGARITA RILEY: Civil law.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And you practiced civil law too?

MARINA ELLIS: I did civil, um-hum.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And tell me a little bit about the law school experience. Do you know -- in America you go to undergraduate, then you go to three years of specialized law school.

MARGARITA RILEY: Um-hum.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Do you go to law school in Russia?

MARINA ELLIS: The thing is that, you know, when we went to school, which was in the '90s, rules were a little different. Our, you know, educational system was based on the Soviet Union system, and by standards back then to become a lawyer you have to go through five years of law school. And that's what we did. We finished -- we graduated from the law school. Here's a picture. Unfortunately only you can see it.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay, that's right. Our listeners can't quite see it, but --

MARINA ELLIS: This is our alma mater, because like I shared with you, Rita and I, we graduated from the same law school in Rostov. So, yes, we studied law for five years, but in the recent years, in the last, I think, ten years, the educational system moved towards European and American model more. And now we do have choice.

MARGARITA RILEY: Bachelor's.

MARINA ELLIS: You basically can get three years and get Bachelor of Law or study for five or six years and get master.

MARGARITA RILEY: And get master.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So do both of you have a Master's in Law?

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

MARINA ELLIS: So what we have -- yes, it's considered master.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay.

MARGARITA RILEY: Before, like we said, it's five years and master, that's it, and then post-graduation period.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: I see. Is that preceded by a general course of study that's not law?

MARINA ELLIS: Right after high school.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: High school. So you go into what -- in America it would be college. But you study for five years and end up with a Master's in Law.

MARINA ELLIS: University -- it was university.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: University.

MARGARITA RILEY: It was university.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So I went to Rollins College in Winter Park.

MARINA ELLIS: Right.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And then after that I went to law school in Philadelphia, Villa Nova, for three years. So that was seven years when you combine them both.

MARINA ELLIS: Um-hum.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: I got a Master's in Business, so there was an -- eight -- really eight years. But if I had been in Russia and wanted to go to law school, it would have been five years certainly undergraduate and my law training and ended up as a Master in Law.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. Fascinating. Then you graduate and you go into the practice of law.

First, let me ask you this, how many women were in law school when you were in law school? Was it mostly men, was it equal men --

MARINA ELLIS: At least half.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Half of the class was --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Were there barriers for women to become lawyers in Russia?

MARGARITA RILEY: No.

MARINA ELLIS: No.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: How far back would you go in time to say before this period of time it was mostly men? That there was -- was it mostly men up until 1960 or 19 -- and this might be a difference in our culture. Because when I went to law school, about a quarter of the class was women. But before that, you didn't have to go back too far when it was only one or two women in law school.

Like, I don't know if you've seen the documentary about Ruth Bader Ginsburg, but she went to law school, there were only two women in her class. All the rest --

MARINA ELLIS: Yes, I saw this.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: -- was men. So -- but Russia, I think women might have been more, you know, involved in the -- all of the aspects of the Russian society since World War II or maybe a little before. So help me with that.

MARINA ELLIS: I would say since October Revolution of 1917, ever since the Soviet Revolution of 1917, men and women were -- had equal rights to begin with. And, you know, I can say that, you know, I am the third generation of, you know, women that had careers in my family. My grandmother had a great career. My mother, you know, she retired just a couple years ago. And, you know, Rita might help for -- in --

MARGARITA RILEY: I would say, as Marina was right, in during Soviet Union time, even after World War II when many men fought in the war, women became to take all that responsibility.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: And she played main part of the -- in the --

MARINA ELLIS: Society.

MARGARITA RILEY: -- society, yes, and that --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So I didn't go back far enough, really, and I should have. I -- because I studied Russian history in college.

MARINA ELLIS: That's why we're here.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So, yeah, in the Revolution of 1917, it was really more about equality for all people, and workers' rights and worker equality. You know, our democratic society -- you know, I was taught a course in high school called Democracy versus Communism, which was propaganda in some ways but in other ways not. You're -- so you're right. Yeah, women had an active role.

And then, as we talked about at lunch -- and maybe our listeners know this -- so World War II -- these are rough numbers -- maybe 500,000 Americans were killed. But in World War II, there were over 25 million, maybe 30 million Russians. So there were many more Russian deaths than American deaths. And, in a sense -- in one sense sort of decimated the male population in Russia. Maybe a quarter of the male population was killed in the war.

MARINA ELLIS: It's absolutely true. And it's statistics and, you know, it's known fact. And, you know, we can say that there is no family in Russia that -- well, still to this day

that is not affected by World War II, because everybody -- everybody were part of it; absolutely everybody who lived in the country.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And so women had -- well, both -- it was accepted for women to be in roles other than just in the house, and had to, because so many men were off fighting and then --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes, they had to.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. Let's move forward a little bit. So your law school experience, as many women as men, you get out. How do you -- do you have a job waiting for you when you get out? Do you compete for a job like you do here? How do you get work as a lawyer with a Law Degree in Russia?

MARGARITA RILEY: When you're young and you're just finished university, it's -- in any society it's pretty much you fought for -- you know, you taking your direction, you try and sometimes it's -- maybe it's your destiny, if you can call it like that.

Yes, of course, it's some challenging for anyone who is just new, graduated and he want to -- everything's all -- kind of like in school they said, oh, everything's for you. And, of course, yes, somehow it's bring you to -- of course you start searching and looking for a job which is related to what you just graduated. And that's what I did and --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So did you go to work for a law firm or for the government or for --

MARGARITA RILEY: I used -- we call it's -- like I said, back in Russia at that time it's like law enforcement area agencies department, and it's under Ministry of Judicial -- I work, I knew many people. And then I decide to go in post-graduation period and studied the law --

continue study law. And I meet with lot of people. I went to Moscow. I was searching -- in the period of searching, and that's how to I start teaching law.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Taught law?

MARGARITA RILEY: My first -- yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: All right.

MARGARITA RILEY: My first teaching is -- was law.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: You know, here, there -- you can get a job with the government in a legal field, like you can be a prosecutor or a public defender, or you could work for a regulatory agency like, you know, Environmental Protection Agency, or in our system you can go to work for a private law firm where you represent either individuals or corporations and they pay you money. And you make more money, usually, in private practice than you do in the government, but your work might be different.

MARGARITA RILEY: The same.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Same in Russia?

MARGARITA RILEY: The same.

MARINA ELLIS: The same.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. So you went to work for an agency, and you --

MARGARITA RILEY: No.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: No?

MARGARITA RILEY: No. It was like law enforcement department --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: -- pretty much federal.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: We don't have that system how here in the United States we're run by state laws and federal laws. And they're pretty much I wouldn't say divided, but it's pretty much independent --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: They are kind of -- right. That's true, we're independent of --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. But in Russia it's all --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So you went to work basically for the Federal Government.

MARINA ELLIS: Federal --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes, for Federal Government.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And did you do the same or did you --

MARINA ELLIS: I did not do the same. I can say that, you know, it's very similar to what it is here. Because when you graduate and you have this great degree and, you know, very prestigious and, you know, you have -- you know, you spent all those years studying but you have no experience, it's always challenging to find something, you know, right away unless you have connections. And it is -- in the beginning, it is all about connections.

So, you know, Rita just shared, you know, she made a lot of, you know, good connections during, you know, her years at the university. I didn't have this much exposure, so my first job was -- actually one of our professors, he had a -- he opened insurance company --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Interesting.

MARINA ELLIS: -- and he invited me to legal department there. So it was based on the connections.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And then I know you -- so then your career in Russia was practicing law.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And we're going to get to Rita being a judge in a moment.

So did you stay there, or did you move to a different area of practice?

MARINA ELLIS: I worked there for a year until my friend opened his law firm and invited me to join.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And you went to work there.

MARINA ELLIS: And I went and I worked for him.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Then when you did that, Marina, did you then have clients who would pay you to represent them in the legal system; is that how it worked? You'd have clients who paid your salary or paid you a fee?

MARINA ELLIS: When I worked for the law firm, you know, clients paid law firm, of course.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARINA ELLIS: And I was salaried, and I paid by the law firm.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right. Okay. How big was that firm?

MARINA ELLIS: We had five attorneys. We don't have paralegal; it's not even profession in Russia. We do everything.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: All right.

MARINA ELLIS: At least that's how it was --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

MARINA ELLIS: -- what, 20 years ago when we did it.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: When you were there, right. Okay. Right.

MARINA ELLIS: But it was five -- you know, five of us, and we were all graduates from the same school.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And then did you go to court and argue cases in court?

MARINA ELLIS: Yes, absolutely. Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: All right. In front of judges?

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. Mostly civil cases?

MARINA ELLIS: Mostly civil cases. And we represented corporations, not --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. What kind of disputes were you involved in, generally?

MARINA ELLIS: Human resource --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay.

MARINA ELLIS: -- injuries, and economical. Economical cases when, you know, two companies wouldn't agree about, you know --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: What was owed --

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: -- or did we get what we ordered.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: I see. Interesting.

And I want to know about your path to being a judge. So tell our listeners a little bit about your experience before you became a judge and then how you became a judge.

MARGARITA RILEY: By introducing myself. And in opposite of Marina's life in her case, I could introduce myself as a functionalist. I don't know if it's right word. I can introduce

myself also as a system person, person who work in the system. And that's how I became working in law enforcement department and having connections and being part of that system.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: I was kind of in that side in my career. And by growing there and finding more, I just -- one day it happens.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. It happens. How does it happen? Do you run for an election or do you get appointed?

MARINA ELLIS: She was -- you were over -- you were over --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yeah, I got just over among many others because it's appointing.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And who appoints you?

MARGARITA RILEY: Who appoints us? It's Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. So you get appointed by the court itself.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. Yes, by the court.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So I got appointed by the governors of the State of Florida. But I can understand a system where -- in the Federal system, for example, the judges decide who the magistrates will be. They hire -- basically choose them. Although the federal judges get chosen by the President of the United States (indiscernible words).

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. It was (indiscernible words).

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right. So it's a little bit like that.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So how long did you practice law before you became a judge?

MARGARITA RILEY: I would say maybe eight years.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. Then what kinds of cases did you hear?

MARGARITA RILEY: You mean being already as a judge?

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: As a judge, right.

MARGARITA RILEY: In Russian Federation, arbitration is more different meaning than in America. In America it's more -- arbitration is like dispute resolution. It's like alternative --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: -- it's mediation, arbitration. In Russian Federation it's more independent federal permanent court of -- it's like --

MARINA ELLIS: I think it's more similar to business court here in United States.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay.

MARINA ELLIS: Because arbitration court in Russia is -- they only hear business cases.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Business matters.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So in our system these alternative dispute resolutions, mediation and arbitration, happen in essence outside the courtroom.

MARGARITA RILEY: Right.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: The parties get together with a mediator or arbitrator and they just decide.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And sometimes they say, we can't resolve this dispute; we just cannot come to any resolution. Then they come into the courtroom and they see me.

MARINA ELLIS: Um-hum.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And then in our system it's an adversary system, so a plaintiff is represented by a lawyer, the defense is represented by a lawyer, and they sort of battle it out in the courtroom. And the theory is the truth will, you know, arise out of this kind of conflict, this adversary conflict.

Do you have that in Russia? Is it adversarial once you get into the courtroom? Are the lawyers sort of battling just for their clients and -- I don't even know if that makes sense if your system's different. You understand that adversarial system?

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes, yes, yes, yes, adversarial.

MARINA ELLIS: But the principle is the same.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Same?

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes, our principle all the same. I'm just trying to get deep in detail which is -- I would say it's pretty much the same adversarial.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay.

MARGARITA RILEY: And that's because we have the same law governs state -- I mean Russia.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Does -- this question, you know, it's a little sensitive, maybe, but does the government tell you how to decide your cases? Like that's -- in America there's probably this image that someone would call you or pressure you to say, we're the

government and we want you to decide this case this way. And I know that may be grossly oversimplifying things, but does that happen or is that a big myth?

MARGARITA RILEY: I think it's more oversimplifying. It's -- even if it's happened, it's depend on the stage which is country exists in that period of the history --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Of Russia.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. And I would say --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So maybe during the Soviet --

MARGARITA RILEY: I would say maybe in the Soviet Union time it's more, you know, call from KGB or from government officials. Maybe that's -- no maybe -- everyone know. No one see that's maybe, but everyone know that's pretty much what's happened like that.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: How it happened. Right.

MARINA ELLIS: Did anybody ever call you and tell you --

MARGARITA RILEY: Never, ever. It's just like here, pretty much. So you made decision, and then that's businesses or corporates, they just appeal, and then it's sending back, and then it's sending to different judge --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: -- and then they do that until maybe that's final to get to say that that's decision which is they want to.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: It's final. Right.

So one of the hallmarks of the American legal system, in theory, and it works for the most part in theory, is the independence of the judiciary. That is that we should not be influenced by politics, we shouldn't be influenced by money. While historically in America you

can find cases where judges are bribed, that's a -- you're -- if it is discovered, normally you're removed from office and you're shamed in the public eye. And that's a sin in a -- to be bribed in America. It's not a common practice. Now, has it happened, yeah, but it's really a stain when it happens. And I think many Americans think, oh, Russian judges, you know, they receive bribes, they receive calls from the government, they're told how to decide. And this might be all naiveté on our part or -- I don't know. So how about that, can you tell me that? Does that system exist in Russia? Is it pervasive? Is it --

MARGARITA RILEY: I would say yes and no. More no, because we are civil society and we are civil law country and we doing everything during last 30 years after Soviet Union collapse, even to bring to that, you know, civility and --

MARINA ELLIS: Higher standards.

MARGARITA RILEY: -- higher standards. Like each country, I would say, probably do if they have open free markets, civil law enforcement anyway. And I would say yes and no. You don't have any that's -- I would say the judge could be independent, but meantime he has his own biases, stereotypes --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right. We have that too.

MARGARITA RILEY: -- subjectiveness.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: They try to be objective --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: -- but that subjectiveness because you living in that's existence and you kind of pretty much that's political interest maybe. Maybe (indiscernible words). I would say in difficult or -- cases, such uncertain cases, maybe that's could happen.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. I think -- there's something you said that led me to think maybe we should give a very brief history of Russia to our listeners. And it's -- this might be oversimplified too, but -- so there's the Czarist Russian period where there were czars and czarinas --

MARINA ELLIS: For centuries.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: -- for centuries who were the political leaders, like kings and queens in England.

MARGARITA RILEY: Um-hum.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Then you get to 1917, and you have the Russian Revolution that overthrew that system of government, this hereditary system of family control of the government and society. Then you had that -- and that was disruptive, of course. But then you have the Soviet system that comes into existence, Lenin, Stalin -- going from Gorbachev -- from 1917 to --

MARINA ELLIS: 1991.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: -- '91.

MARGARITA RILEY: Um-hum.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And then that system sort of changes, right? And it -- there's a little bit of upheaval in that change, sort of Gorbachev, Yeltsin, Putin. That sort -- there's all kinds of intrigue, we'd say here, of who's going to run the country. But you're operating then, what, under a Constitution?

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And there was a Constitution, when, 1991?

MARINA ELLIS: 1991.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Wasn't there, then, another sort of amended or second Constitution in '93 and --

MARINA ELLIS: Well, there were several changes and amendments but --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: We did that 1993?

MARINA ELLIS: Yes. And -- yes, thank you very much for doing this overview because it -- yes, it is important, you know, in terms of, you know, what we're discussing today. Because, you know, people tend to compare and look at Russia and other countries and compare with what they know and what they have around them. And, you know, we do have to remember that everybody has different path, different history, different, you know, ways how they get there. So we -- when we say and when we compare, you know, system in the United States and in Russia, the system is very similar because, you know --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Today it's similar.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes. The system that -- the political system and democracy that we have in Russia is similar because it's copied from the best -- well, it's not copied. When they wrote Constitution in the '90s, they used the best practices from European history, from American history to create Constitution and political system in Russia.

The thing is, because it's so new and it was -- you know, it was after 70 years over communism regime where, you know, there were no democracy, no freedoms period.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARINA ELLIS: And so only in the '90s, Russian -- Russia started, you know, building this institutions and system that exists in Europe and United States for centuries now.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARINA ELLIS: So when we look at two systems, they're -- in theory, they are the same -- well, or very similar. They're just different age.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARINA ELLIS: And they're in the different stage --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So we had our revolution, but that was in 1775 to 1778.

MARINA ELLIS: That's right.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yeah.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Then we adopted Constitution.

MARGARITA RILEY: And you still have the same Constitution.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And we still have it. Now, let's be honest, we've had imperfections so -- we had slavery; we were a country formed in slavery.

MARINA ELLIS: We did too.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: We had the Civil Rights of the '60s, where, depending on your color, you didn't appreciate all the rights that other people of different color had. And then there's been sort of a little bit of a change in society about your sexual orientation, women's rights. You know, women couldn't vote from the formation of our country, but eventually in the 1920's got to vote.

So we have -- but we have existed under the same Constitution. So the same basic structure of government, you know, we've had for over 200 years. Your structure of government was one way till 1917, then a different way from 1917 to the 1990's, and now you have a Constitution.

MARGARITA RILEY: I would say back then, Yeltsin, when he proposed that Constitution, he used to say -- I would just now just literally translate his word, he was saying

it's gentlemen pack. It's like gentlemen basics, which is you have to have with you when you go to your trip or somewhere, you know, like the main basic, and of whole Democratic Constitution of the world. That's was his words exactly. And that's how we can represent our Democratic Constitution, which is based on federative law governed state with a republican form of government.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. So we could spend weeks on history lesson. I'm going to come back to law for just a moment.

So in America, in the criminal courts -- I don't know if either of you have experience in Russia in the criminal courts -- but our theory is that if the police arrest someone, they're presumed to be innocent, that is you don't assume they're guilty, and the government, the state or the federal government, has to prove that you're guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. That's the high -- one of the highest burdens of proof under the law. And then you have this Constitutional right to remain silent, so you don't have to help the government in any way.

Can you tell me, in the criminal courts in Russia, does it work that way or differently?

MARGARITA RILEY: It's work differently.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay.

MARGARITA RILEY: What you said about burden of proof, it's work -- it's mostly on the judge or on the prosecutor.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay.

MARGARITA RILEY: We don't have the definition -- how would say, proof beyond of reasonable doubt.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yeah. We don't have even that's definition to tell about.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: All right.

MARGARITA RILEY: How much I know in America, it's more on the prosecutor's side to prove.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right. Correct.

MARGARITA RILEY: And in civil cases, which is I was in the civil cases, it's -- yes, you're right. I could say about the other standard of burden of proof, which is preponderance of the evidence and clear, which is -- we can say balance of possibilities when you have to prove your evidence from both sides. And it's all depend on the judge. Judge have to get his decision.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: The judge makes the decision.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So do you have jury trials in Russia like we have?

MARGARITA RILEY: We do.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: In what kinds of cases? All kinds or only certain --

MARINA ELLIS: Criminal cases only.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And does the jury have to unanimously decide the verdict?

MARINA ELLIS: No. It's the majority, right?

MARGARITA RILEY: Majority.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. So that's a little different. So for us, the jury has to unanimously -- all have to agree either guilty or not guilty.

MARINA ELLIS: I just looked it up. In 2018, there was new law put into place regarding jury where they broadened the number of cases -- types of cases that jury can hear, so they're improving the system also.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So there are more jury trials. Right.

So I want to go back to the burden of proof a little bit again for our listeners and, Rita, you mentioned it. So in a civil case, we call it preponderance of the evidence. And lawyers often tell them, if you imagine scales being equal, you have to tip the scales just ever so slightly. So more than 50 percent of the evidence has to be on one side to win in a civil case.

On some civil cases, there's a higher burden called clear and convincing evidence. So that's more than a preponderance. No one knows exactly where it is --

MARGARITA RILEY: Um-hum.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: -- but it's more than a preponderance but it's less than beyond a reasonable doubt.

And then when you get into criminal court, it's beyond and to the exclusion of every reasonable doubt. So if you -- we tell jurors, if you go back into the jury room and you're deliberating and you have a doubt that's based in reason as opposed to something that you just make up, like Martians landed and did this, which is absurd -- you know, something that maybe it happened that way, it's reasonable that this -- I have a doubt about that, then you should find someone not guilty.

MARGARITY RILEY: Right.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So those are our different burdens. And in criminal court, it's beyond a reasonable doubt for all cases. In civil court, it's the preponderance or clear and convincing.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

MARINA ELLIS: And because you mentioned this when we met last time, we did study what American standards are for this and we did find out that it is different. You know,

our standards are -- you know, are different. It's not that -- it's still about adversary in the court. You know, you still need to prove the --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yeah.

MARINA ELLIS: -- you know, the --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Your case.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

MARINA ELLIS: You still have to prove your case. It's still, you know, you compete, you know, with the other side to prove your case, but it's just not called -- you know, we don't have the standard that you just --

MARGARITA RILEY: That standards. And that's second burden of proof, which is preponderance of the evidence and clear, is more on the plaintiff side.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right. That's (indiscernible words).

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. He was -- in -- because we don't have that standards, it's -- sometimes it's hard to prove. You can just be a plaintiff to bring that case, however, if you don't have enough evidence to prove this, like you said, that scale could be disbalanced.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Yeah. And the -- and, you know, that -- what's interesting in our system, probably any system, is -- and basically, I mean, this again is a little bit of a simplification, but if you make the claim, if you're the plaintiff saying someone took money from me or someone didn't deliver the goods that we ordered, or if you're the government, someone broke our criminal law, you have to prove what you allege. The burden's on you.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes, it's the --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Sometimes the burdens shift a little bit.

MARINA ELLIS: Right.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: One thing I'm curious about is in our system we have personal injury cases, where someone's injured in an automobile accident or a doctor performs surgery and they're -- you know, and it's grossly -- it's malpractice. And so then they sue for -- to compensate for loss and pain and suffering. Do you have that in your system, do you know?

MARINA ELLIS: We do, but I would say that number of those cases are very, very, very low.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: I see. Right.

MARINA ELLIS: Because -- I don't know. From one side -- because it is very hard to prove, I think, and I don't know -- I don't have explanation for this, but I know that here in the United States it is like almost, like, the majority of cases that --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Well, there's advertising. That might be different.

MARINA ELLIS: Okay. Maybe. Maybe.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So we have that, so people hear about it a lot.

MARINA ELLIS: But --

MARGARITA RILEY: But here it's more known cases.

MARINA ELLIS: Like, well known.

MARGARITA RILEY: Like you said, advertising, but well known. In Russia, it's just happens, whoever work or whoever --

MARINA ELLIS: So when you slip and fall in Russia, going to the court is not the first thing that comes to your mind. It's not something that, you know, somebody would just --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Interesting.

MARINA ELLIS: -- automatically would, you know, sue for this.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: What's the most difficult case you've tried as a lawyer?

MARINA ELLIS: I can --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Or let me -- what case are you most proud of? Either what are you most proud of or what was the biggest challenge that you had?

MARINA ELLIS: Well, there was a case where the -- I represented the corporation and it was about -- the plaintiff was an employee. And, well, I did my job and I fought, you know, as much as I could, you know, to represent the company. And -- but she did win. She did win the case. And I can't say that I'm proud of it, but I was actually happy -- personally happy because she did -- because, you know, I thought that it was the right decision.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So you represented your company, you had to, that's who hired you.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: But you think the right decision was reached.

MARINA ELLIS: Well, I -- yes, I do.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Yeah, I see. Yes. Okay.

What's the most difficult case that you handled as a judge or the work that you're most proud of as a judge?

MARGARITA RILEY: I wouldn't say it's most difficult. It's always difficult to deal with, yourself. I could say that's way. And -- because I mostly work not with civilian. I mean, it's -- was businesses who were represented by civilian. And it's about businesses. And I saw in -- because we been on the transformation period of Russian history development, when some

businesses coming huge and sometimes -- I wouldn't call that dishonestly, but they merge and becoming like big monopolies and just taking over the small businesses and it's was in front of my face. I can see how the small businesses they don't have a choice to grow. And if that's big businesses represented by four, five lawyers who is very much knowledgeable and well known and here is someone who is just represent by one lawyer, it's always sad.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right. That's tough.

MARGARITA RILEY: And you just don't have a choice sometimes. Or when you try to be -- get -- make decision toward to balance and integrity and honesty, and then it's appealing in the highest court and bringing -- just like we talked previously, bringing to lower courts to redo that's again.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: You know, they don't pursue you to do that, but that's how that's happens.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: One of the issues that we're facing here is we're dependent on the legislative body to give us judges to do the work that we have. And we're in a growing community, population-wise and economically, and we need more judges. But I can't just create a new judge. I've got to -- the legislature's got to tell me, you can have an additional judge. So we started a business court, we shut it down because we had to move those judges over to family where there was a great need for more judicial labor.

Do you have those kinds of problems in Russia, like, you know, too much work for a single judge and the judge was just working all the time and couldn't keep up and -- was that -- you have --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes and no. It's too much paperwork. And meantime we -- I would say until two-thousand maybe four to -- we don't have even enough pay to judge.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: I see.

MARGARITA RILEY: And we just raise the wages for judge. And I wouldn't say they want to give up and don't work as a judge, but it's wasn't -- I would say pretty much the same issue in Russia, yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: We had to -- we can't create -- if we have more work, we can't create a new judgeship, so we just do the best that we can.

MARGARITA RILEY: We cannot create -- yes. Yes. It's have to be certain amount, like (indiscernible words) people appointed.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Would you say, having lived in both Russia and America, do you sense that there are much greater personal freedoms for citizens in America than Russia or not?

MARGARITA RILEY: I would say I feel it's not because now I'm in front of the microphone -- I would say I was pretty much feeling freedom in Russia.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: In Russia?

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. Maybe in some way more freedom of speech than I was -- I'm feeling here.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Even here? More freedom of speech in Russia? That will surprise our listeners for some reason, but --

MARINA ELLIS: Well, we are here to surprise. That's why you invited us.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: All right.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So, Marina, what do you say to that; more personal freedoms here than Russia? That's our perceptions as Americans.

MARINA ELLIS: I know.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: You know that, right?

MARINA ELLIS: I know, yes. And I understand the question. I can only speak for myself. I never had -- I never was -- I never felt restricted in any ways when I lived in Russia. And when Rita says about a difference in freedom of speech, it is becoming kind of more and more -- it's not like you cannot say your political opinion here in the United States. But it has become so --

MARGARITA RILEY: Political correctness.

MARINA ELLIS: Political correctness become such a big thing.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Oh, okay.

MARGARITA RILEY: And biases.

MARINA ELLIS: And this is something that we don't have there. And, you know, if somebody doesn't like something, they can talk about it. They don't really --

MARGARITA RILEY: And stereotypes, that's the first my perception here.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Interesting.

MARINA ELLIS: But I think it's more cultural, maybe, phenomenon than anything else. So, again, we --

MARGARITA RILEY: I would clear a little bit. Maybe because more rules and restrictions kind of on that's whole biases or stereotypes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Here or in Russia?

MARGARITA RILEY: Here. I would say --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: More rules and restrictions, really? Interesting.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. I would say, it's not about -- yes. We can -- I'm not say if someone hold my hands and --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So the image here is if you -- that you can kind of easily challenge the government. And we have this historical framework of freedom of speech, and you can criticize the President and you can criticize Congress, you can criticize me as a judge, you know, and you shouldn't be persecuted for that. Our image is you cross that line in Russia and you could be arrested by the KGB or you -- you know, you're going to get in trouble if you're too outspoken.

And maybe that's outgrowth of Soviet Russia and Siberia and --

MARINA ELLIS: I think we're talking about little bit different freedoms.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

MARINA ELLIS: We were talking about personal freedom --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

MARINA ELLIS: -- and you were talking about political freedoms.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay.

MARINA ELLIS: And it is different.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: All right. So help me with that.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. Yes, it is different. It is different, yes.

MARINA ELLIS: And it is different.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. So personal freedoms --

MARINA ELLIS: Like, yes --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: -- same or even more free in Russia.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. Political freedom?

MARINA ELLIS: Political freedoms, yes, they --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: For your --

MARINA ELLIS: Again, in the Constitution it is democracy, and -- but it is more difficult to express your political view on a big scale like it is -- unlike here. It is true. It is true --

MARGARITA RILEY: It is true, yes.

MARINA ELLIS: -- because the system is different. The system it's -- you know, is --

MARGARITA RILEY: More government control.

MARINA ELLIS: -- more government control.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: More government control.

MARINA ELLIS: That is true.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: If I asked you to list one or two personal freedoms that you think are more respected in Russia than in America, is that a fair question?

MARINA ELLIS: Can you give an example?

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Well --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yeah.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: -- you know, we regulate people taking drugs. Do you regulate people taking drugs?

MARINA ELLIS: Of course.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Yeah, of course.

MARGARITA RILEY: Of course.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: More sexual freedom in Russia, less sexual freedom? Is that even an issue or not?

MARGARITA RILEY: Freedom -- sexual freedom in Russia, yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So, for example, a big hot potato in America is abortion. I don't know if abortion is, you know, a big issue in Russia or not. A big issue --

MARINA ELLIS: It's not a big issue in Russia because it's not political issue. You know, if it's medically needed and, you know, it's -- there's no restrictions on it.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Interesting.

MARINA ELLIS: There's a lot of politics around and a lot of religious aspect of it here in the United States. In Russia, it's been like this for decades.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Yeah. So when we met for lunch to talk a little bit about the thought of this podcast, you were explaining to me how beautiful Russia is. And I accept that, even though I haven't been there yet, although I plan on someday visiting. And I think America is beautiful too.

So my question -- and you're -- feel free to pass on this question. But why would you leave Russia and come to America? A beautiful country, you know, burgeoning freedoms, new Constitution; why would you take off from Russia and come to the United States?

MARGARITA RILEY: It's probably destiny. Like we mentioned in our meeting -- last lunch meeting, I get married and first I came as tourist -- on touristic visa, and then I get married and then I decide to stay.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: You married an American?

MARGARITA RILEY: Yeah.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: In Russia, and then --

MARGARITA RILEY: No, here, and then in Russia, yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: You got married here.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And lived in Russia?

MARGARITA RILEY: A little bit. No, he don't live in Russia. I went back to Russia with just made this legal and then come back.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Understood.

And what about you?

MARINA ELLIS: Well, Rita and I, we have similar story. You know, I moved because of the, you know, family situation because my husband was American and we actually met online and when we decide -- well, he proposed, he actually moved to Russia, and we lived in Russia for five years.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Interesting.

MARINA ELLIS: So -- and it just another prove that it's not that bad there, because he really --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And he liked Russia?

MARINA ELLIS: He really enjoys --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. And that was decision making because I have my life there, a job there and everything.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And tell me -- if this is unfair; tell me. Would you rather live in Russia or rather live in America, or is that not even a fair question?

MARINA ELLIS: You see, for us to come here was a huge opportunity. And to have different experience, to new -- to learn something new. For me, that was the -- my, you know,

biggest motivation to come here. Of course I wanted to know about United States and what it is like because I grew up on Hollywood movies. Okay? I -- you know, it was my dream to come here and see to myself.

MARGARITA RILEY: I would say I would like to live in both place.

MARINA ELLIS: So --

MARGARITA RILEY: I would like to live sometimes here, go back there.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Gotcha.

MARGARITA RILEY: Something like that.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: If you could change any one thing about the legal system in Russia, is there anything that you would change?

MARINA ELLIS: Corruption.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So there's some payoffs for decisions.

MARINA ELLIS: Corruption is -- yes. Corruption in society in general exists, and it is a big problem. And, you know, I know that they're working on it, I know that they're trying to, you know, eliminate it. It's a slow and painful process but, you know, unfortunately that's -- I think that's the worst part of the legal system.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right. Gotcha.

What would you say, Judge?

MARGARITA RILEY: About corruption or about --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: If you could change any one thing in the legal system in Russia, is that what you would change too?

MARGARITA RILEY: I would say corruption, yeah, I agree with her what I would change. Maybe I would -- I was thinking maybe I would make less government control.

MARINA ELLIS: Control.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. And give people more entrepreneurial --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Economic freedom.

MARGARITA RILEY: -- economic freedom. Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Interesting.

Are -- is public education in Russia sort of the same as in America? Are -- in other words, is -- in general, are Russians highly educated, would you say --

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: -- across the population base, so almost everyone --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. That's coming from Soviet period. Every single person have to have degree -- I mean, graduated from school ten years, back then. And pretty much after Soviet Union collapse, pretty much everyone have their Bachelor's or whatever. Back then it was just Master's Degree.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: One difference I'm curious about is in Russia, if you need medical help, if you need to see a doctor or have surgery, is that run by the government or is that run privately?

MARINA ELLIS: You -- alternatives. You have choices.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Like you do here. Well, here, it's mostly -- well, I know it's --

MARINA ELLIS: There's mostly private sector --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: I probably should stay away from the whole healthcare industry debate, because I'm no expert.

MARINA ELLIS: Well, there's -- it's very simple. In Russia, education is free, you know --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right.

MARINA ELLIS: -- so public education, you know --

MARGARITA RILEY: Medicine is free.

MARINA ELLIS: -- medical system is free so -- majority of it. You know, everybody has access to free medicine. But there is private sector that -- you know, private companies that provide the services, and you have choices.

MARGARITA RILEY: And you have this alternative.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: I see. So all of the government-run functions, are they financed through income taxes or taxes collected from the people?

MARGARITA RILEY: They do.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

MARGARITA RILEY: They do.

MARINA ELLIS: But also --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Is it mostly income tax or property tax or sales tax?

MARINA ELLIS: But also government has their own revenue, because government still owns --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Runs industries.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: I see.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes, because government still runs certain industries.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Gotcha.

MARGARITA RILEY: The nationalized --

MARINA ELLIS: Yeah.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: National -- like oil and --

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

MARINA ELLIS: Well, they're not -- it's not a monopoly, but they are big players in those industries, oil --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So there's some private companies, some --

MARINA ELLIS: The -- yes.

MARGARITA RILEY: Electricity, yes.

MARINA ELLIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Oh, so -- and is that the big revenue producers, sort of the government businesses, or is it taxes?

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes.

MARINA ELLIS: Yeah.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Or is it both?

MARGARITA RILEY: They --

MARINA ELLIS: It's both, but I think it's more of the government revenues because taxes in Russia are not that high. I mean, the -- there's not the taxes that people pay.

MARGARITA RILEY: It's like main parts of -- main bonds, percentage of bonds on -- let's say on the government's side and maybe some private people.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: All right. Final question. Do you have any interest in practicing law in America, Judge?

MARGARITA RILEY: What -- can you (indiscernible words) that's question? Interest in --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Would you like to be a lawyer in America?

MARGARITA RILEY: Absolutely, I would like to. I like to do that from the beginning and --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: So you'd have to go to an American law school to -- and then pass the bar examination.

MARGARITA RILEY: Yes. Yes. You have to pass bar.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Are you working on that?

MARGARITA RILEY: I do. And I was --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. Good. Where are you going to school?

MARGARITA RILEY: When I will go to school?

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Yeah, when and where?

MARGARITA RILEY: I took some classes when I first arrived.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: All right.

MARGARITA RILEY: I -- so I have many classes. And I took law enforcement class, criminal class, business class, business law class. And I was thinking when I moved to Florida two years ago, I was thinking it is worse me to now work on the bar so I can have that's practice law or not.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Right. Right.

MARGARITA RILEY: And I would tell you I don't know. I will ask you that's question privately after the show.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Okay. Okay, great.

What about you, would you like to --

MARINA ELLIS: I do not have intention to become a lawyer because I found just absolutely amazing profession in the United States that doesn't exist in Russia, and I --

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: What's that? What do you do?

MARINA ELLIS: I'm financial advisor.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Oh, great.

MARINA ELLIS: I'm financial advisor and, you know, things that I've learned, you know, about, you know, this profession and what kind of impact it has on people's life and people's future, it just -- I don't know if I would find it in any other profession. And also I have enough legal aspects to this -- do my job as it is now, so that's why.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Great. Thank you both for taking time out of your schedule and joining us. We -- I could go on for, maybe, days. Not hours, but days.

MARGARITA RILEY: Thank you for inviting us.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: This is so fascinating.

MARINA ELLIS: Thank you so much for this opportunity.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: But I hope our listeners enjoy this as much as I did, and thank you for joining us.

MARGARITA RILEY: We enjoy.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: And best of luck in your careers.

MARINA ELLIS: Thank you.

MARGARITA RILEY: We enjoy.

CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN: Thank you.

MARGARITA RILEY: Thank you so much.

MARINA ELLIS: Thank you very much.

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