

## **Military Resistance 14K8**



# **[Quote Of The Year, So Far] Top ISIS Commander In Afghanistan Says Of Trump: “This Guy Is A Complete Maniac”**

Nov 15 2016 By Khaama Press

The loyalists of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group in Afghanistan have claimed that the victory of Donald Trump in the US Presidential election will help the group attract more fighters in the country.

The loyalists of the terrorist group joined the Taliban insurgents to react towards the victory of the Republican candidate in the elections.

“This guy is a complete maniac. His utter hate towards Muslims will make our job much easier because we can recruit thousands,” Abu Omar Khorasani, a top IS commander in Afghanistan, told Reuters.

The remarks by ISIS commander in Afghanistan came as Trump earlier promised to defeat “radical Islamic terrorism just as we won the Cold War.”

MORE

## **[Political Farce Of The Year, So Far] Clinton's Lead In Presidential Election Votes Passes 1 Million**

17 November 16 By Madeline Conway, Politico. [Excerpt]

Hillary Clinton's lead in the popular vote over President-elect Donald Trump has surpassed 1 million, according to Dave Wasserman of the nonpartisan Cook Political Report.

As the final vote counts continue to trickle in a week after Election Day, Wasserman's tally found that Clinton had 61,963,234 votes to Trump's 60,961,185 as of Tuesday afternoon.

Wasserman tweeted that votes from Montgomery County, Maryland, pushed Clinton's lead over the 1-million mark, with the Democratic nominee receiving roughly 20,000 more votes, compared to about 3,000 for Trump.

Votes are still being tabulated in California, Utah and Washington, according to Tracy Lewis, elections operations manager for the Associated Press. The result in Michigan remains too close to call.

### **Comment: T**

**In this anti-democratic form of government, the candidate for President who gets the most votes does not win.**

**In this case, Clinton.**

**In isn't enough that a national election merely chooses one faction of capitalist class exploiters and oppressors over another.**

**Even within those limits, the farce declares that the winner can lose and the loser can win.**

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

# **Taliban Down Second Afghan Helicopter: “Afghan Officials Have Attempted To Hide Taliban Successes In Shooting Down Its Helicopters In The Past”**

November 17th, 2016 BY BILL ROGGIO, The Long War Journal. [Excerpts] Bill Roggio is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and the Editor of The Long War Journal.

The Taliban claimed it shot down its second helicopter in Afghanistan in three days. Afghan officials confirmed a helicopter encountered problems in Logar province, but said it “made a hard landing due to technical problems.”

The Taliban released the following statement on Voice of Jihad, its official propaganda website:

“The combined U.S invaders and local Special Forces were foiled in their attempts to break through Mujahideen defenses in Baraki Barak district of Logar province last night, according to Al-Emarah News reports.

“It added Mujahideen shot down a helicopter gunship belonging to local Special Forces which was hovering over the area to bomb out Mujahideen positions during the intense fighting that that inflicted the worst casualties on both foreign invaders and local forces.

“The helicopter came down and smashed into pieces, killing or wounding all those aboard. It is not yet clear how many were killed in the shoot-down.”

Afghan officials told Pajhwok Afghan News that a helicopter belonging to the Ministry of Interior had a problem getting off the ground:

“Mohammad Rahim Amin, the district’s administrative chief, told Pajhwok Afghan News the helicopter of the Ministry of Interior’s 303rd unit made an emergency landing in Khosh Mazar area on Tuesday night.

“A number of security personnel disembarked from helicopter before it took off. Immediately after takeoff, the chopper made a hard landing due to technical problems,” he said, adding no one was hurt.

He said the helicopter was still in the area and rescuers had arrived at the site to help the crew.

But a local tribal leader indicated that the helicopter landed near his home:

“Azizuddin, a tribal elder from Shah Mazar area, claimed the helicopter landed close to his house at around 11pm last night. A heavy clash is still underway between the Taliban and security forces, he said, adding the militants did not allow the helicopter to fly.”

The Taliban also declared it downed an Afghan military helicopter in the central province of Ghor on Nov. 14. Afghan officials also asserted that the helicopter crew was forced to make an emergency landing due to technical issues.

Afghan officials have attempted to hide Taliban successes in shooting down its helicopters in the past.

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## **Resistance Action: Insurgent Bomber Blows Up National Security Officials**



[Graphic: flickr.com/photos]

11-16-2016 CCTV.com

A bomber on a motorbike killed at least four people and wounded several others in Kabul, Afghanistan, in an attack on a vehicle carrying national security officials, according to a security official at the scene in the Afghan capital.

An interior ministry official confirmed the attack but could not say immediately how many people were killed or wounded.

According to the ministry’s spokesman, Najib Danish, the bomber blew himself up in the Pul Mahmood Khan area. The target is unclear.

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15 November 2016 TOLONews.com

At least one person was killed and another was wounded in an explosion in Karte Naw area in Kabul's PD8 on Tuesday evening.

A number of eyewitnesses said a Rural Rehabilitation Ministry's vehicle had been the target. Unconfirmed reports the victim might have been the driver of the vehicle.

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## **POLICE WAR REPORTS**

# **Parents Receive \$9 Million Settlement After Police Kill Handcuffed Son: “The Missouri Highway Patrol ‘Knowingly’ And ‘Purposely’ Violated The State’s Open Records Law In The Days And Months After Ellingson’s Death”**

November 18, 2016 By Andrew Emmet, NationofChange

The state of Missouri recently agreed to pay \$9 million to the family of a 20-year-old Iowa man who drowned in police custody. Although the wrongful death lawsuit was settled this week, the state trooper responsible for the young man’s death has been charged with involuntary manslaughter and is currently awaiting trial.

On May 31, 2014, Trooper Anthony Piercy pulled over 20-year-old Brandon Ellingson for suspicion of boating while intoxicated. Ellingson had been vacationing with his friends on the Lake of the Ozarks when Piercy arrested him and cuffed Ellingson’s hands behind his back.

Before taking Ellingson aboard his patrol boat, Piercy placed a Type III life vest over the handcuffed man’s head without properly fastening the straps or securing the vest over his torso.

Driving at speeds up to 46 mph, Piercy claimed that his boat hit another boat’s wake when Ellingson was accidentally ejected from the vehicle and fell into the water.

According to Ellingson’s friends who witnessed the incident, Piercy eventually dove into the water to rescue Ellingson but the handcuffed man had already lost his unsecured life preserver and sunk to the bottom of the lake.

“He never did anything,” eyewitness Larry Moreau recalled Piercy’s hesitation. “He stayed in that position for maybe 10 seconds, something like that, and let the boat drift away from him. It’s hard to comprehend how this officer could have known that this kid was handcuffed and it took him that long to get back to him.”

A few hours later, the Missouri Highway Patrol called Brandon's father, Craig Ellingson, falsely informing him that his son had drowned after his boat capsized.

**In a recorded conversation with another officer, Piercy recalled only driving approximately 15 to 20 mph. But according to his patrol boat's GPS, Piercy had reached speeds up to 46 mph when the handcuffed man fell into the water.**

**Earlier this year, Circuit Judge Jon Beetem ruled that the Missouri Highway Patrol "knowingly" and "purposely" violated the state's open records law in the days and months after Ellingson's death by repeatedly denying information requested by attorneys representing his family.**

In December, Piercy was charged with involuntary manslaughter despite the fact that a Morgan County Coroner determined Ellingson's death to be an accident.

Before patrolling on the lake alone, Piercy had only received two days of field training prior to Ellingson's arrest. Piercy has been placed on administrative leave and currently awaits trial.

On Thursday, Ellingson's family released a statement concerning the recent settlement:

"On November 14, 2016 the State of Missouri agreed to pay the Estate of Brandon Ellingson and Sherry, Craig, and Jennifer Ellingson the sum of \$9 million dollars to settle the lawsuit filed in federal court against the Missouri Highway Patrol, Trooper Anthony Piercy, and several other Defendants on December 5, 2014.

"The Ellingsons wish to express their deep and sincere appreciation to the tens of thousands of people in Iowa, Missouri, Arizona, and across the country who have supported them during this very difficult time.

"No amount of money will lessen the suffering that the Ellingson family, relatives, and friends have endured since his death two and a half years ago. The family established a memorial at Valley Stadium and supported a scholarship at Valley High School in West Des Moines, Iowa to make certain that Brandon will never be forgotten.

"The Ellingsons now look to the Missouri state court to ensure that the manslaughter charges pending against Piercy are prosecuted expeditiously and fairly and that Piercy never again serves as a law enforcement officer. Justice for Brandon will be achieved by ensuring public safety in Missouri."

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## **Scum In Action: St. Louis Cop Poses With Dead Black Man;**

# **“The Cop Gives A Thumbs-Up To The Camera”**

## **“When KMOV-TV Reported On The Issue, A Lawyer For North County Police Cooperative Threatened The Station, Claiming The Photo In Question Was ‘Stolen Property’”**



The unidentified police officer poses with the corpse of 28-year-old Omar Rahman.  
(photo: KMOV)

06 November 16 By teleSUR

An armed police officer hovers next to a body of a deceased Black man, lifting his arm with his gloved hands. Grinning widely straight ahead, the cop gives a thumbs-up to the camera.

This is the startling image captured Aug. 8, at the scene of 28-year-old Omar Rahman’s death, leaked in the weeks following his death in St. Louis, Missouri. Now Kim Staton, Rahman’s mother, is demanding answers of the ordeal many say is reminiscent of U.S. soldiers posing with detainees at the Abu-Ghraib prison in Iraq.

“That’s what I am looking for, I’m looking for some answers,” Staton said, after local media outlet KMOV-TV News 4 showed her the image.

Her attorney Antonio Romanucci called the photo is “hideous.”

While the Medical Examiner ruled Rahman’s death an accidental overdose, Staton says she’s heard little from police ever since he died.

Since the leak, investigative reporter Lauren Trager has been looking into the implications of the photo, questioning the North County Police Cooperative officer’s conduct.

“In your mind, is there any reasonable explanation for what that officer was doing?” asked Trager. “No,” said Staton. “Because when they come to a call, they're supposed to be there to help and protect, not doing what he was doing with thumbs up and a smirk on his face.”

“It's hideous. The implications of this photograph are just astronomical,” said Romanucci. “I have seen thousands and thousands of forensic photographs, I have never seen a staged photograph of an officer next to a deceased body.”

Staton says that once News 4 got involved with the ordeal, police told her their official crime scene camera had been missing for a while, with some missing pictures as well.

When KMOV-TV reported on the issue, a lawyer for North County Police Cooperative threatened the station, claiming the photo in question was “stolen property” and stated that the police cooperative “does not believe it is appropriate to comment on a matter related to two open criminal investigations.”

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## **MILITARY NEWS**

# **Shameful, Disgusting Duty: Additional National Guard Members Called To Assist Repressing Native Americans At Pipeline Protest Site**

November 18, 2016 The Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. — The North Dakota National Guard is requesting more soldiers and airmen to assist law enforcement officers dealing with Dakota Access Pipeline protesters in Morton County.

Maj. Amber Balken says about 90 guard members are on duty currently in Morton County. KFGO reports Balken says that number is expected to increase to about 130 personnel in the next few days. She says the Guard members will come from units “across the board.”

Maj. Gen. Alan Dohrmann, the leader of the state's National Guard, has said about \$8 million has been spent to date on law enforcement and other costs related to the protests, centered in south-central North Dakota.

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## FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



**“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.**

**“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.**

**“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”**

**“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”**

**Frederick Douglass, 1852**

**Wars throughout history have been waged for conquest and plunder and it is the working class who fights all the battles, the working class who makes the supreme sacrifices, the working class who freely sheds their blood and furnishes their corpses, and it is they who have never yet had a voice - in either declaring war or making peace. It is the ruling class that invariably does both. They alone declare war.**

**They are continually talking about patriotic duty. It is not their patriotic duty but your patriotic duty that they are concerned about. Their patriotic duty never takes them to the firing line or chucks them into the trenches.**

**-- Eugene V. Debs**

# Meeting With President Daniel Ortega



From: Mike Hastie  
To: Military Resistance Newsletter  
Sent: November 16, 2016  
Subject: Meeting With President Daniel Ortega

**The day before Brian Wilson and I left Nicaragua (Nov. 13, 2016), we had a 90 minute meeting with President Daniel Ortega. It was a very informal, and relaxing meeting, that also included Fr. Miguel d' Escoto, who was the Secretary General of the UN in 2009. Brian has known Fr. Miguel since 1986, and they are very good friends. Fr. Miguel worked very closely with Daniel Ortega during the war years.**

**Daniel Ortega and Brian reminisced about their friendship over the years since they first met in 1986. The Nicaraguans have not forgotten that Brian gave up his legs for Nicaragua. On so many occasions people came up to us wanting their picture taken with Brian with their cell phone. I have a collection of those moments that I took with my camera. Nicaragua is a beautiful place, and no doubt I will return in the future. It was nice being out of the US during this time, because Nicaragua is not at war with anyone, and their main concern is the well being of their own citizens. '**

**Nicaragua has a chance to be very successful, as long as the US Empire does not want them to be successful. After all, if that happens, it might spread to other countries in Central America, and that would be a threat to Neo liberal economics. There is already a move by the US Government to keep Nicaragua from obtaining funds from the World Bank, and the International Development Bank. It is known as NICA, which is: The Nicaragua Investment Conditionality Act. The economic hit man is**

always at their doorstep. But, for now, Nicaragua has some hope, but only time will tell with President Donald Dumpster in power. When we were traveling in a vehicle throughout Managua, on several occasions when we came to a stop light, Nicaraguan kids would clean our windshield for money. This is the epitome of the U.S. Empire at its parasitic level. The great truth has great silence...

**Mike Hastie**  
Peace at Home, Peace in Nicaragua

Photo and caption from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact [hastiemike@earthlink.net](mailto:hastiemike@earthlink.net))

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

**Mike Hastie**  
U.S. Army Medic  
Vietnam 1970-71  
December 13, 2004

## **“The Auto Workers Went Heavily For Sanders, Who Won The Primary” “From That Moment On Dingell Feared That They – And Michigan – Would Go For Trump, And They Did”**

14 November 2016 by R.W. Johnson, London Review of Books [Excerpt]

During the campaign Debbie Dingell, the Democratic Congresswoman for Michigan’s 12th district, repeatedly warned Clinton (whom she supported) that Michigan was not safe and that Trump could win.

People thought she was nuts: Michigan has been solidly Democratic for most of the last eighty years. Dingell was ‘infuriated’ that Clinton didn’t pitch up in Michigan until the weekend before the primary vote, by which time Sanders had visited her district ten times. The auto workers went heavily for Sanders, who won the primary.

From that moment on Dingell feared that they – and Michigan – would go for Trump, and they did.

**‘The ordinary working man or woman in this country isn’t asking for a lot,’ Dingell said.**

**‘They want to make a decent living. They want to be able to provide for their family, buy a house in a safe neighbourhood, put food on the table, go to the doctor when they need to, afford their medicines and educate their children. What many don’t understand is how these things are in danger of becoming unattainable for too many Americans.’**

She isn’t kidding. The median income of high school graduates fell by 13 per cent between 2000 and 2014.

During his campaign Sanders would point to the example of United Technologies, a giant firm which benefits from many government contracts. In February 2016 it announced the closure of two manufacturing plants in Indiana, although both were profitable. Both were moved to Mexico, where wages were far lower, thus creating super-profits.

The company’s CEO earned more than \$10 million last year. ‘You really can’t make this stuff up,’ as Sanders put it.

Indiana went for Obama in 2008 but Trump won it by nearly 20 points this time.

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## **Time For The Real Left To Double Down On Single Payer Medicare For All**

11/15/2016 by Bruce A. Dixon, Black Agenda Radio. Bruce A. Dixon is managing editor at Black Agenda Report and serves on the state committee of the Georgia Green Party

The Affordable Care Act, which President elect Trump promises to repeal and replace with nobody knows what, was never all it was cracked up to be.

The promise to deliver affordable health care was a key campaign issue in 2007 and 2008.

**But while most Americans demanded a single payer system to replace the private insurance companies, and guarantee health care for everyone, the 44th president and his corporate funded Democrats instead delivered Obamacare — billions in tax dollars to insurance companies for policies with skimpy coverage and such high co-pays and deductibles that many families cannot afford to use their new health insurance.**

Worse still, Obamacare only provided these sketchy policies to about half the uninsured leaving the rest to the tender mercies of state governments which control Medicaid.

Ever since 2009 corporate Democrats have justified their treachery with claims that single payer Medicare For All was impossible to get through even the majority Democratic Congress of 2009 and 2010. Hillary Clinton also declared single payer dead

on arrival should she be elected. But Hillary was not elected, and even though this is the fourth consecutive Republican dominated Congress, and Republican politicians hate Medicare For All just as much as their Democratic rivals, the popular mandate for single payer health care is very much alive.

A May 2016 Gallup Poll confirms that "...58% of U.S. adults favor the idea of replacing the law (Obamacare) with a federally funded healthcare system that provides insurance for all Americans."

The question for the left, however you read that term is what do we do about this? The answer has to be that we fight for what we know people want and need with all the means at our disposal.

In the present era, the willingness to organize, to agitate, to educate, to demonstrate and to demand health care — not health insurance, but health care for everybody as a human right is one of the markers by which we can tell actual flesh and blood leftists and their organizations from those who merely fake the funk until the next Democrat takes office.

It's worth noting that the Green Party' candidates Jill Stein and Ajamu Baraka were the only ones in this election calling for single payer health care.

A 2009 study by the National Nurses Union reveals that adoption of Medicare For All would create 2.6 million new jobs, from doctors and nurses to a host of health care professionals and technicians. That's as many jobs as were lost in the 2007-2009 recession. It would inject \$375 billion per year into the US economy, including \$100 billion in wages alone. President Trump won in part because he told people he'd "bring back the jobs." But steel mill jobs are imaginary, fictitious. Health care jobs are real.

**The tens or hundreds of thousands in streets each night justifiably protesting the ascension of a crotch grabbing racist con man to the White House would be well advised to not repeat the mistake of Occupy a few years ago.**

They and others who want to be relevant in this new era urgently need to put forth some concrete demands which if struggled for will make them opinion leaders, and if won will improve the lives of millions.

Quality single payer health care NOW is one of those demands.

Trump's threat to dismantle Obamacare is an invitation for us to reopen the struggle for health care as a human right.

And this time we know we're struggling against Republicans AND Democrats.

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# Don't Worry America, You Can Still Survive Under Toxic Leadership



November 16, 2016 by Donnell, The Duffle Blog

*The following is an open letter written and signed by every National Guardsman in America.*

Good morning America.

Shake off the hangover and look yourself in the eyes, if you can. It's always an awkward transition but you will make it.

We've seen hundreds of toxic leaders come and go over the years, so trust us when we tell you everything will be okay.

Don't believe us? Strap in.

You think the Electoral College is an outdated system that doesn't represent the average person's interests?

Try the National Guard Bureau on for size, assholes.

The states send our most incompetent officials to Washington to get them out of the way. Then they shit all over their hometowns for personal gain. Sound familiar?

Are you worried about corruption?

We've lived it – and this assclown's still in charge. Hard to believe an obese official accused of improper conduct could keep his job in New Jersey, we know. But even now the New Jersey Guardsmen show up every month and play Candy Crush under their Humvees.

Sure they might be pissed off, but they still get to do their jobs like normal.

Are you concerned the new leadership might make poor financial decisions? Don't worry, even if they do they'll cave under media pressure and make it right.

You just have to tell Congress and they'll take quick action to fix it.

So just take it easy and follow our advice.

Smile to their face and talk shit behind their back.

Grab a Monster and some smokes and hide out back by the Connex. And whatever you do, don't piss them off until you've safely earned your retirement pay.

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Thanks to David McReynolds for posting.

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# ANNIVERSARIES

## November 20, 1816: Anniversary Of A Marvelous Creation



Carl Bunin Peace History November 19-25

November 20, 1816: The term “scab” was first used in print by the Albany (N.Y.) Typographical Society. A scab is someone who crosses a union’s picket line and takes the job of a striking worker.

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### **“A Scab Is A Traitor To His God, His Country, His Family And His Class”**

by Jack London, (1876-1916) [Dawn.thot.net]

After God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad, and the vampire, he had some awful substance left with which he made a scab.

A scab is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a water brain, a combination backbone of jelly and glue.

Where others have hearts, he carries a tumor of rotten principles.

When a scab comes down the street, men turn their backs and angels weep in heaven, and the devil shuts the gates of hell to keep him out.



No man (or woman) has a right to scab so long as there is a pool of water to drown his carcass in, or a rope long enough to hang his body with.

Judas was a gentleman compared with a scab. For betraying his master, he had character enough to hang himself. A scab has not.

Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.

Judas sold his Savior for thirty pieces of silver.

Benedict Arnold sold his country for a promise of a commission in the British army.

The scab sells his birthright, country, his wife, his children and his fellowmen for an unfulfilled promise from his employer.

Esau was a traitor to himself; Judas was a traitor to his God; Benedict Arnold was a traitor to his country.

A scab is a traitor to his God, his country, his family and his class.

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## ***November 22, 1909*** **Heroic Anniversary:** **The First General Strike By Women In** **The U.S.**



Carl Bunin Peace History November 19-25

In New York City, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union went on strike against sweatshop conditions in what became known as the "Uprising of the 20,000" and the "Girl's Revolt."

The strikers won the support of other workers and the women's suffrage movement for their persistence and unity in the face of police brutality and biased courts.

**A judge told arrested pickets: "You are on strike against God."**

This was the first mass strike by women in the U.S.

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**"I Am Tired Of Listening To Speakers Who Talk In Generalities"**

**"I Offer A Resolution That A General Strike Be Declared – Now!"**

Excerpt from *Forged in Freedom: Shaping the Jewish-American Experience*, by Norman H. Finkelstein. (JPS, 2002)

In September 1909, Clara and other women could no longer tolerate their harsh working conditions. They walked out of the Leiserson factory and went on strike.

Within a few days the strike spread to the workers at the nearby Triangle Shirtwaist Company. Day after day the young women strikers picketed the factories to let the public know they were on strike and to prevent replacement workers from entering the factories. They walked up and down the sidewalk in front of the buildings; some carried signs while others chanted and sang.

**The factory owners hired gangs of tough men to frighten the pickets. As the mostly Jewish and Italian teenage girls peacefully walked the picket lines they were threatened and pushed by the ruffians. Women were beaten, punched and thrown to the ground. Many were badly hurt. The police did little to prevent the violence ... During one attack in mid-November Clara and two other young women were so badly beaten the police had to rush them to a hospital.**

Eleven weeks after walking out of the Leiserson and Triangle companies, the women workers saw no end to the bloody strike. While they were on strike they earned no money, and the poor women faced a harsh, hungry and cold winter.

**Union leaders realized that the only quick way to improve working conditions and wages was to shut down every shirtwaist factory in New York.**

On November 22, 1909, thousands of shirtwaist workers gathered in the Cooper Union Auditorium. It was time to make a decision ...

The audience cheered a succession of speakers, finally focusing their attention on Samuel Gompers, the best-known speaker of the evening. He was the founder and president of America's most powerful union, the American Federation of Labor ...

**After two hours of cautious speeches with no end in sight, “a thin wisp of a girl” asked to speak.**

**As she stepped onto the platform, the crowd quieted. Everyone knew Clara Lemlich, the brave union worker who had just been released from the hospital. She still showed signs of the violent beating she received on the picket line. Her words, spoken in clear and passionate Yiddish, echoed through the hall.**

It was a clarion call to action.

**“I have listened to all the speakers, and I have no further patience for talk.**

**“I am a working girl, one of those striking against intolerable conditions.**

**“I am tired of listening to speakers who talk in generalities.**

**“What we are here for is to decide whether or not to strike.**

**“I offer a resolution that a general strike be declared – now!”**

**The audience erupted into wild applause. People jumped from their seats, cheered and waved handkerchiefs. This was the moment they had waited for ...**

**Within two days the entire shirtwaist industry in New York City was shut down.**

No one had predicted the resolve of the strikers. Twenty thousand workers, mainly Jewish and Italian teenage girls and young women, marched in picket lines before factories throughout lower Manhattan ...

Newspapers widely reported on the brutality against the strikers. Other women, wealthy and educated, decided to prevent the brutality and unfair arrests. With great publicity, they joined the poorly dressed and ill-fed immigrant women workers on the picket lines

The brave struggle of Clara Lemlich and the other women workers is known as the “Uprising of the Twenty Thousand.”

**By February 15, 1910, it was over. The strikers won a shorter workweek of fifty-two hours, higher wages and the end of unfair deductions for supplies, chairs and lockers.**

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## **CLASS WAR REPORTS**

# **Publishing An Exposé Of Sweatshop Clothing Factories In Eastern Europe**

# Led To Threatening Phone Calls, And A Factory That Sued Me For Telling The Truth: “Wages Could Be Up To Three Months Late”



Illustration by Branko Karapandza

17 Nov 2016 by Laura Stefanut, BalkanInsight.com. Laura Stefanut is Editor of the Explanatory Journalism Section at Romanian news organisation DIGI24. She conducted her investigation into the garment industry as a 2015 fellow on the Balkan Fellowship for Journalistic Excellence programme.

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Earlier this year I published an investigation into the garment industry.

The story revealed that even inside the European Union some workers had to put up with meagre wages that were not paid on time and with arduous working conditions.

The story focused on a number of factories in Romania that boasted of working with big international brands.

Many workers feared they would lose their jobs just by talking to me but some were brave enough to speak out.

It turned out that publishing the investigation was not the end of the story.

I began receiving anonymous, harassing phone calls. A man rang my doorbell and asked for me. He claimed to be from city hall but refused to identify himself.

At one factory, bosses told workers that they could lose their jobs because my story had prompted certain brands to stop using the plant. So workers took part in a protest

against my article, reasoning that having a poorly paid job was better than having none at all.

But several major brands denied the bosses' assertions so it appears the workers were misinformed.

Then, in late May, the same factory, Italian-owned Maglierie Cristian Impex, launched legal action against me.

It is one of the biggest garment factories in Romania, with around 900 workers. The only major industrial employer in the vicinity of Calafat in southern Romania, the factory received European Union funding in 2012 to "enhance economical competitiveness". In its lawsuit, the company alleged that I had damaged its reputation and caused a financial loss. It described itself as a quality producer for "famous brands such as: Lacoste, Zara, Escada, Massimo Dutti, Tommy Hilfiger, Strellson, Calvin Klein, Brax, etc."

The company wanted me to pay some 45,000 euros in damages (the average salary in Romania is 420 euros per month after tax) and reveal the identity of my main source.

If you do investigative journalism, you expect to get sued at some point. But this was my first time -- and nothing prepared me for how it felt. The morning after learning of the lawsuit, I woke up in a panic.

What if the factory had sent me a comment to include in the story and I had missed it? I searched my emails but found nothing. Deep down, it was no surprise. I had tried many different ways to get the company to comment over a period of months -- all to no avail.

"Lawsuits are the best way of getting back at journalists, as they cost time, money and nerves," said Bogdan Gaurean, a Bucharest lawyer who offered to help with my case pro bono.

Even though I was confident all the facts were on my side, preparing my defence was a major task. I had to go through all the material I had gathered over the course of a year - - some 55 GB of notes, recordings and photos, equivalent in size to about 10 high-definition movies. I had to anonymise dozens of Facebook conversations with my sources, make transcripts of all my recordings related to the factory and find witnesses to participate in the trial.

In June, the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC), an international organisation that promotes the human rights of garment workers, stepped in. It sent a letter to major companies known to have used the factory, calling on them to put pressure on its owners to drop the suit. At least two big clothing firms, such as Inditex, which owns the Zara and Massimo Dutti brands, did just that.

**In late July, the lawsuit was withdrawn and a couple of weeks later I travelled to Calafat with a colleague, keen to find out how things were for the workers now.**

**“Wages Could Be Up To Three Months Late”**

We arrived around 8 pm at the home of a worker featured in my story, given the pseudonym Cristina.

**When Cristina got home from work, she had some good news. Workers used to work in 12-hour shifts, day and night – but not anymore, she said. Now they had a regular eight-hour day and could choose to stay longer for overtime pay of around one euro (4.5 lei) per hour.**

Her kitchen had a brand new double-glazed window with pale green curtains, and a TV that hadn't been there before. But Cristina also told a familiar story. "We can move forward when I receive the money I've worked for," she said.

**One of the problems documented in my story was that workers did not even receive their low wages on time. Cristina said this was still a problem. Wages could be up to three months late, she said. The Labour Inspectorate fined the factory in February 2016 for late salary payments.**

After the protest about my article and an attempt by the factory to find the sources, things seemed to improve, Cristina said. Workers started getting their wages regularly, they could work fewer hours and new employees joined them.

"It's because of the inspectors," Cristina said. Each month, she said, inspectors from the brands could be seen filming inside the factory and interviewing workers. A young supervisor said one brand had been upset to discover workers were not paid on time and things would be different now, Cristina recalled.

**By the time we visited Cristina, the inspections seemed to have stopped. And, according to three workers, so had the timely payment of wages.**

In an email on November 10, 2016, the factory acknowledged it paid salaries late both this year and last but it said these delays were due to late payments from clients. It did not respond to a request to name these clients so this claim could not be verified.

The day after we visited Cristina, we went to the factory, hoping to find its bosses more open to talking than they had been before. We met Gianluca Mantovani, one of the Italian owners. Dressed in jeans and a dark blue polo shirt, Mantovani was initially unwilling to face our questions. "I will not offer interviews and I forbid you to write about the factory," he declared.

Mantovani also told us salaries were a month late. The factory manager, Marian Pasat, explained it was very hard for the firm to compete with Asian producers. For example, he said, the Labour Inspectorate fined the firm because workers were doing extra hours -- but if the workers didn't work those hours, the factory would have to close because the brands want large quantities produced quickly.

He also said the factory paid workers up to twice the minimum wage. But he would not supply documents to prove this.

So, if they were so upset about my story, why did they drop their law suit? "We had pressure from the brands, asking us to end the trial," Mantovani said several times.

Finally, the two men took us on a factory tour, although we were not permitted to take photographs or record audio or video. We walked in and out of large rooms with workers sewing, checking and ironing garments to a soundtrack of ticking sewing machines and whirring washing machines. During the 15-minute tour, we could see nothing wrong. But it was impossible to draw any definitive conclusions.

Mantovani and Pasat invited three workers to talk to us. They lined up as we sat on a couch in the factory's reception area. A man who looked to be in his late thirties joined us first. He leaned forward and spoke in a low voice. A representative of electricians and drivers, he said the biggest problem for his colleagues was extra hours — they wanted more, so they could get paid more. Next came a woman who represents workers making prototype patterns.

She admitted people were upset because they were not receiving their salaries on time but "they understand the situation, as no one gets everything they want, even at home". She said things were good for her at the factory: she'd been working there for 14 years and received a salary of around 377 euros before tax (275 euros per month after tax). The last interviewee was also an official workers' representative, for the department that checks clothes for flaws.

She had worked in several other Romanian garment factories and said this one was the best. "You just look at the others," she said. "They are way worse."

On October 5, 2016, I sat in a courtroom in the town of Craiova, where the factory had filed its lawsuit against me. I waited on a wooden bench with others whose cases were due to be heard that day. The judge sat on a throne-like chair below a Romanian flag fastened to the wall in a butterfly shape.

"Accused: Laura Stefanut," she said in a loud voice. "Present." "Do you agree with ending this trial?" "Yes."

**That was the formal end of the legal action. But is it finally the end of the story?**

**The factory could try to sue me again over this article. And even if it does not, there will be other stories to tell about the reality behind clothes labels that seek to reassure consumers with the words "Made in the European Union"**

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## **BIG BRANDS' REACTION... TO THE STORY AND THE LAWSUIT**

**Inditex:** Asked the factory to withdraw the lawsuit, saying it was "not the way to deal" with the right of free speech, which must always be defended.

**HOLY Fashion Group** (owner of Strellson and Joop! brands): Said it was conducting checks at the factory as a result of media reporting but its final decision would be taken independently of media coverage. Said it was committed to paying fair wages.

**Brax:** Wrote to the factory stating that it believed taking legal action in this case was wrong. Noted that its own inspections had confirmed substantial problems with late salary payments and overtime, as outlined in the story.

**Escada:** Said it was aware of the legal process but didn't "support it actively".

**Marc O'Polo:** Said it was investigating the allegations in the article. Distanced itself from the factory's action but said legal decisions by a supplier were outside its influence. Also noted that it did not want to end its relationship with the factory as it was aware of the importance of jobs in the region.

According to the Clean Clothes Campaign, **Lacoste** owner Maus Frères did not reply to its letter while **PVH, owner of brands such as Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein**, said it would conduct an audit at the factory but has not communicated its findings.

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## OCCUPATION PALESTINE

### **Zionist Terrorists Kill, Wound More Unarmed Palestinians Inside Gaza Free Territory: “Abu Sa’ada Was Shot With A Live Round In His Chest, Causing Instant Death”**



November 18, 2016 IMEMC News

Deir al-Balah, Gaza City, Gaza Strip



Palestinian medical sources have reported that one Palestinian was killed, on Friday evening, and three others were injured, after Israeli soldiers, stationed across the border fence, opened fire on Palestinian protesters in central Gaza, and east of Gaza city.

The sources stated that the soldiers, stationed on military towers near the border fence, east of the al-Boreij refugee camp in central Gaza, fired many live rounds, gas bombs and rubber-coated steel bullets on the protesters, killing a young man, identified as Mohammad Sa'id Abu Sa'da, 26, and wounding two others.

Abu Sa'ada was shot with a live round in his chest, causing instant death, while another young man was shot with a gas bomb in his chest and a third in the leg.

Palestinian medics moved the slain Palestinian, and the wounded, to the nearby Al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah, in central Gaza. Many Palestinians suffered the effects of teargas inhalation.

In addition, soldiers stationed on towers at the Nahal Oz military base, east of Gaza city, fired several live rounds at Palestinians, close to the border fence, moderately wounding one Palestinian, who was moved to the Shifa hospital, while three others suffered the effects of teargas inhalation.

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## **Twisted Freaks Running Occupation Regime Grab Women On Boat In International Waters, Carry Them Into Israel, Then Charge Them With “Illegally Staying” In Israel: [And This Obscenity Calls Itself A “The Only Democracy In The Middle East”]**

November 18, 2016 IMEMC

Adalah – The Legal Center for Minority Rights in Israel provided legal representation for four of the 13 women detained by the Israeli military when it commandeered their Gaza-bound boat, dubbed “The Women’s Boat to Gaza”, who were slated for deportation from the country.

**10/7/2016 Adalah: Detention of women was illegal as they were forced by military to enter Israeli territory, therefore not ‘illegally staying’ in country.**

The Israeli navy took control of the Women’s Boat to Gaza, also known as the Zaytouna-Oliva, and its female crew on the night of 5 October 2016 as they attempted to breach

the Israeli naval blockade of the Gaza Strip to call world attention to the grave humanitarian and human rights situation there.

**The vessel was stopped in the Mediterranean Sea approximately 35 nautical miles off the coast of Gaza and Israeli military forces brought its crew and passengers to the Givon detention center in Ramle.**

The four women represented by Adalah are:

Ann Wright (United States, former army colonel and American diplomat)

Marama Davidson (New Zealand, parliament member)

Sandra Barrilaro (Spain, photographer)

Mairead Maguire (Ireland, 1976 Nobel Peace Prize winner)

All four women were issued with custody and expulsion orders and agreed to sign a “request” to be sent back to their countries of origin as soon as possible.

During their hearing yesterday, 6 October 2016, at the Detention Review Tribunal, Adalah Attorney Suhad Bishara argued that:

The four women were on a humanitarian journey, making their way to Gaza to identify with local residents;

Israel’s maritime blockade of Gaza is illegal and in violation of international law;

**The detention of the women is illegal and the tribunal lacks jurisdiction because the women aren’t “illegally staying” in Israel according to the terms of the Entry into Israel Law, but rather were forced into Israeli territory by the Israeli military;**

**The Israeli navy commandeered the vessel when it was 35 miles off the Gaza coast. According to the 2009 order issued by the Israeli Defense Ministry, which Adalah also opposes, the military blockade of the coastal territory extends 20 miles out to sea.**

The Detention Review Tribunal ruled that the four women would remain in custody until their deportation from Israel.

Despite the Tribunal’s apparent agreement that it lacked jurisdiction to hear the case, it nevertheless upheld the deportation orders:

“The claims raised by the detainees’ representatives have significant importance, but the veracity of most of these claims should be determined at a later date... I refer now to the claim that the detainees were brought into Israeli territory against their will and may therefore not be considered ‘illegally staying’ (in Israel).

“It is possible that the claim made by the detainees’ representatives is indeed correct: someone brought against his will into Israeli territory – by state authorities themselves – would not be considered ‘illegally staying’ in the country. Nevertheless, Interior Ministry authorities have decided to issue a deportation order against the detainees,” the Detention Review Tribunal wrote in its decision.

As of the evening hours yesterday, all the women had been transferred to Israel's Ben-Gurion Airport to await outbound flights to their countries of origin.

Representatives of a number of Tel Aviv-based foreign consulates were also in attendance at the hearing.

The Women's Boat to Gaza is part of the wider Freedom Flotilla Coalition, intended to "raise awareness about the ongoing struggle that women in Gaza, in the West Bank, inside the Green Line and in the diaspora, have waged and continue to wage against the Occupation," according to the organization's website.

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## **Kill Them Off A Bit More Softly? Zionists Attack Health NGO For Palestinians: "First Blasting Open The Doors With Explosive Charges, The Soldiers Gutted The CCTV System Before Seizing Hard Drives, Documents And Video Footage" "They Also Destroyed Computer Equipment, Smashed Windows And Punched Holes In The Walls"**

November 16, 2016 By Matt Broomfield, The Palestine Monitor

Israeli Forces soldiers invaded the offices of the Health Development Information and Policy Institute (HDIP) in the small hours of November 16, ransacking the Ramallah bureau and smashing up equipment and fittings.

Around 8 armored vehicles arrived on Rukab Street, in the heart of Ramallah, circa 2AM. First blasting open the doors with explosive charges, the soldiers gutted the CCTV system before seizing hard drives, documents and video footage. During the raid they also destroyed computer equipment, smashed windows and punched holes in the walls.

In the aftermath of the invasion, tyres burned in Rukab Street and the surrounding roads. Israeli soldiers fired stun grenades, tear gas and high-velocity rubber-coated metal

bullets at demonstrating youths, who responded by hurling stones. Local news sources report that two Palestinians were injured by the time the Israeli soldiers withdrew at 4.30AM.

Dr Mustafa Barghouti is a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council as well as a founder and an ex-director of HDIP. He views the raid as part of a wider Israeli assault on Palestinian civil society.

“Over the last six months, the government has launched a huge campaign against Palestinian civil society, and even against Israeli civil society,” he explained.

Speaking amid the turmoil of the office, with broken glass underfoot and CCTV cameras dangling from frayed wires about him, Dr Barghouti cited similar attacks against television stations and other human rights organisations.

HDIP is a non-governmental organization which “advocates for better government policies on behalf of overlooked groups such as women, youth and the disabled.” It has worked with the WHO, European Community, UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank and local charities and organizations across occupied Palestine, providing educational, outreach and lobbying services.

**Dr Barghouti also stated that the raid – which took place in the heart of Area A, theoretically under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority (PA) – showed Israeli contempt for Palestinian Authority.**

**The invasion fell on the night after the 28th Palestinian 'Independence Day', on which Palestinians celebrate Yasser Arafat's symbolic declaration of a Palestinian state in 1988.**

More broadly, Dr Barghouti criticised the Israeli attack because the HDIP is a “non-governmental organization” that focuses on health and educational issues. “This attack is completely unjustified. It violates the rights of the Palestinian people,” he added.

**Indeed, the damage the HDIP office has suffered has already brought a jarring end to a number of ongoing human rights projects, such as a health education program.**

At a minimum, Dr Barghouti estimated the damage of the raid would run into “thousands of dollars.”

"Dr. Barghouti is a distinguished national leader, member of our parliament and of the PLO Central Council and one of the main advocates in Palestine for the non-violent resistance against the Israeli occupation," PLO Secretary General Dr. Saeb Erekat said in a statement on Wednesday.

"This new Israeli aggression, in contravention of signed agreements, was part of 22 military raids conducted by occupation forces over the past 24 hours in Palestinian cities," the statement continued. "Israel has targeted a political leader involved in non-violent resistance against its illegal occupation. This shows how the Israeli government has stepped up its efforts against peaceful resistance."

Nonetheless, Dr Barghouti is confident that HDIP's staff will continue their work. He said: "this institute will not stop doing its job. Just as they failed to silence us in 2002, they will fail again now."

This was the first invasion of the workplace, which also houses the Palestine Monitor offices, since the height of the Second Intifada in 2002. At that time, Israeli Forces occupied the offices for 6 weeks, using it as a strategic military base in the heart of the West Bank's nominal capital.

**The stairwell of the building still houses old computer equipment in dusty vitrines, smashed up by the Israeli Forces during their previous invasion.**

To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to:

<http://www.maannews.net/eng/Default.aspx> and  
<http://www.palestinemonitor.org/list.php?id=ej898ra7yff0ukmf16>

The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."



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