

Military Resistance 13H10

‘You Never Know How Strong You Are Until Being Strong Is Your Only Choice’



A Lebanese anti-government protester holds a placard, during a demonstration against the trash crisis and government corruption, in downtown Beirut, Lebanon Aug. 29, 2015. Thousands of people began gathering Saturday amid tight security in downtown Beirut, ahead of a major rally to protest government corruption and the country's dysfunctional political system. (AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Pensacola's Own Killed In Afghanistan

August 29, 2015 by Marketta Davis, pnj.com

Described by close friends as being fearless and adventurous, Pensacola native Staff Sgt. Forrest Sibley is being remembered and honored after he succumbed to gunfire wounds in Afghanistan this week.

Sibley, 31, along with Capt. Matthew Roland, 27 (stationed at Hurlburt Field), were Special Tactics airmen and were gunned down at a vehicle checkpoint by two men wearing Afghan National Defense and Security Forces uniforms.

"He was one of the most bold, energetic people I've ever known," said Sara Latshaw, Sibley's friend. "He truly cared about America and was so passionate about the work he was doing."

Latshaw met Sibley through a mutual friend about six years ago and said his wild spirit and the fact that he was so full of energy, fun and excitement carried over into his personal life as well as his work life.

"He was fearless and so much fun," she said. "We owe him so much gratitude. It's a loss for our community on every level."

Sibley's close friend of 10 years, Josh Flores, described him as a "challenge accepted" kind of guy who was always on the right side of reckless. Saying his friend had a military side and a "homeboy" side, he called Sibley a "professional celebrator."

"He was always good to hang out with," Flores said. "He was always on time for a party or celebration. It was a skill of his to have a good time."

Flores said he, Sibley and their former roommate, Andrew Holman, were an extremely tight-knit group of friends. Remembering the giving side of Sibley, Flores said he was always there to help. If there was a job to do, he'd help you do it.

In fact, after Hurricane Ivan in Sept. 2004, the three friends drove around Pensacola Beach — Sibley's favorite place to be in Pensacola — helping people clean up their houses and property.

"He'd goof off in the process but it only made the job better," Flores said.

Flores and Sibley helped to open Hemingway's Island Grill as a bartender and server. When Sibley decided to leave Hemingway's to join the military, Flores was nervous seeing his friend so amped about being a part of the Air Force.

"He loved that job," Flores said. "When he was on deployment, he shared everything he could share — because he couldn't tell us everything. He was very passionate and had his own sense of understanding what we were doing over there. He took it seriously and played his part."

Sibley was a combat controller with the 21st Special Tactics Squadron at Pope Army Airfield in North Carolina and was deployed in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel. Special Tactics airmen combine air power into special operations missions and often work with U.S. Army Rangers, Green Berets and U.S. Navy Seals.

Col. Wolfe Davidson, 24th Special Operations Wing commander, said the loss of both airmen is a terrible blow to everyone who knew them.

"These two combat controllers were incredible warriors who not only volunteered to join our nation's Special Operations Forces, but earned their way to the tip of the spear in defense of our nation," said the commander in a recent statement.

Even when telling stories about the things going on overseas, Flores said Sibley — who he called a champion story-teller — was never the bearer of bad news and always found a way to end those stories with a smile.

"The circumstances under which (he died) are very violent and hate-filled," Flores said. "He has had a really significant effect on people that barely even knew him, but they got to know him really quickly and realized what the world would be like without him."

There was never a malicious side to Sibley, according to Flores, only a jovial side and they always had a fun time.

"He was the perfect character to be around when things were a struggle ... if something rough was going on, he'd meet you for a beer anytime.

"He was a supportive guy. He was a friend."

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED
THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WAR**

POLICE WAR REPORTS

**Family Releases Video Of Police
Killing Their Mentally Ill Son:
Witnesses Assert That The
Department Lied In Order To
Justify The Shooting;
Federal Police Officer Says "They
Said He Accelerated And Crashed**

Into The Police Car. That Did Not Happen — I Was There For The Whole Thing”

“But They Have To Say That Because It Justifies Their Aggressive Actions.”

August 26, 2015 by Andrew Emmett, NationofChange

The family of a mentally ill man released a video this week depicting Los Angeles Sheriff's Deputies shooting their son to death.

Instead of attempting to calm down the schizophrenic young man, deputies immediately escalated the situation by repeatedly shooting him with a Taser, hitting him with batons, and pepper-spraying his face.

Although the sheriff's department claims that the mentally ill man rammed a police car and pinned a deputy's legs between his vehicle and a patrol car, witnesses assert that the department lied in order to justify the shooting.

Days after losing his job, 31-year-old John Berry drove to the Lakewood home that he shared with his mother and siblings on July 6. Instead of going inside the house, Berry remained in his car while his older brother went out to talk to him.

Chris Berry, a federal police officer who works at a facility with two psychiatric hospitals, realized his younger brother appeared to be off his medication and had not slept in days.

Concerned for his younger sibling, Chris Berry called the sheriff's department to request a mental health team to help his brother. Chris Berry was informed that a mental health team could not be dispatched until patrol deputies assessed him first.

According to Chris Berry, the deputies who arrived immediately began acting aggressively toward his brother and rapidly escalated the situation.

Family members and neighbors helplessly watched as deputies pepper-sprayed Berry in the face, repeatedly shot him with a Taser, and viciously beat him with metal batons. Chris Berry recalled his brother looking stunned and asking, “What did I do wrong?”

A neighbor captured a video on her cell phone of several deputies surrounding Berry's car and hitting him.

Berry remains in the driver's seat of his car as his neighbor can be heard repeatedly shouting, “Stop beating him!”

As neighbors and family members plead with Berry to get out of his car, two deputies aggressively whip out their metal batons and extend them in a threatening manner. Before the deputies can hit him again, Berry puts his car in reverse. The neighbor recording the incident momentarily looks away as deputies gun down Berry.

He was pronounced dead at the scene.

A few hours after the incident, Homicide Bureau Lt. Eddie Hernandez justified the shooting by claiming that Berry had injured a deputy's legs by pinning him between Berry's vehicle and a patrol car. In a follow-up statement on Monday, sheriff's spokeswoman Nicole Nishida asserted that Berry had driven his vehicle head-on into a responding patrol car before the start of the video.

But according to witnesses, Berry never rammed a patrol car with his vehicle and was killed after a deputy fell down beside the cars.

“They said he accelerated and crashed into the police car. That did not happen — I was there for the whole thing,” Chris Berry stated.

Conflicted in his roles as both a law enforcement officer and an older brother, Chris Berry became overwhelmed with emotion when he told reporters, “I called one brother to help another brother and...”

Berry's family has filed a complaint against Sheriff Jim McDonnell and the seven deputies involved in the shooting.

The complaint accuses deputies Michael Bitolas, Anthony Johnson, Grant Oberle, Eric Saavedra, Sergio Santoyo, Robert Solorio, and Sgt. James Jobling of escalating the situation and causing the wrongful death of the mentally ill man diagnosed with schizophrenia.

On Monday, attorneys representing Berry's family released the video of his death. Berry's mother, Susan Berry, explained at a press conference that her family filed the complaint in order to improve the callous treatment mentally ill people receive from law enforcement officers.

Marred with a history of abuse and corruption, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department has recently been the target of multiple Justice Department investigations.

Nearly two dozen deputies have been convicted of numerous crimes including use of excessive force, obstructing federal investigations, and threatening an FBI agent. In May, former Undersheriff Paul Tanaka and retired Captain William “Tom”

Carey were indicted on federal obstruction charges for corruptly influencing and impeding an FBI investigation into abuse and bribery within the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department.

Last week, Carey pleaded guilty to lying under oath.

MILITARY NEWS

**NOT ANOTHER DAY
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



An Army carry team transports the remains of Army 1st Sgt. Peter A. McKenna Jr., of Bristol, R.I., killed in Afghanistan, upon arrival Aug. 10 at Dover Air Force Base, Del. (Photo: Jose Luis Magana/AP)

YOUR INVITATION:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome.

Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication.

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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

<p>I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war. -- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace</p>

1915: World War I
**“The Struggle Against The Government
That Conducts The Imperialist War Must**

Not Halt In Any Country Before The Possibility Of That Country's Defeat"

March 29, 1915, V.I. Ulyanov, Sostial Demokrat [The writer used the pen name "Lenin" to keep the government from terrorizing his family. Excerpts]

Some of the means employed to fool the working class are pacifism and the abstract preachment of peace.

A propaganda of peace at the present time, if not accompanied by a call to revolutionary mass actions, is only capable of spreading illusions, of demoralizing the proletariat by imbuing it with confidence in the humanitarianism of the bourgeoisie, and of making it a plaything in the hands of the secret diplomacy of the belligerent countries.

In particular, the idea of the possibility of a so-called democratic peace without a series of revolutions is deeply erroneous.

The struggle against the government that conducts the imperialist war must not halt in any country before the possibility of that country's defeat in consequence of revolutionary propaganda.

The defeat of the governmental army weakens the government, aids the liberation of the nationalities oppressed by it, and makes civil war against the ruling classes easier.

Searching for a Soldier's Grave Martha Spencer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqEltkvVNUk>

ANNIVERSARIES

September 1917:
The Palmer Raids Begin
**16,000 ARRESTED IN CAMPAIGN
AGAINST RADICALS AND LEFT-
WING ORGANIZATIONS**



Arrested for “obstructing World War I: “Big Bill” Haywood

Carl Bunin Peace History September 3-9

In 48 coordinated raids across the country, later known as the Palmer Raids, federal agents seized records, destroyed equipment and books, and arrested hundreds of activists involved with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), known fondly as the Wobblies.

Among the arrested was William D. “Big Bill” Haywood, a leader of the IWW, for the “crimes of labor” and “obstructing World War I.”

Spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk

In 1919 Woodrow Wilson appointed A. Mitchell Palmer as his attorney general.

Worried by the revolution that had taken place in Russia, Palmer became convinced that Communist agents were planning to overthrow the American government. His view was reinforced by the discovery of thirty-eight bombs sent to leading politicians and the Italian anarchist who blew himself up outside Palmer’s Washington home.

Palmer recruited John Edgar Hoover as his special assistant and together they used the Espionage Act (1917) and the Sedition Act (1918) to launch a campaign against radicals and left-wing organizations.

A. Mitchell Palmer claimed that Communist agents from Russia were planning to overthrow the American government.

On 7th November, 1919, the second anniversary of the Russian Revolution, over 10,000 suspected communists and anarchists were arrested.

Palmer and Hoover found no evidence of a proposed revolution but large number of these suspects were held without trial for a long time.

The vast majority were eventually released but Emma Goldman and 247 other people were deported to Russia.

On 2nd January, 1920, another 6,000 were arrested and held without trial. These raids took place in several cities and became known as the Palmer Raids.


A. Mitchell Palmer and John Edgar Hoover found no evidence of a proposed revolution but large number of these suspects, many of them members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), continued to be held without trial.

When Palmer announced that the communist revolution was likely to take place on 1st May, mass panic took place. In New York, five elected Socialists were expelled from the legislature.

When the May revolution failed to materialize, attitudes towards Palmer began to change and he was criticised for disregarding people's basic civil liberties.

Some of his opponents claimed that Palmer had devised this Red Scare to help him become the Democratic presidential candidate in 1920.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?



U.S. TROOPS WILL STAY IN AFGHANISTAN UNTIL AT LEAST 2024

SOMEDAY THIS WILL ALL BE YOURS

**YOUR NAME HERE
AFGHANISTAN
2008 - 2022**

2012 T E D R A L

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CLASS WAR REPORTS

“Tens Of Thousands” Demand Thieving Malaysia Prime Minister Get Out



Supporters of pro-democracy group "Bersih" (Clean) gather as they prepare to march to Dataran Merdeka in Malaysia's capital city of Kuala Lumpur August 29, 2015. Tens of thousands joined a peaceful protest in Kuala Lumpur on Saturday to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Najib Razak, bringing to the streets a political crisis over a multi-million-dollar payment made to an account under his name. (REUTERS/Edgar Su)

Mass Uprising Against Narco-President Shaking Guatemala: “Thousands Gathered In Guatemala City To Demand The President’s Resignation”

“70 Groups Headed By The Powerful Comité De Unidad Campesina, An

Organization Of Indigenous Peasants, Announced A Three-Day Strike Starting Tuesday”

Aug 23, 2015 by Joaquín Bustelo via Marxism list.

The political crisis in Guatemala just went from critical to full meltdown.

On Friday the attorney general, accompanied by the head of a UN-sponsored commission against corruption in Guatemala, announced that former vice-president Roxana Baldetti had been arrested and was being held pending trial on corruption charges.

Baldetti had resigned in May following the discovery of a fraud network in customs known as "La Línea."

But the Attorney General also announced that it was asking for pre-trial proceedings against President Otto Molina Perez to strip him of immunity from prosecution. The evidence showed, she said, that he was the head of "La Línea."

On Friday afternoon, the leaders of the main business associations demanded Pérez Molina resign; on Saturday, three cabinet members and three vice-ministers resigned and thousands of people gathered in Guatemala City to demand the president's resignation.

On Sunday the Archbishop of Guatemala joined in the popular outcry saying the majority of Catholics --the country's largest religious group-- wanted the president gone.

Various student, peasant, and worker organizations have announced protests for the coming days demanding Otto Perez's resignation.

The president hasn't been seen since shortly after the attorney general's announcement. In response to a habeas corpus petition filed on the president's behalf, a judge went at mid-day Sunday to his residence. People there told her that Perez Molina was not there and that they could give her no information on his whereabouts.

Even before the latest revelations, a motion to strip Perez of immunity had received a majority of the votes in Congress the previous week, but not the two-thirds majority necessary for approval.

Guatemala is scheduled to have presidential elections in two weeks in which Perez Molina was trying to get himself re-elected. A coalition of some 70 groups headed by the powerful Comité de Unidad Campesina (CUC), an organization of indigenous peasants, has announced a three-day strike starting Tuesday demanding cancellation of the "illegitimate, illegal and fraudulent" elections.

The deepening crisis is bound to have an impact in neighboring Honduras, where for 14 weeks there have been weekly "Marchas de las Antorchas" (March with Torches) by

people calling themselves "indignados" (meaning those who are outraged, which is also how participants in occupy-type movements in Mexico, Spain and other countries referred to themselves).

The Honduran indignados are demanding the resignation of the president in the wake of the looting of the country's social-security funds and the creation of a UN-sponsored International Commission Against Corruption in Honduras like the one operating in Guatemala.

If anything, the Honduras government is even weaker than the one in Guatemala, since it is the bastard child of the 2009 coup against Manuel Zelaya carried out with the cooperation and back-handed support of the Obama administration which officially claimed to oppose it.

In both countries powerful criminal gangs fed by superprofits from the drug trade have penetrated all spheres of society including the government and the police.

It is a situation similar to that in some parts of Mexico, like the state of Guerrero, where 43 students from a teachers college were kidnapped by the Iguala police who were said to be acting on behalf of local crime bosses, including the mayor from the leftist Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD) and his wife.

In El Salvador the political situation is different and the government seems to be more stable, but an escalating war against two U.S.-originated mafias, the Mara Salvatrucha and Calle 18, are sinking the country into a bloodbath unseen since the civil war in the 1980s.

In the week that started last Sunday, August 16, at least 246 people were killed, an average of 35 a day. The number of homicides has been steadily growing for a year, since a truce with the cartels established under the previous government fell apart.

To get an idea of the magnitude of the bloodbath, remember that El Salvador is the smallest country in Central America, with a land area and population comparable to that of metro Atlanta, where I live.

**Solidarity Despite Their Own
Economic Woes:
Inhabitants Of Greek Holiday
Island Generously Caring For
Boatloads Of People Fleeing Syria;**

**The People Here Are Not Rich, But
What They Have, They Share:
“Even If Greece Is Bankrupt And We
Have No Money, We Will Still Have Our
Bodies And We Will Help The People
Who Need Us”**



Refugees arrive on the beach in Lesvos. 1,000 people arrive every day in Greece, fleeing war in Syria, Afghanistan. Photograph: Laura Padoan

21 July 2015 by Laura Padoan in Lesvos, Guardian News and Media Limited

On the Greek island of Lesvos, two worlds are colliding. Every day this summer, holidaymakers are confronted with the fallout from bloody civil wars as sunrise brings boatloads of refugees to the beaches of Europe.

During my seven years with UNHCR, I have found myself working in refugee camps in Ethiopia, Jordan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The last place I expected to be sent on emergency mission was a holiday island during peak tourist season.

But Greece is now the frontline of Europe, receiving more than 1,000 new arrivals every day. More than half of them are to Lesvos.

Although the Turkish coast is only 10km across the turquoise Aegean, the crossing costs dearly. The going rate charged by smugglers is around \$1,000, half price for children, and life vests cost extra. You wouldn't want to take your chances without one, as each week news of another sinking adds to the death toll in this stretch of the Mediterranean.

People are making the journey because they have no choice. Most are from Syria, others from Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Eritrea – refugees from war, persecution, violence and human rights abuses. Desperation and fear drive them.

I saw a 71-year-old woman, her daughter and eight-week-old granddaughter rescued from a flimsy rubber dinghy crammed with 40 people. It's not a journey undertaken lightly.

What pushes the refugees onwards through the mountains of Greece, up through the Balkans – where the brutality of the police and smugglers is rife – and onwards towards safety in Germany, Sweden, and the UK, is the knowledge that what they are leaving behind is far worse.

Sami, a 24-year-old computer science graduate from Aleppo, is one of those who made the dawn crossing from Turkey. "The smugglers told us it was safe. But there were too many of us. We knew it was dangerous and we didn't want to get on the boat," he tells me, his hands still shaking. Threatened with guns, 40 Syrian men, women and children got onto a small inflatable dinghy and were pushed into the water.

"It was totally dark. After 20 minutes water started to come into the boat. We didn't know what to do, we were still so far away and the sea was rough. We had to hold the children up so they didn't get wet. I just didn't want the children to die." By the time the Greek coastguard arrived the boat had almost entirely deflated. "We were only five centimetres above water. We were so close to death."

Under normal circumstances, responding to the needs of the ever-increasing influx of refugees would be a difficult task. But with Greece facing an uncertain financial future, the challenge for the Athens government is overwhelming.

In Lesbos, much of the response has been led by volunteers living in small villages with limited resources but enormous generosity.

Melinda, owner of the Captain's Table tavern in Molyvos, spends €100 a day on fruit for the children rescued by the coastguard. Daphne, owner of the Votsala hotel in Thermi, has been organising football matches and cookery lessons with refugees and holidaymakers.

"It's a cold drop on a hot stone, just a humble contribution," says one of the volunteers. Everyone I speak to feels their contribution is small.

Even the islanders not involved in the refugee response are sympathetic to their plight. I meet 80-year-old Euclides in the port of Mytilini, which is overlooked by Lesbos's own Statue of Liberty. Keen to impart some local history, he tells me it was built by a young Greek man who fled to America during the first world war. Upon arrival in New York he was so struck by the Statue of Liberty as a symbol of hope that he vowed to make enough money to return and build his own statue for the island.

Euclides's own father found refuge on Lesbos in 1922. "The Greeks and the Armenians came here because their houses were being burnt," he tells me. "So many people were slain. My father came to Greece with my grandparents when he was four years old. They

came by boat from Smyrna. They left their houses, all their property, and they could never go back.”

I ask Euclides what he makes of the new wave of refugees. “The Syrians are coming now because otherwise they will be killed. What else can they do? What is happening to them is a tragedy. I understand. It is what happened to my own family.”

Kalloni is halfway between the beaches at the north of the island, where most of the refugees arrive by boat, and the town of Mytilini, 70km away through the mountains, where they must register with the police.

I find Giorgos mopping the floor at the refugee shelter in Kalloni provided by his NGO, Agkalia. He has recently finished his PhD, and works part-time at the family butcher’s shop to support his wife and son. A tractor owned by a member of Greece’s far-right Golden Dawn is parked outside of a shelter and a dozen young men from Afghanistan rest against its wheels, grateful for the shade and impervious to the protest.

Giorgos is cleaner, cook and doctor to the road-weary refugees who spend a night at his shelter. “A lot of people arrive in bad shape. They’ve been tortured by the smugglers in Turkey. I’ve seen people with gangrene and terrible wounds. I’ve pulled sea urchin spines from a thousand feet, and rubbed them with olive oil. In Lesbos we have hundreds of graves that just say ‘Afghan 54’, ‘Afghan 55’... It’s a new holocaust.”

He is worried about the impact of the financial crisis and that if the government falls, the right-wing factions may take over. The people here are not rich, but what they have, they share. “Even if Greece is bankrupt and we have no money, we will still have our bodies and we will help the people who need us,” he says.

For me, the shining example of hope and freedom on Lesbos is not its statue but its people. The islanders don’t know what will happen with the economic crisis, but they still reach out to refugees.

In the middle of this Greek tragedy, they are epic heroes.

Sentiment Building to Deport Nation’s Billionaires



28 August 15 By Andy Borowitz, The New Yorker

They don't pay taxes. They circumvent our laws. They get free stuff from the government.

They are America's billionaires, and many would like to see them gone.

According to a new survey by the University of Minnesota's Opinion Research Institute, the American people hold the nation's billionaires in lower esteem than ever before, and a majority would like to see new laws enacted to deport them.

"They come here, take thousands of our jobs, and export them overseas," one respondent said, in an opinion echoed by many others in the survey.

"They are part of a shadow economy that sucks billions of dollars out of the United States every year and puts it in Switzerland and the Caymans," another said.

Images of hedge-fund managers arriving via helicopter in the Hamptons this summer have only reinforced the impression that authorities have turned a blind eye to their movements.

"Many of these people should be in prison, and the government is looking the other way," one respondent said.

Stirring even more controversy is the billionaires' practice of having babies in the United States and using the nation's porous estate-tax laws to pass down untold wealth to the next generation.

"They should leave and take their children with them," one respondent said.

Even after it is pointed out to respondents that some billionaires, such as Warren Buffett and Bill Gates, have made significant philanthropic contributions to the world, a majority of those polled stubbornly maintained their negative views of billionaires.

"Look, in every group you're going to have some good ones," one of the respondents said. "But that doesn't take away from the fact that the vast majority of these people are destroying this country, they don't pay taxes. They circumvent our laws. They get free stuff from the government. They are America's billionaires, and many would like to see them gone.

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DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



**Greeks Feeling EU Control In
Brutal New Rules:
Pharmacists And Bakers Are
Worried;
Christos Vouldis Doesn't See Why
European Central Bank Should Tell
Him How To Run His Bakery
"The ECB, International Monetary Fund,
The European Commission And Its ESM
Bailout Fund – Have Insisted On All**

These Measures As Conditions Of The Bailout”



A bakery in Athens. Tax hikes, spending cuts and detailed regulations for retailers are on the horizon for Greece. Photograph: Milos Bicanski/Getty Images

13 August 2015 by Jon Henley in Athens, Guardian News and Media Limited

Christos Vouldis doesn't see why international institutions like the European Central Bank should tell him how to run his bakery.

Nikolleta Stefanidi, meanwhile, is worried for the elderly people who come to her Athens neighbourhood pharmacy for their medicine.

Air and sea ports and the national grid are to be privatised as part of Greece's latest rescue deal under the new three-year bailout.

Taxes will be raised on powerful shipping firms, and VAT increased at an estimated cost to the average Greek household of €650 a year.

But among the headline tax hikes, spending cuts and market reforms, there lurk a few oddities.

The shelf-life of milk, for example, or the weight of a loaf of bread, along with rules on what kind of shop may call itself a bakery.

Not to mention the sale of unbottled tsipouro – home-distilled pomace spirit – or who can legally own a pharmacy.

Greece's creditors – the ECB, International Monetary Fund, the European commission and its ESM bailout fund – have insisted on all these measures as conditions of the bailout.

They come from the two so-called OECD toolkits, a raft of 320 or more recommendations made after the Paris-based body spent most of 2013 analysing where Greece's tangled web of rules and regulations fell short of what it felt was required of a modern economy.

So (in theory) there will be an end to regulations that limit the shelf-life of pasteurised milk in Greece to just five days, against roughly twice that in most of the rest of the EU, making Greek milk up to 30% more expensive.

Out, too, goes the law that said only a place where bakers mixed ingredients, kneaded dough and produced fresh loaves could call itself a bakery and avoid the "bread sales outlet" definition of just selling defrosted and pre-baked loaves.

"The benefit from abolishing the definition would be the enhancement of competition by creating quality differentiations and by offering a broader choice to consumers," said the OECD, which also wanted bread sold by the kilo rather than, as was the case until very recently, in standard, fixed-weight loaves.

Vouldis, 33, whose bakery was founded 22 years ago by his parents in the southern Athens suburb of Kallithea, and is one of 15,000 local bakeries in Greece, said: "If a supermarket can call itself a bakery and present frozen loaves as fresh, that's cheating customers .

"And if we sell by the kilo – which we've been supposed to be doing since Easter, actually, but no one does – customers will end up spending more on their bread. Bakers will have far more opportunity to play around with their prices.

"Neighbourhood bakeries are the heart of a community; it's wrong to make things harder for them than they already are.

"And it's unacceptable to have international institutions saying, you're stupid, you don't know how to run your business, here's how you must do it."

Vouldis, 33, whose bakery was founded 22 years ago by his parents in the southern Athens suburb of Kallithea, and is one of 15,000 local bakeries in Greece, said: "If a supermarket can call itself a bakery and present frozen loaves as fresh, that's cheating customers . And if we sell by the kilo – which we've been supposed to be doing since Easter, actually, but no one does – customers will end up spending more on their bread. Bakers will have far more opportunity to play around with their prices.

Stefanidi meanwhile was concerned at the bailout powers' insistence that anyone should be allowed to own a pharmacy: at present, Greek law limits their ownership to pharmacists.

The way the OECD and the international creditors saw it, far too many laws protected Greece's 11,000 pharmacies – a quantity, per head of the population, about double that for France or Spain, and more than 15 times Denmark's total.

Many of the rules were scrapped last year despite a European court upholding Greece's view that it was perfectly entitled to legislate on the matter since its supreme court had

ruled that pharmacies were not pure commercial enterprises but also fulfilled a vital social function.

The rule that no district can have more than one pharmacy per 1,000 people will stay. But the regulation stipulating that over-the-counter medicines may only be sold at licensed pharmacies is soon to be scrapped; and the ownership restriction could be gone next week if the bailout package is approved.

“It’s crazy,” said Konstantinos Lourantos, president of the Panhellenic Pharmaceutical Association, in his pharmacy in the Athens suburb of Nea Smyrni. “Anyone will be able to open a pharmacy now. Anyone.

“In all Europe, only in Slovenia and Hungary is this allowed. Even in Germany, a licensed pharmacist must own at least 51% of a pharmacy.”

The association fears that behind the institutions’ move to liberalise the pharmacy sector, the big drugs multinationals are lying in wait.

“They say they want to open us up to competition, reduce prices, but all that will happen is the big manufacturers will buy up struggling Greek pharmacists and set up their own chains, perhaps favouring their own products,” said Christos Arvantis, the association’s legal counsel. “How is that competition?”

Greece’s embattled pharmacies are presently owed an average of about €40,000 each in overdue reimbursements from the country’s cash-strapped health service, Lourantos said. And he denied that Greece’s laws kept drug prices high. “They’re based on an average of the lowest three prices in the EU.”

For Stefanidi, whose small pharmacy is just along the road from Vouldis’s bakery, such arguments were important but not the real issue.

“You see, I see my job as providing medicine, not selling products,” she said. “If someone comes in here I won’t sell him something just because it’s nearing its use-by date. I’m a pharmacist, I want it to be the solution. And I’ll make sure it’s safe for him to take in his condition, and with any other drugs he’s taking.”

Above all, though, Stefanidi said, Greek pharmacies were “neighbourhood institutions”. She added: “It’s almost like social work, especially now, with the crisis. If people come in and cannot pay, what am I expected to do? Turn them away?”

She said she was helping five local families, including a couple of older residents, who had little or no income or pension. “And not just with medicines, either,” she said.

“Is that protectionism? And how many commercial pharmacy owners, how many supermarkets, would do that?”

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Violent Zionist Settlers Keep Hebron Palestinian Family Prisoners In Their Own Home: Occupation Army Issues “Eviction Notice Giving The Abu Rajabs 30 Days To Leave The Three-Story Building That Has Been Their Home For 50 Years.

**“The Notice Said The Military Was No Longer Able To Protect The Family From Jewish Settlers Who Have Been Trying To Take Over Their Home For The Past Two-And-A-Half Years”
“Settlers Beat Palestinians In Front Of Soldiers”**

August 20, 2015 by Kate Shuttleworth, Foreign Correspondent; thenational.ae

HEBRON

Hazem Abu Rajab, a Palestinian from the West Bank city of Hebron, has barely left his home in the past two months. He lives in constant fear that extremist Jewish settlers will try to take over the property, forcing him and the 15 family members that he lives with out on to the streets.

The threat of losing his house has been compounded since August 6 when the Israeli military issued an eviction notice giving the Abu Rajabs 30 days to leave the three-story building that has been their home for 50 years.



Hazem Abu Rajab, 28, whose family is being forced out of their home in Hebron by the Israeli army and settlers, with Badee Dwaik, leader of a non-government organisation Human Rights Defenders. Kate Shuttleworth for The National / August 15, 2015

The notice said the military was no longer able to protect the family from Jewish settlers who have been trying to take over their home for the past two-and-a-half years.

After the settlers stormed the house one night in December 2012, taking over the top level of the house, the military booted them out two weeks later following a court order.

However, the military did not return the floor to the Abu Rajabs and at least ten soldiers go in and out of it every day.

The military claims that it does not have the manpower to protect the Abu Rajabs against the settlers who have ramped up their efforts to evict the family in recent weeks.

But the Abu Rajabs are refusing to give in.

Hazem, 28, who is expecting his first child in two months, says that he was called in for an interrogation last Sunday with Israel's internal security service, the Shin Bet, a move he said was only the latest attempt by the Jewish state to intimidate his family.

"I was in jail for two years without charge from 2012," he said. "A judge even said he didn't have any reason to keep me in jail."

"They are targeting me because they want to punish my family for not leaving the house.

In December 2012, shortly before they forced their way into the Abu Rajab home, settlers submitted documentation to the Israeli authorities showing that they had bought the house from a Palestinian man who in turn had bought it from an unstated member – or members – of the family.

But the civil administration, Israel's governing body in the West Bank, said in January 2013 that the settlers had failed to obtain the required permit to purchase property in the occupied territory.

Hazem said the house had been successively inherited by the original owner's sons, grandsons and great-grandsons. "If the settlers did buy it like they claim, it was from one owner out of many," he said. "This house belongs to the whole family."

Since being evicted from the Abu Rajab home, the settlers have continued to push for ownership of the property in the courts but have not been successful.

Earlier this month, the settlers appeared to switch tactics, stepping up their efforts on the ground to force the Abu Rajabs from their home, Hazem said. And since the eviction notice was issued, this escalation has "gotten more and more serious".

On August 7, a day after the notice was issued, Hazem's 60-year-old father, the patriarch of the house, Ali Sheik Abu Rajab, was hospitalised after suffering a heart attack. Hazem believes it was caused by stress resulting from the notice and said the settlers took advantage of his father's absence to step up their intimidation of the family, which comprises eight adults and seven children.

Last Thursday, "over 200 settlers turned up and they were dancing, playing music, and clapping and they set up plastic tables and chairs by our doorway," he said.

Hazem's wife Marwa, who is six months pregnant, was alone in the building's basement – which has its own separate entrance – at the time. Settlers entered the back garden and tried to break into the basement through a glass window covered by metal bars.

Afterwards, she was rushed to hospital after experiencing some bleeding as a result of the stress.

"Someone has to be inside the house 24 hours a day," said Hazem "We block the kids from the windows – it's too dangerous with the settlers outside with guns."

Hazem, who earns his living as a plumber, said he has only left the house to go to work once in the past two months, leaving him struggling to provide for his family.

The family's home is in an area of Hebron known as H2. According to an agreement between Israel and the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in 1997, the city – which is the only part of the West Bank to have settlers living among the Palestinian population – has been divided into two parts. H1, which is home to about 200,000 Palestinians, is under full control of the Palestinian Authority.

But the much smaller H2, which is home to 30,000 Palestinians and 1,000 Jewish settlers, is controlled by Israel, and sectioned off from the rest of the city by barricades and checkpoints.

In H2, Palestinian cars are forbidden and the main Shuhada Street is closed to Palestinians. Enforcing these rules and manning the barricades and checkpoints are up to 300 Israeli soldiers. The set-up works to ensure that the hardline settlers can come and go without ever having to come into contact with their Palestinian neighbours.

The Abu Rajab family say they have received little support from Hebron's Palestinian community who fear going into H2, where attacks by Jewish settlers on local Palestinians are rife.

“People are scared to come here because it's too risky – the soldiers humiliate people on a daily basis. Settlers beat Palestinians in front of soldiers,” said Badee Dwaik, head of the Human Rights Defenders, a Palestinian group that documents Israeli human-rights violations against Palestinians.

Mr Dwaik, a Palestinian, has been opposing evictions and settler-led violence for decades and last week camped outside the Abu Rajab house for a night to help protect the family from settlers.

He says the situation in Hebron has been escalating since the start of the year.

“We have a saying in Arabic: they've already killed the dead and now they walk in his funeral,” he said.

“The question is, who is feeding the settlers, who funds them? The government and does and the ministry of justice.”

Occupation Regime Begins Construction On Ruins Of Negev Bedouin Village “Extermination Of A 60-Year-Old Town Whose Residents Have Been Displaced Three Times”

Aug. 23, 2015 Ma'an

BEERSHEBA -- Israeli excavators on Sunday morning began work on infrastructure for two Jewish-only settlements in the former Bedouin village of Umm al-Hiran in the Negev desert in southern Israel, locals said.

Locals told Ma'an that excavators and bulldozers were building a new road under heavy protection of Israeli forces.



In November 2013, the Israeli government approved a decision to demolish the unrecognized Bedouin village of Umm al-Hiran and passed plans to create two Jewish settlements, Hiran and Kassif, in the area.

"There is no room for comments any more as we are not talking about racism, but rather, extermination of a 60-year-old town whose residents have been displaced three times," a member of a local committee of the displaced Bedouin community, Raed Abu al-Qean, said.

Umm al-Hiran is one of dozens of Bedouin villages which the Israeli government does not recognize. It is located in Wadi Attir east of Hurah village.

A Palestinian member of the Israeli Knesset, Talab Abu Arar, described the Israeli decision as racist.

"Racism has become crystal clear in Umm al-Hiran as a Jewish settlement Hiran is being built on the ruins of the Arab Umm al-Hiran village." He added that Israeli courts and authorities ignored the rights of Palestinians and worked towards confining them to a few recognized towns and denying their rights.

Abu Arar compared the activities in Umm al-Hiran to the forced displacement of more than 700,000 Palestinians from their homes in 1948 prior to the creation of the state of Israel.

The Higher Guidance Committee of Arab Residents of Negev is scheduled to convene and decide on practical moves in protest against the construction of Jewish settlements in Umm al-Hiran. Palestinian members of the Knesset are also set to join the meeting.

Zionist Settler Mob Attacks Palestinian Man, As Usual

Aug. 23, 2015 Ma'an

NABLUS) -- A number of Israeli settlers on Saturday night attacked a Palestinian man on a main road south of Nablus in the northern occupied West Bank, a local monitor said.

Ghassan Daghlis, who monitors settlement activity in the northern West Bank, told Ma'an that the assault took place at a crossroads near Yatma village south of Nablus.

Witnesses told Daghlis that a number of settlers stepped out of a vehicle and physically attacked 32-year-old Mahmoud Ahmad Othman from the village of Majdal Bani Fadil.

A witness then took Othman to Rafidia hospital in Nablus.

Medics said he sustained moderate to light injuries.

Last week Daghlis reported that an Israeli settler allegedly ran over Muhammad Mustafa Najjar, 19, in Yatma village before fleeing the scene.

Settler violence has come under international scrutiny after an arson attack carried out by settlers last month in the southern Nablus village of Duma killed an 18-month-old infant and his father. The infant's mother and brother remain in critical condition.

Following the attack, Israeli human rights group B'Tselem said that the deadly attack has been "only a matter of time," pointing to a culture of impunity for Israeli settlers.

The perpetrators of settler violence against Palestinian civilians and their property -- both inside of Israel and the occupied territories -- are rarely punished, with police closing the majority investigations without an indictment.

Israeli settlers have carried out at least 133 attacks on Palestinians in occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank and their property since the start of 2015, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

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