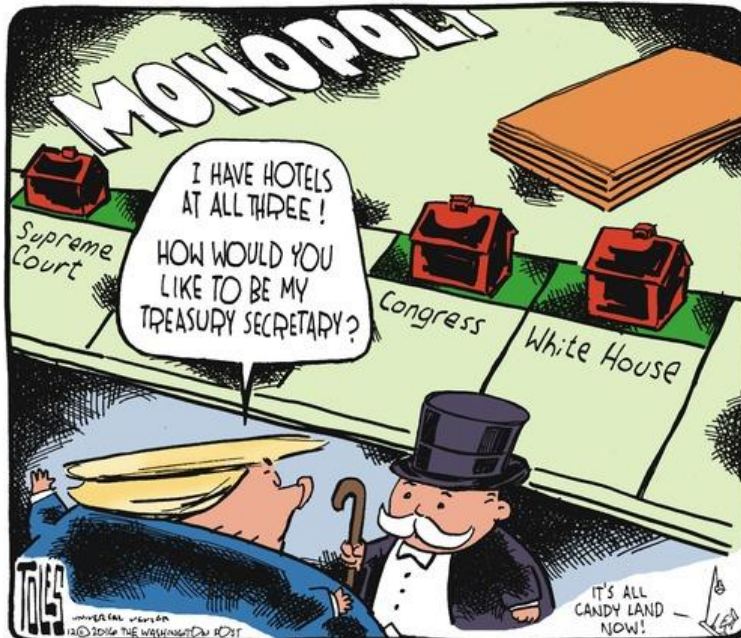


## **Military Resistance 14L6**



### **Trump Names Goldman President Gary Cohn Director Of National Economic Council:**

**“One Of The Most Influential Voices  
On Economic Decisions In The White  
House”**

**“Putting Mr. Cohn In The White House  
Would Give Goldman Sachs Veterans A  
Major Influence In Economic Decisions”**

Dec. 12, 2016 By DAMIAN PALETTA and NICK TIMIRAOS, Wall Street Journal &  
December 9, 2016 by NATHANIEL POPPER, MICHAEL J. de la MERCED and MAGGIE  
HABERMAN, New York Times

WASHINGTON—President-elect Donald Trump announced Monday that he was appointing Goldman Sachs Group Inc. President and Chief Operating Officer Gary Cohn as director of the National Economic Council, a position that will make him one of the most influential voices on economic decisions in the White House.

Mr. Trump, in a statement, said Mr. Cohn would be his “top economic adviser.”

“He will help craft economic policies that will grow wages for our workers, stop the exodus of jobs overseas and create many great new opportunities for Americans who have been struggling,” Mr. Trump said. “He fully understands the economy and will use all of his vast knowledge and experience to make sure the American people start winning again.”

Putting Mr. Cohn in the White House would give Goldman Sachs veterans a major influence in economic decisions. Mr. Trump’s pick to be Treasury secretary, Steven Mnuchin, spent 17 years at Goldman Sachs.

Mr. Cohn called the appointment “a great honor.”

“I share President-elect Trump’s vision of making sure every American worker has a secure place in a thriving economy, and we will be completely committed to building a nation of strength, growth and prosperity,” he said.

**The NEC director is one of the most influential economic policy decision makers in the U.S. government, a division of the White House that has in the past been used to brainstorm and craft everything from banking rules to tax policy.**

At times, there can be tension between the NEC and Treasury Department over who is in the driver’s seat of economic policy decisions, and Mr. Cohn’s presence in the White House on a likely daily basis could boost his influence.

Goldman Chief Executive Lloyd Blankfein said in a separate statement “I am confident that Gary will bring his many talents and expertise to the White House and will do his part to make our economy stronger for all Americans.”

The appointment doesn’t require Senate confirmation. The NEC job could serve as a steppingstone to other top government posts, including at the Treasury or Federal Reserve, a leap that has some precedent in past administrations.

**The pick of a Goldman executive to head the NEC, the top economic policy-making body in the West Wing, is surprising because Mr. Trump railed against a global power structure and promised to “drain the swamp” of favor-seekers during his election campaign, repeatedly singling out Goldman Sachs as an icon of a corrupt elite.**

**A campaign video in the final weeks before the election alleging a global plot to take wealth from workers flashed an image of Goldman’s Mr. Blankfein. In addition to Messrs. Cohn and Mnuchin, top Trump adviser Steve Bannon worked at Goldman.**

J.P. Morgan Chief Executive James Dimon, whose name had been floated as a possible candidate for Treasury secretary, said it would be a “huge mistake” for the transition team to disqualify potential appointees because of private-sector ties.

“You want the best ballplayer on the field, and Gary’s an unbelievable ballplayer,” he said in an interview. “You’re talking about putting someone in the room who’s got wide global knowledge of capitalmarkets, trade, tax... hopefully he can help companies create jobs.”

Mr. Cohn joined Goldman in 1990 and became a partner in 1994, the same year as Mr. Mnuchin.

Mr. Cohn, the son of an electrician-turned-real estate developer in Ohio, served as Goldman’s operating chief since 2006, a leadership transition set into motion when the then-CEO of the bank, Henry Paulson, was tapped by President George W. Bush to serve as Treasury secretary.

Mr. Cohn, a registered Democrat, isn’t vocally political and has given money to candidates of both parties. Colleagues described him as a nonideological pragmatist, and analysts said the selection indicated diminishing political risks for the biggest banks in a Trump administration.

Mr. Cohn has traveled extensively abroad for Goldman, and his appointment would provide Mr. Trump’s inner circle with an insider well connected to foreign economic ministers, technology executives and banking regulators.

President Bill Clinton created the National Economic Council in 1993 and it has grown to become the most important economic policy-making body across the executive branch. At times, its director has been as influential as the Treasury secretary or other cabinet posts.

Mr. Clinton tapped another Goldman executive, then-co-chairman Robert Rubin, as his first NEC director. Mr. Rubin had served at Goldman alongside co-chairman Stephen Friedman, who would later serve Mr. Bush as NEC director from 2002-2005. Mr. Cohn will become the 10th person to head the council and the third to join it from the executive suite at Goldman.

Joining the government would allow Mr. Cohn to sell his Goldman stock tax-deferred. He owned more than 882,000 shares outright and through trusts and other vehicles, according to a Nov. 15 regulatory filing. That stake is worth more than \$209 million at current prices, which are just shy of an all-time high reached in October 2007.

**Goldman Sachs has already been a beneficiary of the coming Trump administration. Mr. Trump has promised to push back on financial regulations passed since the financial crisis, which have come down particularly hard on Goldman.**

**Since the election, shares of banks and other financial institutions have risen sharply; Goldman’s is up 34 percent.**

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## MILITARY NEWS

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



The remains of Army Sgt. Douglas Riney, 26, of Fairview, Illinois, killed in Afghanistan, at Dover Airforce Base. Army Times October 20, 2016

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**Three Marines Face Court-Martial:  
“Up To 20 Marines Could Be Charged  
Or Face Administrative Punishment  
For Allegations Of Abuse”**

**Drill Instructor “Made The Recruit  
Exercise In The Shower, Ordered Him To  
Get Into A Commercial Dryer And Then It**

# Turned It On Several Times While Insulting His Religion”

December 13, 2016 By: Jeff Schogol, Marine Corps Times [Excerpts

The abuse scandal at the Marine Corps’ East Coast training depot at Parris Island, South Carolina, widened on Tuesday as charges against three Marines were referred to a special court-martial and a fourth Marine will appear before an Article 32 hearing stemming from investigations into allegations of abuse.

Marine Corps Training and Education Command announced the following Marines assigned to Parris Island have been charged with violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice:

Staff Sgt. Matthew T. Bacchus was charged with maltreatment, violation of a lawful order and making a false official statement.

Staff Sgt. Jose Lucena-Martinez was charged with failure to obey a lawful general order and making a false official statement.

Sgt. Riley R. Gress was charged with maltreatment, failure to obey a lawful order and making a false official statement.

The three Marines will face special courts-martial, which is a mid-level court venue that can punish convicted Marines with a maximum confinement up to one year in the brig.

A staff sergeant whose name TECOM is withholding will face an Article 32 hearing on accusations of cruelty and maltreatment, failure to obey a lawful general order and making a false official statement, a TECOM news release says.

An Article 32 hearing, which is similar to a civilian court's grand jury proceeding, will review the evidence and help determine whether the Marine ultimately faces a court-martial.

**None of the allegations are in connection with the investigation into the March 18 suicide of recruit Raheel Siddiqui, a Muslim Marine recruit who jumped to his death during boot camp at Parris Island after he was hazed and struck by his drill instructor.**

Siddiqui's death sparked outrage on Capitol Hill and focused national attention on allegations of hazing at the Marine Corps' boot camp.

After Siddiqui's death, the Marines launched two investigations into misconduct by drill instructors. A third investigation, which was ongoing at the time of Siddiqui's death, looked into allegations of hazing in 2015. It was ultimately combined with the other two.

Up to 20 Marines at Parris Island could be charged or face administrative punishment for allegations of abuse against Siddiqui and others.

**Parris Island has been under an uncomfortable microscope since Siddiqi vaulted over the railing of a barracks stairwell and fell nearly 40 feet to his death after a drill instructor slapped him.**

**He was assigned to the 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, where drill instructors often slapped and choked recruits while justifying the physical abuse as “drill corrections,” an investigation into his death found.**

**Although his death was ruled a suicide, an investigation was unable to determine whether Siddiqi was trying to kill himself or if he was trying to get away from the drill instructor who slapped him.**

One of Siddiqi’s drill instructors had been accused of hazing another Muslim recruit in a separate incident in 2015.

**The drill instructor allegedly made the recruit exercise in the shower, ordered him to get into a commercial dryer and then it turned it on several times while insulting his religion, an investigation found.**

At one point, the drill instructor allegedly asked the recruit if he took part in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

Siddiqi’s family issued a statement on Tuesday through their attorney Shiraz K. Khan saying they were told in October that charges would likely be filed against “many individuals” in the coming weeks.

“In light of recent charges against three Marines being referred to a special court martial, we are eager to receive updates regarding the progress of filing charges in the death of Raheel Siddiqi,” Khan said in the statement.

“We are well aware of the magnitude, sensitivity, and credibility of the evidence obtained and held in this case. However, despite our continued efforts, almost nine months later, the family is still searching for answers. We have still not received any material updates nor have we met with NCIS [Naval Criminal Investigative Service] officials regarding the matter.”

**In September, Marine Commandant Robert Neller said the majority of drill instructors and other personnel assigned to recruit training follow the rules on turning recruits into Marines.**

**Not speaking specifically about the investigation into Siddiqi’s death, Neller said the Marine Corps has never permitted abuse of recruits.**

“Recruit training is designed to be tough and demanding,” Neller told Marine Corps Times in a Sept. 16 interview. “That’s why young men and women join the Marine Corps, because they want to be challenged and tested. I have every confidence that the drill instructors that are out there both at Parris Island and San Diego understand that.

“They are working extremely hard and they’ve very proud of the effort they’ve put forward to take young men and women who are civilians and turning them into basically trained Marines.”

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# VA Facility Left Dead Veteran's Body Unattended In Shower For 9 Hours

[Thanks to Phil Gasper, who sent this in.]

December 12 By Derek Hawkins, Washington Post

First they moved the dead body into a hallway. Then they took it into a shower room.

There it remained, ignored, for more than nine hours. No one showed up to take it to the morgue because no one called the dispatchers.

Not much is known about the unidentified veteran who died in hospice care at the Bay Pines VA Healthcare System outside St. Petersburg, Fla. But a hospital investigation made public Friday by the Tampa Bay Times criticizes staff members for leaving the veteran's body unattended for such a long time and then trying to cover up their mistake.

The veteran died in February, and the Times obtained the report from the hospital's Administrative Investigation Board through a Freedom of Information Act request. Investigators interviewed more than 30 witnesses, the Times reported, finding that hospice staff members "demonstrated a lack of concern, attention and respect" for the veteran and subjected the veteran's body to "increased risk of decomposition."

According to the heavily redacted report, the veteran died while receiving treatment in the hospice unit at the sprawling medical complex on Florida's Gulf Coast.

When staff members learned the veteran had died, the report says, they asked a transporter to carry the body to a morgue. The transporter allegedly told them to contact dispatchers instead. "That request was never made, so those responsible for taking away the body never showed up," the Times reported.

The body sat in a hallway for an unspecified amount of time before staff members moved it into a shower room, according to the Times. They left it there unattended for more than nine hours, investigators reportedly found.

Decomposition of the human body begins within minutes of death. The process, called autolysis, or self-digestion, begins when cells lose oxygen and tissues start to break down.

When the veteran's body was finally moved, Bay Pines staff members "falsely documented" the incident and tried to blame their mistakes on a communication breakdown that never happened, according to the Times. Staff members also tried to pin blame on a lack of clerical staff in the hospital, and they failed to update an organizational chart to make it harder to determine who was in charge, investigators found.

A Bay Pines spokesman called the report's findings "unacceptable" and told the Times that the hospital was retraining staff members and changing its procedures in response.

"We feel that we have taken strong, appropriate and expeditious steps to strengthen and improve our existing systems and processes within the unit," hospital spokesman Jason Dangel told the Times, declining to say whether any workers had been fired. "It is our expectation that each veteran is transported to their final resting place in the timely, respectful and honorable manner. America's heroes deserve nothing less."

Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.) criticized the Department of Veterans Affairs for the way the hospital handled the veteran's death.

"I am deeply disturbed by the incident that occurred at the Bay Pines VA hospital, and even more distressed to learn that staff attempted to cover it up," Bilirakis said in a Facebook post Friday. "Unsurprisingly, not a single VA employee has been fired following this incident, despite a clear lack of concern and respect for the Veteran. The men and women who sacrificed on behalf of our nation deserve better."

At least two other veterans care facilities have come under fire this month amid claims that they failed to properly care for patients.

In Oklahoma, a physician assistant and three nurses resigned from a state veterans affairs facility after a veteran who had a wound infested with maggots died in October, the Tulsa World reported.

In Wisconsin, a dentist resigned from a state veterans affairs hospital after being accused of treating hundreds of patients with equipment that had not been properly cleaned, according to the Associated Press.

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## **New Study Could Force VA To Expand Agent Orange Benefits: "The Military And VA Turned To An Herbicide Expert Who Defends Agent Orange For Guidance On Handling Vets' Claims" "Only One Reason To Explain The Agency's Reluctance: 'Money'"**



# “The Latest Findings: An Association Between Exposure And High Blood Pressure”

[Thanks to Sandy Kelson, Veteran & Military Initiative Organizing Committee, who sent this in.]

Nov. 15, 2016 by Charles Ornstein, ProPublica, and Mike Hixenbaugh, The Virginian-Pilot [Excerpts]

A new study has found a close relationship between Agent Orange exposure during the Vietnam War and high blood pressure, a conclusion that could lead the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to dramatically expand the number of veterans eligible for compensation.

The study, published last week by VA researchers in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, found a higher rate of hypertension among members of the Army Chemical Corps who handled Agent Orange during the war compared to those who didn't.

Corps members who served in Vietnam but did not spray the chemicals also had a higher rate of hypertension than their peers who served outside Vietnam.

Both results were statistically significant and add to a body of evidence linking Agent Orange exposure and hypertension.

**The findings come 41 years after the close of the Vietnam War and decades since the last supplies of Agent Orange were incinerated.**

**Since then, veterans have become increasingly distrustful of the VA. They maintain that their exposure to Agent Orange, which contained the toxic chemical dioxin, has harmed their own health and has been passed on to their children.**

A VA working group has been studying the latest scientific literature since March to determine if any illnesses should be added to the agency's list of diseases for which vets are automatically entitled to compensation if they served in Vietnam. Specifically, the group has been looking at new evidence linking bladder cancer, under-active thyroid, Parkinson's-like symptoms and hypertension to Agent Orange exposure.

**The VA had been expected to announce its decision this year, but officials now say that will be left to the administration of President-elect Donald Trump.**

“For this administration, the deadline for proposing new rules for potential new presumptions (of service connection to herbicide) has passed, and this will become work for the new administration to take to completion,” VA officials said in a written statement first reported last week in the newspaper Stars and Stripes.

Hypertension is the most common ailment among veterans seeking health care at the VA—indeed it is one of the most common ailments among older adults generally.

**The study released last week found the prevalence of hypertension among members of the Army Chemical Corps to be higher than among other aging veterans. Although most of the Agent Orange used in Vietnam was sprayed from Air Force planes, the Army Chemical Corps also sprayed the herbicide from hand sprayers and helicopters.**

Researchers analyzed responses from about 3,000 members of the Army Chemical Corps who participated in a 2013 survey. The research team then verified their self-reported exposure to Agent Orange by using dioxin levels in their blood and checked their self-reported blood pressure against medical records and in-home testing.

**Among Chemical Corps members who sprayed herbicides in Vietnam, 81.6 percent said they had high blood pressure. That compares to 64.6 percent among Corps members who did not serve in Vietnam and did not spray herbicides.**

**Researchers said that difference could not be explained away by other characteristics they analyzed, including age, race, weight, alcohol use and tobacco use.**

It's unclear if the results from the Army Chemical Corps apply to other Vietnam veterans, the researchers said.

For years, the VA has been weighing whether to provide Agent Orange benefits to vets with high blood pressure, which could potentially cost billions of dollars.

### **“Waiting For Vets To Develop Ischemic Heart Disease Or Suffer A Stroke Is “A Pennywise Pound Foolish Decision”**

**In 2009, a federal advisory panel said there was evidence suggesting a connection between Agent Orange exposure and several conditions, including Parkinson's disease, ischemic heart disease and hypertension.**

**A VA internal working group of scientific experts wanted to recommend the department grant benefits to veterans with all of those conditions, according to Dr. Victoria Cassano, a member of the group who at the time was acting chief consultant for the VA's Environmental Health Strategic Healthcare Group.**

**But the group's superiors at the VA told the panel to change its position and instead recommend against providing benefits for heart disease and hypertension, Cassano said. It recommended in favor of Parkinson's disease.**

“I wasn't really surprised by these findings,” said Yasmin S. Cypel, the study's principal investigator and a health science specialist at VA. “I just felt that based upon the research that there was evidence to indicate that there might be an association.”

Rick Weidman, legislative director of Vietnam Veterans of America, said the new report should add pressure to the VA to compensate vets for hypertension. His group has been

pressing the VA to add the condition to its list of Agent Orange-connected diseases ever since the advisory panel first noted evidence of a link.

**He can think of only one reason to explain the agency's reluctance:**

**"Money."**

**"Simple as that," said Weidman, himself a Vietnam vet. "There are so many people who utilize the VA who have hypertension, they know it's going to cost."**

Cassano, the former VA official who thought VA should have agreed to provide hypertension benefits in 2009, said the new research by Cypel and colleagues was "really well designed." "It's a very definitive study," Cassano said. "It's showing that just being in Vietnam gives you a higher relative risk of developing hypertension."

While hypertension affects many veterans, it is not as debilitating as other conditions and generally can be treated inexpensively with medications. Therefore, she said, the costs may not be as high as some have predicted.

**Waiting for vets to develop ischemic heart disease or suffer a stroke is "a pennywise pound foolish decision."**

Since last year, ProPublica and The Virginian-Pilot have compiled more than 6,000 stories from veterans and their families about how Agent Orange has affected them.

**We also have reported how the military and VA have turned to an herbicide expert who defends Agent Orange for guidance on handling vets' claims.**

Several veterans said that if the VA begins offering Agent Orange benefits for high blood pressure, they would apply for them.

"It has never been anything I considered," said Ron Bass, 67, who served as an Air Force crew chief in Vietnam from 1969 to 1971 and takes medication for his condition.

"I would definitely file a claim for it," said Ron Zatawski, 66, who served in the Army in Vietnam from 1970 to 1971. "We went through areas that they had sprayed Agent Orange. ... We didn't know how toxic this stuff was."

Victoria Davey, another researcher on the hypertension study, said there's still much to learn about the effects of Agent Orange on vets. She is leading a new study comparing the health of Vietnam vets with similarly aged U.S. residents who never served in the military.

"This doesn't close the book on long-term health consequences of service in Vietnam," Davey said of the hypertension study.

**Military Resistance In PDF Format?**

If you prefer PDF to Word format, email: [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org)

## 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**

**The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.**

**-- Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach"**

# Many Blacks In Milwaukee Neighborhood Didn't Vote — And Don't Regret It:

**“Both Of Them Were Terrible. They Never Do Anything For Us Anyway”**

**“He Said No President In His Lifetime Had Done Anything To Improve The Lives Of Black People, Including Mr. Obama, Whom He Voted For Twice”**



Justin Babar, seated at center, said he voted for Donald J. Trump as a protest against Hillary Clinton. Credit Ben Brewer for The New York Times

11.20.16 By SABRINA TAVERNISE, New York Times

MILWAUKEE — Four barbers and a firefighter were pondering their future under a Trump presidency at the Upper Cutz barbershop last week.

“We got to figure this out,” said Cedric Fleming, one of the barbers. “We got a gangster in the chair now,” he said, referring to President-elect Donald J. Trump.

They admitted that they could not complain too much: Only two of them had voted. But there were no regrets.

“I don’t feel bad,” Mr. Fleming said, trimming a mustache. “Milwaukee is tired. Both of them were terrible. They never do anything for us anyway.”

As Democrats pick through the wreckage of the campaign, one lesson is clear: The election was notable as much for the people who did not show up, as for those who did. Nationally, about half of eligible voters did not cast ballots.

Wisconsin, a state that Hillary Clinton had assumed she would win, historically boasts one of the nation’s highest rates of voter participation; this year’s 68.3 percent turnout was the fifth best among the 50 states. But by local standards, it was a disappointment, the lowest turnout in 16 years. And those no-shows were important. Mr. Trump won the state by just 27,000 voters.

Milwaukee’s lowest-income neighborhoods offer one explanation for the turnout figures.

Of the city’s 15 council districts, the decline in turnout from 2012 to 2016 in the five poorest was consistently much greater than the drop seen in more prosperous areas — accounting for half of the overall decline in turnout citywide.

**The biggest drop was here in District 15, a stretch of fading wooden homes, sandwich shops and fast-food restaurants that is 84 percent black. In this district, voter turnout declined by 19.5 percent from 2012 figures, according to Neil Albrecht, executive director of the City of Milwaukee Election Commission.**

It is home to some of Milwaukee’s poorest residents and, according to a 2016 documentary, “Milwaukee 53206,” has one of the nation’s highest per-capita incarceration rates.

At Upper Cutz, a bustling barbershop in a green-trimmed wooden house, talk of politics inevitably comes back to one man: Barack Obama. Mr. Obama’s elections infused many here with a feeling of connection to national politics they had never before experienced. But their lives have not gotten appreciably better, and sourness has set in.

“We went to the beach,” said Maanaan Sabir, 38, owner of the Juice Kitchen, a brightly painted shop a few blocks down West North Avenue, using a metaphor to describe the emotion after Mr. Obama’s election. “And then eight years happened.”

**All four barbers had voted for Mr. Obama. But only two could muster the enthusiasm to vote this time. And even then, it was a sort of protest.**

**One wrote in Mrs. Clinton’s Democratic opponent, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont. The other wrote in himself.**

“I’m so numb,” said Jahn Toney, 45, who had written in Mr. Sanders.

**He said no president in his lifetime had done anything to improve the lives of black people, including Mr. Obama, whom he voted for twice. “It’s like I should have known this would happen. We’re worse off than before.”**

But Mr. Obama did do something important: “He did give black people something to aspire to. That’s a lot. I’m happy my son was able to see a black president.”

Mr. Fleming, 47, who has been trimming hair, beards and mustaches for 30 years, had hoped his small business would get easier to run. But it hasn't.

"Give us loans, or a 401(k)," he said, trimming the mustache of Steve Stricklin, a firefighter from the neighborhood.

His biggest issue was health insurance. Mr. Fleming lost his coverage after his divorce three years ago and has struggled to find a policy he could afford. He finally found one, which starts Monday but costs too much at \$300 a month.

"Ain't none of this been working," he said. He did not vote.

Mr. Albrecht, of the election commission, said other factors contributed to the decline in turnout. This was the first general election under new state laws that required voters to produce an approved photo ID card, and that stiffened the requirements for new voters to prove their residence. This was particularly onerous for the poor, who move often.

Mr. Albrecht said he believed this change had cost several thousand people in the city their vote.

"To me that's very significant," he said. "It takes away from the fairness and integrity of the election."

Although two federal district courts had ruled that the photo ID law discriminated against African-Americans, who disproportionately lack the approved IDs, the law was applied on Election Day after an appeals court stayed one of the decisions. Gov. Scott Walker, a Republican who backed the laws, has said they have no impact on voter participation, and Mr. Albrecht allowed that their effect on Milwaukee's turnout would not have erased Mr. Trump's victory in the state.

Perhaps the biggest drags on voter turnout in Milwaukee, as in the rest of the country, were the candidates themselves. To some, it was like having to choose between broccoli and liver.

**"I felt cornered," said Ian Pfeiffer, 25, who works the grill at Jake's Delicatessen and says he did not vote. "We were stuck between Trump and Hillary. They really left us with no choice."**

Mr. Pfeiffer's grandmother, an avid supporter of Mrs. Clinton, spent months trying to convince him to vote for her. But he could not get over his revulsion at what he saw as trust issues related to the Clinton Foundation. (Mr. Pfeiffer's grandfather pushed him toward Mr. Trump, but he found him even less appealing.)

He thought Oprah Winfrey would be a good candidate.

"Hey, would you vote for Oprah Winfrey?" he said in a loud voice to a line of customers.

"Yeah, I'd vote for her," said Erin Miles, 41, a financial services worker waiting for her sandwich. "She has a level head and decision-making skills."



Ian Pfeiffer, a cook at Jake's Delicatessen, said he did not vote. "We were stuck between Trump and Hillary," he said. "They really left us with no choice." Credit Ben Brewer for The New York Times

Few of the men and women interviewed on West North Street last week had voted for Mr. Trump, though many said they admired him. (He spoke his mind. He was rich.)

"If I would have voted, I would have voted for him," said Andre Frierson, 40, a security guard working the evening shift at Jake's. "From a business perspective, I loved him."

As for Mrs. Clinton, "other countries probably wouldn't have respected us because we had a woman running the country," he said.

One exception was Justin Babar, who said he voted for Mr. Trump as a protest against Mrs. Clinton. He blamed her husband's policies for putting him in prison for 20 years.

As for the claims of racism that have dogged Mr. Trump, Mr. Babar wasn't so worried. "It's better than smiling to my face but going behind closed doors and voting against our kids," he said.

Tarvus Hawthorne, 45, a program coordinator at a local nonprofit, agreed.

"He was real, unlike a lot of liberal Democrats who are just as racist" but keep it hidden, he said, his jaw slathered with shaving cream. "You can reason with them all day long, but they think they know it all. They want to have control. That they know what's best for "those people."

Still, he voted for Mrs. Clinton, as did many others here.

Upper Cutz gets busier as the day wears on. Children come in after school. Danielle Rogers, Mr. Toney's sister, stopped by the barbershop for a visit. Everybody agreed they would miss Mr. Obama.

Ms. Rogers said Mr. Obama had aged a lot. "It's like having a bunch of bad kids," she said. "He's probably saying: 'I'm done. Take them back to their mama's house.'"



Mr. Fleming was trying to imagine Mr. Trump as president.

“The White House is going to be the penthouse!” he said, adding that Mr. Trump would be like Al Pacino in “Scarface,” with parties in the mansion and exotic animals roaming around the grounds. “If he comes home and finds his wife cheating on him, he could just say, ‘Let’s go to war!’”

They were laughing. But they were also worried. “He’s going to mess with us on some racist level,” said Otis Jackson, 45, a barber who did not vote. “He’s already appointed a known racist,” he said, referring to Stephen K. Bannon, Mr. Trump’s chief strategist and the former head of Breitbart News, which has been denounced as a white nationalist hate site.

With so many people sitting in his chair over the years, Mr. Fleming has developed a keen sense of where society is headed. But now he is stumped.

“This was a weird election,” he said, holding a set of clippers and looking pensive. “You can’t tell what’s on people’s minds. There are less cars out there. No one wants to come out. No one knows what comes next.”

He added, “Hell, Trump doesn’t even know.”

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## **STUCK ON STUPID**

# **Stupid Losers Moan And Whine About Russian Conspiracy To Elect Trump: “The Madness Sweeping Official Washington And The Mainstream Media Is Pervaded By Breathtaking Hypocrisy”**

December 13, 2016 By Robert Parry, Consortiumnews. Investigative reporter Robert Parry broke many of the Iran-Contra stories for The Associated Press and Newsweek in the 1980s.

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As Democrats, the Obama administration and some neocon Republicans slide deeper into conspiracy theories about how Russia somehow handed the presidency to Donald

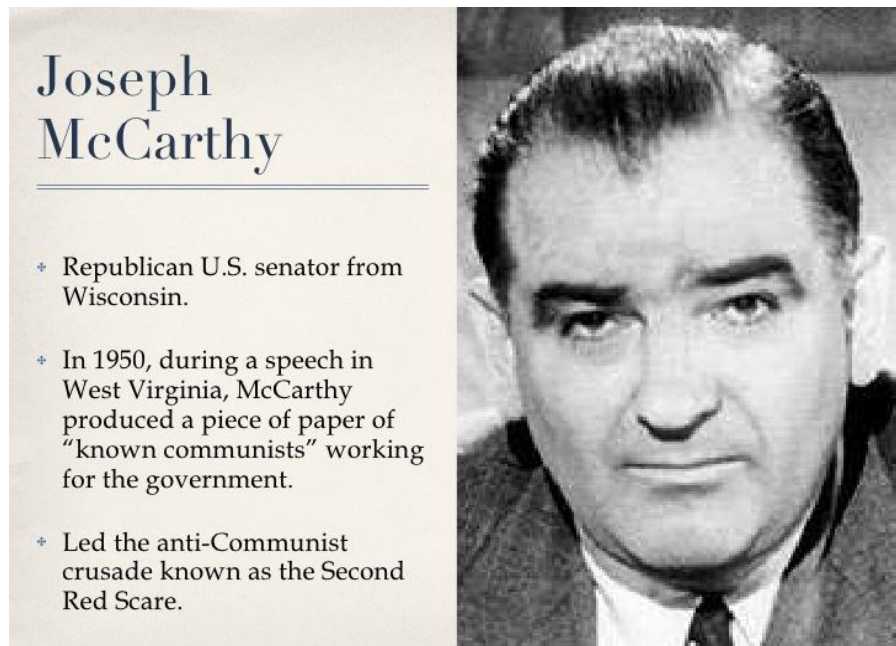
Trump, they are behaving as they accused Trump of planning to behave if he had lost, questioning the legitimacy of the electoral process and sowing doubts about American democracy.

The thinking then was that if Trump had lost, he would have cited suspicions of voter fraud – possibly claiming that illegal Mexican immigrants had snuck into the polls to tip the election to Hillary Clinton – and Trump was widely condemned for even discussing the possibility of challenging the election's outcome.

His refusal to commit to accepting the results was front-page news for days with leading editorialists declaring that his failure to announce that he would abide by the outcome disqualified him from the presidency.

But now the defeated Democrats and some anti-Trump neoconservatives in the Republican Party are jumping up and down about how Russia supposedly tainted the election by revealing information about the Democrats and the Clinton campaign.

Though there appears to be no hard evidence that the Russians did any such thing, the Obama administration's CIA has thrown its weight behind the suspicions, basing its conclusions on "circumstantial evidence," according to a report in The New York Times.



Been There, Done That

The Times reported: "The C.I.A.'s conclusion does not appear to be the product of specific new intelligence obtained since the election, several American officials, including some who had read the agency's briefing, said on Sunday. Rather, it was an analysis of what many believe is overwhelming circumstantial evidence — evidence that others feel does not support firm judgments — that the Russians put a thumb on the scale for Mr. Trump, and got their desired outcome."

**In other words, the CIA apparently lacks direct reporting from a source inside the Kremlin or an electronic intercept in which Russian President Vladimir Putin or**

**another senior official orders Russian operatives to tilt the U.S. election in favor of Trump.**

The absence of such hard evidence opens the door to what is called “confirmation bias” or analytical “group think” in which the CIA’s institutional animosity toward Russia and Trump could influence how analysts read otherwise innocent developments.

For instance, Russian news agencies RT or Sputnik reported critically at times about Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, a complaint that has been raised repeatedly in U.S. press accounts arguing that Russia interfered in the U.S. election.

But that charge assumes two things: that Clinton did not deserve critical coverage and that Americans – in any significant numbers – watch Russian networks.

Similarly, the yet-unproven charge that Russia organized the hacking of Democratic National Committee emails and the private email account of Clinton’s campaign chairman John Podesta assumes that the Russian government was responsible and that it then selectively leaked the material to WikiLeaks while withholding damaging information from hacked Republican accounts.

Here the suspicions also seem to extend far beyond what the CIA actually knows.

First, the Republican National Committee denies that its email accounts were hacked, and even if they were hacked, there’s no evidence that they contained any information that was particularly newsworthy. Nor is there any evidence that – if the GOP accounts were hacked – they were hacked by the same group that hacked the Democratic Party emails, i.e., that the two hacks were part of the same operation.

That suspicion assumes a tightly controlled operation at the highest levels of the Russian government, but the CIA – with its intensive electronic surveillance of the Russian government and human sources inside the Kremlin – appears to lack any evidence of such a top-down operation.

**Second, WikiLeaks editor Julian Assange directly denies that he received the Democratic leaked emails from the Russian government and one of his associates, former British Ambassador Craig Murray, told the U.K. Guardian that he knows who “leaked” the Democratic emails and that there never was a “hack,” i.e. an outside electronic penetration of an email account.**

**Murray said, “I’ve met the person who leaked them, and they are certainly not Russian and it’s an insider. It’s a leak, not a hack; the two are different things.”**

But even if Assange did get the data from the Russians, it’s important to remember that nothing in the material has been identified as false.

It all appears to be truthful and none of it represented an egregious violation of privacy with some salacious or sensational angle.

**The only reason the emails were newsworthy at all was that the documents revealed information that the DNC and the Clinton campaign were trying to keep secret from the American voters.**

For instance, some emails confirmed Sen. Bernie Sanders's suspicions that the DNC was improperly tilting the nomination race in favor of Clinton.

The DNC was lying when it denied having an institutional thumb on the scales for Clinton.

Thus, even if the Russians did uncover this evidence and did leak it to WikiLeaks, they would only have been informing the American people about the DNC's abuse of the democratic process, something Democratic voters in particular had a right to know.

### **“These Disclosures Are Clearly Not “Fake News” – The Other Hysteria Now Sweeping Official Washington”**

And, regarding Podesta's emails, their most important revelation related to the partial transcripts of Clinton's paid speeches to Wall Street banks, the contents of which Clinton had chosen to hide from the American people. So, again, if the Russians were involved in the leak, they would only have been giving to the voters information that Clinton should have released on her own.

**In other words, these disclosures are clearly not “fake news” – the other hysteria now sweeping Official Washington.**

In the mainstream news media, there has been a clumsy effort to conflate these parallel frenzies, the leak of “real news” and the invention of “fake news.”

But investigations of so-called “fake news” have revealed that these operations were run mostly by young entrepreneurs in places like Macedonia or Georgia who realized they could make advertising dollars by creating outlandish “click bait” stories that Trump partisans were particularly eager to read.

According to a New York Times investigation into one of the “fake news” sites, a college student in Tbilisi, Georgia, first tried to create a pro-Clinton “click bait” Web site but found that a pro-Trump operation was vastly more lucrative. This and other investigations did not trace the “fake news” sites back to Russia or any other government.

**So, what's perhaps most telling about the information that the CIA has accused Russia of sharing with the American people is that it was all “real news” about newsworthy topics.**

**So, how does giving the American people truthful and relevant information undermine American democracy, which is the claim that is reverberating throughout the mainstream media and across Official Washington?**

**Presumably, the thinking is that it would have been better for the American people to have been kept in the dark about these secret maneuverings by the DNC and the Clinton campaign and, by keeping the public ignorant, that would have ensured Clinton's election, the preferred outcome of the major U.S. news media.**

There's another double standard here.

For instance, when a hack of — or a leak from — a Panamanian law firm exposed the personal finances of thousands of clients, including political figures in Iceland, Ukraine, Russia and other nations, there was widespread applause across the Western media for this example of journalism at its best.

Regarding the “Panama Papers,” there was simply back-slapping for the organizations that invested time and money in analyzing the volumes of material. And there were cheers when implicated officials were punished or forced to step down.

So, why are some leaks “good” and others “bad”?

In both the “Panama Papers” case and the “Democratic Party leaks,” the material appeared to be real. There was no evidence of disinformation or “black propaganda.” But, apparently, it’s okay to disrupt the politics of Iceland, Ukraine, Russia and other countries, but it is called a potential “act of war” – by neocon Sen. John McCain, R-Arizona – to reveal evidence of wrongdoing or excessive secrecy on the part of the Democratic Party in the United States.

Russian President Putin, while denying any Russian government attempt to tilt the election to Trump, recently commented on the American hypocrisy about interfering in other nations’ elections while complaining about alleged interference in its own or those of its allies.

He described a conversation with an unnamed Western “colleague.”

Putin said, “I recently had a conversation with one of my colleagues. We touched upon our (Russian) alleged influence on some political processes abroad. I told him: ‘And what are you doing? You have been constantly interfering in our political life.’

And he replied: ‘It’s not us, it’s the NGOs’. I said: ‘Oh? But you pay them and write instructions for them.’ He said: ‘What kind of instructions?’ I said: ‘I have been reading them.’”

Whatever one thinks of Putin, he is not wrong in describing how various U.S.-funded NGOs, in the name of “democracy promotion,” seek to undermine governments that have ended up on Official Washington’s target list.

And another aspect of the hypocrisy permeating Official Washington’s belligerent rhetoric directed toward Russia:

Aren’t the Democrats doing exactly what they accused Trump of planning to do if he had lost the Nov. 8 election, i.e., question the legitimacy of the results and thus undermine the faith of the American people in their democratic system?

For days, Trump’s unwillingness to accept, presumptively, the results of the election earned him front-page denunciations from many of the same mainstream newspapers and TV networks that are now trumpeting the unproven claims by the CIA that the Russians somehow influenced the election’s outcome by presenting some Democratic hidden facts to the American people.

Yet, this anti-Russian accusation not only undermines the American people's faith in the election's outcome but also represents a reckless last-ditch gamble to block Trump's inauguration – or at least discredit him before he takes office – while using belligerent rhetoric that could push Russia and the United States closer to nuclear war.

Wouldn't it be a good idea for the CIA to at least have hard evidence before the spy agency precipitated such a crisis?

### **YOUR INVITATION:**

**Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2472 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025 or email [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.**

## **CLASS WAR REPORTS**

# **Striking Drivers Keep Busses On The Road: Passengers Get Free Rides “The Last Thing Our Drivers Want To Do Is Inconvenience The Public, So That's Why They Will Still Be Operating The Buses”**



Photo: Tom Lee/Fairfax NZ

December 14, 2016 by Phil Duncan, Redline

Tomorrow (Thursday) bus passengers in Hamilton [New Zealand], riding Pavlovich Coachlines, will be travelling for free.

Pavlovich currently operates the Orbiter and Huntly Connector lines as well as some school routes. The free rides come courtesy not of the company, but of thirty bus drivers who are taking industrial action against the employer not by withdrawing their labour but by simply not collecting any fares.

The drivers are members of FIRST Union. They have become frustrated with the company's intransigence in relation to the drivers' current pay claim and efforts to achieve secure conditions.

FIRST organiser Tony Stevens says, "Pavlovich has given up on good faith. He won't put through back pay for our members, he wants to add in 90-day trials, and he wants the drivers to agree to conditions that'll disadvantage future union members." He has also noted that the company won't offer "any meaningful bereavement leave".

The drivers, who have not received a pay rise in the last two years, are asking for just 39c an hour more from this very wealthy company.

This increase would bring their pay to just \$19 an hour. Current pay, says driver Mane Stanley, "doesn't pay the bills, it doesn't pay the rent, there's a lot of people out there who cannot afford to live."

She pointed out that at times she may be working a shift such as starting at 5.50am and ending at 7pm, ie 11.5 hours. These kinds of shifts can more than five hours in the seat without a break.

He continues, "we've decided to hit the wealthy company where it hurts – their wallet. The last thing our drivers want to do is inconvenience the public, so that's why they will still be operating the buses. The only difference is passengers will not be charged for the trip."

The union is urging members of the public to ride the buses on Thursday.

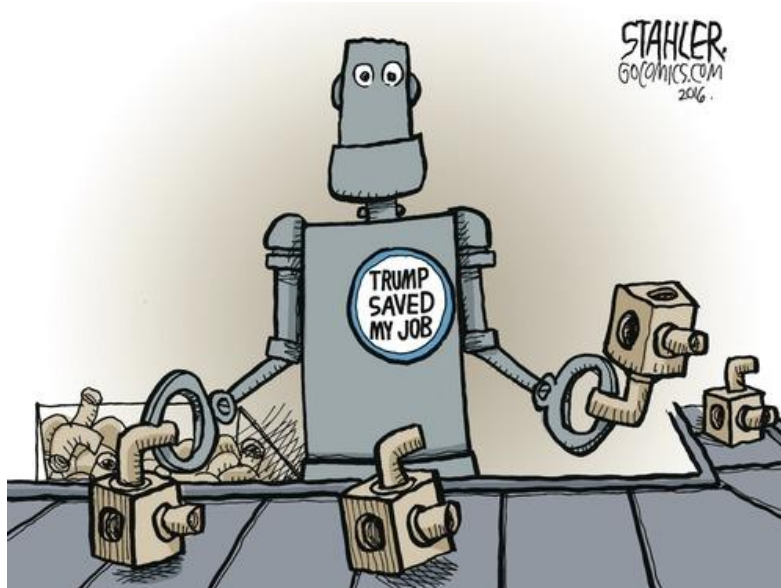
This is a great form of industrial action because it hits the boss in the pocket, which is where it hurts, while at the same time making it much easier to win public support. It also, in a modest way, points to an alternative for public transport – one based not on private profit but on providing the services people need for free.

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## DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



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## OCCUPATION PALESTINE

### **Zionist Soldiers Assault Elderly Palestinian Woman After Invading Her Home In Hebron**

December 12, 2016 IMEMC News

Many Israeli soldiers invaded, on Sunday at night, a Palestinian home in Shiokh town, northeast of Hebron, in the southern part of the occupied West Bank, and assaulted an elderly woman while violently searching and ransacking her home.

Journalist Ahmad Halayqa said several army vehicles invaded Shiokh, before the soldiers broke into the home of Hajj Ahmad Ali 'Ayayda, and violently searched and ransacked the property, causing excessive damage.

Halayqa added that the soldiers also used military dogs during the search, and repeatedly assaulted 'Ayayda's wife, especially in her chest, after she objected to their violent invasion and ransacking of her home.



The woman collapsed before Palestinian medics rushed to the property, and took her to a hospital in Hebron.

Doctors said they intend to keep her under observation for an additional day to conduct more checkups and X-rays.

On Sunday evening, the soldiers abducted three Palestinians in the al-'Eesawiyya town, in the center of occupied East Jerusalem, and Hizma town, north of the city, while navy ships attack Palestinian fishing boats in Gaza waters.

On Sunday at dawn, the soldiers abducted a former political prisoner, after invading his home in Beit Ummar town, north of Hebron, in the southern part of the occupied West Bank.

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# **How A Dictatorship Does Its Work: Occupation Regime Keeps Palestinian Circus Performer In Prison A Year, So Far, For No Apparent Reason: Jailed On Basis Of "Secret" Evidence, "Mohammed And His Lawyer Were Unable To Review The "Evidence", And Therefore Unable To Prepare A Defence" "Mohammad Was Denied The Right To Attend His Own Court Hearing"**

December 11, 2016 by Nasim Ahmed, The Middle East Monitor

The cruelty and injustice of Israel's policy of administrative detention has once again been highlighted by its treatment of Palestinian circus and school performer, Mohammed Abu Sakha.

Twenty-five-year-old Mohammed has been held by Israeli occupying forces (IOF) since December 2015.

According to Addamer, the legal aid organisation representing Mohammed, he was arrested while crossing Zaatara military checkpoint near Nablus on his way to work in Birzeit village near Ramallah.

The bus that Mohammed was riding was stopped by the IOF and the soldiers started checking the IDs of the passengers. After identifying Mohammed, they asked him to step outside the vehicle, while pointed their weapons at him, threatening to shoot him if he tried to move.

For reasons that have not been made public or disclosed to Mohammed, his lawyers or family, he was swiftly sentenced to administrative detention, which Israel uses to hold Palestinians in prison without charge or trial for renewable periods of six-months.

Following his arrest last year, the Israeli army told Al Jazeera that Mohammed was arrested “due to the danger he posed to the security of the region”, noting the case was based on “confidential information”.



Mohammed Abu Sakha

Last Monday, Mohammed’s case was due to be presented to the Israeli High Court for review, after numerous unsuccessful appeals to the Israeli military courts. The court had accepted the petition by his lawyer, and a hearing was held on 5 December at the Supreme Court in Jerusalem.

Mohammad Mohammed’s lawyer, however, decided to withdraw the petition after the judges were given the chance to review a file of secret “evidence” provided by the Israel Security Agency (ISA).

Mohammed and his lawyer were unable to review the “evidence”, and were therefore unable to prepare a defence. He will now need to wait until tomorrow when his second six month sentence ends, to see whether he will be released. Friends and family however fear he is unlikely to be released next week.

**The judges indicated to Mohammed's lawyer that they considered the material contained within the secret file to be sufficient in supporting the ISA's contention that Mohammed posed a "threat to the security of the state of Israel", despite there being no new material in the file since his arrest in December 2015.**

Mohammed's case once again raises moral and legal questions over Israel's practice of administrative detention. The routine manner in which Israel arbitrarily detains Palestinians like Mohammed is a violation of international law.

Like hundreds of others arbitrarily detained by Israel, Mohammad was denied the right to attend his own court hearing, a practice that is in clear violation of Article 14(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which stipulates:

"In the determination of any criminal charge and obligations in a suit at law, everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law."

**Furthermore, since his detention a year ago, neither he nor his lawyer were given the opportunity to review the "evidence" allegedly held against him, which is also a clear violation of article 9(2) of ICCPR.**

Israel is signatory to the covenant and has an obligation to ensure that individuals arrested by the state are informed at the time of arrest and the reasons for the arrest are promptly communicated and the charges explained.

Although Mohammed's case is unique in catching the attention of the media and human rights campaign groups, his situation is representative of a much larger issue.

There are currently 720 Palestinians being held in administrative detention, including three members from the Palestinian Legislative Council.

**The secret nature of this process is not only illegal; it is also a very painful for the victims and their family and friends. Individuals held under administrative detention encounter many restrictions to family visits, not least in obtaining permits from Israel which can take months.**

**Keeping victims and family members in the dark over reasons for their arrest is also a form of psychological torture. Mohammed's anguishing mother echoed the pain of many Palestinian families, "either charge him or release him" she said before exclaiming "and whilst he is in prison, I want to at least see my son.**

**"The last time I was allowed to visit him was in August and before that it was four months previously. Since August I have been denied the right to see him without explanation. His sister and brothers have never been allowed to visit and his father has been allowed to visit just once. At least, as a prisoner, respect his right to see his family."**

Mohammad's circus school also released a statement which was specifically directed at the European Union. Pointing to the bilateral agreement between the EU and Israel they said: "Israel's relationship with Europe and the States is based on respect for human

rights. The EU is clear on their position – there were EU representatives present at Abu Sakha’s high court hearing and they have released another statement yesterday on administrative detention which references Abu Sakha’s case.”



Mohammed Abu Sakha

The circus school protested against the EU’s weak response and called on the union to take firmer action: “If Israel is not respecting their agreement (by the ongoing illegal abuse of human rights), then why continue the relationship with them?”

We call on everyone to send emails, letters and make phone calls to Israel to demand that Abu Sakha is either given a fair trial or released immediately. We need hundreds of thousands of people to make this pressure.”

**In conclusion to their statement they said: “If you put anyone in prison it kills them. Imprisoned between four walls with nothing to do, it first kills you spiritually, then it kills your mind and then it kills your body. Especially when you don’t know why you are there or how long you will stay”.**

Mohammed’s friends are campaigning frantically for his release. Speaking to MEMO, Hannah Prytherch commented: “as a UK citizen, I am ashamed of our country. I am ashamed of our historic role in creating the situation in Palestine and ashamed of our ongoing refusal to denounce what the Israeli authorities are doing to the Palestinian people.

“Abu Sakha is a very special person and his ongoing illegal incarceration is a crime not just against him but against his family, his friends, his students and his community. As UK citizens, we are complicit in this crime and therefore as UK citizens, we are responsible to do something about it. If all UK citizens had the courage, humility and dedication to social justice that Abu Sakha has, the world would be a much better place.”

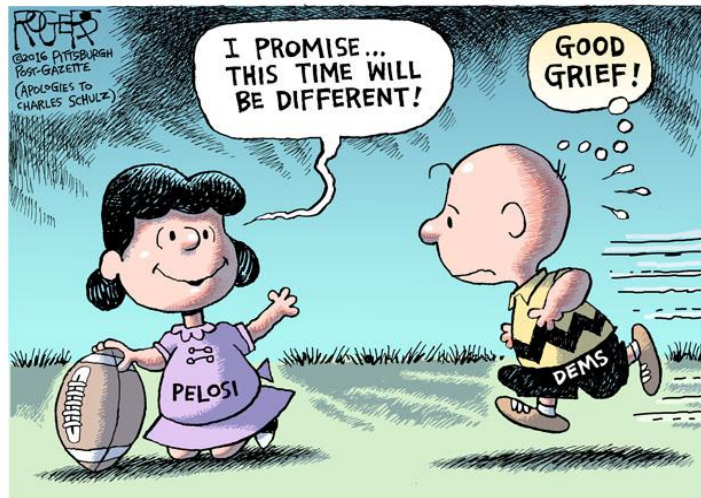
To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to:

<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."

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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