

Opinion / editorial

Part Two

September 2023 MIGOP's flagship event for decades, the Mackinac Leadership Conference, has been attacked mercilessly all summer with inuendo and outright lies, including an anonymous statewide email falsely announcing that it had been rescheduled and the location moved from Mackinac Island to a "campsite" off Route 21. The malicious posts, echoed in certain social media sites, had suggested that attendees who paid money might not be refunded in the event of cancellation, which was claimed to be highly likely to occur. These libelous attacks took a toll and resulted in significant cancellations, greatly undermining the event's chance of success. The Chair is vilified for a Mackinac failure that hasn't even happened yet. Then, against all odds, it goes forward and is, by all accounts, a resounding success for the Party. After all expenses are paid, the MIGOP Treasurer announces net proceeds of \$28,000 to the good.

October 2023. A turncoat from the Karamo team releases sensitive internal MIGOP communications from the Mackinac Conference planning team and, along with financials allegedly leaked by Karamo's Co-Chair, parlays them into a broad-based attack on the Karamo Administration. He enlists the services of his lawyer to write a hyperbolic 100-plus page report (composed mostly of exhibits, many immaterial to the allegations), which is released and promoted widely by mainstream media as a credible indictment of the Karamo Administration. Detroit, Lansing and even some national media oblige in assisting with the smear. Critics cry "where's the beef?" and claim the lurid allegations are a collection of disjoint non-sequiturs, unsupported by evidence and proving nothing of substance.

After the anti-Karamo author gives a presentation in Macomb County, it is debunked a week later at the same venue by Kristina Karamo and her Chief of Staff, who present a blistering point-by-point rebuttal. Nevertheless, allies in the Dem-RINO-media complex continue to publicize the report and the general public's support for Karamo begins to wane.

December 2023. The month begins with a State Committee Meeting scheduled to be held December 2nd at a predominantly black church in Redford (Wayne County), which Karamo had planned as an outreach to the black community and a springboard to her bold strategy of "engaging non-traditional demographics". Instead, it is sabotaged by "Deep State" elements (having no apparent fear of prosecution), who disrupt the meeting using anonymous emails warning participants of a purported threat of violent protests by "Palestinian terrorists". Later, real and unspeakably vicious death threats against the church, its pastor and his family are called in and within hours he cancels the meeting, the afternoon prior to its scheduled start. The Detroit media are notified of the cancellation before Karamo or her staff.

Anti-Karamo forces, as if on cue, offer an alternative venue a few hours later and, when Karamo chooses the safer, virtual meeting option, they proceed to undermine it, even urging attendees at their in-person rump gathering not to join her online meeting, successfully denying her quorum. Key votes affecting party business are derailed. The anti-Karamo forces then submit a request for a special meeting that will figure greatly in her ultimate removal from the Chair.

Just prior to this, the MIGOP General Counsel, at Karamo's direction, had filed a lawsuit seeking declaratory and injunctive relief in court to determine the real owner of the Party's headquarters building on Seymour Street in Lansing. At issue was why MIGOP and the State Committee held the debt to a line of credit, but a shadowy Trust, called Seymour Street, LLC, composed of former MIGOP Chairs, held the building and other assets. The Trust had filed DBAs claiming ownership of the name "Michigan Republican Party" and "Republican Party of Michigan". Did this divest MIGOP and the State Committee of the party name and ownership of assets, but not the debt? The lawsuit would later be scuttled as soon as Peter Hoekstra became Chair. But the questions raised by Karamo's General Counsel remain.

Also in December, the National Republican Campaign Committee (NRCC) sends a letter announcing a \$263K grant to MIGOP. Karamo's staff then allegedly receives a phone call directing MIGOP to send almost 90% of the grant to the campaign committee of a single Michigan candidate for US Representative. The rest of the funds could be retained by MIGOP. The caller refuses to put the directive in writing or email. After consultation with legal counsel and being advised of such action's illegality under FEC rules, (and appalled by the inherently unethical nature of the directive), Karama refuses to comply.

In November, a Royal Oak citizen's recount initiative of the November 8th, 2023, local election had uncovered almost 50 voters whose votes had not counted. They were not listed in the final, certified list of voters, yet they had returned absentee ballots in the mail, drop box or in person at the clerk's office. 18 of them even signed affidavits attesting to the fact that they had voted. The Board of Canvassers is notified, and an investigation requested well in advance of the December 15th recount. The Board includes two Republicans appointed by the Hoekstra-aligned Oakland County GOP Chair. They side with the Democrat canvassers and refuse to utilize their statutory authority and broad powers to investigate the credible allegations of voter disenfranchisement through error or possible fraud. Those investigative powers, critical to basic election integrity, will later be removed by the Democrat legislature, with no effective opposition from Hoekstra's MIGOP.

Despite the recount plaintiff's lawyer pleading for support from the Oakland County Party Chair, there is no cooperation from the two Republicans and no investigation ensues. The plaintiff sues the Board of Canvassers, demanding an investigation of the disenfranchised voters but the case is later thrown out by a district judge, even though, according to the plaintiff's lawyer, there is a glaring conflict of interest: the lawyer has an outstanding grievance filed against the same judge making the ruling.

January 2024 The request for a special meeting, announced by the anti-Karamo minority on the State Committee is riddled with errors and declared invalid by the State Committee's Policy and Rules Subcommittee. Nevertheless, Karamo agrees to hold a special meeting and complies with the bylaws in its scheduling. The anti-Karamo members announce their own special meeting, to take place January 6th, 2024, with the agenda to include a vote on removal of the party Chair.

This meeting takes place and utilizes a loophole in the State Committee Bylaws allowing non-members (proxies) to be brought in by district chairs and to count toward achieving quorum (i.e. a majority of members must be present for the meeting to proceed). Once the quorum is achieved, they then dismiss the non-members (who are barred from voting on removal), leaving only 45 out of 104 actual SC members to vote on removal of Chair Karamo. The vote is 40-5 for removal. Afterward, the Policy and Rules Subcommittee cites several fatal flaws of the January 6th meeting. Included is the failure to meet the bylaws' requirement that a quorum of *members* (as opposed to members *and proxies*) is needed for the Chair removal vote, which, owing to the gravity of the question, specifically calls for stricter voting rules.

Later, in the month, the then Karamo MIGOP's special meeting is chaired by Kristina Karamo on January 13th and achieves a valid quorum with 54 State Committee members and many proxies, all of whom brave a snowstorm to reach the Houghton Lake venue. There, the Committee members voted 59-1 to keep Kristina as Chair. They also voted to declare the January 6th meeting invalid and to remove certain members based on alleged disingenuous attempts to undermine Karamo's MIGOP. An audio taping that emerges of the Co-Chair who betrayed Karamo is revealing. She admits: "I know that I was used for Kristina to win and now I know that I'm used by other thugs to vote her out."

February 2024 Key members of the State Committee's anti-Karamo faction file suit against Kristina Karamo with the demand that she be removed as State Chair. The complaint is filed by the same lawyer that authored the hyperbolic, anti-Karamo report, who works for the same law firm that defended the former MIGOP Chairs' Michigan Republican Party Trust against the Karamo General Counsel's suit seeking declaratory judgment on the MIGOP headquarters building. This is also the law firm that defended a Michigan Governor in the Flint water crisis and the same law firm

representing Chinese Communist Party-controlled Gotion, Inc in its lawsuit against the citizens of Green Township, Michigan to build a battery factory in their community. And it is the same law firm that represented GBI Strategies in Southfield when they were raided by the state police investigating voter registration fraud in Muskegon, Michigan.

The Karamo defense team provides the court with audio secretly recorded by a State Committee member who says he perceived he was being bribed by the Karamo turncoat who commissioned the anti-Karamo report. The member alleges that after he refused what he took to be a bribe to get him to sign a petition to remove Karamo from the Chair, he was then threatened with political reprisals. The lawyer is also secretly taped speaking with the member and can be heard comparing Karamo to Hitler.

Soon, a new chair, Pete Hoekstra, is voted in by a sparsely attended anti-Karamo meeting in Lansing and he begins to assume the role of Chair.

Stay tuned for Part 3 coming soon.

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