



From The Wilderness

A Nonpartisan Non-sectarian MAP for the Here That Is, Into the Tomorrow of Our Own Making

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BY THE LIGHT OF A BURNING BRIDGE

A Permanent Goodbye to the United States

by

Michael C. Ruppert

“Sometimes you get your best light from a burning bridge” – Don Henley, “My Thanksgiving”



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From the Wilderness

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[\$2.8 to 4 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI) debt is sold by the U.S. everyday just to keep the federal government operating. How much debt do you take on just to keep your life functioning?

There are alternatives, but none that are simple or do the work for you. The re-localization of life on every level – from food to finances to “vacations” – is the only solution that is sustainable in any significant sense. To get to that point it is necessary to get out of debt. – MK]

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEBT

By Carolyn Baker, Ph.D.

Never before have political leaders urged such large-scale indebtedness on American consumers to rally the economy.

*Kevin Phillips, in *American Theocracy: The Peril and Politics Of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money In The Twenty-First Century**

*August 11th 2006, 2:03[PST] - **I**n a recent conversation with a friend, a married mother of three, she anxiously confided that although she has never been scared about money in her entire adult life, she now, in her mid-forties, finds herself feeling terrified. “Sometimes I wonder,” she said tentatively, “if it’s our own fault or if it’s the world we now live in. I’ve never worked harder in my life, but I’ve never found myself and my family falling so far behind financially.”*

Readers of *From The Wilderness* and the writings of Catherine Austin Fitts are no doubt hearing similar anguish issuing from the mouths of friends and family, and in all likelihood, thinking similar thoughts, but they know that the frightening quagmire of debt in which millions of Americans are entrenched is not predominantly about frivolous over-consumption or latte-induced destitution. Here are some very sobering statistics¹. My intention is not to bore you with them, but to offer a reality check:

- The credit card industry took in \$43 billion in fee income from late payments, over-limit, and balance transfer fees in 2004, up from \$39 billion in 2003. In 2005, however, credit card late fees alone totaled over \$11 billion.
- Total American consumer debt reached \$2.2 trillion in 2005.
- Total American household consumer debt averaged \$11,840 in 2005. As of July 15, the war in Iraq costs over \$2,600 per household in the United States² Taking into consideration the \$4 trillion “missing” from the U.S. Treasury as documented by Catherine Austin Fitts and others³ the average debt per household for missing money alone is \$14,000; therefore, including missing money, the Iraq War, and general consumer debt, the sum total of household debt is, in fact, over \$28,000.
- Average household credit card debt has increased 167% between 1990 and 2004.

(continued on page)

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August 16th 2006, 11:45 AM [PST] – CARACAS – **I**t was about a week before I left the United States forever that I watched [Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.](#) tell Charlie Rose something all of us already know in our hearts. “Today,” he said, “the United States is hated around the world far worse than it was at the height of the Vietnam War.” I remember the Vietnam War. I will never forget it.

I opposed that war, and I still remember riots on the UCLA campus in May, 1970 when four students were shot dead by National Guard troops at Kent State University in Ohio. I was a college student then, and I was 2S-deferred for the draft. A year later I would be re-classified 1A as the nation shifted to a lottery system. At least someone in my country was willing to risk his life in the face of injustice. It gave me hope. That kind of risk-taking was commonplace then, from the civil rights movement to the anti-war movement, to the American Indian Movement. American blood was shed regularly on American soil to resist American tyranny; from Watts, to Detroit, to Selma, to San Francisco to Memphis to Wounded Knee. It fertilized our lives and souls as it touched the ground. The willingness to endure physical suffering, material sacrifice, and jail for the sake of justice was a singular mark of the American character that earned respect as it infected the world.

What is the United States infecting the world with today? Now it seems the American people won't even risk their credit ratings, student loans, the next piece of ass, or a sideways glance from people who look at them like AIDS patients for daring to deviate from the corporate, media-instilled norm. We have come a long way backward. Rodney King's "Can't we all just get along" has become the modern day theme song for the surrender of America's character, and the L.A. Rebellion of 1992 was probably the last flame of will to fight injustice in American history.

This new quiescence comes at a time when US crimes are far worse and more far-reaching than they were in 1970; certainly in the eyes of the world. In 2001 the US government both facilitated and executed the attacks of 9/11 against its own people, killing thousands of its citizens as an excuse to launch a neo-imperial conquest for energy. A few Americans held small rallies, organized some ineffective groups, bought a few hundred thousand books and DVDs, listened to a few radio programs and lectures, and then quietly lined up to have their bags, emails, credit histories, minds and bodies searched. Critical mass was never achieved as Executive Orders along with the Patriot and Homeland Security Acts shredded the 1st, 4th, 5th, 6th and 8th Amendments to our Bill of Rights.

In my book [Crossing the Rubicon](#) I wrote that events that took place in the five years following those attacks would determine the course of human history for centuries to come. We now stand at the brink of that fateful anniversary.

After the 9-11 attacks the US government lied to create a war for oil in Iraq telling us that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction, almost-ready atom bombs, poison gas and deadly germs. We were told that he helped execute the 9/11 attacks. It was all lies, and no one has held the US accountable for the hun-

dreds of thousands of deaths (murders) in Iraq and Afghanistan since then. Few have tried to hold the government accountable for 2,500 Americans who have died needlessly, and those who have, have been remarkably ineffective.

US presidential elections were stolen in 2000 and 2004 through rigged electronic voting software and intimidation. Not one drop of blood was spilled anywhere, even as the US Supreme Court rendered an illegal decision supporting the overthrow of the Constitution and trampling the rights of individual states.

I never thought I would call the 60s and 70s “the good old days”. I would cry tears of joy today to see just one campus overrun by a modern equivalent of the Students for a Democratic Society. I would cheer to see a general strike paralyze a city. It would be living proof that American character had not been submerged, drugged, weakened, and rendered anemic beyond revival.

My country is dead. Its people have surrendered to tyranny, and in so doing, they have become tyranny's primary support group; its base constituency; its chief defender. Every day they offer their endorsement of tyranny by banking in its banks and spending their borrowed money with the corporations that run it. The great Neocon strategy of George H.W. Bush has triumphed. Convince the American people that they can't live without the “good things”, then sit back and watch as they endorse the progressively more outrageous crimes you commit as you throw them bones with ever-less meat on them. All the while, lock them into debt. Destroy the middle class, the only political base that need be feared. Make them accept, because of their own shared guilt, ever-more repressive police state measures. Do whatever you want.

No amount of mind control spin can absolve any of us from acknowledging this ugly truth about the US and its crimes today. It lurks invisibly behind every corporate news broadcast, every commercially-made television show, every infomercial, every new magazine ad, and almost every new popular song that leads Americans deeper into ever-less-satisfying consumption, self-indulgence and debt. It stands grinning behind every report on the world's rapacious financial markets and every new automobile, shampoo, or other product that promises to give the world larger and more potent sexual organs, bigger (more ridiculous) breasts, a better love life, and peace of mind.

I left my last classes that spring day in 1970 after four students had been murdered, crying from both the emotional pain and the tear gas that wafted up the Janns Steps and onto the Quad at UCLA. I went to my job as an intern at the Los Angeles Police Department. After donning my khaki uniform without gun or badge I returned to UCLA to work at LAPD's command post, ferrying dispatches and running errands for Deputy Chiefs, Commanders, and Captains as LAPD batons shed the blood of my fellow students. My life has always been full of ironies. Then, I believed that the system could be changed from the inside. Then, I believed that the United States could be changed from the inside.

Mistrusted by both sides there was no safe place for me to cry that day.

My shame today is that it took a set of circumstances where my life was in danger to make me make the right choice, a choice I would now like to say was totally a matter of conscience, but it was not. The truth is that I was prompted to do what I should have done long ago out of a well-justified desire to save my life. In this life I have chosen not to die a martyr's death. As I am learning every day, there are more difficult and demanding ways to write the final chapters of one's life. I left the United States with one large suitcase, my laptop, and a backpack. I left behind my precious library, most of my clothing, my personal possessions, my guns, and a house full of furniture. I brought with me less than eight thousand dollars in cash and gold to start the final segment of my life.

My permanent exodus from the US was actually ordained thirty years — to the month — before I left for good on July 18th, 2006. It was thirty years ago that my then-fiancée, a career contract agent for the CIA, disclosed to me that “her people” were interested in giving a major boost to my career with LAPD if I would become involved with her “anti-terror” operations that involved “overlooking” (i.e. protecting) large drug shipments coming in while facilitating the movement of large quantities of firearms going out. I refused to compromise my ethics as a police officer and — as I wrote on page 6 of *Crossing the Rubicon* — “that has determined the course of my life ever since.”

Like all humans I want to hold on to dreams for as long as possible, even long after I know they will never come true. I have tried and sacrificed with every fiber of my being to change my country, but the plain fact is that the United States of America cannot and will never be changed from within. I recall the words spoken to me by a senior FBI agent in Los Angeles in 1986: “Mike, the world doesn't want to be saved.”

Stupid me. I still believe it does — at least the parts of it that lie outside the US, Great Britain, and Israel; the real Axis of Evil.

Today the United States is the cause of ever-expanding wars (covert and overt), carnage, suffering, and political and economic exploitation — even within its own borders against its own people — that fill our corporate-issued headlines and TV shows. The US economy, the privately-owned Federal Reserve system, and the government which they operate like a franchise are the greatest enemies of the entire human race and especially the rapidly-deteriorating and fragile ecosystem which supports all life. U.S. citizens are slowly discovering that they are not immune because of their nationality. On our planet today, what happens to one must inevitably happen to all. Peak Oil and global warming will spare no nationality in the end.

The US economy, driven by a fiat currency, fractional reserve banking, debt-based financing — and “doped” with the billions of dollars of [drug profits](#) laundered through its corporations and banks — is a superheated pyramid scheme of infinite growth wherein 5% of the world's population consumes 25% of the world's energy and a totally disproportionate share of the world's diminishing resources and commodities.

In their silence and acquiescence Americans have voted — even if by abstention — to stand on the shoulders of all drowning peoples in the vain hope that they will somehow be saved from a

paradigm which they support and empower by obeying it; by endorsing it with their silence or knowingly impotent protests; by refusing to throw themselves against the gears of the machine. In this world, a protest which is allowed and encouraged, corralled into free-speech areas, and then policed by the ruling government only to be ignored by the media is, by definition, meaningless.

The US is a nation where the “non-negotiable” and unsustainable “American” way of life is propped up by global conflict, out-of-control military spending, massive and unsustainable debt, and an increasingly-aggressive fascist police state. It is a nation where all US citizens who do not resist and disconnect from this paradigm enjoy their ever-diminishing privileges with the guilty knowledge that somewhere else, hopefully in some “other” country, others are paying the price for it.

The world is now my country.

With the passage of time, the degree of corporate oppression, the outrageousness of the cruelty, and the absurdity of the lies can only increase as dwindling resources diminish and desperation erupts. Ironically, the disappearing American middle class will still cheer at each new millionaire success story, even if they quietly understand that a hundred or a thousand of their kind had to disappear to create it. They chase illusions of hope rather than the real possibility of justice and change like lottery players with a one-in-a-billion chance of winning. They prefer that to hard work and sacrifice with much better odds where almost everybody can win something.

As the human race enters the first stages of inevitable collapse resulting from Peak Oil, it does so ass-backwards, in complete denial, and in the one way most certain to guarantee the greatest amount of suffering and death for future generations. It does so because, for a time at least, U.S. foreign, military, and economic policy holds the steering wheel of human destiny through dollar hegemony, military force, technology and globalization. This control is inevitably weakening, and other hands in other countries are successfully struggling for an ever-increasing measure of influence. The Empire is dying from within, and like all wounded beasts, it is becoming more vicious and dangerous in the process; its lies more transparent.

A different world is possible. A better world is possible. It took the imminent threat of my own death at the hands of my government to make me fully admit to my innermost self what I have known for years. Having failed to change my country's direction after 30 years of effort, I had to stop living in the problem and start living in the solution. If I did not, my soul would have died just as surely as my body would have died after the recent burglary that savaged our offices.

I do not know where I will spend the rest of my days. Maybe in Venezuela, maybe in Mexico with the Zapatistas, maybe in Bolivia, maybe in France, Germany, or even Russia. But because Venezuela has become the singular world leader in resisting US domination under the courageous, intelligent, and inspired leadership of Hugo Chavez, I want to begin the rest of my days here. Being freer to speak, to learn, to experience and to witness real solutions being discovered and implemented by peoples willing to take risks and who understand the challenges, I will be better

able to report usefully to *FTW* readers and the world in future books and articles. I am currently in a country where the people have changed and are changing their government; where the elected head of state has won six elections while George W. Bush has stolen two. Is it any wonder I feel better already?

One thing is certain about fascism and that is that its behavior and evolution are remarkably predictable. Five years ago I helped bring into world consciousness a forgotten quote from Benito Mussolini wherein he said that, "Fascism ought to more properly be called corporatism since it is the merger of state and corporate power." Nothing better describes the state of the world today. The U.S. is a nation of the corporation, by the corporation, and for the corporation. As such it has placed something different from and opposed to the welfare of human beings on the compass as its "true North".

Fascism always becomes more vicious as it evolves. It never retreats, and as with drug addition, larger and larger doses of oppression and violence are always required to sustain its inevitable path towards self-destruction. As the great Cynthia McKinney said to me not long before her just-orchestrated ouster from the House of Representatives, "any fool can see it coming."

KRISTALNACHT

The [burglary](#) that took place at the new *FTW* offices in Ashland, Oregon on Sunday, June 25th of this year was the equivalent of my Kristalnacht, a replay of the night in 1938 when Nazi storm troopers, aided by an increasingly cowed and cowardly citizenry, raided synagogues all over Germany and smashed every piece of glass and every window they could find. German Jews not in denial who could (literally) read the writing on the walls (Juden Raus!) fled for their lives in the short time remaining before The Holocaust. Those who denied the meaning of that very specific warning remained in Germany, and their fate was sealed.

As a man who owns his own mind I can and do vehemently oppose the Israeli government and its policies and still have no ill will at all towards any Jew anywhere. Israel is a country. Judaism is a religion. All men and women are free to worship their God or Gods as they see fit, and in so doing, to bring knowledge of the unknowable and their truths to a human table that is increasingly deprived of compassion, love, justice, balance, and mercy. These will always remain the common threads in all true spirituality. Truly what is needed now is some spirit.

Those who *do* know history are not destined to repeat it.

DETAILS

As for the burglary itself, there will be another time and another place, when I can and will say more about what happened. Certain important events have yet to unfold, and I'm holding other key facts until the time is right. There are facts about the timing of the burglary that may eventually connect to events here in Venezuela. But for now, suffice it to say that it was the final outrage in almost three decades of attempts to silence my voice and the eight-year-old voice of *From The Wilderness*.

It is almost certain that the burglary was perpetrated, at minimum, based upon inside information provided by recently fired or resigned *FTW* staff members. There is – or was – only one

television program I cared about, HBO's *Deadwood*. It was common knowledge in *FTW*'s new offices that I was obsessed with the show, and on June 25th I was certain to be home watching one of the first episodes of the new season I had been anticipating for a year. As everyone knew, I worked late and had irregular hours every other day of the week. I may never find out if Al Swearingen got the best of George Hearst, but in retrospect, it's a small price to pay for my new freedom.

The burglary followed on the heels of my humiliation of the perpetrator of a feeble and stupidly executed sexual blackmail plot that began when a newly-hired staff writer (with a clean record and a Master's degree in English) began a torrid (and not very discrete) sexual affair with my long-term IT manager. The IT manager was, at the time, involved in a committed relationship with a woman in Los Angeles. The same female employee also made simultaneous direct sexual advances to my Operations Manager who is married. These included her showing naked photographs of herself to both men in our offices, something which they kept from me until later.

Eventually the sexual intrigue resulted in an altercation between the three which wound up on my doorstep late on a Sunday night in April. It seems no one involved in the altercation was capable of telling the whole truth. It was also clear that my IT manager – who was known for his appetites – had fallen hopelessly in the grasp of an attractive sexual smorgasbord that was fulfilling his every wish. This is what he said to people in phone conversations who later told me about them. He reportedly described her as a "sexual demon". He lied to his girlfriend. He lied to me when he told me that he had ended the relationship. Then he lied to his friend, the Operations Manager, about it. I could no longer trust him, and this was of enormous concern to me.

After all of the previous attempts to sink *FTW* over the years I was well-prepared when the same woman started making advances to me. How dumb did they think I was? I concealed a tape recorder in my office as she directed me, after regular office hours, to pornographic web sites and continually tried to tempt me with scanty outfits, G-strings and hints of sexual delights including descriptions of her private parts. She was doing all this at a time when she made 103 cell phone calls in one month to my IT Manager on a cell phone that *FTW* was paying for. I got the bills. Most of the calls were made during business hours. The second month's bill was just as bad when it arrived after she had been fired.

My IT Manager had been my most trusted employee and a close friend. I may never be able to forgive his betrayal even if the Siren's song had overwhelmed him. In previous years *FTW* computers had been sabotaged, our web site had been hacked, and several attempts had been made to financially sabotage our operations. Being fully aware that he was likely revealing our most sensitive proprietary information, including account access codes, I had but two choices.

I could fire the young woman. But if I did so she would be angry outside the company and still have the IT Manager as helpless as Ulysses' crew in her vindictive grasp. Or, I could keep her close, play along with her games, prepare myself against the blackmail I knew would come, and try to find out what kind of damage she

was intent on doing and head it off. When she could not compromise me sexually, she turned the IT Manager against me, and he gave sudden notice. That was damaging enough. His last day of work was to be June 1st. I decided immediately that that would be her last day of work too, and so it was.

As June 1 approached I baited her with actions I knew would force her to show her hand. She did on May 29th and that's when I let it be known how I had protected myself. She immediately went – no doubt with the guidance of our IT Manager – to a ridiculous pseudo-journalist who has been hounding *FTW* and other 9-11 activists for years. In a previous sabotage attempt in 2005 this same pseudo-journalist had been directly connected to the FBI by a tape recording.

Her allegations of sexual harassment against me fell flat on their faces, and she was publicly humiliated. She had also been showing highly erratic emotional behavior consistent with drug use in her last two weeks of work. On the day she was terminated she and the IT manager frantically rushed to erase large quantities of data from her office computer. This was witnessed by the entire office staff. Fortunately for us, the erasures were only made with one-pass deletions, and most of what they were trying to hide remains recoverable.

This was on my mind when I came into the office at 7:30 AM on June 26th and saw all seven of our computers dismantled and smashed in a vacant portion of our building. As luck would have it, the right hard drives were not damaged beyond recovery. But other facts started to indicate government involvement. As soon as I discovered the burglary I ran next door to the offices of the US Forest Service which shares the same building (rented from a California property management company). A female Ranger who was raising the flag out front seemed unusually nervous even before I got to her. I asked if they had surveillance cameras covering the front of the building and our only parking lot. Reacting as though I was scaring her to death, she hastily replied, "No". I couldn't help but feel she already knew about the burglary.

If I didn't know that there were no surveillance cameras on a government building then how could the burglars have been so confident? The street our offices are on is a long "no outlet" street, and the only place to park late at night is directly in front of *FTW's* front door. My next step was to look for any one of the three small and run-down motor homes belonging to poor people who always parked right in front of our offices at night. It was a rent-free place for them to sleep, and it had a great view. Maybe they had seen something. All three were gone. One of them had been parking diagonally across the street every day since the day we moved in, and I had (correctly, I believe) pegged that one as government surveillance.

These witnesses would have been invaluable because they would have seen whoever came to the office in the quiet business park that was always abandoned after sunset. After I left the states, allegations were floated that I had smashed my computers myself. But who could have missed my Blue and Gold, 1996 Ford Bronco? It stands out like a sore thumb. And I could hardly have walked a block or two with a sledge hammer over my shoulder without risking being noticed.

There are between eight and twelve screws that need to be removed to take the cover off of each of our computers. There were seven computers, and every one had their covers removed before being smashed. This was not a one-man job. Someone with computer savvy was involved. Four interior doors were also smashed with multiple sledge hammer blows. I estimated between three and five blows per door. Each computer had been disconnected from its monitor and peripherals. That was three to six connections per computer. This feat would have taken one person hours, and it would have been physically exhausting.

All the evidence showed that one person was waiting to dismantle each computer as it was brought into the vacant office (where there was plenty of room to swing the hammers) by another person who was doing the disconnecting, while a third person went ahead with the sledgehammer to open the doors to which the fired female employee never had the keys, from which to make copies before she was fired. I suspect that a minimum of two sledge hammers were used.

One door to a storage area which held no computers at all was needlessly smashed. That was wasted time and effort. Likely one or more of the burglars didn't know where the computers were.

Or maybe they just had a little too much crystal meth in their system and needed to burn off some energy.

There was, however, one other way that the burglars could have gained entry to the interior of the building. That is through a back door which is accessible only through a high-security parking lot controlled by the Forest Service which covers the entire back side of the building. No one else can get to the back doors. The burglars could have been waiting inside the Forest Service offices for me to leave. This would have left no telltale cars out front and would have provided an easy, secure escape route in the event that I or a police car pulled up out front unexpectedly. No one would ever have been seen entering via the front door, the only way *FTW* employees could get in.

About a week after the burglary I noticed the Ashland Police Department towing away one of the mobile squatters. The one mobile home that had been there every night up until the burglary has never been seen again. The third just vanished the night of the burglary.

Also, about a week after the burglary, my Operations Manager, who we have since discovered was apparently in the process of destroying our paper financial records, disclosed that the fired female employee was a multi-year close friend of a convicted methamphetamine manufacturer and dealer who had served five years in prison. That was the last straw, and it was then I started realizing that it was time to go.

Convicted drug dealers are usually on parole. They have little or no rights and can be violated and sent back to prison at any time. Whether it's federal or state parole, they'll do anything the government wants them to in order to curry favor, including the commission of crimes "under color of authority". The COINTELPRO records of the FBI from the 60s and 70s against civil rights and anti-war activists; against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement; show clearly how these con-

victed felons were used as ideal plausibly deniable weapons of infiltration and mass destruction by the US government against enemies of the state.

THE END OF HISTORY

In 2001 a high school classmate who had served in the US Army and worked for the National Security Agency, led *FTW* into a financial trap promising a major investment to re-publish suppressed books documenting US government corruption. After *FTW* had invested thousands of dollars in layout and committed to spending more for printing, the investor disappeared leaving us with a huge loss.

In 2001 and 2002 a series of previously-unknown computer viruses completely destroyed our office computers. In 2003 an outside storage area of the building where our offices were, was burglarized.

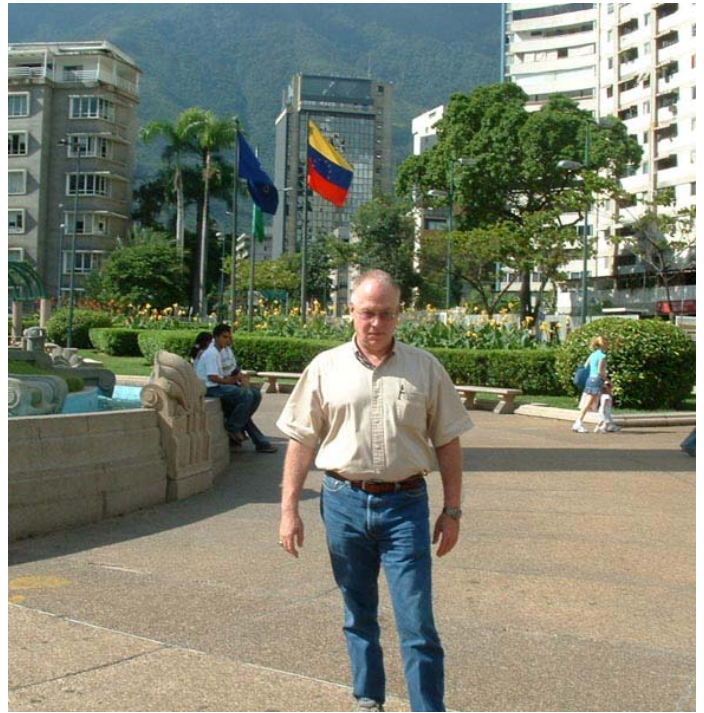
In late 2003 our then General Manager, Michael Leon, suddenly abandoned his job and fled to New Zealand. That nearly put us out of business. We have since learned that he was, at minimum, a key material witness in a huge federal Ponzi scheme prosecution, *US v. Osaki*. (I had absolutely no connection to the case). In 2005 information surfaced in federal court that he had provided the FBI with information, and I have — based on other information — concluded that he was an active FBI informant while working for *FTW*.

Throughout 2004 and 2005 a series of successive employees (one of whom was a retired FBI agent presenting herself as a victimized whistleblower) engaged in ruthless sabotage which came closer to sinking us than anything ever had. Other links to the FBI were [well-documented](#). *FTW* struggled for survival, and I successfully fought back, ultimately winning a case in Small Claims Court wherein I proved deliberate sabotage and won a small judgment. That nine-month effort ended just two months before we moved to Oregon.

Then came the events I just described in Ashland. To the end of my days I will never forget the indescribable beauty of the Rogue Valley in the brief time I was allowed to live there. I will always remember the wonderful, spiritual and courageous friends who came to our aid in time of need and who still remain close friends and supporters of *FTW*.

But at 55, as I looked at the smashed computers and realized that I had humiliated the government one too many times, I understood two things. I was too old to go on fighting these increasingly ugly and dangerous battles. And there was nothing left in the United States worth fighting for. The next battle would surely mean death for me. Additionally, according to their own figures, and after an independent review by a Los Angeles area law firm specializing in royalty rights, *Rubicon's* publisher, New Society, appears to have defrauded me out of between \$38,000 and \$58,000 dollars of royalties.

I made my decision on July 1st. It really wasn't difficult.



A NEW BEGINNING

Since my departure Carolyn Baker, Michael Kane, Stan Goff, Jamey Hecht and the remaining *FTW* office staff consisting of Brendan, Spencer and Luke have been performing heroically. A brave and honorable Ashland attorney has valiantly stepped in with complete power of attorney over my affairs. My agent and publicist Ken Levine has been steadfast and true. It was he who helped to get me out of the country in secret. In the coming weeks some of these wonderful people will provide our subscribers with their accounts of my last days in the US. There were many poignant moments in the way we put together and executed a plan to get me out of the country in just 18 days, even as I noticed renewed and ominous surveillance around the office.

To all those who will assert – and I'm sure they will – that all of these things happened because I'm some kind of deranged maniac who pisses everyone off, I ask how I could possibly have earned and retained the loyalty of these wonderful people and all of our subscribers for all these years.

FTW is going to be bigger and better. I will continue to write and offer editorial guidance, but my days of running the business are over. Carolyn Baker, Mike Kane and Stan Goff are giants in their own rights, and they need room to blossom and carry on the *FTW* tradition with their own unique styles and personalities. Since leaving the US I have been offering occasional editorial guidance, but I have come to realize that *FTW's* writers need very little of this. They have the map and are reading it well.

Listen to them.

FTW needs your help now. We need donations. We need sales. Very soon we will have a new DVD which will show you my last two public appearances ever in the United States. It will be my farewell message to all of you even as I say hello in a new form. After FTW's current, considerable expenses and staff are paid, some of that badly-needed money will find its way to me in Venezuela where I sorely need it.

I have said time and again that the only thing that matters to me is effecting real change in the political landscape. Revolution is not a dinner party. The economy and government of the United States of America are my enemies and the enemies of the entire human race and even of the American people themselves. They must be weakened, defeated and replaced by something which places the welfare of human beings ahead of profits and share value.

With these words I have committed a crime in the eyes of US law. There is no turning back. The bridge is burned. But I will reply with the words of the Declaration of Independence which state:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness, -- That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, -- That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of those ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it,...

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations... evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, their duty, to throw off such Government.

In 1776 there was no concept of any limitation in terms of resources, space or possibilities. We live in a fundamentally different era today, and so therefore, I would add to these truths the following:

We must also recognize that Happiness cannot be defined solely within the mind and the will of individuals alone, without regard to the availability of the same potential for all mankind and all life placed here by the Creator. One human being, or group of human beings, cannot possess a disproportionate share, deprive others, and justly call this Happiness. True Happiness and Peace result from harmony between peoples, the planet and all life forms without which no life is possible. These can only be achieved in a world where men and women in all places realize the need for Balance, Equity, Harmony and Justice and that only these will ensure equal and fair Rights for subsequent generations and the sustainability of the planet itself.

In many lectures I have uttered another one of my trademarked lines: The human race is now being presented by a dispassionate universe with one test; either evolve or perish. I, for one, have chosen to evolve.

Now that I am in the world and not a "country", my prayer is that my future adventures for as long as I live will connect me with other world-changers so that we can support and empower each

other and all peoples. I am already finding out that there are more people who clearly see these challenges than I ever suspected.

But I am also under no illusions about the increased danger this will bring. Even though life is very difficult now as I live on the cheap and struggle to become halfway fluent in Spanish, I wake up each morning with something I haven't felt in a long time – hope, real hope.

I promise to send some home.

****The opinions expressed here are not necessarily or entirely those of *From The Wilderness* as a corporation.****

(continued from page 2...)

- The average American had over seven payment cards in their wallet including credit card, retail store cards, and bank debit cards in 2004.
- The average interest rate paid on credit cards was approximately 14.54% in 2005.
- The rate of personal savings in the U.S. has dipped below 0% for the first time since the Great Depression, hitting negative .5% in 2005.
- 45% of American cardholders were only making minimum payments in 2004, up from 42% who did so in 2003.
- **A typical credit card purchase is 12-18% more than if cash was used (as of 2004).**
- 2.39 million U.S. households filed for bankruptcy in 2005, a 12% increase over 2004.
- 30 million Americans (40% of homeowners) refinanced their mortgages during the 3 years (prior to Q3 2005), with over half applying the proceeds to eliminate credit card debt.
- **Seven out of ten low and middle-income households, reported using their credit cards as a financial safety net, i.e., to pay for car repairs, rent or housing repairs and medical expenses, rather than relying on savings in 2005.**
- According to a national survey, the most significant predictor of financial stress is if households rely on using credit cards to cover non-discretionary living expenses like rent, groceries, and medical expenses.
- In 2004, the average college student graduated with \$16,500 in student loans, up 74% since 1997. (While this figure is an average, an incredible number of graduates leave college with more than a year's salary in debt.)
- In 2004, 65% of teens failed a financial literacy test according to Jump\$tart Coalition.
- In 2004, the average debt for Americans 65 and older was \$4,000, up 89% in the past decade.
- In 2004, the average personal wealth of a 50 year-old American was less than \$40,000 including home equity.
- In 2004, most credit card debt of older Americans was driven by healthcare expenses and the increased cost of prescription medication.

So much for the self-flagellating mantra, "I must be doing something wrong."

Kevin Phillips notes in *American Theocracy* that debt has literally become an *industry* which he calls, “the debt and credit-industrial complex.” Second only to the weapons industry in profitability, the debt industry has replaced America’s manufacturing base. Today, Phillips tells us, 44% of all corporate profits come from the financial sector, whereas only 10% come from the manufacturing sector. (Pages 280-288)

I am not an economist, nor does my knowledge of finance even begin to approach that of Catherine Austin Fitts, so I refuse to venture into the territory of connecting personal debt with national debt, deficits, Treasury Bills, or a variety of other related topics. My focus in this article is on personal debt—how *FTW* readers can avoid it, and what they can do about it if they are in it. Understanding how and why personal debt ravages American families in unprecedented proportions is extremely useful in extricating oneself from one of the most toxic effects of the debt-shell game, namely, assuming that if one did all the right things and played impeccably by the rules, one would not be in debt. Studying the Solari website is extremely useful in connecting the dots between the macro economic domain mentioned above and the micro stratosphere of one’s own personal finances.

Just this week, the *Houston Chronicle* reported that Americans increased their borrowing in June of this year at a much faster pace than expected, with the rise led by credit card debt.⁴ The June increase rate of \$10.27 billion obviously surpassed the \$3.7 billion increase economists had been expecting. **And note that the June increase pushed total consumer credit to a record annual rate of \$2.2 trillion.**

Also this week, the *New York Times* reported that gains in income are being offset by rises in property taxes nationwide, leading New Jersey Governor, Jon Corzine to comment: “It is all too clear to everyone: The property tax burden is simply overwhelming our citizens and their economic well-being.”⁵ Here it is difficult to avoid the macro economic connection since part of the reason property taxes are soaring is that the federal government has been bankrupted as a result of becoming a criminal enterprise⁶, passing the burden of financing public services and infrastructure on to the states and local communities—a scam otherwise known as Tapeworm Economics and the privatization of what are clearly obligations to “promote the general welfare” as mandated by the U.S. Constitution.⁷

During the past two years, we have seen books and interviews from Elizabeth Warren, a Harvard Law Professor, most notably *The Two-Income Trap: Why Middle-Class Parents Are Going Broke*. Throughout her work, Warren clarifies that the economic rules for families, money, and risk have been and are daily being re-written by “powerful corporate interests who see middle class families as the spoils of political influence.”⁸ While Warren takes on the myth of mindless over-consumption by American families as portrayed in the documentary, “Affluenza,” she appears clueless about Tapeworm Economics and tends to fault inflation alone without asking the tougher, disturbing questions. Nevertheless, her work has been validating to a number of agonizing middle-class families such as the friends with whom I began this article.

The four issues Warren does target as the most cruel family budget taskmasters are: Mortgage payments, childcare, car payments, and, if they are fortunate to have it, health insurance. Between these four obligations, most middle-class, working families have very little left for paying utilities and buying food.

“Today’s family has no margin of error; there’s no leeway to cut back if one earner’s hours are cut or if the other gets sick....The modern American family is walking a high wire without a net.”⁹

Most consumers prefer not to have credit card debt, but Warren reminds us of the all-too-familiar reality that :

*For those who can stay out of debt, the rules of lending may not matter. But the economic pressures on the middle class—stagnant wages, the need to pull down two salaries to support a family, and the rising costs of the basic expenses—are causing more families to turn to credit just to make ends meet. When something goes wrong—a job loss, an illness or accident, or a family break-up—the only place to turn is credit cards and mortgage refinancing. At that moment, the change in lending rules matters. The family that might manage \$2,000 of debt at 9%, discovers that it cannot stay afloat when interest rates skyrocket to 29%. And the family that refinanced the home mortgage into a larger loan may be staring at foreclosure. Job losses or medical debts can put any family in a hole, but a credit industry that has rewritten the rules can keep that family from ever climbing back.*¹⁰

Working class neighborhoods and strip malls are now replete with the only other alternative to credit card usage and home refinancing: payday loan offices that lend instant cash at exorbitant rates of interest—interest which may become many times the amount of the principal by the time the borrower is able to pay off the loan.

Tragically, where all of this leads in far too many cases is what was, before October, 2005, the ultimate escape hatch: Bankruptcy. Warren has written extensively on the bankruptcy issue, her legal specialties being bankruptcy and contract law, and she repeatedly underscores the reality that an overwhelming majority of bankruptcies are caused by health emergencies among families and individuals who have no health insurance.¹¹ One month before The Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005¹² went into effect, Warren assessed the law as a moral judgment written by the credit card companies and the banking industry and supported by millions in campaign contributions to legislators who voted for the law. “It reinforced,” says Warren, the stereotype of “irresponsible people consumed by appetites for goods they don’t need, who think little of cost, and who would rather file for bankruptcy than repay their lawful debts.”

Qui bono? Who benefits? Not only the captains of the finance industry, but those who profit handsomely from health emergencies among the un-insured. In 2004 testimony before the House Commerce and Energy subcommittee, financial experts told legislators that, “Hospitals routinely charge uninsured people up to four times more than patients with coverage.”¹³ Furthermore, “medical problems contribute to about half of all bankruptcies” in the U.S.¹⁴

But what does the new bankruptcy law actually say? How specifically, does it close and seal an escape hatch for individuals and families suffocating in debt?

Some of the most brutal and egregious provisions are:¹⁵

- Bankruptcy filers must attend credit counseling at their own expense. This has given rise to a new industry of highly-profitable, predatory credit counseling services who promise to virtually erase one's debts, as if by magic.
- Under the new laws, in many instances, debtors are restricted to monthly living allowances mandated by the IRS, regardless of individual circumstances upon the same quasi-criminal standards used to prosecute unpaid taxes.

Under the new laws, in some cases, debtors are required to live under court supervision with all disposable income applied to the full payment of all debts for a period of five years or until paid in full.

While bankruptcy laws vary in how they affect debtors, depending on whether one files for Chapter 7 bankruptcy or Chapter 13,¹⁶ the 2005 laws severely limit one's financial freedom and makes declaring bankruptcy a daunting option. While The National Association of Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys offer sound advice¹⁷ for debtors filing for bankruptcy, individuals and families drowning in debt should consider every other viable option first before declaring bankruptcy. At the October, 2005 Petrocollapse Conference in New York City, Mike Ruppert enumerated the government's responses to Peak Oil which protect the financial elites and major corporations:¹⁸

1. Rationing

2. *More Coal and Nuclear – Emphasis on Fisher-Tropsch Coal-to-Liquids Conversion.*

3. *Suspended Environmental and Drilling Restrictions*

4. *Protection of Critical Infrastructure*

5. *Strengthening and Reinforcing Domestic Military Operations – Suspension of Posse Comitatus*

6. *Suspension and Relaxation of Labor and Minimum Wage Laws.*

7. *Changing and Tightening the Bankruptcy Laws, Allowing Fewer Distressed Consumers to Discharge Debts.*¹⁹

8. *Allowing and Facilitating Population Reduction through Famine and Disease.*

9. *Strengthening and Giving More Power to FEMA.*

10. *Destroying Demand Through Economic Collapse and Allocating Scarce Resources – by Force if Necessary – to Protect the Interests of the Wealthiest Communities and Interests in the Country.*

For a holistic view of how personal debt in the U.S. connects with the macroeconomics of missing money, black budgets, sto-

len pensions, and the broader landscape of Tapeworm Economics, studying Catherine Austin Fitts' articles at her website is crucial. Fitts notes that a significant portion of debt in America has been fraudulently induced. In other words:

If I lend someone money when I know something that may negatively impact their ability to repay the loan and I fail to disclose that information to them, I may be engaging in "fraudulent inducement." If that is the case, it is possible that the borrower does not owe me some or all of the money back. In the 1990's the large financial institutions and the housing leadership of the federal government knew that a significant number of jobs were going to be moved abroad and that, as a result, the income of many Americans could be expected to plateau or fall. Despite this knowledge, public and private policies were adopted to encourage millions of Americans to borrow significantly more debt -- on houses, on cars, on consumer credit and on student loans -- than they could be expected to pay back. I believe there is a compelling case to be made that much of this debt -- including a significant number of mortgages and student loans issued from 1996 on -- was fraudulently induced.

*Further, US securities impose disclosure standards in the marketing of securities in US capital markets. One of these standards is that the issuer is not allowed to omit material information. The failure to disclose such information is a "material omission." As with the fraudulent inducement standard, it can be argued that leading US financial institutions who sold mortgage-backed and asset-backed securities during this period were guilty of material omission when they failed to disclose the likelihood that many borrowers to might not be able to meet debt service obligations given plans underway and known to the board and senior management of these institutions to move significant jobs abroad.*²⁰

Certainly Fitts is not suggesting debtors claim "fraudulent inducement" as a realistic option for crawling out from the rubble of personal debt. Her point is that the federal government and centralized financial systems, operating as criminal enterprises, have set the American middle class up for abject financial disaster--another reason not to buy into the psychological trap of self-blame. Fitts has also provided us in her famous article, "Coming Clean"²¹, specific tools for avoiding the kind of financial train wreck with which millions of American families are currently attempting to cope.

As the price of hydrocarbon energy, food, asphalt, taxes, healthcare, a falling dollar, unemployment, and a tanking housing market increasingly squeeze the human race in the vice of Peak Oil's ramifications, avoidance of credit card usage is imperative. I haven't had one for years and have survived quite well. In fact, the other day, when I paid for a purchase with little green pieces of paper with pictures of dead presidents on them, a store clerk remarked, "We don't see much of those anymore." I can only wonder what her employer will tell her when some of us show up with silver and gold coins to pay for our purchases because all other forms of payment have become null and void.

¹ <http://www.creditcards.com/statistics/statistics.php>

² <http://www.zmag.org/sustainers/content/2006-07/15schechter.cfm>

³ http://www.solari.com/learn/articles_missingmoney.htm

- ⁴ <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/business/4100515.html>
- ⁵ <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/07/nyregion/07taxes.html?ex=1312603200&en=12972eff05da89ce&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>
- ⁶ http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/ww3/061206_godfather_government.shtml
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- ⁸ <http://privatizationofrisk.ssrc.org/Warren/>
- ⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹ http://www.law.harvard.edu/news/2005/09/22_warren.php
- ¹² <http://bankruptcy.findlaw.com/new-bankruptcy-law/>
- ¹³ <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/5290172/>
- ¹⁴ <http://content.healthaffairs.org/cgi/content/full/hlthaff.w5.63/DC1>
- ¹⁵ 4 Researched by Oakland Community College, Oakland, Michigan:
- ¹⁶ <http://72.14.203.104/search?q=cache:Edb0ldA2ERcJ:www.oaklandcc.edu/buslaw/handouts/bl2/Bankruptcy.pdf+Summary+of+2005+Bankruptcy+Law&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=37>
- ¹⁷ <https://www.nacba.org/tips.php>
- ¹⁸ http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/ww3/100405_petrocollapse_speech.shtml
- ¹⁹ <http://bankruptcy.findlaw.com/new-bankruptcy-law/>
- ²⁰ Personal email from Catherine Austin Fitts, August, 2006.
- ²¹ <http://www.solari.com/campaign/index.htm>

[The most succinct, well-documented analysis of the current terror frenzy you will see anywhere is this one presented by Michael Kane. It is one more piece of reporting that underscores that readers of FTW find at our site what they cannot find elsewhere.—CB]

OPERATION “SLOW BURN?”

U.K. Terror Conveniently Forces Demand Destruction

Cusp of Liquid Fuel Crisis Social Engineering? Politics as Usual

by
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August 15th 2006, 2:40 PM[PST] – Demand destruction has been discussed in both financial and elite circles for quite some time, especially as it pertains to the consumption of hydrocarbons. Jet fuel makes up 10% of total oil consumption, or 12% of total liquid fuel consumption.¹ North America and Western Europe consume more jet fuel than any other regions on the

planet, totaling 112.5 million gallons per day as of 1998.² That number is certainly higher today.³

The recent arrests of suspects said to be conspiring to blow up planes headed from Britain to America occurred at a very convenient time in light of current events. As the world stands on the brink of an unprecedented energy crisis, the question is whether there is going to be a fast collapse or a slow burn. Elites can attempt to avoid a fast collapse by manipulating the public’s perception of reality in order to modify our behavior. As FTW’s Carolyn Baker recently wrote:

If the empire will not tell the truth about Peak Oil, then it has only two options: 1) Create wars to take the resources it needs, and/or 2) Create demand destruction.

The arrests in the U.K. caused hundreds of flights to be cancelled or delayed. The ramifications will last for months, if not years. This terror-scare will likely be seen as a hallmark moment in the decline of the airline industry. Following on the heels of the U.K. scare, an Alaskan Airline plane was evacuated in Los Angeles after a “suspicious item” was found on board. So why would a plan to bring on demand destruction be implemented now? Let’s look at our current energy reality.

Cusp of Liquid Fuel Crisis

The two largest oil fields on the planet – Ghawar in Saudi Arabia and Cantarell in Mexico – are both reportedly at the brink of crisis in supply.⁴ Saudi Arabia and Venezuela have just cut their oil production.⁵ This is a wise move, especially when considering that oil is destined to be more valuable tomorrow than it is today, which is precisely the argument Congressman Roscoe Bartlett makes as to why the U.S. should not squander the oil reserves in Alaska.

Meanwhile, the Prudhoe Bay pipeline under British Petroleum’s control has dropped from 400,000 to 150,000 barrels of oil per day due to corrosion in need of repair. BP originally announced plans to completely shutdown the pipeline, but after Congressional members complained that this was an attempt to manipulate the oil market, the company changed its tune. Now they say they can get production up to 200,000 barrels per day after completing maintenance planned before the recent leak.⁶

All we need now is a hurricane to ravage the Gulf for a supply shock.

We are now living in the last days of cheap, abundant oil. Global elites are well aware of this reality. BP didn’t invest heavily in fixing the pipeline at Prudhoe Bay because the field’s production had been declining (peaked) since 1989; workers had complained about this back in 2002.⁷ Why fix a pipeline if there won’t be enough oil to justify the expense? Instead, keep up on maintenance only as necessary and once corrosion runs rampant, replace those sections with smaller piping because that’s how the money works.

It seems that is what BP is now doing.

As pointed out at www.cryptogon.com the Prudhoe Bay pipeline is 34-inches in diameter, but BP plans to replace corroded sections with 18-inch pipe, as reported by the AP.⁸ It would seem this will limit the pipeline to operate at around half the current capacity – precisely what BP just announced production will eventually get back up to.

Signs are everywhere that world daily oil supply is on the downward slope of Hubbert's peak.

Social Engineering

If plans to curtail international flights and liquid fuels were being outwardly discussed within the context of a [POWERDOWN](#) strategy, this would be a positive development. That is not what we are seeing. This is a Plan B (slow burn) of a neoliberal vein – to protect the markets, not people.

Inevitably jet fuel consumption will be reduced once global oil production begins permanent decline. That is a certainty. Bankruptcies and mergers will occur throughout the airline industry, which will one day return to its origins of exclusively serving the business community and the rich; I've heard as much discussed "hypothetically" on the floor of Congress, broadcasted on CSPAN in recent months.

Liquid fuel shortages are certain in the near term. With these facts at hand, it makes sense to attempt to manipulate the sequence of events in order to protect, or control, the markets. As FTW and many other reputable publications have long maintained, revamping the rail system is a necessary step towards mitigating Peak Oil. Railroads are five times more efficient than automobiles. The financial press is reporting that this terror-related blow to the air industry is already a boom for the rail system in Europe.

Eurostar, the cross-channel rail service, said it had seen an extra 2,300 bookings - on top of the roughly 22,500 passengers it had expected to handle for the day in and out of London Waterloo - by 11 AM and expected further bookings during the day.

*It had brought in extra staff to cope with the increased demand and was examining the possibility of adding extra trains on top of the already-scheduled 16 each way daily between London and Paris and 10 each way between London and Brussels.*⁹

As Mike Ruppert has stated in the past, rationing is part of the global elite's agenda to deal with resource scarcity. While rationing may be openly embraced in European nations with governments that lean more towards socialism, this will not be the case in America because of how we define our freedom.¹⁰

When FTW investigated what plans were in place for the very real possibility of fuel shortages last winter, we found there were no rationing plans anywhere in the U.S. In place of such a plan, some big energy consumers (industry, non-profits and government agencies) have agreed to energy curtailments when supply is short. If those curtailments are inadequate, rolling blackouts would be implemented as was the case in Denver last winter.

Unless this upcoming winter is unusually warm, we will face blackouts on the scale of the summertime blackouts that recently engulfed the world. That is extremely dangerous. Americans are ill prepared mentally and physically for the challenges we will face in the near future. If there were a nationwide announcement on every TV and radio station stating what Peak Oil really was and what we had to do to properly address it, Americans would swear it was some sort of conspiracy against their "freedom."¹¹

It is highly probable that the events unfolding around the thwarted terror plot in the U.K. are part of a social engineering program to bring in an era of demand destruction through market manipulations. This is part of what we call "the slow burn" at FTW; an outgrowth of what Catherine Austin Fitts calls "The Tapeworm Economy."

Tapeworm Economy: the ability of financial and criminal elites to manipulate the rapidly-hollowing shell and façade of a financial system destined to collapse. They do this while keeping appearances (controlled by major media) as normal as possible so that the "suckers" (you) will keep trusting and spending your money in ways that hurt you and progressively wither your needed survival skills and resources.

*This is the way that all parasites function until they kill their hosts and move on.*¹²

Politics as Usual

A terror scare is good for the Bush Administration and the Republicans. Wall Street was virtually unaffected by the news of a thwarted terrorist plot on August 10, 2006, but European markets took a tumble.¹³

FTW was immediately interested in how many put options were purchased on British Airways, Continental, American, and United Airlines in the days leading up to the arrests in the U.K. All of these airlines saw their stocks fall anywhere from 3 to 8 percent.¹⁴ In comparison with what we saw on 9/11 – where United Airlines' stock plummeted a whopping 42% overnight¹⁵ – it does not appear the same opportunity was available to profit wildly from prior knowledge of these events. We have not dedicated much time into researching this area as of yet, but we do encourage others to do so.

24 U.K. citizens, some of Pakistani origin, have been arrested in connection with this plot. Anonymous government and intelligence sources in Pakistan's government claim they helped thwart the plot.

"The major work was done by the British agents, but they got a major clue from Pakistan," said a Pakistani intelligence official, according to the Times of India.¹⁶

As longtime FTW readers know, Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) agency has a unique and cozy relationship with Washington (and the crimes of 9/11).¹⁷ According to Michel Chossudovsky, the Director of Central Intelligence must approve of whoever is appointed to head the ISI.¹⁸ Investigative reporter Wayne Madsen made an important catch regarding the ISI's help in the U.K. terror plot.

Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) agency has helped provide the cover story for the alleged liquid bombers. Working with British and U.S. intelligence, the ISI says it broke up the plot after arresting terrorist suspects in Lahore and Karachi. However, the ISI claims that the men were affiliated with the Kashmiri terrorist group Lashkar-e-Toiba, a group that is run and funded by the ISI itself.¹⁹

The thwarted plot as it has been told to us (which closely resembles Project Bojinka)²⁰ included the use of explosive liquids to blow up at least 10 airplanes headed from Britain to America. John Pike, Director of GlobalSecurity.org, was interviewed on CNN regarding liquids that can be used to make an explosive device. He said that for a person to obtain such liquids, he/she would need security clearance as a chemist working in explosive chemistry.

Who has the necessary security clearance to access explosive liquids in Britain that would benefit from this plot? That question may be irrelevant, since we do not know if any explosive liquids were actually possessed by the suspects.

MSNBC reports that American and British officials disagreed as to the timing of the arrests. Some of the arrested suspects had not yet purchased plane tickets or even gotten their passports. A dry run was going to be attempted soon and U.K. officials wanted to run surveillance on the suspects to obtain more information, but Washington wanted the arrests immediately.²¹

The U.K. terror plot is being used by the Bush Administration to gain political leverage over the Democrats.

...a senior White House official said that the British government had not launched its raid until well after Cheney held a highly unusual conference call with reporters to attack the Democrats as weak against terrorism.

Snow said Bush first learned in detail about the plot on Friday, and received two detailed briefings on it on Saturday and Sunday, as well as had two conversations about it with British Prime Minister [Tony Blair](#).

But a senior White House official said that the British government had not launched its raid until well after Cheney held a highly unusual conference call with reporters to attack the Democrats as weak against terrorism.

An aide to Lieberman, who would have been one of the first Democrats to hear of the plot because he is the top Democrat on the Senate [Homeland Security](#) Committee, said the lawmaker first heard of it late Wednesday.

On Wednesday, Cheney had suggested that Democrats believe "that somehow we can retreat behind our oceans and not be actively engaged in this conflict and be safe here at home, which clearly we know we won't, we can't, be," he said.

While some Democrats have opposed some steps in the war on terrorism, and more and more are calling for a withdrawal from Iraq, no major figures in the party have called for a wholesale retreat in the broader conflict.

But Bush's Republicans hoped the raid would yield political gains. "I'd rather be talking about this than all of the other things that Congress hasn't done well," one Republican Congressional aide told AFP on condition of anonymity because of possible reprisals.

"Weeks before September 11th, this is going to play big," said another White House official, who also spoke on condition of not being named, adding that some Democratic candidates won't "look as appealing" under the circumstances.²²

Michel Chossudovsky recently documented what he feels is Dick Cheney's attempt to lay the ground work for another 9/11 (through military contingency planning) to create a pretext to invade Iran.²³

Even if this hypothesis is correct, I don't know if Cheney and the neo-cons have the luxury of being able to get away with pulling off another one. But as desperation sets in, the possibility can't be ruled out: A bully with his back against the wall can be a dangerous entity.

It is more likely that we will see continuous "terror scares" that further lead the population towards consuming less liquid fuel, and jet fuel seems to be the easiest target since social, political, economic and geological factors have naturally aligned against the airline industry. What better time to bring in a neo-liberal era under President Hillary Clinton with the appearance of leaning towards socialist policies (at least enough so to upset conservatives) while actually supporting corporate interests?

¹ <http://www.eia.doe.gov/neic/experts/expertanswers.html>

² http://www.chevron.com/products/prodserv/fuels/bulletin/aviationfuel/1_at_fuel_intro.shtm#consumption

³

It is also certain that travel to-and-from the East – especially China – has increased drastically since 1998, possibly surpassing that in Western Europe. Demand destruction in China is not likely at this point since it is seen as a "developing nation," and the population is much better prepared to survive in a low-energy economy than the West. The manufacturing sector has already relocated to China, and the society is actively planning for Peak Oil with a crisis mentality.

Marla Dickerson, "Will Mexico Soon Be Tapped Out?," *L.A. Times*, July 24, 2006

http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-pemex24jul24,1,6754747_story?coll=la-headlines-business&ctrack=1&csset=true

Morris B. Beschloss, "Mexico's Energy Problems Hurt the U.S.," *The Desert Sun*, August 6, 2006 <http://www.thedesertsun.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060806/COLUMN03/608060309/1238/business>

Richard Heinberg, "Middle East at a Crossroads," *Energy Bulletin*, August 4, 2006

<http://www.energybulletin.net/18904.html>

⁵ "Saudi Arabia and Venezuela to pull Opec output down," *Reuters*, July 25, 2006

<http://archive.gulfnews.com/articles/06/07/25/10054491.html>

⁶ Sheila McNulty, "BP deal to keep half of Prudhoe Bay open," *MSNBC*, August 13, 2006

<http://msnbc.msn.com/id/14332403/>

⁷ “DEC regulator resigns after reassignment,” Associated Press, March 7, 2002

http://www.alaskaforum.org/news_archive.html

⁸ Allison Linn, “Oil field shutdown raises more questions,” AP, August 9, 2006

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[Arm-](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20060809/ap_on_bi_ge/oil_field_shutdown_55;_ylt=Arm-VJWQOB07eDuaax7p.ZE6AsnsA;_ylu=X3oDMTBiMW04NW9mBHNIYwMIJVRPUCUI)

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⁹ Roger Blitz, “Restrictions cause chaos at airports,” *Financial Times*, August 10, 2006

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/c7867418-2857-11db-a2c1-0000779e2340.html>

¹⁰ In the word “freedom,” the suffix “dom” stems from the word “dominion”. Literally translated, freedom means “free to dominate.” This is precisely what the American definition of freedom is – free to dominate the world’s resources via over-consumption. I thank my friend and colleague Tiokasin Ghost Horse for teaching me this.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Michael C. Ruppert, “The Abyss Awaits,” *FTW*, June 14, 2006

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¹³ “European Stocks Implode,” *News.com.au*, August 11, 2006

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¹⁷ *Crossing the Rubicon*, chapter 8,

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²² Olivier Knox, “Bush seeks political gains from foiled plot,”

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²³ Michel Chossudovsky, “The Pentagon's "Second 911",”

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[The current Middle East conflict, orchestrated by the United States, has brought forth unintended consequences: victory for Hezbollah and the uplifting of Iran to the position of the most powerful nation in the Middle East.—CB]

The US-Israeli Defeat in Lebanon

by

Stan Goff

FTW Military/Veterans Affairs Editor

“Another such victory over the Romans and we are undone.”

-Pyrrhus of Epirus

August 24th 2006, 2:14 [PST] - With the tentative implementation of a UN-brokered ceasefire in Lebanon, two things have become crystal clear: Lebanon has been destroyed, and the US-Israeli axis has been delivered a remarkable geopolitical defeat.

In what -- even today -- was a shockingly savage attack on Lebanon, ostensibly over the capture of two IDF soldiers, neither the alleged nor the actual intent of the US-Israeli campaign was achieved. Let there be no doubt, the collusion between Israel and the US in this sadistic failure was absolute, and it was intimately related to the broader collapse of the neocon strategy in the region, especially Iraq. Just as Tony Blair was dragged into the vortex of the Bush cohort’s Straussian hubris, now Ehud Olmert has been directed to join them at Waterloo.

Never one to hitch onto uni-dimensional interpretations, in this case there is, nonetheless, one persistent concern that functions as the strange attractor: Iran. Certainly, there are other currents that flowed into this decision to wreck Lebanon and displace a million human beings, but more than anything, it was an attempt to demonstrate to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad what might happen to him.

This was a Bush Administration operation all the way to its roots; let there be not the slightest doubt of that. The notion that Israel dictates to the US is ludicrous on its face. Israel could not continue to exist as a viable political entity without US assistance. It is an externally funded state. More than one-third of US foreign aid arrives in this one country, because Israel is seen as nothing more nor less than the US’s massive forward-deployed military base in the region. In the words of a US State Department communiqué, the US is committed to “maintaining and enhancing Israel’s security and qualitative edge over any combination of adversaries... [and] ...the important advantages the US-Israeli strategic relationship has and will continue to provide us.” If the US subsidy to the Israeli State were withdrawn, the country would collapse economically and militarily.

It is for this reason, if we wish to understand why Israel undertook such a destructive and ultimately humiliating operation, we need to conduct a review of US fortunes to date in the Southwest Asian campaign of the Energy War.

Quite simply, the US -- originally planning to militarily occupy Iraq, then move on to "regime-change" in Iran -- has subdivided Iraq into a Kurdistan that is provoking Turkey, a multifarm northern guerrilla resistance, a training opportunity for Saudi Wahabbist fighters in urban insurgency, and an Iranian rump state in the south... the latter being the nominal US ally in Iraq. Iran has emerged as the most influential Islamic country in the region, and is now securing its strategic interests in bi-lateral and multi-lateral trade and security agreements with Russia, India, and China. In the capitol of Iraq, where he has positioned himself to exercise the plurality of power that will influence any political outcome in Iraq, is Muqtada al Sadr. Sadr's successful resistance to the US humiliated the Bush Administration in 2004 and catapulted Sadr's popularity.

Sadr's opposition to the US occupation put the conciliatory maneuvers of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani in check in much the same way Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah has checked the comprador Sunni rulers of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan -- by going directly to their popular bases. None of these rulers is particularly happy with the sudden emergence of Shia and Persian influence in an area where they benefit by being the "moderate" Muslims under the paternal gaze of the US. But they are all faced with the more alarming prospect of being identified with Israel, via the US, at a point when their own domestic populations are growing restive and holding up both Sadr and Nasrallah as folk heroes.

Now, just as the destruction of Iraq has translated into a growing militant resistance to the US occupation, the Lebanese have been bombed directly into the armed camp of Nasrallah, who may face an administrative challenge keeping up with new recruits. And neither Mubarak, nor Abdullah, nor Abdullah II can now serve the US master by crowding Iran. Their initial criticisms of Nasrallah are now muted... and mooted.

Given that military actions can only be judged at the end of the road by their political outcomes, the position of both the US and Israel is now weaker in the region than at any point since the settler state was established in 1948.

As US hegemony -- that is, control through the consent of the governed -- has begun to unravel around the world, the US faced a choice: go gently into that good night by beating an orderly retreat into a multi-polar world, as Britain did with the loss of its empire, or make the shift from hegemony to naked brutality. The Bush regime has chosen the latter. Any time force becomes the single-note option, war planners are already at a disadvantage. They are not consolidating a political advantage, as FDR did for the US in World War II. They are trying to create a political advantage by force. This is how they are reduced to the linear logics of "metrics," like Rumsfeld and McNamara before him.

When mathematics is one's only measure of success in political affairs, one has already lost. It is easy to change outcomes, but very, very hard to predict them. War and politics are not linear. The power of military brutality alone is the power to demoralize and demobilize, which presupposes a belief by the physically weaker party in the invincibility of the stronger party. The myth of the military invincibility of the United States had already been

destroyed in Iraq. All that remained within the axis was the mystique of Israeli invincibility, and Hezbollah has shattered that by the simple act of survival. The destruction of Lebanon has massively increased the ranks of an ever-more general and regional resistance.

A refugee Lebanese woman with a baby in her arms declared to reporters yesterday, "Even if we die we are with Hezbollah. We want the resistance to live and to hold its strength. We don't want Israel to come in and take a single piece of our land and we're telling Hassan Nasrallah, you are the jewel in our crown." Many have been killed, and many more wracked with physical and psychic pain, but few among the Arabs and Muslims of the region have been demoralized. Quite the contrary. Furious morale, is very high.

This is a world-historic event. More, we can be sure, will follow.

[In this final chapter of the Tillman Files, Stan Goff assesses the cover-up of events surrounding Tillman's death as symptomatic of nothing less than the final stages of imperialism: "Exterminism, the acceptance of mass death as the price of doing business."—CB]

The Tillman Files - Part 7

Botched Crime Scene

Investigation

by
Stan Goff
FTW Military/Veterans Affairs Editor

August 8th 2006, 1:12 [PST] - **L**et me say for the record, again, that I do not believe that Pat Tillman was targeted for assassination.

A second lieutenant and an infantry sergeant are not tasked with anything as politically sensitive as assassination. I am speaking as an alumnus of Delta Force, one of the few organizations that actually *might be* entrusted with this kind of operation (and then only *very rarely*). It doesn't matter what you see in the movies.

The decisions that placed Pat Tillman at exactly the place and exactly the time of his death were made *ad hoc*, on the spot, at a series of junctures that could not have been controlled, including a vehicle that unexpectedly broke down, one key decision made by an Afghan *jinga* truck driver and Pat's own decision (following two on-the-spot decisions by members of his platoon in direct response to a completely unexpected situation) to move forward into the position where he was shot.

The mystique of Special Operations (including the Rangers, who are the Special Operations' shock infantry component) is useful as a deterrent, but it is not reflective of a reality. The Pentagon and others want you and the rest of the world to believe this mystique, because your fear and the fear of the rest of the world is what maintains the efficacy of a huge bluff. This government wants us to spin out as many scary fantasies as possible, because

it serves the dual purpose of either portraying opponents of the military as “conspiracy nuts” or promoting precisely the myth of spooky invincibility that keeps us in line.

I came straight from the bowels of this system, and I have written three books exposing the worst aspects of the military. If they haven’t cut my brake lines or shot me when I’m out fishing yet, then they didn’t kill Pat Tillman because he criticized the war in Iraq and read a book by Noam Chomsky.

I say this as a preface to what I am about to present, because unanswered questions have a habit of getting answered by our imaginations. Declaring that there isn’t an answer to a question then providing one with the implicit assumption that this *is* the answer ignores the very common and simple fact that many, many things are done for reasons that are not linear and logical, and it further ignores that we don’t have all the information necessary to form a useful conclusion. It’s like saying -- had one lived in 1400 AD -- if this fever is not being caused by witchcraft, then what *is* causing it? And it ignores the fact that not all human actions -- in fact, arguably, only a few of them -- are motivated by causal logic or even well-thought-out intent.

Having ruled out a conspiracy, at least to my own satisfaction, there remain a number of open questions about the evidentiary trail left in the wake of Pat’s death by fratricide. That means there are a number of questions that might be explained as accident, incompetence, spin, and-or cover-up as viable hypotheses. All four of these particular dynamics were in play as the multiple determinants of Pat’s death and what we can quite reasonably, at this point, conclude *was* a cover-up.

Everyone who came into contact with Pat Tillman’s body after the killing was stepping under multiple emergency spotlights.

With the increasingly sophisticated and penetrative mass media, and the consolidation of that media into a handful of multinational corporations, the production of mass consciousness has become qualitatively different, more generally conforming, and has inaugurated a new reality reflected imprecisely by academic postmodernism: the “narrative” now has more power than ever to create a reality in its own image. Production, however, is not explicitly ideological. It is driven by competition for market share, and entertainment is the commodity... a kind of bread and circuses default that prefigures a more general breakdown of authentic community. This is in turn reflected by officialdom attempting to map its own propaganda onto entertainment media conventions.

The President himself is costumed as a cowboy or a fighter pilot, as we enter a postmodern era where life imitates art, and politics imitates cheap cinematic conventions. Actors and wrestlers become Presidents and Governors. “News” personalities in pancake makeup pander to niche markets of misdirected outrage.

The image is all. The image replaces reality. The narrative *is* reality. We are in Oz, the land of postmodern American politics where anything real threatens to pull back the curtain. Anything corporeal breaks the circuits on the narrative. It has to be removed and put as far away as possible.

Nothing could be as disruptive to this narrative, at this particular time, as the maimed body of a human being whose history would draw public attention, and for whom the circumstances of his death give the lie to the Panglossian, Tom Clancy bullshit story that was being spun out about the progress of the Energy War. Around the remains of Pat Tillman, as it was carried from the field, studied and processed by the military bureaucracy, flown across the globe to his family, there was a strengthening vortex of fear, confusion, accident, incompetence, spin, and cover-up. It was a vortex that reached from the mouth of a canyon in Paktia Province into the buffed, fluorescent hallways of the Pentagon.

This was the contradictory context of the post-mortem that flew into the face of the postmodern.

The interviews from multiple investigations say little about what happened with Pat’s body. Before Pat was rendered inert by three machine gun bullets through his head, he was 71 inches tall. He had two very distinguishing external marks for any medical examiner: a torn bicep with no connection into his superior brachia, and a very visible scar across his shoulder from rotator cuff surgery. Internal distinguishing characteristics included black scars on his lungs from a bout of Valley Fever.

The original autopsy for Pat Tillman is as sloppy and rushed a medical document as I have ever seen, and I worked for a time in the medical field when I was in the Army, including writing “SOAP” notes. It is scribbled and over-brief. The coroner at the time, Commander Jim Caruso, was not overwhelmed with bodies. He was working in a facility adjacent to Dover Air Force Base in New Jersey.

Nor was the medical facility at FOB Salerno under attack at the time of the autopsy (one of the absurd claims to explain the conflicting reports about how Pat’s body was handled). The whole episode, from both sides of the Atlantic, reeks of shoddiness, given that the chain of command already knew this was a fratricide for which there would be an Article 15-6 investigation.

None of the above distinguishing characteristics of Pat’s body were recorded, and his height was incorrectly listed as 6’. His wedding band was described as gold, when in fact it was platinum. And there was the bizarre claim that he had been defibrillated... a man whose entire cranial contents had been avulsed (much of his brain was collected for recovery on the scene in an ammunition box). There were also subsequent claims that CPR had been performed on Pat *at the field hospital*; also preposterous, given that there was no intact bony structure on the back of his head to support the head for ventilation had anyone been inclined to make such a patently vain attempt on a man who was obviously dead. By the time Pat Tillman arrived at the hospital, he was cold, and the first signs of rigor mortis would have already been emerging.

When Pat’s mother questioned the medical examiners and field hospital personnel about this, their reply to her was “we are not usually criticized for trying to save lives.” The petulant arrogance of this reply to a grieving mother is symptomatic, if readers will forgive the medical allusion, of how the military per-

forms to its stated standard of care for its families when careers may be at stake.

Hospital spokespersons (not yet identified) told Warrant Officer Dale Jefferies that the reason the work was so sloppy on the autopsy was that the field hospital was being fired upon. Archive searches for attacks on the field hospital at FOB Salerno that day yield not a single story to support this contention. In any case, an autopsy is not like an emergency room "code" where lives depend on finishing the task right now. Unless this hospital was under constant fire (it clearly was not), this does not in any way provide a viable excuse for such a recklessly substandard autopsy.

A Doctor Foley at the field hospital wrote that Pat had been taken to Intensive Care, a peculiar ward for the dead, instead of a morgue, which we might presume would be available in a hospital that claims to be under such combat duress. When confronted about the absurdity of this claim, he changed his story. Pat was taken to a "tent," so other wounded troops wouldn't see the grisly sight. The impression was to be that FOB Salerno's field hospital was not unlike the field hospital in the Korean War dark-comedy film, *MASH*. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is a very well-appointed, modern facility, that even takes in large numbers of Afghan patients as a Civil Affairs/Propaganda exercise... which any Google search will show.

Moreover, chronicles of actions and casualties show that April-May, 2004 experienced a very significant lull in fighting and a remarkable drop in American KIA's, Pat being the only one recorded nationwide in April.

One field hospital report states that Pat died on April 25th, three days after he was killed instantly. The autopsy says nothing about wounds to Pat's leg, yet one of the soldiers who handled Pat's body stated that his fingers actually sank into a devastating leg wound, and another Ranger said the leg was "falling apart." Staff Sergeant Weeks, who was positioned up the hill from Pat when he was killed, stated that Pat's head was so destroyed that his face appeared to be a "flap of skin." This description was confirmed by O'Neal, the Ranger who was close enough to touch Pat when he was killed. Yet a subsequent investigator who looked at photos told Mary Tillman that Pat's face appeared "unscathed" except for the three bullet holes.

The fact is, there are so many contradictory accounts that one cannot reasonably speculate at this point about the sequence of events or motivations of those who participated in post-mortem activities. While plain incompetence and accident might account for some aspects, and the symbolically reconstructive (and therefore subjective) nature of human memory, conditioned in this instance by the shock of the incident, may explain some aspects of the post-mortem, it does not explain the arrogantly defensive and openly perfidious accounts of senior medical staff.

It also does not explain why Pat's personal effects (which may have included his diary) were burned. Personal effects are, by policy at least, always returned to the families. The claim that his clothing and equipment was burned to prevent the bloody gear having a negative impact on morale is evasive bullshit, almost shocking in the impunity with which it insults the intelli-

gence. Rangers, the Army's own eat-your-dead elite shock infantry, falling apart at the sight of bloody clothes, which were, by the way, not in sight at all, but bagged up and stored in a shed prior to being burned. Of course, the aluminum oxide ceramic hard-plate in Pat's body armor wasn't burned (unless there was a very special furnace), but we have no idea where that went.

There is little doubt that the military can apply extreme pressure through the chain of command using the mechanism known by the sociologists of bureaucracy as "over-interpretation" and through plain veiled threats to one's career and future. That also applies to military doctors.

There is little doubt that any M.D., questioned in the course of this or future investigations, will state that he was not influenced by any pressure from the chain of command on the Tillman case. To admit otherwise would be a violation of his oath as a doctor. And while by law, all courts owe defendants the presumption of innocence, there is no requirement that investigators operate from this standpoint, or no investigation of malfeasance would ever succeed. From this investigative standpoint, given the contradictory and obfuscating responses given by the M.D.'s in this case to all interrogatives, the overwhelming indication of a general cover-up, and my prior premise that pre-meditated murder by an institution is not a viable hypothesis, the only apparent hypothesis that remains to explain the conduct of the post-mortem and the evasive responses by the medical personnel is command pressure... probably multiple and possibly conflicting command pressures.

Military psychiatrists, themselves M.D.'s, have been routinely diagnosing post-traumatic stress disorder as "personality disorder" in Iraq and Afghanistan, even though the military has screened for personality disorders during induction. It is fairly obvious to anyone with a garage-sale clue that this is a *policy*, designed to inhibit the number of future claims of PTSD to be paid for by the V.A. *Personality disorder* has its ostensible origins in childhood, not military service, and cannot be claimed as service-connected, and to conceal the psychological costs to soldiers of Bush's little adventures. Military personnel certainly do take command pressure into account, just as any of us do with our bosses unless we are independently wealthy.

Feigned outrage by the M.D.'s in Pat's case (*How dare you question my integrity?!*) -- which is already predictable until someone acquires subpoena authority outside the military -- is *not* a defense. And of course, independent subpoena authority always seems to de-escalate these sand-in-the-eyes outbursts.

If any member of Congress finally decides to take this up, the subpoena is the puff of wind that will bring this whole house of cards down. Subpoenas make people get honest, because there is a scary little word attached to them -- *perjury*. If the Chief of Staff for the one of the three most powerful men in the United States can have his dreamspace invaded by the sound of slamming cell doors as a result of this little word, imagine what it can do to loosen the lips of some military members.

Subpoenas and blanket permission for Rangers to say what they want to the public about what happened? Right now, the members of the battalion we have talked to report that they are

afraid. One told me on the phone that he can't care for his family if he spends 30 years in prison... for what? Telling the truth?

There is a pending case against a Ranger from B Company, adjacent to A Company, wherein his attorney has discussed using issues from the Tillman case, related to allegations of cover-up, as evidence that may have a bearing on his case. As this is written, the Army's prosecutors have filed a motion to suppress any reference to the Tillman case whatsoever. Given that the prosecutors haven't a flea market clue what the specific evidence is, this motion to exclude is a form of "prior restraint" related to one incident. This strongly suggests that it is not the evidence they fear "as prejudicial" if presented to a court martial panel of *experienced officers*. What they fear is the Tillman case. More precisely, what they fear is allowing anyone with subpoena authority in an active court martial – anyone who has no interest in covering up the cover-up.

The reason it is important to pursue this matter, as it stands, with all the above *caveats*, is that neither the Bush administration nor the Pentagon *wants* the truth to come out. There are a couple of ways that the truth can be decisively kept below ground. The facts themselves can be altered, camouflaged, or disappeared. Or the people asking the questions can be "discredited" with the kinds of demagogic fallacies for which the public generally falls.

Key facts, as presented in this series, and which will be more thoroughly explored in a book early next year by Mary Tillman and Narda Zacchino, have already "escaped," *e.g.*, the Scott investigation and the fraudulence of awarding a Silver Star as part of a cover story. These facts are now, for the Administration and the Pentagon, inescapable. All that is missing right now is someone with a little integrity and courage, and subpoena authority, to use these facts to tear the rest of the mask away.

All that is required, however, to discredit those asking the questions is our own insistence on the least plausible scenario, no doubt inspired by a righteous mistrust and loathing of people like Donald Rumsfeld and Lawrence Di Rita, when the existing facts do not support that scenario.

There is nothing the Pentagon would rather do with this case, aside from making it evaporate, than turn it into a debate about whether Pat was assassinated or not. He wasn't, and so they can not only poke fun at any of us who propose that hypothesis, they can relax as we all bark up the wrong tree.

What they do *not* want is a rigorous examination of the motives, decisions, and events that might lead a larger public to see how they have been spinning prevarications to call an imperial Oil War democracy-building.

Pat Tillman, and many who knew and cared for him, at some point believed, based on the evidence before them, that he was bound for a place in history of some kind... in football. What neither he nor they could know was that football fame would emerge as just a stepping stone to a far more significant role in history: contributing to the end of an illegal war, and bringing down (hopefully) a dangerous clique of international scoundrels.

The crimes of this Administration are more serious and vile by orders of magnitude than the mere imagined assassination of one young man.

The greatest crimes are facilitated not through arms (which are employed when other means fail, and which are as plentiful as they are odious), but by the banal wordsmiths of the legal, financial, and administrative realms. The war that Pat Tillman said was "so fucking illegal" is but one aspect, like a superficial lesion in a metastatic cancer, of a system that is now slaughtering millions through external debt, medical neglect, malnutrition, rape of the environment, imprisonment, mis-education, mass exodus, arms sales, and is now flirting with nuclear war. The Bush Administration has moved our whole society decisively into the final stage of imperialism: Exterminism, the acceptance of mass death as the price of doing business.

That Pat Tillman died wearing the uniform of the Imperium is just another historical irony. I wore it, too. It's where some of us had to go to learn.

Pat Tillman, for his comparatively small size in football, was known as a fearless and devastating tackler. In his final moment, unbeknownst to him, he may have been participating in one of history's greatest tackles... and one that will be witnessed by more people than could fit in a thousand stadiums.
Pat Tillman. *Presente!*

This is the final installment of The Tillman Files.

[The economic insanity of "free" market capitalism is only free to those who possess enough resources to dominate those with much less. How this system has ever become the symbol of what it means to be free in the West is mind-boggling. In stark contrast to this, the Bolivarian Revolution is once again sweeping through Latin America with participatory budgeting, cooperative business structures, and relocalization – especially as it relates to agriculture.

In America we are brainwashed to believe this is the antithesis of "freedom."

But for the poor the key to true freedom is equality. The Bolivarian philosophies are based upon equitable returns to community members participating within their own economy. This is precisely what Catherine Austin Fitts' [Solari](#) economic model is designed to implement by reconstructing – or deconstructing – the tools "free" market capitalism uses to economically enslave us. Call it whatever you want – Revolution or Solari – all that matters is positive change that empowers people at the local level.

That is what Latin America is doing as America continues to be drained by the tapeworm; to compare and contrast the two is quite revealing. – MK]

LATIN AMERICA DECON- STRUCTS THE TAPE- WORM: LESSONS FOR FINAN- CIALLY-DRAINED AMERI- CANS

By Carolyn Baker, Ph.D.

We are here to share in the fight that starts in the communities and barrios....I don't mind being a permanent nightmare for the United States.

Evo Morales, President of Bolivia

[The Recession Will Be Nasty And Deep](#)

Marketwatch, August 23, 2006

August 25th 2006, 2:43PM [PST] - On August 15, Reuters News Service reported that the bankrupt Northwest Airlines Corporation advised workers to “fish in the trash for things they like or take their dates for a walk in the woods [instead of taking them to dinner].¹ This was stated in a booklet which encouraged employees to “manage their money better and prepare for financial emergencies.”² In my last *FTW* article “Valley Of The Shadow Of Debt”,³ I wrote in depth about the albatross of debt that hangs around many American families, which in a majority of cases, was acquired through medical emergencies, and I provided ample documentation that financial emergencies and competent money management are almost always unrelated.

Many *FTW* readers are familiar with Catherine Austin Fitts’ [Tapeworm economics paradigm](#) and how the Solari model of economics offers viable alternatives. This analysis will explore how Tapeworm Economics is ravaging the American middle class and how Latin American countries are beginning to implement solutions similar to the Solari model to reverse centuries of economic oppression—an oppression which seems unfathomable to most North Americans, even as they are circling the fiscal abyss.

For example, in the past ten days, the housing slump in America has worsened, and this week, the National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo index revealed that builder confidence fell to its lowest in 15 years in what is now the seventh consecutive month of decline. David Seiders, chief economist at the National Association of Home Builders said that, “Two big factors are coloring builders’ perception of the market right now, rising cancellations and substantial growth in inventories of both new and existing homes.”⁴ How is a soft landing for the housing market possible when that market is over-inflated and when borrowers are already over-extended? “With sky-high energy prices, rising interest rates and a cooling housing market, can U.S. households continue pulling rabbits out of their hat?” asked economic analyst, Nesbitt Burns. Consumers are stretched to the breaking point, and mortgage payments are increasingly difficult to make.

A similar scenario exists in Australia where the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported this week in an article entitled “Housing Crash Puts Sellers In Debt Crisis” that increasing energy prices appear to be compounding the impact of repeated interest rate rises on properties in the outlying suburbs by driving prices down.⁵

MSNBC.com produced a chilling article this week entitled, “Will You Ever Be Able To Retire—Cracked Nest Egg?”⁶ Not only are most Americans ill-prepared to cope with the task of creating a nest egg to rely on when they’re too old to continue working, but they are woefully unaware of the risks they face in retirement investing, and they’re falling further behind in providing for their long-term financial security. A New Jersey financial planner, Doug Lockwood, stated, “I don’t think we’re going to see another generation that’s going to fully retire. There’s going to be a lot of people that are going to continue to work for the rest of their lives.”

An Employee Benefits Research Institute survey⁷ in April, 2006 found that more than half of workers 55 and older have saved less than \$50,000 toward retirement. Not only have most Americans not saved for retirement, but they are essentially clueless about how much more they will need to support themselves once they are no longer employed. In fact, according to the survey, nearly six in ten workers haven’t even bothered to calculate how much they might need to live on. Add to this looming deficits in Social Security funds, horrendous new Medicare regulations, the billions in shortages devastating pension plans,⁸ and you have a nightmare scenario for aging baby-boomers and numerous generations of younger Americans who will be forced to work until they die. Set aside money for retirement? Really? Tell it to countless middle-class Americans who are working two or more jobs to simply stay afloat.

We already know that healthcare for Americans over 65 will be a daunting and dismal ordeal, but for those younger Americans in the work force, even those who are insured by their employers, quality healthcare continues to elude them. In fact, with the latest trend in outsourcing healthcare, as reported by the *Christian Science Monitor* in “Companies Explore Overseas Healthcare,”⁹ expensive procedures are increasingly being performed in third-world countries and paid for at extraordinary savings to employers of the insured or by the insured themselves. Surgeries which might cost \$100,000 in the U.S. may run about \$20,000 in India. “Medical tourism,” the article states, “is morphing into ‘global healthcare’.” Obviously, this indicates the severity of America’s healthcare crisis, yet going overseas for expensive procedures deals still another blow to a system in crisis and limits the amount of money available for everyone.

Nor is medical debt limited to the uninsured. According to a *Newsweek*’s Karen Springen, in her article [“Health Hazards”](#), twenty percent of working-age adults in the U.S., both insured and uninsured, currently have medical debt which they are attempting to pay off over time. Moreover, Americans are taking out home-equity loans, using credit cards, and cashing out retirement accounts in order to pay medical expenses.

One of the most stunning aspects of [“The Power Of Community”](#) DVD which has been available on the *FTW* website for several months, is the manner in which the filmmakers documented not

only Cuba's astounding success in surviving Peak Oil, but the ways in which its people in the past four decades have reconstituted their nation economically. Within the past decade, several other Latin American nations have begun to move in a similar direction--nations such as Venezuela, Bolivia, Chile, and Brazil, uniting in principle and practice behind the new Bolivarian Revolution.

One of the most impressive feats of this revolution is *participatory budgeting* which is "a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making, in which ordinary city residents decide how to allocate part of a municipal or public budget."¹⁰ The process developed in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre in 1989 and has been extremely successful there. In participatory budgeting, the population, through debate and consult process, determines who defines and decides on amounts of income and expense, as well as where investments will be done, which are the priorities and which are the plans and actions to be developed by the government.¹¹ As a result of its success in Porto Alegre, there are 70 cities throughout Brazil that are establishing the participatory budget system.

UNESCO reports that from 1991 on, "the Participative Budget became a massive and thrilling process which started to mobilize the communities of all regions. In 1994, for instance, more than 11 thousand persons and in 1995, more than 14 thousand persons attended the meetings and the regional assemblies directly coordinated by the City Hall. If we add to this number of people, the huge quantity of local associations and popular organizations, we will end up having over 100 thousand persons linked somehow to the creation of the City Budget. Besides that, circa one thousand entities and associations are registered at the Participative Budget."¹²

Over the years, sanitation has dramatically improved, increasing the water supply so that today, 98% of the households are served by a water system. Moreover, the growth in the availability of sewage systems was even more impressive, growing from 46% of the population served to 74%. As a result of participatory budgeting, the quality of education has improved as well as the number of the total number of enrollments.

One need only Google "participatory budgeting" and add a particular country to the search to learn the successes brought about by the process in Latin America. But the South American nation that has most fervently adhered to a participatory economic model, not unlike the Solari model, is Venezuela.

When Hugo Chavez came to power in the late nineties, he instituted something called Bolivarian Circles of which at one point, there were 2.3 million members. Most of the circles are no longer operative, but in their heyday, they were essentially neighborhood groups (Solaris?) committed to reorganizing Venezuelan society from the grassroots. From their inception, they were very independent of the Chavez government, and they did not always agree with it. The circles were charged with such tasks as neighborhood beautification, grassroots organizing and activism, lending support to local businesses, and charity work.¹³

Following the model of Simon Bolivar, Chavez also instituted an agenda of Bolivarian Missions which are a series of social jus-

tice, social welfare, anti-poverty, and educational programs. One of those is Barrio Adentro which seeks to provide comprehensive, publicly-funded healthcare and dental care to poor communities. Unlike Tapeworm healthcare in the United States, Venezuelan healthcare, although still struggling to become available to all of its citizens, is based on the fundamental tenet that healthcare is a human right, guaranteed to all people.

Mission Habitat has its goal the construction of thousands of new housing units for the poor, and it seeks to develop agreeable and integrated housing zones that make available a full range of social services—from education to healthcare, not unlike the vision of New Urbanism. Related in principle to Barrio Adentro is the belief that healthcare and social service providers should be physically accessible to patients and clients, living in their neighborhoods.

Mission Mercal has set up subsidized grocery stores run by a government-run company, Mercal. Some 11 million Venezuelans benefit regularly from Mercal food programs as over 14,000 Mission Mercal food distribution sites are spread throughout the nation, and over 4,000 metric tons of food are distributed each day. Even more stunning is Mercal's reliance not on imports, but on products from local farmers, small businesses, and cooperatives. Previously, Venezuela's food production and distribution systems were managed by large national corporations, but upon coming to power, Chavez expressed his outrage at the nation's lack of food sovereignty and vulnerability to major food corporations, the result of which were closed supermarkets, growing malnutrition, and food shortages. Part of Mercal's mission is to provide low-priced products in order to compete with private companies and food chains. Mercal's program offers a balance of meat, dairy, grains, fruits, vegetable oils, and mineral salts. Curiously, one of the major tasks of the Venezuelan armed forces is logistical support for moving, procuring, warehousing, and distributing food, as bases and barracks become storage centers.

Frankly, in a time of peace, I can't think of a better use of any military unit.

Mission Robinson and Mission Sucre are programs for dramatically improving the educational system of Venezuela. Mission Robinson uses volunteers to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic to more than 1.5 adults who were illiterate prior to Chavez's election to the presidency. In 2005, Venezuela was declared an "illiteracy-free zone", having raised the rate of literacy, verified by UNESCO to 95%. Mission Sucre has provided free, ongoing higher education (college and graduate level) to two million Venezuelans who had not completed their elementary education.

The program is geared specifically to lower-income and marginalized students. And, since Chavez came to power in 1999, five new universities have been founded and four new institutes of technology.¹⁴ In fact, *Prensa Latina* reported on August 23, 2006 that [Venezuela is very close to achieving "education for all."](#) Working alongside the Bolivarian Missions program is the cooperative movement of Venezuela—108,000 of them formed in the past two years. Cooperatives are essentially collectively-run businesses which are now at the core of the country's plan for egalitarian economic development, according to Betsy Bowman and Bob Stone in "An Economic Experiment Is The Hidden

Story Behind Chavez's Bolivarian Revolution." Cooperatives exist in four major sectors: Commerce, restaurants and hotels; transport, storage, and communications; agriculture, hunting, and fishing; and industrial manufacture. Bowman and Stone note that,

Capitalism generates unemployment. Neoliberalism aggravated this tendency in Venezuela, producing a large, stable group of over-looked people who were excluded from meaningful work and consumption. If not forgotten altogether, they were blamed for their plight and made to feel superfluous. But the Bolivarian revolution is about demanding recognition. In March of 2004 Chávez called Venezuelans to a new "mission," when MINEP [Ministry of Popular Economy] inaugurated the "Misión Vuelvan Caras" program—Mission About-Face. Acting "from within themselves and by their own powers" to form cooperatives, the people were to "combat unemployment and exclusion" by actually "chang[ing] the relations of production."

The broader goal of the Chavez government is "endogenous development" which means that although foreign investments in Venezuela continue, the government's intention is to avoid relying on foreign imports which make the nation vulnerable to blackmail. Endogenous development is about producing seeds, food, clothing, and goods and services autonomously rather than becoming a captive of the World Bank or the IMF. Bowman and Stone emphasize that "co-ops can meet needs better than conventional capitalist firms [because] freed of the burdens of supporting costly managers and profit-hungry absentee investors, co-ops have a financial buoyancy that drives labor-saving technological innovation to save labor time."¹⁵

A few days ago, I was visiting with a nurse in a lab where I was having some tests. I had with me Richard Gott's book *Hugo Chavez And The Bolivarian Revolution* which has a picture of Chavez on the cover. When the nurse saw the book, she looked shocked and exclaimed, "Why are you reading about him? He kills people!" Such is the insanity that mainstream media peddles about Venezuela and its president. When do we hear about the Mission programs or Venezuelan co-operatives? Yet those place-based movements have been and continue to devour the tapeworm, place by place. Little wonder then, that this week, the International Relations Center's *Globalization News* reported, "U.S. Trade Sanctions Seek To Pressure Latin America" in an effort to politically pressure Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela to "participate in the model of regional integration proposed by the United States"¹⁶—translation: We intend to force the Tapeworm economy on you through economic slavery to the IMF, the World Bank, and privatization by American corporations.

I do not wish to imply that the Bolivarian Revolution has achieved economic nirvana; it is in for decades-long struggle which could be sabotaged at any time by corrupt politicians, subversion by U.S. intelligence, or direct U.S. military aggression.

However, Latin American countries which are on board with the Bolivarian Revolution, particularly Venezuela, are deconstructing the Tapeworm and transforming their societies on an intensely local level. They are not doing this by holding the government's hand, but are operating—with the moral support of the

Chavez government—by, for, and within their own unique places.

In the United States at this moment, a number of relocation movements are working hard, many with astounding success, to create sustainable communities. As I have written oh so many times, working Americans do not yet comprehend the future ahead of them dictated by Peak Oil, climate chaos, and the Tapeworm. Those who do are preparing by getting out of debt, downsizing and relocating their lives. Fortunate are those who can and will read the tea leaves and disconnect from Tapeworm economics, joining with other awake individuals in their local communities to assist each other as the people of the Bolivarian Revolution are doing. Sadly, those who cling to their denial only fatten the Tapeworm and provide it with a more vulnerable, succulent host.

As the economic landscape in the United States continues to deteriorate, there will be much blame, rage, and paranoia. Only under the most calamitous circumstances will some individuals and families awaken to the reality that their only survival lies in combining efforts with their neighbors. Not comfortable societies, but only those in excruciating misery can create a Bolivarian Revolution—not a revolution of bombs and bullets, but the transformation of places.

FTW knows that many of our readers are engaged in a "Bolivarian Revolution" in their own local areas. They are not waiting for collapse but are operating pro-actively. How much anguish will it take before those who dismiss collapse and *FTW*'s reporting as "doom and gloom" begin deconstructing the Tapeworm in their personal and community economy? We do not have to waste energy envying the kind of government Venezuela is giving its citizens; we can begin applying its lessons now.

Whether one is in "Tapeworm trauma" or merely seeking to prevent it, we have some of the greatest teachers on earth—the courageous women and men of Latin America who have drawn their line in the sand, crying, "Ya basta!" (Enough already!)

[1 http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/bizarre/4119078.html](http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/bizarre/4119078.html)

[2 Ibid.](#)

[3 http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/ww3/081106_valley_debt_summary.shtml](http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/ww3/081106_valley_debt_summary.shtml)

[4 http://www.dailyreckoning.com/Issues/2006/WEDR081906.html](http://www.dailyreckoning.com/Issues/2006/WEDR081906.html)

[5 http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/housing-crash-puts-sellers-in-debt-crisis/2006/08/20/1156012414995.html?from=rss](http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/housing-crash-puts-sellers-in-debt-crisis/2006/08/20/1156012414995.html?from=rss)

[6 http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/13322751/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/13322751/)

[7 http://www.ebri.org/surveys/rcs/2006/](http://www.ebri.org/surveys/rcs/2006/)

[8 http://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/08/business/08pension.html?ex=](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/08/business/08pension.html?ex=)

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[9 http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0816/p03s03-usec.html](http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0816/p03s03-usec.html)

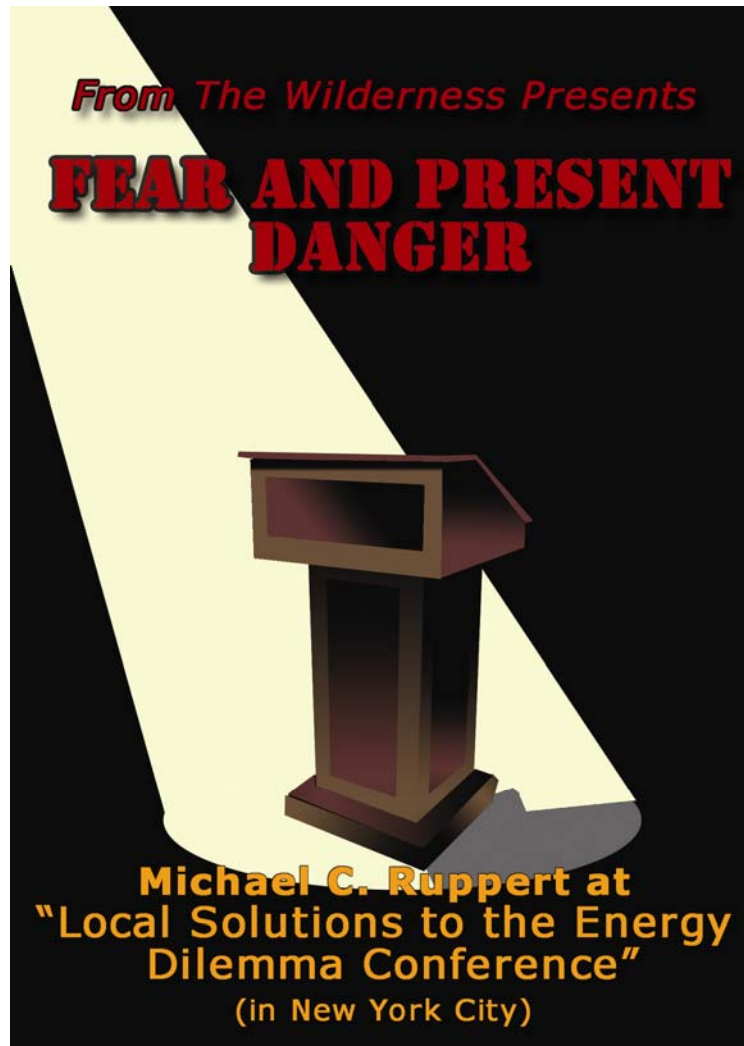
[10 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Participatory_budgeting](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Participatory_budgeting)

[11 http://www.unesco.org/most/southa13.htm](http://www.unesco.org/most/southa13.htm)

[12 Ibid.](#)

[13 http://www.axisoflogic.com/artman/publish/article_22819.shtml](http://www.axisoflogic.com/artman/publish/article_22819.shtml)

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