

Rock Creek Free Press

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A FIERCELY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

Washington, D.C.

Vaccines Linked to Autism Government Concedes Causal-link in Federal Court

By DAVID KIRBY

After years of insisting there is no evidence to link vaccines with the onset of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), the US government has quietly conceded a vaccine-autism case in the Court of Federal Claims.

The unprecedented concession was filed on November 9, and sealed to protect the plaintiff's identity. It was obtained through individuals unrelated to the case.

The claim, one of 4,900 autism cases currently pending in Federal "Vaccine Court," was conceded by US Assistant Attorney General Peter Keisler and other Justice Department officials, on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services, the "defendant" in all Vaccine Court cases.

The child's claim against the government—that mercury-containing vaccines were the cause of her autism—was supposed to be one of three "test cases" for the thimerosal-autism

theory currently under consideration by a three-member panel of Special Masters, the presiding justices in Federal Claims Court.

Keisler wrote that medical personnel at the HHS Division of Vaccine Injury Compensation (DVIC) had reviewed the case and "concluded that compensation is appropriate."

The doctors conceded that the child was healthy and developing normally until her 18-month well-baby visit, when she received vaccinations against nine different diseases all at once (two contained thimerosal).

Days later, the girl began spiraling downward into a cascade of illnesses and setbacks that, within months, presented as symptoms of autism, including: No response to verbal direction; loss of language skills; no eye contact; loss of "relatedness;" insomnia; incessant screaming; arching; and "watching the florescent lights repeatedly during

VACCINE p.2



Wayne Madsen Report

Winter Soldier Evidence of War Crimes Presented

By WAYNE MADSEN

US Marines took "pot shots" at Iraqi passing and idle vehicles in August 2004 near the Iraqi-Syrian border town of Al Qa'im. Former Indiana Marine Vincent Emanuele revealed this abuse of Iraqi civilians at the Winter Soldier conference held in Silver Spring, Maryland from March 14 to 16.

Emanuele said his unit identified the targets they shot at. In one case, his unit mortared a tire shop in Al Qa'im by mistake and without compensation to its owner. The former Marine also said that Iraqi prisoners who were wrongly detained were set free in the middle of the desert after being kicked and punched by Marines. Emanuele also revealed

that corpses of Iraqis were similarly abused. He said bodies, including decapitated corpses, were run over by Marine vehicles. In one case, an Iraqi killed in a field by Emanuele was left to rot. Another Marine took a photograph of the rotting corpse and used it as a screen saver on his lap top computer.

A very emotional former Marine from the First Battalion, 7th Marines, Sergio Kochergan from Oregon, described his own experiences from Region II, near Al Qa'im.

Kochergan said his unit's "rules of engagement" (ROE) were altered to include the use of lethal force against anything deemed "suspicious behavior." He said that any Iraqi carrying a shovel was "taken out"

InfraGuard FBI Deputizes Corporations to Enforce Martial Law

By GARY D. BARNETT

There is an organization that is quietly and secretly becoming very large and powerful. The FBI started this partnership or alliance between the federal government and the private sector in 1996 in Cleveland with a few select people. After September 11, 2001, when the general population replaced their rationality with fear, this organization, called InfraGard, continued growing, and with little notice. By 2005 more than 11,000 members were involved, but as of today, according to the InfraGard website, there are 23,682 members,

INFRAGUARD p.5

FBI Refuses to Document Identity of 9/11 Planes

By MATT SULLIVAN

The FBI claims that federal investigators made no attempt to identify plane wreckage pursuant to the investigation of 9/11. Researcher Aidan Monaghan submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the FBI seeking documents "revealing the process by which wreckage recovered by defendant, from aircraft used during the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, was positively identified by defendant . . . as belonging to said aircraft"

In response, Assistant U.S. Attorney Patrick A. Rose, representing the FBI, states: "The identities of the airplanes hijacked in the September 11 attacks was never in

question, and, therefore, there were no records generated" pursuant to the identification of the aircraft.

In other words, in the case of the greatest crime in US history, involving the greatest loss of civilian life ever, with nearly 3000 dead, the FBI claims that it made no attempt to formally identify the remains of the murder weapons. This would certainly seem to be a monumental oversight and incompetent blunder if it was true, but the publicly available information suggests that counsel's statements are false on at least two counts.

First, the identities of the aircraft

9/11 PLANES p.7

Gulf War Syndrome Caused by Drugs Administered to Soldiers by DOD

By BRANDON KEIM

The controversial disorder known as Gulf War illness may have been caused by chemicals used in pesticides and anti-nerve gas pills.

In an article published recently in the "Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences", University of California, San Diego military health researcher Beatrice Golomb reviewed 115 studies on Gulf War illness, also known as GWI.

Approximately one in three veterans of the Persian Gulf War have reported lingering health problems associated with GWI, from neuropathic pain and loss of muscle control to

chronic fatigue and forgetfulness.

The root—or roots—of GWI haven't been conclusively determined. Among the possible causes are exposure to nerve gas, still-radioactive depleted uranium ammunition, an experimental anthrax vaccine and extreme stress. Golomb's review focused on a class of chemicals known as acetylcholinesterase inhibitors, or AChEIs. Acetylcholinesterase is an enzyme that regulates the activity of acetylcholine, a vital neurotransmitter.

Soldiers were exposed to AChEIs in

SYNDROME p.5

Who Controls the Media? Soulless Corporations Do, Of Course.

By ALEX CONSTANTINE

Corporations control the media; corporations with grinning, double-breasted executives, interlocking directorates, labor squabbles and flying capital. Dow. General Electric. Coca-Cola. Disney. Newspapers should have mastheads that mirror the world: The Westinghouse Evening Scimitar, The Atlantic-Richfield Intelligentser. It is beginning to dawn

on a growing number of armchair ombudsmen that the corporate media reports news from a parallel universe - one that has never heard of politically-motivated assassinations, CIA-Mafia banking thefts, mind control, death squads or even federal agencies with secret budgets fattened by cocaine sales - a place overrun by lone gunmen, where the CIA and Mafia are usually on their best behavior. In this idyllic land, the most serious infraction an official can commit is the employment of a domestic servant with (shudder) no residency status.

This unlikely land of enchantment is the creation of MOCKINGBIRD.

It was conceived in the late 1940s, the most frigid period of the cold war, when the CIA began a systematic infiltration of the corporate media, a process that often included direct takeover of major news outlets.

In this period, the American intelligence services competed with communist activists abroad to influence European labor unions. With or without the cooperation of local governments, Frank Wisner, an undercover State Department official assigned to the Foreign Service, rounded up students abroad to enter the cold war underground of covert operations on behalf of his Office of Policy Coordination. Philip Graham, a graduate of the Army Intelligence School in Harrisburg, PA, then publisher of the Washington Post, was taken under Wisner's wing to direct the program code-named Operation MOCKINGBIRD.

"By the early 1950s," writes former *Village*

CIA-MEDIA p.2

Why Bush Justice "Watergated" Spitzer

By F. WILLIAM ENGBAHL

The spectacular and highly bizarre release of secret FBI wiretap data to the *New York Times* exposing the tryst of New York State Governor, Eliot Spitzer, the now-infamous "No.9," with a luxury call-girl, had little to do with the Bush Administration's pursuit of high moral standards for public servants. Spitzer was likely the target of a White House and Wall Street dirty tricks operation to silence one of their most dangerous and vocal critics of the handling of the current financial market crisis.

A useful rule of thumb in evaluating spectacular scandals around prominent public

figures is to ask what and who might want to eliminate that person. In the case of Governor Eliot Spitzer, a Democrat, it is clear that the spectacular "leak" of government FBI wiretap records showing that Spitzer paid a high-cost prostitute \$4,300 for what amounted to about an hour's personal entertainment, was politically motivated. The press has almost solely focused on the salacious aspects of the affair, not least the hefty fee Spitzer apparently paid. Why the scandal breaks now is the more interesting question.

Spitzer became Governor of New York following his high-profile record as a relentless

State Attorney General going after financial crimes such as the Enron fraud and corruption scandal by Wall Street investment banks during the 2002 dot.com bubble era. The powerful former head of the large AIG insurance group, Hank Greenburg was among his detractors. He made powerful enemies by all accounts. He was bitterly hated on Wall Street. He had made his political career on being ruthlessly against financial corruption. Most recently, from his position as Governor of the nation's second largest state, and home to its financial industry, Spitzer had begun making high profile attacks

SPITZER p.6

Abu Ghraib Prisoners Packed in Ice Water, Sent into Shock, Military Police Say

By SHERWOOD ROSS

Muslim prisoners held in Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison were submerged in water-filled garbage cans with ice or put naked under cold showers in near-freezing rooms until they went into shock, Sgt. Javal Davis, who served with the 372nd Military Police Company there, has told a national magazine.

Davis, from the Roselle, NJ, area, said while stationed at the prison he also saw an incinerator with "bones in it" that he believed to be a crematorium and said some prisoners were starved prior to their interrogation.

Another soldier that had been stationed at Abu Ghraib, M.P. Sabrina Harman—who gained dubious fame for making a thumbs-up sign posing over the body of a prisoner she

believed had been tortured to death—said the US had imprisoned "women and children" on Abu Ghraib Tier 1B, including one child as young as ten.

"Like a number of the other kids and of the women there, he was being held as a pawn in the military's effort to capture or break his father," wrote co-authors Philip Gourevitch and Errol Morris in the March 24th issue of *The New Yorker* magazine, which describes Abu Ghraib in a 14-page article titled "Exposure."

They assert "the abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib was de facto United States policy. The authorization of torture and the decriminalization of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment of captives in wartime have been among the defining legacies of the

current Administration."

They add that the rules of interrogation that produced the abuses documented in the prison "were the direct expression of the hostility toward international law and military doctrine that was found in the White House, the Vice-President's office, and at the highest levels of the Justice and Defense Departments." (President Bush has insisted "We do not torture." The Associated Press reported on November 7, 2005.)

Imprisoning suspects in a war zone, torturing and/or murdering them, and holding their wives and children as hostages, are all banned practices under international law. Some prisoners died from rocket attacks on the compound.

TORTURE p.5

Going to Jail for Being a Democrat How Alabama Gov. Don Siegelman Got Roved

By PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS

Don Siegelman, a popular Democratic governor of Alabama, a Republican state, was framed in a crooked trial, convicted on June 29, 2006, and sent to Federal prison by the corrupt and immoral Bush administration.

The frame-up of Siegelman and businessman Richard Scrushy is so crystal clear that 52 former state attorney generals from across America, both Republicans and Democrats, have urged the US Congress to investigate the Bush administration's use of the US Department of Justice to rid themselves of a Democratic governor who "they could not beat fair and square," according to Grant Woods, former Republican Attorney General of Arizona and co-chair of the McCain for

President leadership committee. Woods says that he has never seen a case with so "many red flags pointing to injustice."

The abuse of American justice by the Bush administration in order to ruin Siegelman is so blatant that even the corporate media organization CBS allowed "60 Minutes" to broadcast on February 24, 2008, a damning indictment of the railroading of Siegelman. Extremely coincidental "technical difficulties" caused WHNT, the CBS station covering the populous northern third of Alabama, to go black during the broadcast. The station initially offered a lame excuse of network difficulties that CBS in New York denied. The Republican-owned print media in Alabama seemed to have the inside track on every aspect

of the prosecution's case against Siegelman. You just have to look at their editorials and articles following the "60 Minutes" broadcast to get a taste of what counts for "objective journalism" in their minds.

The injustice done by the US Department of Justice (sic) to Siegelman is so undeniable that a participant in Karl Rove's plan to destroy Siegelman can't live with her conscience. Jill Simpson, a Republican lawyer who did opposition research for Rove, testified under oath to the House Judiciary Committee and went public on "60 Minutes." Simpson said she was told by Bill Canary, the most important GOP campaign advisor in Alabama, that "my girls can take care of Siegelman."

SIEGELMAN p.4

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Government Concedes Vaccine-Autism Link in Federal Court

VACCINES from p.1

examination.”
Seven months after vaccination, the patient was diagnosed by Dr. Andrew Zimmerman, a leading neurologist at the Kennedy Krieger Children’s Hospital Neurology Clinic, with “regressive encephalopathy (brain disease) with features consistent with autistic spectrum disorder, following normal development.” The girl also met the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) official criteria for autism.

In its written concession, the government said the child had a pre-existing mitochondrial disorder that was “aggravated” by her shots, and which ultimately resulted in an ASD diagnosis.

“The vaccinations received on July 19, 2000, significantly aggravated an underlying mitochondrial disorder,” the concession says, “which predisposed her to deficits in cellular energy metabolism, and manifested as a regressive encephalopathy with features of ASD.”

This statement is good news for the girl and her family, who will now be compensated for the lifetime of care she will require. But its implications for the larger vaccine-autism debate, and for public health policy in general, are not as certain.

In fact, the government’s concession seems to raise more questions than it answers.

1) Is there a connection between vaccines, mitochondrial disorders and a diagnosis of autism, at least in some cases?

Mitochondria, you may recall from biology class, are the little powerhouses within cells that convert food into electrical energy, partly through a complex process called “oxidative phosphorylation.” If this process is impaired, mitochondrial disorder will ensue.

The child in this case had several markers for Mt (mitochondrial) disease, which was confirmed by muscle biopsy. Mt disease is often marked by lethargy, poor muscle tone, poor food digestion and bowel problems, something found in many children diagnosed with autism.

But mitochondrial disorders are rare in the general population, affecting some 2-per-10,000 people (or just 0.2%). So with 4,900 cases filed in Vaccine Court, this case should be the one and only, extremely rare instance of Mt disease in all the autism proceedings.

But it is not.
Mitochondrial disorders are now thought to be the most common disease associated with ASD. Some journal articles and other analyses have estimated that 10% to 20% of all autism cases may involve mitochondrial disorders, which would make them one thousand times more common among people with ASD than the general population.

Another article, published in the Journal of Child Neurology and co-authored by Dr. Zimmerman, showed that 38% of Kennedy Krieger Institute autism patients studied had one marker for impaired oxidative phosphorylation, and 47% had a second marker.

The authors—who reported on a case-study of the same autism claim conceded in Vaccine Court—noted that “children who have (mitochondrial-related) dysfunctional cellular energy metabolism might be more prone to undergo autistic regression between 18 and 30 months of age if they also have infections or immunizations at the same time.”

An interesting aspect of Mt disease in autism is that, with ASD, the mitochondrial disease seems to be milder than in “classic” cases of Mt disorder. In fact, classic Mt disease is almost always inherited, either passed down by the mother through mitochondrial DNA, or by both parents through nuclear DNA.

In autism-related Mt disease, however, the disorder is not typically found in other family members, and instead appears to be largely of the sporadic variety, which may now account for 75% of all mitochondrial disorders.

Meanwhile, an informal survey of seven families of children with cases currently pending in Vaccine Court revealed that all seven showed markers for mitochondrial dysfunction, dating back to their earliest medical tests. The facts in all seven claims mirror the case just conceded by the government: Normal development followed by vaccination, immediate illness, and rapid decline culminating in an autism diagnosis.

2) With 4,900 cases pending, and more coming, will the government concede those with underlying Mt disease – and if it not, will the Court award compensation?

The Court will soon begin processing the 4900 cases pending before it. What if 10% to 20% of them can demonstrate the same Mt disease and same set of facts as those in the conceded case? Would the government be obliged to concede 500, or even 1,000 cases? What impact would that have on public opinion? And is there enough money currently in the vaccine injury fund to cover so many settlements?

When asked for a comment last week about the court settlement, a spokesman for HHS furnished the following written statement:

“DVIC has reviewed the scientific information concerning the allegation that vaccines cause autism and has found no credible evidence to support the claim. Accordingly, in every case under the Vaccine Act, DVIC has maintained the position that vaccines do not cause autism, and has never concluded in any case that autism was caused by vaccination.”

3) If the government is claiming that vaccines did not “cause” autism, but instead aggravated a condition to “manifest” as autism, isn’t that a very fine distinction?

For most affected families, such linguistic gymnastics is not so important. And even if a vaccine injury “manifested” as autism in only one case, isn’t that still a significant development worthy of informing the public?

On the other hand, perhaps what the government is claiming is that vaccination resulted in the symptoms of autism, but not in an actual, factually correct diagnosis of autism itself.

4) If the government is claiming that this child does NOT have autism, then how many other children might also have something else that merely “mimics” autism?

Is it possible that 10%-20% of the cases that we now label as “autism,” are not autism at all, but rather some previously undefined “look-alike” syndrome that merely presents as

dysfunction; and how could vaccines aggravate that dysfunction to the point of “autistic features?”

While some Mt disorders are clearly inherited, the “sporadic” form is thought to account for 75% of all cases, according to the United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation. So what causes sporadic Mt disease? “Medicines or other toxins,” says the Cleveland Clinic, a leading authority on the subject.

Use of the AIDS drug AZT, for example, can cause Mt disorders by deleting large segments of mitochondrial DNA. If that is the case, might other exposures to drugs or toxins (i.e., thimerosal, mercury in fish, air pollution, pesticides, live viruses) also cause sporadic Mt disease in certain subsets of children, through similar genotoxic mechanisms?

Among the prime cellular targets of mercury are mitochondria, and thimerosal-induced cell death has been associated with the depolarization of mitochondrial membrane, according to the International Journal of Molecular Medicine among several others. (Coincidentally, the first case of Mt disease was diagnosed in 1959, just 15 years after the first autism case was named, and two decades after thimerosal’s introduction as a vaccine preservative.)

Regardless of its cause, shouldn’t HHS sponsor research into Mt disease and the biological mechanisms by which vaccines could aggravate the disorder? We still do not know what it was, exactly, about this girl’s vaccines that aggravated her condition. Was it the thimerosal? The three live viruses? The two attenuated viruses? Other ingredients like aluminum? A combination of the above?

And of course, if vaccine injuries can aggravate Mt disease to the point of manifesting as autism features, then what other underlying disorders or conditions (genetic, autoimmune, allergic, etc.) might also be aggravated to the same extent?

7) What are the implications for medicine and public health?

Should the government develop and approve new treatments for “aggravated mitochondrial disease with ASD features?” Interestingly, many of the treatments currently deployed in Mt disease (i.e., coenzyme Q10, vitamin B-12, lipoic acid, biotin, dietary changes, etc.) are part of the alternative treatment regimen that many parents use on their children with ASD.

And, if a significant minority of autism cases can be linked to Mt disease and vaccines, shouldn’t these products one day carry an FDA Black Box warning label, and shouldn’t children with Mt disorders be exempt from mandatory immunization?

8) What are the implications for the vaccine-autism debate?

It’s too early to tell. But this concession could conceivably make it more difficult for some officials to continue insisting there is “absolutely no link” between vaccines and autism.

It also puts the Federal Government’s Vaccine Court defense strategy somewhat into jeopardy. DOJ lawyers and witnesses have argued that autism is genetic, with no evidence to support an environmental component. And, they insist, it’s simply impossible to construct a chain of events linking immunizations to the disorder.

Government officials may need to rethink their legal strategy, as well as their public relations campaigns, given their own slightly contradictory concession in this case.

9) What is the bottom line here?

The public, (including world leaders) will demand to know what is going on inside the US Federal health establishment. Yes, as of now, n=1, a solitary vaccine-autism concession. But what if n=10% or 20%? Who will pay to clean up that mess?

The significance of this concession will unfortunately be fought over in the usual, vitriolic way—and I fully expect to be slammed for even raising these questions. Despite that, the language of this concession cannot be changed, or swept away.

Its key words are “aggravated” and “manifested.” Without the aggravation of the vaccines, it is uncertain that the manifestation would have occurred at all.

When a kid with peanut allergy eats a peanut and dies, we don’t say “his underlying metabolic condition was significantly aggravated to the extent of manifesting as an anaphylactic shock with features of death.”

No, we say the peanut killed the poor boy. Remove the peanut from the equation, and he would still be with us today.

Many people look forward to hearing more from HHS officials about why they are settling this claim. But whatever their explanation, they cannot change the fundamental facts of this extraordinary case:

The United State government is compensating at least one child for vaccine injuries that resulted in a diagnosis of autism.

And that is big news, no matter how you want to say it.

David Kirby is the author of “Evidence of Harm - Mercury in Vaccines and the Autism Epidemic, A Medical Controversy” (St. Martins Press 2005)

US Corporate Media- The CIAs Mighty Whurlitzer



OSS veteran Frank Wisner ran most of the early peacetime covert operations of the CIA as head of the Office of Policy Coordination. He referred to the US “news” media as his “Mighty Whurlitzer” because they could be made to play whatever tune the CIA was calling. The Whurlitzer, an organ designed for film productions, could imitate many different instruments including sounds such as rain, thunder, or an auto horn.

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Voice reporter Deborah Davis in Katharine the Great, “Wisner ‘owned’ respected members of the New York Times, Newsweek, CBS and other communications vehicles, plus stringers, four to six hundred in all, according to a former CIA analyst.” The network was overseen by Allen Dulles, a templar for German and American corporations who wanted their point of view represented in the public print. Early MOCKINGBIRD influenced 25 newspapers and wire agencies consenting to act as organs of CIA propaganda. Many of these were already run by men with reactionary views, among them William Paley (CBS), C.D. Jackson (Fortune), Henry Luce (Time) and Arthur Hays Sulzberger (N.Y. Times).

Activists curious about the workings of MOCKINGBIRD have since been appalled to find in FOIA documents that agents boasting in CIA office memos of their pride in having placed “important assets” inside every major news publication in the country. It was not until 1982 that the Agency openly admitted that reporters on the CIA payroll have acted as case officers to agents in the field. “World War III has begun,” Henry’s Luce’s Life declared in March, 1947. “It is in the opening skirmish stage already.” The issue featured an excerpt of a book by James Burnham, who called for the creation of an “American Empire,” “world-dominating in political power, set up at least in part through coercion (probably including war, but certainly the threat of war) and in which one group of people ... would hold more than its equal share of power.”

George Seldes, the famed anti-fascist media critic, drew down on Luce in 1947, explaining that “although avoiding typical Hitlerian phrases, the same doctrine of a superior people taking over the world and ruling it, began to appear in the press, whereas the organs of Wall Street were much more honest in favoring a doctrine inevitably leading to war if it brought greater commercial markets under the American flag.”

On the domestic front, an abiding relationship was struck between the CIA and William Paley, a wartime colonel and the founder of CBS. A firm believer in “all forms of propaganda” to foster loyalty to the Pentagon, Paley hired CIA agents to work undercover at the behest of his close friend, the busy grey eminence of the nation’s media, Allen Dulles. Paley’s designated go-between in his dealings with the CIA was Sig Mickelson, president of CBS News from 1954 to 1961.

The CIA’s assimilation of old guard fascists was overseen by the Operations Coordination Board, directed by C.D. Jackson, formerly an executive of Time magazine and Eisenhower’s Special Assistant for Cold War Strategy. In 1954 he was succeeded by Nelson Rockefeller, who quit a year later, disgusted at the administration’s political infighting. Vice President Nixon succeeded Rockefeller as the key cold war strategist.

“Nixon,” writes John Loftus, a former attorney for the Justice Department’s Office of Special Investigations, took “a small boy’s delight in the arcane tools of the intelligence craft - the hidden microphones, the ‘black’ propaganda.” Nixon especially enjoyed his visit to a Virginia training camp to observe Nazis in the “special forces” drilling at covert operations.

The two biggest financiers to stumble from the drunken dreams of world-moving affluence were, in their time, Moses Annenberg, publisher of The Philadelphia Inquirer, and his son Walter, the CIA/mob-anchored publisher of the TV Guide. Like most American high-rollers, Annenberg lived a double life. Moses, his father, was a scion of the Capone mob. Both Moses and Walter were indicted in 1939 for tax evasions totalling many millions of dollars—the biggest case in the history of the Justice Department. Moses pled guilty and agreed to pay the government \$8 million and settle \$9 million in assorted tax claims, penalties and interest debts. Moses received a three-year sentence. He died in Lewisburg Penitentiary.

Walter Annenberg, the TV Guide magnate, was a lofty Republican. On the campaign trail in April, 1988, George Bush flew

into Los Angeles to woo Reagan’s kitchen cabinet. “This is the topping on the cake,” Bush’s regional campaign director told the Los Angeles Times. The Bush team met at Annenberg’s plush Rancho Mirage estate at Sunnylands, California. It was at the Annenberg mansion that Nixon’s cabinet was chosen, and the state’s social and contributor registers built over a quarter-century of state political dominance by Ronald Reagan, whose acting career was launched by Operation MOCKINGBIRD.

The commercialization of television, coinciding with Reagan’s recruitment by the Crusade for Freedom, a CIA front, presented the intelligence world with unprecedented potential for sowing propaganda and even prying in the age of Big Brother. George Orwell glimpsed the possibilities when he installed omniscient video surveillance technology in 1948, a novel rechristened 1984 for the first edition published in the U.S. by Harcourt, Brace. Operation Octopus, according to federal files, was in full swing by 1948, a surveillance program that turned any television set with tubes into a broadcast transmitter. Agents of Octopus could pick up audio and visual images with the equipment as far as 25 miles away.

Hale Boggs was investigating Operation Octopus at the time of his disappearance in the midst of the Watergate probe.

In 1952, at MCA, Actors’ Guild president Ronald Reagan - a screen idol recruited by MOCKINGBIRD’s Crusade for Freedom to raise funds for the resettlement of Nazis in the U.S., according to Loftus - signed a secret waiver of the conflict-of-interest rule with the mob-controlled studio, in effect granting it a labor monopoly on early television programming. In exchange, MCA made Reagan a part owner. Furthermore, historian C. Vann Woodward, writing in the New York Times, in 1987, reported that Reagan had “fed the names of suspect people in his organization to the FBI secretly and regularly enough to be assigned ‘an informer’s code number, T-10.’ His FBI file indicates intense collaboration with producers to ‘purge’ the industry of subversives.”

No one ever turned a suspicious eye on Walter Cronkite, a former intelligence officer and in the immediate postwar period UPI’s Moscow correspondent. Cronkite was lured to CBS by Operation MOCKINGBIRD’s Phil Graham, according to Deborah Davis. Another television conglomerate, Cap Cities (now Disney/Cap Cities/ABC), rose like a horror-film simian from CIA and Mafia heroin operations. Among other organized-crime Republicans, Thomas Dewey and his neighbor Lowell Thomas threw in to launch the infamous Resorts International, the corporate front for Lansky’s branch of the federally-sponsored mob family and the corporate precursor to Cap Cities. Another of the investors was James Crosby, a Cap Cities executive who donated \$100,000 to Nixon’s 1968 presidential campaign. This was the year that Resorts bought into Atlantic City casino interests. Police in New Jersey attempted, with no success, to spike the issuance of a gambling license to the company, citing Mafia ties.

In 1954, this same circle of investors, all Catholics, founded the broadcasting company notorious for overt propagandizing and general spookiness. The company’s chief counsel was OSS veteran William Casey, who clung to his shares by concealing them in a blind trust even after he was appointed CIA director by Ronald Reagan in 1981. Most consumers of the corporate media were - and are - unaware of the effect that the salting of public opinion has on their own beliefs. A network anchorman in time of national crisis is an instrument of psychological warfare in the MOCKINGBIRD media. He is a creature from the national security sector’s chamber of horrors. For this reason consumers of the corporate press have reason to examine their basic beliefs about government and life in the parallel universe of these United States.

Alex Constantine is author of Psychic Dictatorship in the USA and editor of Fascism in America: The Essential Mae Brussell.

Rock Creek Free Press

A FIERCELY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS

Protecting America – From the President

President George W. Bush and his director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnell, are telling the American people that an unaccountable executive branch is necessary for their protection. Without the Protect America Act, Bush and McConnell claim, the executive branch will not be able to spy on terrorists, and we will all be blown up. Terrorists can only be stopped, Bush says, if Bush has the right to spy on everyone without any oversight by courts.

The fight over the Protect America Act was everything to do with our safety, only not in the way that Bush and McConnell assert.

Bush says the Democrats have put “our country more in danger of an attack” by letting the Protect America Act lapse. This claim is nonsense. The 30-year-old Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act gives the executive branch all the power it needs to spy on terrorists.

The choice between FISA and the Protect America Act has nothing whatsoever to do with terrorism, at least not from foreign terrorists. Bush and his brownshirts object to FISA, because the law requires Bush to obtain warrants from a FISA court. Warrants mean that Bush is accountable. Bush and his brownshirts argue that accountability is an infringement on the power of the president.

To escape accountability, the Brownshirt Party came up with the Protect America Act. This act eliminates Bush’s accountability to judges and gives the telecom companies immunity from the felonies they committed by acquiescing in Bush’s illegal spying.

Bush began violating the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) in October 2001 when he spied on Americans without obtaining warrants from the FISA court.

Bush pressured telecom companies to break the law in order to enable his illegal spying. In court documents, Joseph P. Nacchio, former CEO of Qwest Communications International, states that his firm was approached more than six months before the September 11, 2001, attacks and asked to participate in a spying operation that Qwest believed to be illegal. When Qwest refused, the Bush administration withdrew opportunities for contracts worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Nacchio himself was subsequently indicted for insider trading, sending the message to all telecom companies to cooperate with the Bush regime or else.

Bush has not been held accountable for the felonies

he committed and for leading telecom companies into a life of crime.

As the lawmakers who gave us FISA understood, spying on people without warrants lets a political party collect dirt on its adversaries with which to blackmail them. As Bush illegally spied a long time before word of it got out, blackmail might be the reason the Democrats have ignored their congressional election mandate and have not put a stop to Bush’s illegal wars and unconstitutional police state measures.

Perhaps the Democrats have finally caught on that they cannot function as a political party as long as they continue to permit Bush to spy on them. For one reason or another, they have let the Orwellian-named Protect America Act expire.

With the Protect America Act, Bush and his brownshirts are trying to establish the independence of the executive branch from statutory law and the Constitution. The FISA law means that the president is accountable to federal judges for warrants. Bush and the brownshirt Republicans are striving to make the president independent of all accountability. The brownshirts insist that the leader knows best and can tolerate no interference from the law, the judiciary, the Congress, or the Constitution, and certainly not from the American people who, the brownshirts tell us, won’t be safe unless Bush is very powerful.

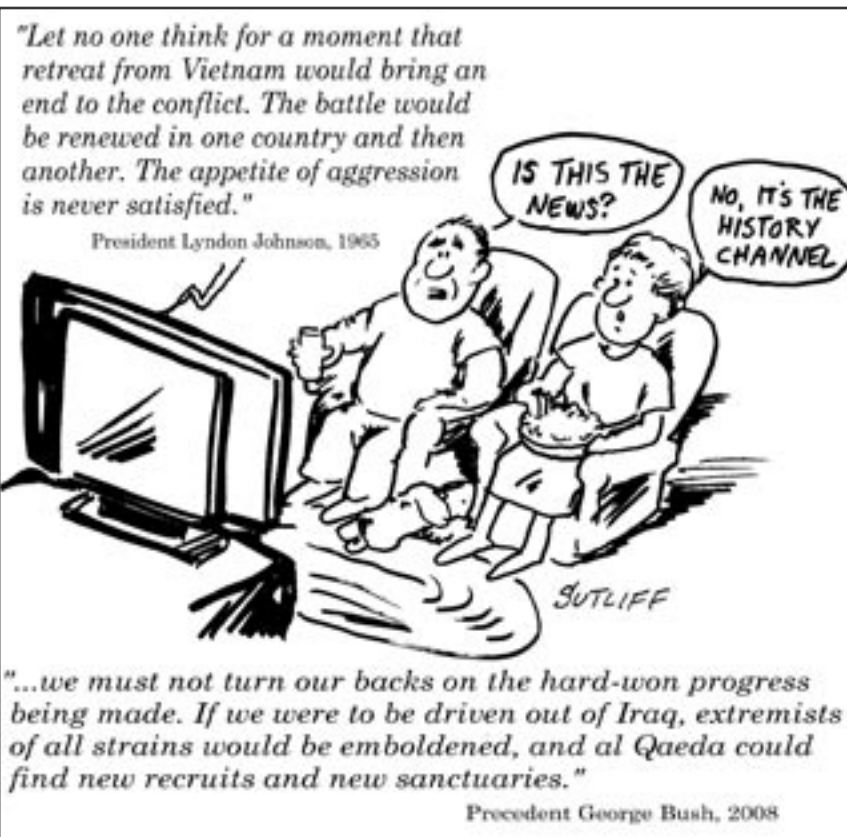
George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison saw it differently. The American people cannot be safe unless the president is accountable and under many restraints.

Pray that the Democrats have caught on that they cannot give the executive branch unaccountable powers to spy and still have grounds on which to refuse the executive branch unaccountable powers elsewhere.

Republicans have used the “war on terror” to create an unaccountable executive. To prevent the presidency from becoming a dictatorial office, it is crucial that Congress cease acquiescing in Bush’s grab for powers. As the Founding Fathers warned us, the terrorists we have to fear are the ones in power in Washington.

The al-Qaeda terrorists, with whom Bush has been frightening us, have no power to destroy our liberties. Compared to the loss of liberty, a terrorist attack is nothing.

Paul Craig Roberts was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the Reagan administration. He is coauthor of The Tyranny of Good Intentions. He can be reached at: paulcraigroberts@yahoo.com



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Debt Serfdom Comes to America

BY ELLEN BROWN

Today We're All Irish

We recently celebrated St. Patrick’s Day, when people of all national origins raise a glass and declare, “Today we’re all a bit Irish!” This may be truer than we know. The Irish were driven to America by debt, and they are leading the Western world in household debt today.

The *London Daily Telegraph* reported on March 13, 2008 that household debt in Ireland has reached 190 percent of disposable income, the highest in the developed world; and that the Irish banking system is suffering such acute strains from the downturn in the housing market that it may have to nationalize its banks. The same may soon be happening in the United States, and for much the same reasons.

Debt Drives the Irish to America

A short review of the history of the Irish in North America reveals that few

were here before 1845, when a disease struck the potato crops of Ireland, wiping out the chief or only source of food for many poor farmers. Famine continued for the next five years, killing over 2.5 million people. “God put the blight on the potatoes,” complained the Irish farmers, “but England put the hunger upon Ireland.”

Farmers who were heavily in debt were shipped to England to pay the rent owed to their landlords. Impoverished Irish immigrants saved what little money they could to send family members across the Atlantic, traveling on overcrowded ships on which many died of disease or hunger on the way. When they arrived, the Irish men had to fight – often physically – to get labor jobs involving long hours and low pay; while the women worked mainly as servants (called “Brigets”) to upper-class families. Despite their very low wages, they managed to send a bit of money back to their families, until

other family members had enough to buy the ship tickets to America. In the American South (mainly New Orleans), the Irish lived in swamp land infested with disease.

Here, Irish men were looked upon as actually lower than slaves. As one historian put it, if a plantation owner lost a slave, he lost an investment; if he lost a laborer, he could always get another. Because the Irish workers were plentiful and expendable, they were often sent in to do dangerous jobs for which the slave-owners were reluctant to send their valuable slaves.

“Debt Slavery” Replaces Physical Slavery

This form of “debt slavery” or “debt peonage” was not just an accidental development of history. It was a deliberately-planned alternative to the slave arrangement in which owners

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Economics: Hallucinated Wealth

BY JOHN MICHAEL GREER

I have no idea if kids still do this, but in my elementary school days in the late 1960s it was common practice to write IOUs for “a million billion trillion dollars” or some equally precise sum, and use those as the stakes in card games like Old Maid and Go Fish. Some of those IOUs passed from hand to hand dozens of times before being accidentally left in a pocket and meeting their fate in the wash. Kids who were good card players amassed portfolios with a very impressive face value, especially compared to the 25 cents a week that was the standard allowance in my neighborhood just then. If I recall correctly, though, nobody ever tried to convert their IOU holdings into anything more substantial than cookies from a classmate’s lunchbox, and that’s apparently the one thing that kept me and my friends from becoming pioneers of

modern finance.

It surprises me how many people still seem to think that the main business of a modern economy is the production and distribution of goods and services. In point of fact, far and away the majority of economic activity today consists of the production and exchange of IOUs. The United States has the world’s largest economy not because it produces more goods and services than anyone else—it doesn’t, not by a long shot—but because it produces more IOUs than anyone else, and sells those IOUs to the rest of the world in exchange for goods and services.

An IOU, after all, is simply a promise to pay a given amount of value at some future time. That describes nearly every instrument of exchange in today’s economy, from bonds and treasury bills through bank deposits and

government-issued currency to credit swaps and derivatives. All these share three things in common with the IOUs my schoolmates staked on card games. First, they cost almost nothing to issue. Second, their face value needn’t have any relationship at all to the issuer’s ability to pay up. Third, they can be exchanged for goods and services—like the cookies in my example—but their main role is in exchanges where nothing passes from hand to hand except IOUs.

It’s harsh but not, I think, unfair to call the result an economy of hallucinated wealth. Like the face value of those schoolroom IOUs, most “wealth” nowadays exists only because everyone agrees it does. Outside the social game of the market economy, financial instruments have no value at all, and the game continues only because the

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Cuckoo in the Nest: How the War Party Prevails

BY WERTHER*

The saturation coverage afforded the presidential horse race, with all its vapid, soap-operaish attitudinizing about the petty personality traits of the candidates has become so overwhelming as to drown out the purpose and meaning of elections in a nominally constitutional republic. How many more election cycles before we descend to the level of Argentina or the Philippines, where ex-divas, beauty queens, or mistresses of dead dictators ascend the greasy pole of power on the strength of their tear-jerking karaoke numbers? Or like Russia, where the heir of Peter the Great appeared on the stage of a rock concert on election night with his designated successor, both of them garbed in studded leather jackets like a couple of skinheads?

Petty and melodramatic the squabbles of the campaign may be, but on rare occasions they afford us a glimpse at the Realpolitik the candidate is likely to implement upon election — indeed, they suggest what the whole campaign is about, win or lose. And perhaps winning is not the point; the higher objective is to shore up the status quo.

How else can one interpret Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton’s denigration of her Democratic primary opponent’s foreign policy experience, while at the same time she praised that of the putative Republican nominee, Senator John McCain? Objectively, the argument is bosh, since Senator McCain has no more meaningful executive command

time under his belt than any of the other 99 Senators duly chosen and sworn. His foreign policy pronouncements as a senator are nothing but the expression of the aggressive, frustrated impulses of someone who needs desperately to vindicate his past life.

But what is even odder is the fact that in praising Senator McCain, Senator Clinton is handing ammunition to her potential Republican opponent in the general election campaign. Sparse as Senator McCain’s foreign policy experience and judgment are, Senator Clinton is framing an issue that would work to her Republican rival’s advantage. A thorough reading of the United States Constitution would make one conclude that the office of the first lady had no constitutional basis or line authority in the chain of command from the president on down.

Then why did she make that comparison, to her Democratic rival’s disadvantage and her potential Republican rival’s benefit? Perhaps she got carried away in the heat of a tight primary campaign and said whatever sounded plausible to discredit her immediate opponent, figuring that she would deal with Senator McCain should she be fortunate enough (or cunning and devious enough) to secure the Democratic nomination. Perhaps. But imagining, a month or two ago, one of the Republican candidates denigrating his party conferees in comparison to a Democrat, shows how unlikely Ms. Clinton’s outburst was as an

act of mere inadvertence.

Senator Clinton, and her husband before her, are a kind of flywheel that regulates the Democratic Party machinery. They embody the policy preferences of an oligarchy that has run this country more or less continuously since the *Maine* gurgled into the murk of Havana harbor. The oligarchy has two non-negotiable demands: first, that American finance at its apex must be run by a small cartel of monopolists mislabeling itself as proponents of the “free market”; and second, the care and feeding of the war machine must be attended to. Once those two demands have been met, it doesn’t really matter which party wins the presidency. The yokels can exercise themselves to their hearts’ content over religion in public life, “family values,” or other distractions, as long as the oligarchs control the counting house and the arsenal.

The Republican primary process has long since winnowed down the possibilities to the most pro-war plausible candidate who ran in that series of contests. Therefore, it is not necessary that Senator Clinton should win the general election, merely that she should deny the nomination to someone, like Senator Obama, who is at least in a rhetorical sense unambiguously anti-war. She is, as was her husband in the previous decade, the cuckoo in the Democratic nest.

* Werther is the pen name of a Northern Virginia-based defense analyst.

CYNTHIA MCKINNEY

A Discussion of Race Worth Having

Much has been made around the edges of this campaign about the issue of race. Sadly, nothing has been made of the public policy exigencies that arise because of the urgent racial disparities that continue to exist in our country. Just last week, the United Nations criticized the United States, again, for its failure to address the issues arising from the rights, particularly the right of return, of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita survivors.

Author Bill Quigley writes in “The Cleansing of New Orleans,” that half of the working poor, elderly, and disabled of New Orleans have not been able to return. Two weeks ago, United Nations experts on housing and minority rights called for an immediate end of public housing demolitions in New Orleans.

Now, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, ratified by the US in 1994, further observes that the US must do more to protect and support the African American community. In 2006, the United Nations Human Rights Commission “noted its concern that while African Americans constitute just 12% of the population, they represent 50% of homeless people, and the government is required to take “adequate and adequately implemented” measures to remedy this human rights violation.” In short, the United Nations has issued reports squarely calling for the United States to do more to eliminate racial discrimination and this discrimination is a human rights violation.

I am deeply offended that in the middle of a Presidential campaign, remarks—be they from a pastor or a communications mogul, or a former Vice Presidential nominee—are the cause of a focus on race, and not the deep racial disparities that communities are forced to endure on a daily basis in this country.

Myriad reports and studies that have been done all come up with the same basic conclusion: in order to resolve deep and persisting racial disparities in this country, a public policy initiative is urgently needed. A real discussion of race, in the context of a Presidential election, ought to include a discussion of the various public policy initiatives offered by the various candidates to eliminate all forms and vestiges of racial discrimination, including the racial disparities that cloud the hopes, dreams, and futures of millions of Americans.

For example, every year on the anniversary of the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. United for a Fair Economy publishes a study of the true state of people of color in America called the “State of the Dream Report.” And it was their 2004 report that noted that without public policy intervention, it would take 1,664

years to close the racial gap in home ownership in this country. And that on some indices, for example, infant mortality, the racial disparities were worse at the time of the report than at the time of the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In their 2005 report, entitled, “Disowned,” United for a Fair Economy explored the disparate impact of Bush’s “Ownership Society” economic program that saw Black and Latino lives shattered as unemployment, income, home ownership, business ownership, and stock ownership plummeted even in the face of Administration economists trumpeting the phenomenal “growth” of the US economy as a result of their policies.

In 2006, United for a Fair Economy focused on the devastating and embarrassing effect of government inaction before, during, and after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. They focused on something as simple as car ownership and the relationship between vehicle ownership and race. In the case of New Orleans, car ownership literally meant the difference between losing or saving one’s life.

In 2007, United for a Fair Economy explored the Black voters’ attachment to the Democratic Party, and in a piece entitled, “Voting Blue, but Staying in the Red,” they explored goals that the Democratic Party should have put at the top of its agenda for its first 100 hours in the majority. While noting that the Democrats didn’t even mention Katrina in their agenda, United for a Fair Economy concluded that Blacks and Latinos voted in the November 2006 elections in the blue, but due to a failure of public policy that pays attention to their needs, they continue to live in the red.

In their 2008 report, United for a Fair Economy explores the sub-prime mortgage crisis and note that the largest loss of wealth in US history is being experienced by the Black and Latino communities with an estimated \$92 billion being lost by Blacks and an estimated \$98 billion being lost by Latinos. And while families are losing their life savings and the only major investment that they own, policy makers are asking them to tighten their belts. But the predator banks’ CEOs are walking away with record remuneration. And our policy makers are notable for their inaction: first on the predatory lending that disproportionately affects Blacks and Latinos, and then on offering relief so that homeowners remain homeowners, including in the midst of this crisis.

Sadly, United for a Fair Economy isn’t the only research organization to find glaring and intolerable

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A Discussion of Race Worth Having

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disparities in our society by race and no appropriate public policies enacted to address them. Hull House did a study that found that it would take 200 years to close the gap in the quality of life experienced by black Chicagoans and white Chicagoans. There has been no public policy initiative taken up by the mayor or the governor of Illinois to begin closing that gap.

Several years ago, the *New York Times* published a finding that nearly half the men between the ages of 16 and 64 in New York City were unemployed. There was no initiative by the mayor or the governor of New York to begin addressing such pain.

Every year, the National Urban League publishes a study, "The State of Black America," in which the ills and disparities that persist in this country are catalogued. Every year, the story is basically the same. The United States has a way to go that only public policy can address. However, when Harvard University/The Kaiser Family Foundation did a study on White attitudes about race several years ago, it found that Whites have little appreciation for the reality of Black life in America, from police harassment and intimidation, to imprisonment, to family income, unemployment, housing, and health care. But without an appreciation of the reality faced by many of our fellow Americans, the necessary public policy initiatives to change those realities will find difficulty gaining acceptance in the public discourse.

Additionally, compounding the problem, there is little public discourse because the corporate press refuse to cover the deep implications of the results of all these studies. I am convinced that if the American people knew the truth of the conditions, change would surely follow. I believe that to be the case because of the impact of the images of "Bloody Sunday" on the passage of the Voting Rights Act. I believe that to be the case because of the impact of the images of the Vietnam War on the turn of the tide of public opinion against that War.

This moment sheds light on a much-needed discussion: on race and the legacies of race and



slavery and the continuing problems associated with our failure to treat racism as a curable American disease.

I am glad that candidate Obama mentioned the existing racial disparities in education, income, wealth, jobs, government services, imprisonment, and opportunity. Now it is time to address the public policies necessary to resolve these disparities. Now it is time to have the discussion on how we are going to come together and put policies in effect that will provide real hope and real opportunity to all in this country.

To narrow the gap between the ideals of our founding fathers and the realities faced by too many in our country today: That must be the role of public policy at this critical moment in our country today.

I welcome a real discussion of race in this country and a resolve to end the long-standing disparities that continue to spoil the greatness of our country. I welcome a real discussion of all the issues that face our country today and the real public policy options that exist to resolve them. That must be the measure of this campaign season. For many voters, this important discussion has been too vague or completely non-existent. Now is the time to talk about the concrete measures that will move our country forward: on race, war, climate change, the economy, health care, and education. Our votes and our political engagement must be about ensuring that fairness truly for all is embodied in "liberty and justice for all."

Cynthia McKinney is a former congresswoman from Georgia and Green Party candidate for President 2008.

How Alabama Gov. Don Siegelman Got Roved

SIEGELMAN from p.1

Canary's "girls" are two US Attorneys in Alabama, both appointed by President Bush. One is Bill Canary's wife, Leura Canary. The other is Alice Martin. According to Harper's Scott Horton, a law professor at Columbia University, Martin is known for abusive prosecutions.

What was the "crime" for which Siegelman and Scrusby were convicted? Scrusby made a contribution to the Alabama Education Foundation, a not-for-profit organization set up to push for a lottery to benefit secondary education in Alabama, to retire debt associated with the Alabama education lottery proposal. Scrusby was a member of Alabama's Certificate of Need board, a nonpaid group that oversaw hospital expansion. Scrusby had been a member of the board through the terms of the prior three governors, and Siegelman asked him to serve another term.

Federal prosecutors claimed that Scrusby's contribution was a bribe to Siegelman in exchange for being appointed to the Certificate of Need board. In the words of federal prosecutor Stephen Feaga, the contribution was "given in exchange for a promise for an official act."

Feaga's statement is absolute nonsense. It is well known that Scrusby had served on the board for years, felt he had done his duty, and wanted off the board. It was Siegelman who convinced Scrusby to remain on the board. Moreover, Scrusby gave no money to Siegelman. The money went to a foundation.

As a large number of attorneys have pointed out, every US president appoints his ambassadors and cabinet members from people who have donated to his campaign. Under the reasoning applied in the Siegelman case, a large number of living former presidents, cabinet members and ambassadors should be in federal prison - not to mention the present incumbents.

How in the world did a jury convict two men of a non-crime?

The answer is that the US Attorney used Governor Siegelman's indicted young assistant, Nick Bailey, to create the impression among some of the jurors that "something must have happened." Unbeknownst to Siegelman, Bailey was extorting money or accepting bribes from Alabama businessmen in exchange for state business. Bailey was caught. Presented with threats of a long sentence, Bailey agreed to testify falsely that Siegelman came out of a meeting with Scrusby and showed Bailey a \$250,000 check he had accepted in exchange for appointing Scrusby to the Certificate of Need board. Prosecutors knew that Bailey's testimony was false, not only because they had Bailey rewrite his testimony many times and rehearsed him until he had it down pat, but also because they had the check. The records show that the check, written to a charitable organization, was cut days after the meeting from which Siegelman allegedly emerged with check in hand.

It is a crime for prosecutors to withhold exculpatory evidence. The *Washington Post* reported on February 26 that Siegelman's attorneys have called for a special prosecutor after CBS quoted prosecution witness Bailey "as saying prosecutors met with him about 70 times. He said they had him regularly write out his testimony because they were frustrated with his recollection of events. The written notes, if they existed, could have damaged the credibility of Bailey's story, but no such notes were turned over to the defense, as would have been required by law."

In video documentaries available online, Bailey's friend, Amy Methvin, says that Bailey told her that he was going to parrot the prosecutors' line, "pay for play," "quid pro quo." Methvin says Bailey went into a speech about money exchanged for favors. "You sound like a robot," Methvin told him. "You would have it memorized, too, if you had heard the answers as many times as I have heard the answers," Bailey replied.

The prosecutors also had help from some jurors. On a WOTM Special Report hosted by former US Attorney Raymond Johnson, Alabama lawyer Julian McPhillips produced emails from two jurors about influencing other jurors in order to achieve a conviction. Jurors are not supposed to discuss a case outside the court or to consider information other than what is presented in court and allowed by the judge. The outside communication among the jurors is sufficient to declare a mistrial.

However, Federal District Judge, Mark Fuller, a George W. Bush appointee, ignored the tainted jury. Fuller's handling of the case suspiciously favored the prosecution. He bore a strong grudge against Siegelman. Fuller had been an Alabama district attorney before Bush made him a federal judge. Fuller's

successor as district attorney was appointed by Siegelman and produced evidence that suggested that Fuller had connived with his former senior assistant in a "pension spiking" scheme, which some viewed as a fraud or attempted fraud against the state retirement system.

Despite his known animosity toward Siegelman, Fuller refused to recuse himself from Siegelman's trial. According to the WOTM Special Report, Fuller owns a company that was receiving federal money during Siegelman's trial. Fuller did not disclose this conflict of interest. The charges raised by 60 Minutes cast the trial as Karl Rove's effort to rid the Republicans of the candidate they could not beat. The strange conduct of the presiding Republican judge, who had recently become a rich man as the company he owned was awarded a mass of discretionary federal contracts, only raises more very troubling questions.

The Justice Department's answer to the accusation that it framed Siegelman is that Siegelman was indicted by career prosecutors and convicted in a fair trial by a jury of his peers. These claims are no more truthful than anything else the



Alabama Governor Don Siegelman

DOJ says. Horton reports that career prosecutors advised against the case, concluded it was a political vendetta and walked away from it. Canary's "girls" were "flailing about trying to find loyal troopers who would shut up and do what is expected of them," a category into which Scott Horton says Louis Franklin and his deputy Stephen Feaga fell. The jurors were presented with what Bailey's and Methvin's testimony indicates to be Bailey's perjury suborned by the US Attorney's office and misled about what the testimony actually meant.

Horton says the case was "pressed forward with brute political force." According to Horton, Leura Canary refused to recuse herself despite her obvious conflict of interest. After she was forced to recuse herself, she continued to control the case from her office. In Horton's words: "Her husband was managing the campaign against Siegelman and leaks from the investigation were emanating from someone at his address. But beyond this, her husband, Bill Canary, had a long, well established, close working relationship with Karl Rove covering work he did in Washington and Alabama over a period of more than 17 years. Leura and Billy Canary were close friends of, and socialized with, Karl Rove."

On his Bush League Justice program, MSNBC's Dan Abrams reported that a Republican attorney said under oath that "key Republicans on [Republican candidate for governor Bob] Riley's team discussed talking to Karl Rove about the case, quoting one of them who said, 'Not to worry, that he had already gotten it worked out with Karl, and Karl had spoken to the Department of Justice.'"

The Bush Justice Department first went after Siegelman during his 2002 reelection campaign. When Siegelman was first elected in 1998, the Republican Alabama Attorney General, William Pryor, began investigating Siegelman. There was nothing to investigate, but his "investigation" was the entry for Leura Canary, who federalized the "investigation." Politically motivated leaks from the "investigation" were used in an effort to defeat Siegelman's reelection.

It almost worked, but Siegelman narrowly won.

Unable to defeat Siegelman even with leaks from a phony investigation designed to smear him, the Republicans decided to steal the election. After all districts had reported the vote count, Siegelman thanked the voters for reelecting him and went to bed. During the night the Republicans, with no Democratic voting officials present, "recounted" the ballots in Baldwin County. Six thousand Siegelman votes that had been reported disappeared in the recount. The next morning Republican Bob Riley declared himself the winner.

The theft was so hastily arranged that the thieves forgot to change any of the other vote outcomes on the ballots. All other races had the same totals as originally reported, a statistical impossibility had there actually been a computer glitch as the election thieves claimed.

The Republican attorney general Pryor refused a recount. The Bush Justice Department and Republican federal judges looked the other way, as did the Republican propaganda sheets that masquerade as news media in Alabama.

President Bush rewarded William Pryor for his service by making him a federal judge in a recess appointment as he could not be confirmed by the US Senate.

According to MSNBC and other reports, a prosecution witness against Siegelman also made charges against Pryor and US Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL), but neither of the Republicans were investigated.

The case against Siegelman was drawn out in the media for two more years in the hopes of smearing him forever. When Leura Canary's false case was finally brought to court, Federal District Judge U.W. Clemon threw it out of court. Clemon cited an assistant US Attorney and an assistant state attorney general for contempt of court. All charges against Siegelman and his co-defendants were dropped on October 5, 2004.

Vindicated, Siegelman began his campaign for recovering the governorship in 2006. The word came from Washington to "take another look at the case," a phrase that could well be understood as "get Siegelman at all costs." Siegelman was indicted a second time on October 26, 2005, costing him the Democratic primary. The jury twice deadlocked and was twice sent back by Siegelman's adversary, Judge Fuller. With charges of jury-tampering in the air, Siegelman was acquitted of 25 counts and found guilty of "pay for play." Judge Fuller had Siegelman handcuffed and manacled and immediately whisked off to prison for a seven-year sentence. Normally a non-dangerous person is left at liberty while the case is being appealed.

The Siegelman case makes it clear exactly what Bush, Rove, and the disgraced Bush flunky Alberto Gonzales intended by firing the eight Republican US Attorneys. These eight refused to politicize their office by falsely prosecuting Democrats in order to achieve a Rovian political agenda. Apparently, there were only eight honest persons among the 1,200 Republican US Attorneys. Bush, Rove, and Gonzales had no problem with the other 1,192. Professors Donald Shields and John Cragan report that the Bush Justice Department has investigated seven times more Democratic than Republican officials.

Former Alabama Supreme Court Justice Terry Butts said that justice in America today is about political agendas, "not about convicting real criminals." Butts said that Siegelman's attorneys and allies expect reprisals from the US Attorney's office and Alabama's Republican establishment.

Siegelman has been in prison for over a year. His appeal cannot move forward, because Judge Fuller's court has not produced a transcript of the trial needed for appeal. In other words, Republicans are preventing Siegelman from being released on appeal by a higher court.

Karl Rove refused to testify about the case before Congress.

On February 25, 2008, Fox "News" gave Karl Rove airtime in which to deny the accusations and evidence against him, which he did.

The Department of Justice refuses to release Siegelman trial documents to Congress. It won't even let Congress see what Leura Canary had to say to her bosses about the ethics challenges brought against her, which they swept under the carpet.

Siegelman's family home was broken into.

Siegelman's attorney's office was broken into and ransacked.

Jill Simpson's house had a mysterious "electrical fire" and her car was run off the road.

Is a justice system that functions in this way worthy of respect? Can we believe any convictions obtained by federal prosecutors?

Author's note: Scott Horton, Harper's Online, has reported extensively and courageously on the frame-up of Don Siegelman. Raw Story has a multi-part report by Larisa Alexandrovna and Muriel Kane. The 60 Minutes broadcast is available from YouTube as is the WOTM Special Report. YouTube also has a multi-part documentary on Richard Scrusby. Brad Blog provides good coverage including a MSNBC broadcast on the Siegelman prosecution which traces it back to Karl Rove. Ernest Partridge's Online Journal account provides additional information including the study by Professors Donald Shields and John Cragan. See also Glynn Wilson at The Nation.

Hallucinated Wealth

HALLUCINATED from p.3

players - all of them, from the very rich to the ones with scarcely a million billion trillion dollars to their name - keep playing. They have to keep playing, because access to goods and services, not to mention privilege, perks, and power, depend on participation in the game.

The resulting IOU economy is highly unstable, because hallucinated wealth has value only as long as people believe it does. The history of modern economics is thus a chronicle of booms and busts, as tidal shifts in opinion send various classes of IOUs zooming up in value and then crashing back down to earth. Crashes, far from being signs of breakdown, are a necessary and normal part of the process. They serve the same role as laundry day did in the schoolroom IOU economy, paring down the total number of IOUs when an excess emerges, and thus maintaining the fiction that the ones left still have value.

All this leaves us in a historically unprecedented situation. Economies based purely on hallucinated wealth existed before the 20th century, but only for brief periods in the midst of speculative frenzies - the Dutch tulip mania, the South Sea bubble, and so on. Today's hallucinated wealth, by contrast, has maintained its place as the mainspring of the global economy for more than half a century. Social critics who point to the housing bubble, the derivatives bubble, or the like, and predict imminent disaster when these bubbles pop, are missing the wider picture: the great majority of the global economy rests on the same foundations of empty air.

Those who have noticed this wider picture, on the other hand, are fond of suggesting that sometime soon, given a suitable shock, the entire structure will come cascading down. Those of you who were reading the alternative press at the time of the 1987 stock market crash will recall predictions of economic collapse in the wake of that vertiginous plunge. Similar predictions have accompanied each of the notable fiscal crises since then - the Japanese stock market debacle of 1990, the Mexican debt crisis of 1995, the Asian currency crash of 1998, the tech-stock crash of 2000, and so on. Similar claims are now being made about the housing bubble, the US trade and credit deficit, and of course about peak oil as well.

Plausible as these claims are, I suspect they're missing the core of the situation, as well as the lessons taught by twenty years of violent economic gyrations. It's a mistake to expect hallucinations to obey the laws of gravity. It's doubly a mistake when the institutions charged with keeping them in midair - the Federal Reserve Board in the US and its equivalents elsewhere - have proven tolerably adept at manipulating markets, flooding the economy with cheap credit (that is, more IOUs) to minimize the effects of a crash, and inflating some other sector of the economy to take up the slack of a deflating bubble. It's triply a mistake when the American middle class and, to a lesser extent, its equivalents in other industrial countries display a faith in speculation so invulnerable to mere reality that their response to a crash in one market is invariably to go looking for a new speculative bubble somewhere else.

To say that the economic empire of hallucinated wealth will continue to exist, though, does not imply that it will continue to produce the goods and services and provide the jobs that people need. Arguably, it doesn't do that very well now. The "jobless recovery"

of recent years saw most economic statistics rise well into positive territory, while most people saw their expenses rise and their income shrink when their jobs didn't simply fold out from under them. Things could go much further in the same direction. It requires no particular suspension of disbelief to imagine a situation where the stock market hits new heights daily and other measures of economic activity remain in positive territory, while most of the population is starving in the streets.

Partly, as Bernard Gross pointed out several decades ago, economic indicators have morphed into "economic vindicators" that promote a political agenda rather than reflecting economic realities. The dubious statistical gamesmanship inflicted on the consumer price index and the official unemployment rate in the US show this with a good deal of clarity. Partly, though, most of the common measures of economic well-being only track hallucinated wealth, and the markets whose antics fill so much of the financial news are IOU markets disconnected from what remains of the real economy, where real people produce and consume real goods and services.

Thus trying to track the economic impact of peak oil, global warming, and other aspects of our predicament by watching markets and financial statistics may well turn out to be as misleading as trying to track the supply of cookies in a schoolroom by watching the exchange of IOUs in card games. As for the theory that a massive market crash triggered by peak oil will bring down the economy, this is, to be frank, naive. Crashes there will certainly be, and some of them may be monumental, since volatility in the energy markets tends to play crack-the-whip with the rest of the economy. Crashes aren't threats to the system, though; crashes, and the recessions and economic turmoil that follow them, are part of the system.

The economy of markets and statistics has aptly been compared to a circus, and like any other circus, it serves mostly to distract. While interest rates wile the crowd with their high-wire act and clowns pile into and out of various speculative vehicles, the real story of economic decline will be going on elsewhere, in the non-hallucinated economy of goods and services, jobs and personal income, all but invisible behind a veil of massaged numbers and discreetly unmentioned by the mainstream media. There's good reason for that to be tucked out of sight, too, because it won't be pretty at all.

As the boom and bust cycle continues and accelerates, we can expect each recession to push more people down into poverty, and each recovery to lift fewer out of it. As industries dependent on cheap abundant energy fold, we'll see jobs evaporate, lines form at the doors of soup kitchens, and today's posh suburbs slump into tomorrow's shantytowns. Rising transport costs and sinking median incomes will squeeze the global trade in consumer goods until it implodes; shortages and ad hoc distribution networks will be the order of the day, and wild gyrations in currency markets could easily make barter and local scrip worth a good deal more than a million billion trillion dollars of hyperinflated IOU-money. Poverty, malnutrition, and desperation will be among the very few things not in short supply.

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FBI Deputizes Corporations to Enforce Martial Law

INFRAGUARD from p.1

including FBI personnel. At first glance, many would think this alliance healthy and useful in the fight against "terrorism," but upon further examination, one has to wonder.

InfraGard began as an alliance between the FBI and local businesses with the objective of investigating cyber threats. Since that time, little resemblance to that design exists. According to InfraGard's own website, InfraGard is an information sharing and analysis effort serving the interests and combining the knowledge base of a wide range of members. At its most basic level, InfraGard is a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the private sector. InfraGard is an association of businesses, academic institutions, state and local law enforcement agencies, and participants dedicated to sharing information and intelligence [emphasis added] to prevent hostile acts against the United States.

Every InfraGard chapter has an FBI special agent coordinator attached to it, and this FBI coordinator works closely with FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C. Initially, while under the direction of the National Infrastructure Protection Center (NIPC), the focus of InfraGard was cyberinfrastructure protection, but things have gotten much more interesting since September 11, 2001. NIPC then expanded its efforts to include physical as well as cyber threats to critical infrastructures.

A progression is occurring, but it gets even more interesting as time passes. In March 2003, NIPC was transferred to the Department of Homeland Security which now has total responsibility for critical infrastructure protection (CIP) matters. Part of the Department of Homeland Security's mission is to facilitate InfraGard's continuing role in CIP activities and to further develop InfraGard's ability to support the FBI's investigative mission, especially as it pertains to counterterrorism and cyber crimes.

InfraGard's stated goal "is to promote ongoing dialogue and timely communications between members and the FBI." Pay attention to this next part:

"InfraGard members gain access to information that enables them to protect their assets and in turn give information to government that facilitates its responsibilities to prevent and address terrorism and other crimes."

I take from this statement that there is a distinct tradeoff, a tradeoff not available to the rest of us, whereby InfraGard members are privy to inside information from government to protect themselves and their assets; in return they give the government information it desires. This is done under the auspices of preventing terrorism and other crimes. Of course, as usual, "other crimes" is not defined, leaving us to guess just what information is being transferred. Since these members of InfraGard are people in positions of power in the "private" sector, people who have access to a massive amount of private information about the rest of us, just what information are they divulging to government? Remember, they are getting valuable consideration in the form of advance warnings and protection for their lives and assets from government. This does not an honest partnership make; quite the contrary.

In my article "The New Crime of Thinking," I criticized H.R.1955 and Senate 1959, which, if passed, will literally criminalize thought against government. As usual, the exact type of thought is left undefined. This vagueness in

the thought-crime legislation together with the secrecy of InfraGard makes for a dangerous combination. S.1959, if passed, will be attached to the Homeland Security Act and InfraGard is already a part of the Department of Homeland Security. This is not a coincidence. Under section 899b of S.1959 it is stated:

"Preventing the potential rise of self radicalized, unaffiliated terrorists domestically cannot be easily accomplished solely through traditional Federal intelligence or law enforcement efforts, and can benefit from the incorporation of State and local efforts."

This appears to be a direct reference to the InfraGard program. Moreover, in section 899c of S.1959 the new commission, created after passage, is to build upon and bring together the work of other entities, and will establish, as designated under 899d, a "Center of Excellence." This center will be university-based, and is to study "violent radicalization and homegrown terrorism" in the United States. According to InfraGard's mission

InfraGard members. Independent of the type of presentation, (interview, brief, or published documentation) the InfraGard leadership and the local FBI representative should be made aware of the upcoming presentation. The InfraGard member and the FBI representative should agree on the theme of the presentation. The identity of InfraGard members should be protected at all times."

This means that no one outside InfraGard is to know who is a member unless previous approval has been given. In addition, when interviews with members of the press are forthcoming, all questions should be submitted in writing prior to the interview. The InfraGard leadership and the local FBI representative should review the submitted questions, agree on the character of the answers, and identify the appropriate person to be interviewed prior to the interview. Even demeanor is addressed in this directive, and strict guidelines for behavior are listed. You see, when I said secret, I wasn't kidding.



statement, it is a group of businesses, academic institutions, state and local law enforcement, and other participants dedicated to sharing information and intelligence. Keep in mind that this new center will be, and InfraGard already is, a part of the Department of Homeland Security. I'm just speculating, of course, but it is possible that InfraGard will be a domestic police and spying arm for the government concerning "thought crime"?

There is a definite and natural link here, and it should give us pause. The definitions concerning thought crime are vague and unclear, left to the interpretation of government only. InfraGard, on the other hand, is an organization cloaked in secrecy. It holds secret meetings with the FBI. It also, according to FBI Director Robert Mueller, shares information (what information, we don't know) with the Secret Service and all government agencies involved with security in the United States.

One question on InfraGard's application for membership is, Which critical infrastructures does your organization belong to? Some choices listed are defense, government, banking and finance, information and telecommunications, postal and shipping, transportation, public health, and energy. At least 350 of the Fortune 500 companies have representation in InfraGard, this according to their website. These representatives have access to most of our private records, including phone and Internet use, health records, and banking and finance records. Considering the recent attempts by President Bush and his administration to protect many telecommunications companies and executives from prosecution for releasing private information, how many of the top telecom executives are members of InfraGard? I, for one, would be very interested in this information, but alas, it is not public information; it is secret.

According to InfraGard's own policies and procedures,

"The interests of InfraGard must be protected whenever presented to non-

The bottom line is this: This is an organization created by the FBI, sanctioning individuals from the private business sector to provide information, sensitive and private information, to government agencies for special concessions.

These concessions, or favors, according to an article titled "The FBI Deputizes Business," in

The Progressive magazine, include advance warning on a secure portal about any threatening information related to infrastructure disruption or terrorism. InfraGard notes as much on their website by advertising for members "access to an FBI secure communication network complete with VPN encrypted website, webmail, listservs, message boards and much more." Also advertised: "Learn time-sensitive, infrastructure related security information from government sources such as DHS [Department of Homeland Security] and the FBI." Is this elitist group of InfraGard members a group of Americans superior to the rest of us? Are they truly privileged or just selling their souls for protection and favors? And how involved will they be in watchdog activities, activities sanctioned by the U.S. government? Is this a new kind of conscription by government meant to increase its surveillance capabilities so that it can monitor our lives even more than it does now?

Legislation, bureaucracies, and government/business partnerships created since 9/11 have severely infringed our freedom. Almost all of the so-called terror-protection legislation has been linked—and in many cases it is linked—to increased government oversight of the rest of us. This is evident concerning InfraGard and the Department of Homeland Security. If this program is for the benefit of this country, why are the members' names and their activities kept so secret? Why do some gain protection and early warning while the rest of us do not? And what information and "intelligence" is being shared? Since these business members are fully protected by government, how far will they go, and when will it be too late to stop this secret assault by this behemoth we call government?

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Gulf War Syndrome

SYNDROME from p.1

pesticides, in pills given to blunt the effects of nerve gas, and in nerve gas released during the destruction of an Iraqi weapons depot. Researchers think that AChEI exposure may cause the overexpression of a rare but debilitating version of acetylcholinesterase previously associated with symptoms similar to those of afflicted soldiers.

Again and again, the studies reviewed by Golomb found that soldiers suffering from GWI had been exposed to AChEIs; the more they'd ingested — especially when taking AChEI-containing pills — the worse their symptoms were likely to be.

"Across studies, significant positive relationships of AChEI-related exposures to illness in Gulf War Veterans outnumber significant negative relationships more than chance would predict," wrote Golomb. "The studies show a high consistency, with most

showing a significant (typically strong) positive association. Few nonsignificant findings are present and virtually no inverse associations."

Golomb also noted that the symptoms of GWI are much like those reported by agricultural workers exposed to AChEI-containing pesticides, and follow effects predicted by AChEI tests on brain cells and animals.

Taken together, the evidence — epidemiological, animal, and biological — is persuasive enough for Golomb to formally declare a cause-and-effect relationship. This isn't just important for veterans of the Gulf War, she wrote; it could also explain the as-yet-undiagnosed afflictions of civilians exposed to AChEIs.

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Abu Ghraib Prisoners Packed in Ice Water, Sent into Shock, Military Police Say

TORTURE from p.1

Harman said she didn't like taking away naked prisoners' blankets when it was really cold. "Because if I'm freezing and I'm wearing a jacket and a hat and gloves, and these people don't have anything on and no blanket, no mattress, that's kind of hard to see and do to somebody — even if they are a terrorist." (Note: the prisoners were suspects, not terrorists, being held without due process on charges of which they were often ignorant and without legal representation.)

Harman said the corpse she posed with likely was murdered during interrogation although a platoon commander said he had died of a heart attack. Harman and another soldier, Corporal Charles Graner unzipped his body bag and took photos of him and "kind of realized right away that there was no way he died of a heart attack because of all the cuts and blood coming out of his nose." Harman added, "His knees were bruised, his thighs were bruised by his genitals. He had restraint marks on his wrists."

Asked why she posed making a "thumbs up" gesture over the corpse, Harman said she thought, "Hey, it's a dead guy, it'd be cool to get a photo next to a dead person. I know it looks bad. I mean, even when I look at them (the photos) I go, 'Oh Jesus, that does look pretty bad.'"

The corpse, said to have died under interrogation by a CIA agent, was identified as that of Manadel al-Jamadi. An autopsy found he had succumbed to "blunt force injuries" and "compromised respiration" and his death was classified as a homicide, *The New Yorker* article said. The dead man was removed from the tier disguised as a sick prisoner, his arm taped to an IV, and rolled away on a gurney, apparently as authorities "didn't want any of the prisoners thinking we were in there killing folks," Sergeant Hydrue Joyner, Harman's team leader, told the magazine.

Harman said she saw one naked prisoner with his hands bound behind his back raised higher than his shoulders. This forced him to bend forward with his head bowed and his weight suspended from his wrists and is known as a "Palestinian hanging" as it is said to be used in Israeli prisons, Gourevitch and Morris write.

In a letter to a friend Harman described "sleep deprivation" used on the prisoners: "They sleep one hour then we yell and wake

them — make them stay up for one hour, then sleep one hour — then up, etc. This goes on for 72 hours while we fuck with them. Most have been so scared they piss on themselves. It's sad." On one occasion, she wrote, sandbags soaked in hot sauce were put over the prisoners' heads.

The CIA agent that interrogated al-Jamadi at the time of his "heart attack" was never charged with a crime, but Harman was convicted by court-martial in May of 2005, of conspiracy to maltreat prisoners, dereliction of duty and sentenced to six months in prison, reduced in rank, and given a bad-conduct discharge.

Five other soldiers involved in taking pictures were sentenced to terms of up to ten years in prison. Gourevitch and Morris write, "The only person ranked above staff sergeant to face a court-martial was cleared of criminal wrongdoing."

Sergeant Javal Davis, describing Abu Ghraib generally, said the prison reminded him of something out of a *Mad Max* movie, explaining, "The encampment they were in when we saw it at first looked like one of those Hitler things, like a concentration camp, almost." The inside, he said, is "nothing but rubble, blown-up buildings, dogs running all over the place, rabid dogs, and burnt remains. The stench was unbearable: urine, feces, body rot. Their (prisoners') rest rooms were running over. It was just disgusting. You didn't want to touch anything. Whatever the worst thing that comes to your mind, that was it — the place you would never ever, ever, ever send your worst enemy."

When a delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross visited the prison in October of 2003, they were denied full access (contrary to international law) and, *The New Yorker* said, "what they were permitted to see and hear did not please them: men held naked in bare, lightless cells, paraded naked down the hallways, verbally and physically threatened, and so forth."

The ICRC reported the prison was plagued by gross and systematic violations of the Geneva Conventions, including physical abuses that left prisoners suffering from "incoherent speech, acute anxiety reactions...suicidal ideas."

(Sherwood Ross is a Miami, Florida-based journalist and veteran public relations consultant who suspects the Bush regime may be bad for the image of the United States. He is founder of the Anti-War News Service. Reach him at sherwoodr1@yahoo.com)

DEBT SERFDOM from p.3

were responsible for the feeding and care of a dependent population, and it is still with us today.

Although European financiers were in favor of an American Civil War that would return the United States to its colonial status, they admitted privately that they were not necessarily interested in preserving slavery. They preferred "the European plan": capital could exploit labor by controlling the money supply, while letting the laborers feed themselves. In July 1862, this plan was revealed in a notorious document called the Hazard Circular, which was circulated by British banking interests among their American banking counterparts. It said:

"Slavery is likely to be abolished by the war power and chattel slavery destroyed. This, I and my European friends are glad of, for slavery is but the owning of labor and carries with it the care of the laborers, while the European plan, led by England, is that capital shall control labor by controlling wages.

This can be done by controlling the money. The great debt that capitalists will see to it is made out of the war, must be used as a means to control the volume of money. To accomplish this, the bonds [government debt to the bankers] must be used as a banking basis. It will not do to allow the greenback, as it is called, to circulate as money any length of time, as we cannot control that."

A system of "debt peonage" is inextricably linked to a banking system in which money is issued privately by bankers and lent to the government rather than being issued

as "greenbacks" by the government itself. Today the "European plan" has evolved into the private central banking system, and it has come to dominate the economies of the world. A private central bank creates money simply by printing it or entering it as an accounting entry, then lends it to the federal government in exchange for government bonds or debt. Private commercial banks create many more dollars in the same way, advancing money created as accounting-entry loans without even incurring the cost of a printing press.

Except for coins, the entire US money supply is now created as a debt to private bankers. Banks create the principal but not the interest necessary to pay back their loans, so more money is always owed back than was put into the money supply in the first place. More loans must therefore continually be taken out to cover the interest, spiraling the economy into increasing levels of debt and inflation, in a futile attempt to repay principal and interest on a debt that is actually impossible to repay. The result is "debt peonage," and it has systematically reduced the people to working for the company store, bound to their corporate masters for the food, shelter and health care formerly provided by slave owners under the old physical-slave system.

The Colonial Alternative: The Pennsylvania System of Benjamin Franklin's Day

This is not the only way to run an economy. Until 1913, when the Federal Reserve Act was passed, the European system of debt peonage competed with what was called "the American system" — debt-free government-issued dollars generated by provincial governments to pay their expenses. This "greenback" system was

not actually used in the United States after the American colonies became a nation, except during the Civil War; but the "American system" flourished for decades in colonial America. Paper money was issued by local provincial governments not only to pay their own expenses but as commercial loans.

The most effective and efficient of these government-issued money systems was in Pennsylvania, where a publicly-owned bank issued paper notes and lent them to farmers. Since this money returned to the government, it did not inflate the money supply; and since the government issued and spent an additional sum of money on public works, enough money was kept in the system to pay the interest on the loans and prevent the debt spiral afflicting the private banking system. The Pennsylvania system worked so well that it completely funded the provincial government without taxes or inflation.

Benjamin Franklin and others maintained that the chief reason for the American Revolution was that Parliament forbade the colonies from issuing their own money. Paper money issued by the Revolutionary government got the colonists through the Revolutionary War, but the British heavily counterfeited this money as a deliberate war tactic, and by the end of the war it had been inflated so much that it was nearly worthless. Fear of inflation led the Continental Congress to completely omit paper money from the Constitution, which does not say who can issue paper money or under what circumstances. The private banks filled the breach, and by 1913 the United States had the same private central banking system that England had.

Today, the pyramid scheme of lending 10 dollars and requiring 11 back has resulted in the very inflationary spiral the Founding Fathers feared. The money supply is inflated with more and more debt, shrinking the value of the dollars paid to workers and propelling larger and larger portions of the population into debt peonage. If the government were to issue its own money rather than borrowing from banks that issued it, and if this money were used to pay for real goods and services (roads and bridges, sustainable energy development, health services, and the like), demand and supply would remain in balance and inflation would not result.

A government with a properly designed and monitored system of publicly-issued money could fund itself without taxes, inflation or debt.

Publicly-owned banks are also called "national" banks or "nationalized" banks — the very thing that threatens the private banking system in Ireland today. We have come full circle: a system of national banks is what used to be called "the American system." This may be what we actually need — a public banking system operating for the benefit of the public. The private European system of debt peonage has failed.

On this 2008 St. Patrick's Day, we the modern-day Irish of all persuasions can raise a glass to the possibility of being freed from the debt peonage that has kept us wage-slaves for most of our national history.

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Book Review

Half Great,
Half Terrible

By DAVID RAY GRIFFIN

The Commission by Philip Shenon has performed a great public service, letting the world know that there are good reasons to be suspicious of “The 9/11 Commission Report.” The main problem is the fact that the Commission was almost entirely under the control of Philip Zelikow, who was closely connected to the Bush White House. Although my book *Christian Faith and the Truth behind 9/11* revealed some of the facts about Zelikow that showed him to be one of the worst possible choices for the Commission’s executive director, Shenon has revealed even more facts.

It was already known that Zelikow had been on the National Security Council (NSC) with Condoleezza Rice during the administration of the first President Bush; that he wrote a book with her while the Republicans were out of power; that he helped her make the transition from the Clinton to the Bush NSC; and that he wrote at her request the 2002 version of “National Security Strategy of the United States of America” (NSS 2002), which enunciated a new doctrine of preemptive war that was used, in Shenon’s words, to “justify a preemptive strike on Iraq.”

But now Shenon reveals more: that in applying to Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton, the co-chairs of the 9/11 Commission, for the position of executive director, Zelikow failed to reveal some of his conflicts of interest, especially his authorship of NSS 2002 and his role on the transition team; that he continued, contrary to his promise, to be in touch with Karl Rove (who was very concerned about the Commission’s work), as well as Rice; that Zelikow largely prevented direct contact between the staff and the Commissioners (“If information gathered by the staff was to be passed to the commissioners, it would have to go through Zelikow”); and that Zelikow largely “controlled what the final report would say.”

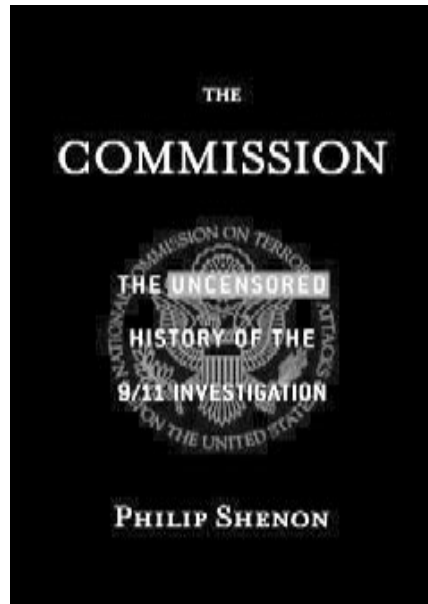
Shenon also reveals that Zelikow, before the Commission’s work had begun, had written a detailed outline for the Commission’s report, complete with “chapter headings, subheadings, and sub-subheadings,” and that he and the Commission’s co-chairs agreed to keep this outline a secret from the Commission’s investigative staff. When the staff learned about this outline a year later, some of them circulated a parody called “The Warren Commission Report—Preemptive Outline,” one chapter of which was entitled “Single Bullet: We Haven’t Seen the Evidence Yet. But Really. We’re Sure.”

However, although all of this should have made Shenon suspicious that Zelikow might have used his power to cover up the truth about 9/11, it did not. Shenon believes that the falsehoods in the Commission’s report were limited to covering up White House incompetence (especially by Rice) and foreign funding of al Qaeda (by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia).

Because Shenon simply presupposed the truth of the official story as fully as did the Commission, his book is terrible as well as great. It is terrible because Shenon, in mentioning the contention that 9/11 was an inside job, assures his readers that this contention has been debunked, while showing no sign of having studied any of the books that provide evidence for this contention. In his bibliography, for example, he mentions two defenses of the official account: *Debunking 9/11 Myths*, put out by Popular Mechanics, and *Without Precedent*, coauthored by Kean and Hamilton. But he does not mention my *Debunking 9/11 Debunking: An Answer to Popular Mechanics and Other Defenders of the Official Conspiracy Theory*, in which I responded at length to both of these books. Also, although one would expect his bibliography to include all major critiques of the 9/11 Commission, it does not include my book, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions*, which has generally been considered the major critique of the Commission’s report.

Shenon’s ignorance of facts contained in this alternative literature is apparent in his assurances that all is well with the official account. For example, claiming that the evidence that al Qaeda was responsible for 9/11 is “incontrovertible,” Shenon points to a videotape in which a bin Laden boasts about the attacks. Shenon is evidently unaware that bin Laden expert Bruce Lawrence called this videotape “bogus” and that FBI spokesman Rex Tomb admitted that “the FBI has no hard evidence connecting Bin Laden to 9/11.” Also, claiming that there is clear evidence that “nineteen young Arab men . . . were aboard the four planes,” Shenon is evidently unaware that, as I showed in *Debunking 9/11 Debunking* (updated edition), all this supposed evidence falls apart under scrutiny. For example, although we were told that the presence of hijackers on American Flight 77 was proved by Barbara Olson’s phone calls to her husband, Ted Olson, the evidence given to the Moussaoui trial in 2006 by the FBI said that no such calls occurred. This same report contradicted the widely held belief that cell phone calls from passengers on United 93 had reported the existence of hijackers.

Shenon could have remained neutral on the question of the truth of the official story. But because he chose to enter the fray, it was incumbent upon him as a journalist to study, and



The Commission: The Uncensored History of the 9/11 Investigation by Philip Shenon. Twelve, \$27 (457p) ISBN 978-0-446-58075-5

report, the arguments on both sides of the issue. He did not.

Shenon’s book is terrible not only because he endorses the official account without engaging any of the serious critiques of that account, but also because his complacent acceptance of that account leads him to ignore dozens of signs in the Commission’s report that Zelikow used his position as executive director to cover up far more than incompetence. In *The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions*,¹ I showed that it contains over 100 omissions and distortions of the type that would be expected if Zelikow had indeed used his position to cover up official complicity. Here are a few examples that Shenon fails to mention.

Believing that the claim “that the Twin Towers were brought down by preplaced explosives” had been debunked before the Commission began its work, Shenon does not mention the Commission’s silence about the fact that over a hundred members of the Fire Department of New York, in giving oral histories of that day—which were made publicly available by Shenon’s own *New York Times*—spoke of apparent explosions in the towers. Shenon also fails to mention the Commission’s silence about evidence that steel in the buildings had melted and even evaporated—evidence that a *New York Times* article called the “deepest mystery uncovered in the investigation,” because the fires could not have come close to the temperature needed to produce such effects. Was Shenon unaware of these revelations provided by his own paper?

Shenon ignores the Commission’s failure even to mention the fact that WTC 7, which was not hit by a plane and had fires on only a few floors, also collapsed. Shenon perhaps considers this omission unimportant because there was no mystery. “[I]t was determined,” he says, “that a fire that . . . destroyed WTC 7 on September 11 was probably caused by the rupture of the building’s special diesel fuel tanks.” That is indeed the official theory. But the FEMA report—which is still the only official report on this building—suggested what it considered the most likely version of this theory but then admitted that it had “only a low probability of occurrence.”

Although Shenon mentions that Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta testified before the Commission, he does not mention Mineta’s report that Vice President Cheney was in the bunker under the White House by 9:20 AM, which contradicted the Zelikow-led Commission’s later claim that Cheney did not arrive there until almost 10:00.

Although Shenon mentions Cheney’s appearance on “Meet the Press” five days after 9/11, he does not mention Cheney’s statement that he learned about the attack on the Pentagon after (not before) he entered the bunker—which the Zelikow-led Commission later contradicted.

Although Shenon points out that Zelikow and Clarke hated each other, he does not point out that Clarke’s book, *Against All Enemies*, is not mentioned by the Zelikow-led Commission’s report and that it contradicted that report on several points, saying that Cheney was down in the bunker before 9:15, that Clarke received shutdown authorization from Cheney before 9:55 (not at 10:25), and that General Richard Myers was in the Pentagon between 9:00 and 9:45 AM (not on Capitol Hill).

Although Shenon points out that the Commission failed to ask Rudy Giuliani any tough questions, he does not mention the Commission’s failure to ask the toughest question that should have been asked: How did Giuliani know in advance that the Twin Towers were going to come down?

In sum: Whereas Shenon’s book has performed a great service by revealing things about the Zelikow-led Commission that should lead people to suspect that its account of 9/11 covered up the truth, it is also a terrible failure: Because of Shenon’s lack of journalistic skepticism with regard to the official account of 9/11, he failed to raise the most important question about the Commission’s report: Did it cover up complicity by forces within our own government? Although the Commission’s report contains dozens of signs that it did just this, Shenon’s book mentions not a single one

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History’s Lessons
The War Prayer

MARK TWAIN

It was a time of great and exalting excitement. The country was up in arms, the war was on, in every breast burned the holy fire of patriotism; the drums were beating, the bands playing, the toy pistols popping, the bunched firecrackers hissing and sputtering; on every hand and far down the receding and fading spreads of roofs and balconies a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun; daily the young volunteers marched down the wide avenue gay and fine in their new uniforms, the proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheering them with voices choked with happy emotion as they swung by; nightly the packed mass meetings listened, panting, to patriot oratory which stirred the deepest depths of their hearts and which they interrupted at briefest intervals with cyclones of applause, the tears running down their cheeks the while; in the churches the pastors preached devotion to flag and country and invoked the God of Battles, beseeching His aid in our good cause in outpouring of fervid eloquence which moved every listener.

It was indeed a glad and gracious time, and the half dozen rash spirits that ventured to disapprove of the war and cast a doubt upon its righteousness straightway got such a stern and angry warning that for their personal safety’s sake they quickly shrank out of sight and offended no more in that way.

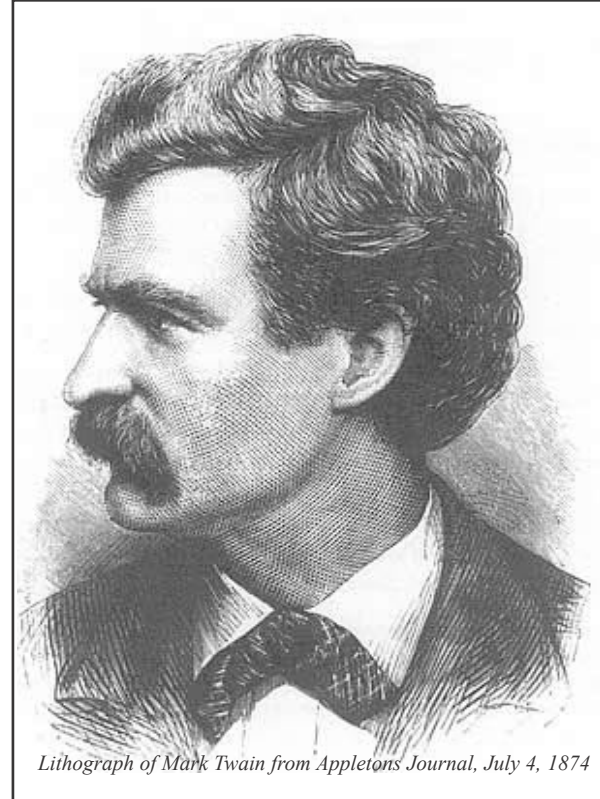
Sunday morning came — next day the battalions would leave for the front; the church was filled; the volunteers were there, their faces alight with material dreams — visions of a stern advance, the gathering momentum, the rushing charge, the flashing sabers, the flight of the foe, the tumult, the enveloping smoke, the fierce pursuit, the surrender! — then home from the war, bronzed heroes, welcomed, adored, submerged in golden seas of glory! With the volunteers sat their dear ones, proud, happy, and envied by the neighbors and friends who had no sons and brothers to send forth to the field of honor, there to win for the flag or, failing, die the noblest of noble deaths. The service proceeded; a war chapter from the Old Testament was read; the first prayer was said; it was followed by an organ burst that shook the building, and with one impulse the house rose, with glowing eyes and beating hearts, and poured out that tremendous invocation — “God the all-terrible! Thou who ordainest, Thunder thy clarion and lightning thy sword!”

Then came the “long” prayer. None could remember the like of it for passionate pleading and moving and beautiful language. The burden of its supplication was that an ever-merciful and benignant Father of us all would watch over our noble young soldiers and aid, comfort, and encourage them in their patriotic work; bless them, shield them in His mighty hand, make them strong and confident, invincible in the bloody onset; help them to crush the foe, grant to them and

to their flag and country imperishable honor and glory.

An aged stranger entered and moved with slow and noiseless step up the main aisle, his eyes fixed upon the minister, his long body clothed in a robe that reached to his feet, his head bare, his white hair descending in a frothy cataract to his shoulders, his seamy face unnaturally pale, pale even to ghastliness. With all eyes following him and wondering, he made his silent way; without pausing, he ascended to the preacher’s side and stood there, waiting.

With shut lids the preacher, unconscious of his presence, continued his moving prayer, and at last finished it with the words, uttered in fervent appeal, “Bless our arms, grant us the victory, O Lord our God, Father and Protector of our land and flag!”



Lithograph of Mark Twain from *Appletons Journal*, July 4, 1874

The stranger touched his arm, motioned him to step aside — which the startled minister did — and took his place. During some moments he surveyed the spellbound audience with solemn eyes in which burned an uncanny light; then in a deep voice he said

“I come from the Throne — bearing a message from Almighty God!” The words smote the house with a shock; if the stranger perceived it he gave no attention. “He has heard the prayer of His servant your shepherd and grant it if such shall be your desire after I, His messenger, shall have explained to you its import — that is to say, its full import. For it is like unto many of the prayers of men, in that it asks for more than he who utters it is aware of — except he pause and think.

“God’s servant and yours has prayed his prayer. Has he paused and taken thought? Is it one prayer? No, it is two — one uttered, the other not. Both have reached the ear of His Who heareth all supplications, the spoken and the unspoken. Ponder this — keep it in mind. If you beseech a blessing upon yourself, beware! lest without intent you invoke a curse upon a neighbor at the same time.

the nation’s current financial and economic disaster. He testified in Washington in mid-February before the US House of Representatives Financial Services subcommittee on the problems in New York-based specialized insurance companies, known as “monoline” insurers. In a national CNBC TV interview the same day, he laid blame for the crisis and its broader economic fallout on the Bush Administration.

Spitzer recalled during his testimony, that several years ago the US Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) went to court and blocked New York State efforts to investigate the mortgage activities of national banks. Spitzer argued the OCC did not put a stop to questionable loan marketing practices or uphold higher underwriting standards.

“This could have been avoided if the OCC had done its job,” Spitzer said in the interview. “The OCC did nothing. The Bush Administration let the housing bubble inflate and now that it’s deflating we’re dealing with the consequences. The real failure, the genesis, the germ that has spread was the sub prime scandal,” Spitzer said. Fraudulent marketing and very low “teaser” mortgage rates that later ballooned higher, were practices that should have been stopped, he argued. “When mortgages are being marketed, there is a marketplace obligation to ensure the borrower can afford to pay back the debt.”

That TV interview was only one instance of Spitzer laying blame on the Bush Republicans. On February 14, Spitzer published a signed article in the influential *Washington Post* titled, “Predatory Lenders’ Partner in Crime: How the Bush Administration Stopped the States from Stepping In to Help Consumers.”

That article, laying clear blame on the

If you pray for the blessing of rain upon your crop which needs it, by that act you are possibly praying for a curse upon some neighbor’s crop which may not need rain and can be injured by it.

“You have heard your servant’s prayer — the uttered part of it. I am commissioned by God to put into words the other part of it — that part which the pastor, and also you in your hearts, fervently prayed silently. And ignorantly and unthinkingly? God grant that it was so! You heard these words: ‘Grant us the victory, O Lord our God!’ That is sufficient. The whole of the uttered prayer is compact into those pregnant words. Elaborations were not necessary. When you have prayed for victory you have prayed for many unmentioned results which follow victory — must follow it, cannot help but follow it. Upon the listening spirit of God the Father fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen!

“O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle — be Thou near them! With them, in spirit, we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe. O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it — for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts. Amen.

(After a pause)

“Ye have prayed it; if ye still desire it, speak! The messenger of the Most High waits.”

It was believed afterward that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said.

Note: Twain wrote *The War Prayer* during the Spanish-American War. It was submitted for publication, but on March 22, 1905, Harper’s Bazaar rejected it as “not quite suited to a woman’s magazine.” Eight days later, Twain wrote to his friend Dan Beard, to whom he had read the story: “I don’t think the prayer will be published in my time. None but the dead are permitted to tell the truth.” Because he had an exclusive contract with Harper & Brothers, Mark Twain could not publish “*The War Prayer*” elsewhere and it remained unpublished until 1923.

Administration for the development of the sub-prime crisis, appeared the day after his ill-fated tryst with the prostitute at the Mayflower Hotel. Just a coincidence? Spitzer wrote, “In 2003, during the height of the predatory lending crisis, the OCC invoked a clause from the 1863 National Bank Act pre-empting all state predatory lending laws, thereby rendering them inoperative. The OCC also promulgated new rules that prevented states from enforcing any of their own consumer protection laws against national banks.”

In his article Spitzer charged, “Not only did the Bush administration do nothing to protect consumers, it embarked on an aggressive and unprecedented campaign to prevent states from protecting their residents from the very problems to which the federal government was turning a blind eye.” Bush, said Spitzer right in the headline, was the “Predator Lenders’ Partner in Crime.” The President, said Spitzer, was a fugitive from justice. And Spitzer was in Washington to launch a campaign to take on the Bush regime and the biggest financial powers on the planet. Spitzer wrote, “When history tells the story of the sub-prime lending crisis and recounts its devastating effects on the lives of so many innocent homeowners the Bush administration will not be judged favorably.”

With that article, some Washington insiders believe, Spitzer signed his own political death warrant.

Global Research, March 18, 2008

F. William Engdahl, an economist and writer, is author of the best-selling book on oil and geopolitics, “*A Century of War: Anglo-American Oil Politics and the New World Order*.” His most recent publication: “*Seeds of Destruction: The Hidden Agenda of GMO*”

International Demands for a New 9/11 Investigation Challenge the “War on Terror”

By CAROL BROUILLET

In Japan, in Europe, in the Congress of the United States, in New York City, in Australia, elected officials and citizens are questioning the events of 9/11, and the obstacles that the Administration placed before the Kean/Hamilton Commission. The official narrative that the US has used to justify the “War on Terror,” and dismantle domestic civil liberties and international laws is being challenged.

On January 10, 2008, Mr. Yukihisa Fujita, a member of the Democratic Party of Japan, challenged Bush’s request for assistance from the Japanese to supply the US military effort in Afghanistan, by raising questions about 9/11 and the “War on Terrorism” in the Japanese Parliament.

On February 26, 2008 Guilietto Chiesa, a member of the European Parliament, journalist, and author, invited his colleagues and the press to attend a screening of the Italian documentary named “ZERO, an investigation into the events of 9/11” and a debate with Mr. Yukihisa Fujita, Dr. David Ray Griffin, theologian and author of seven important books on 9/11, Tim Sparke, the film distributor, as well as the director and producers of “Zero”- Paolo Jormi Bianchi, Thomas Torelli, Francesco Trento and Franco Fracassi. Although the press and Parliament were invited, only six members of the 800 EU members came to the event, not one corporate journalist came. Chiesa blamed the lack of attendance on the power of the US government. Chiesa explained that when they made Zero, they were unable to answer the questions that they raised. They only knew where the official lies were, but they still were unable to gather the evidence and testimony to get to the truth of the event.

On the same day, the anniversary of the first World Trade Center bombings, Representative Rohrabacher spoke out on the floor of Congress.

“The disdain and uncooperative nature that this administration has shown toward Congress, including Republican Members, is so egregious that I can no longer assume that it is simply bureaucratic incompetence or isolated mistakes. Rather, I have come to the sad conclusion that this administration has intentionally obstructed Congress’ rightful and constitutional duties.”

Rohrabacher detailed the lack of cooperation in many specific cases, including his request to the acting Attorney General last October:

“In 2005, former Clinton National Security Advisor Sandy Berger pled guilty to the mishandling and destruction of classified documents.

“He admitted to entering the National Archives and unlawfully removing, then subsequently destroying, classified documents dealing with terrorist related issues. He removed the documents by stuffing them down his pants and in his suit jacket, presumably with the intention of getting rid of any damning evidence showing his involvement in the failure of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to prevent the Sept. 11th attacks prior to his testimony before the 9/11 Commission. These documents have never been recovered.

“As part of a plea deal, Mr. Berger agreed to take a polygraph test to be administered by the Department of Justice. It has been two years since that agreement and Mr. Berger has yet to fulfill his obligation.

“We are writing to officially request that as Attorney General you direct the Department of Justice without any further delay to administer a lie detector test to Mr. Berger and determine what documents were stolen and how our National Security was compromised.

“The Congress, and the American people,

deserve to know the facts of this crime and what Mr. Berger was covering up.”

Rohrabacher also was denied access to the Federal prisoner Ramzi Yousef who:

“may well have had something to do with the bombing of the World Trade Center and the bombing of the Oklahoma City building... This request is well within my committee’s jurisdiction as ranking member of the Investigative Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. This request has been supported by the chairman of the Investigative Subcommittee, the chairman of the full Foreign Affairs Committee, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and the chairman of the Intelligence Committee...”

“Nevertheless, the Department of Justice, consistent with its treatment of congressional inquiries during the tenure of this President, has dismissed this valid request. This request has been treated with what can only be described as contempt and condescension.

“So, why would this administration obstruct congressional inquiries such as this? Remember, Ramzi Yousef was the mastermind behind several devastating terrorist attacks and plots against America. He led the first murderous attack on the World Trade Center in 1993, as I say.

“After fleeing to the Philippines, he and two other terrorists plotted to kill thousands of Americans by blowing up 12 commercial airliners over the Pacific at the same time. It was known as the Bojinka plot. It was within 2 weeks of being executed when it was discovered and thwarted by Philippine police.

“Interestingly, the terrorist operation, the Bojinka plot, was to take place about the same time as the Oklahoma City Federal building bombing, perhaps on the same day. We don’t know. Perhaps we should know. Perhaps we should ask Ramzi Yousef about that.

“Ramzi Yousef has been in Federal prison for over a decade. He is a prisoner with a unique understanding of the al Qaeda terrorist structure. He is the nephew of Khalid Sheik Mohammed, the mastermind of the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center.

“In 2006, when I was the chairman of the House Oversight Investigations Subcommittee on the Foreign Affairs Committee, I was investigating Yousef’s movements and activities not only in the United States but in the Philippines. I even traveled to the Philippines to question authorities who had captured Yousef’s roommate and coconspirator in the Bojinka plot.

“In spite of that fact and in spite of the fact that I was looking into Yousef’s terrorist activities and in spite of the fact that I had obtained new information about Yousef’s phone calls right here in the United States and new information about his associates while he was in the United States, the Department of Justice still dismisses the effort and, more than that, they are obstructing a legitimate congressional investigation, refusing to permit this elected Member of Congress, a ranking member of a congressional investigating committee, to interview a Federal prisoner. They refused access to Yousef claiming that there is an ‘ongoing investigation.’

“This prisoner has been in jail for over 10 years. It is more likely that what we have here is an ongoing coverup and not an ongoing investigation. In fact, I have been told recently by a former member of the Justice Department that they were told routinely simply to give answers that there is an ongoing investigation even if no ongoing investigation was underway, but simply using it as a phrase to dismiss a request from Congress.

“Well, this is outrageous, but it’s typical of this administration... Is it really the rules of

engagement that we want for our government that Members of Congress and the legislative branch don’t have a right to talk to Federal prisoners?”

“Well, that’s apparently what the Bush administration is trying to establish as the executive authority, the right to deny congressional investigators access to Federal prisoners. The danger of this should be easy to understand, both on my side of the aisle, the Republican side, and the Democratic side of the aisle.”

Rohrabacher’s statements on the floor of Congress indicate that not only have the American people been lied to, but Congress has been kept in the dark, as well. The most easily shattered lie, was the one used repeatedly by the Bush Administration, Condoleezza Rice, and Philip Zelikow that “no one could have dreamed of using planes as weapons” and that the Administration was taken completely by surprise by the attacks.

According to a NYT/CBS poll taken in October 2006:

Many adults in the United States believe the current federal government has not been completely forthcoming on the issue of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. 53 per cent of respondents think the Bush administration is hiding something, and 28 per cent believe it is lying.

In New York City, there is a citizen effort to place on the November 2008 General Election ballot an initiative which will allow the voters of New York City to mandate, through public referendum, directly and democratically, the formation of a new Citizen’s Commission to Re-Investigate 9/11.

Sydney Truth Action of Australia, from March 14th to Sunday 16th March, 2008, will host an International Conference to critically examine the events of 9/11 and Australia’s participation in the War on Terror. Themed: “Did Australia go to war in Iraq and Afghanistan on a false pretext?” the conference will focus on what really occurred on September 11th and what has been done in the name of September 11th by the Australian government. The conference will examine how the US and Australian governments have actively sponsored, or been complicit in the cover-up, of terrorism. Mr. Yukihisa Fujita, who spoke before the Japanese Parliament, and attended the event at the European parliament, will also speak. Two new documentaries, one on 9/11 - “Shadowplay” and another on the Bali Bombings, “Fool Me Twice”, will also be shown.

The 9/11 Truth Movement continues to grow, as evidenced by the actions, events, conferences, websites devoted to the issue, the books, documentaries, films, music, art, and radio programs. A Green Party candidate for President, Cynthia McKinney, although vilified by the corporate press and the Democratic Party, raised the most challenging questions about 9/11 while she was in Congress. Public revelations that the official Report was based upon “tortured confessions” and that the Commissions’ work was directed by Philip Zelikow, author of the “Pre-Emptive War Doctrine” and integral to the National Security transition from the Clinton to Bush White House has fueled doubt in the Commission and demands for a real investigation and government accountability.

Carol Brouillet organized one of the first street rallies and marches on public officials demanding a Congressional Investigation of 9/11. In March 2004, she was the primary organizer of the San Francisco International Inquiry into 9/11 which brought together researchers, authors, filmmakers who questioned the official narrative of 9/11, and the 9/11 Cover-Up Commission for failing to address key questions raised by the victims’ families. She ran in 2006 and 2008 as the Green Party candidate for Congress in California.

FBI Withholds Identity of 9/11 Planes

9/11 PLANES from p.1

certainly were in question on 9/11. There was widespread confusion at the FAA and NORAD on the morning of 9/11, caused in part, by the numerous exercises, some involving simulated hijackings, which were also taking place that morning. The aircraft that crashed had different transponder codes from the passenger aircraft and transcripts of flight controller communications indicate a significant level of confusion as to the identity of the flights.

The plane which crashed at the Pentagon is particularly suspect since the FAA made no radar contact with the aircraft on its return flight over West Virginia and did not establish radar contact again until the plane reached Washington, DC, now with a different transponder code.

Secondly, there is ample evidence that serial numbered aircraft parts were in fact collected and identified by the FBI with the assistance of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). For example Carol

Carmody, Vice-Chairman of NTSB said in published remarks from February 2002; “I ... assured FBI Director Mueller that we would assist in any way we could ... he called and said, ‘Could you send us some people to help find the black boxes and help identify aircraft parts.’” The fact that the NTSB did comply with director Mueller’s request was corroborated by her boss NTSB Chairman Marion C. Blakey who testified to the 9/11 Commission that “Over 60 Safety Board employees worked around the clock in Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, and at our headquarters in Washington, DC, assisting with aircraft parts identification”

These statements by NTSB officials make it abundantly clear that the FBI did collect and identify serial numbered parts and should have the data necessary to positively identify the aircraft that crashed on 9/11.

Why do they refuse to release the data?

Matt Sullivan is the editor of the Rock Creek Free Press in Washington, DC.

Winter Soldier Evidence of War Crimes Presented

WINTER SOLDIER from p.1

Washburn also said that taxi drivers were prime targets for the Americans. He said if cars did not pull over they were shot at. Standing orders were to shoot at particular vehicles with telltale orange doors. Washburn said that description applied to every taxi in Iraq.

In another incident, Washburn said Marines shot a mayor of a town near Haditha. Washburn’s commander congratulated the Marines and said a photograph taken of the dead mayor was “how good Marines should shoot.”

Washburn also revealed a commonplace occurrence in Iraq. He said that when US troops shot innocent Iraqi civilians, the Americans would toss weapons or shovels on the dead bodies in order to comply with ROEs.

Former Marine Sergeant Jason Lemieux, who spent three tours in Iraq from 2003 to 2006, said ROE’s were weakened to protect US forces at the expense of the Iraqi people. On arrival in Baghdad in 2003, Lemieux was ordered to shoot anyone who got too close to US forces and made them “feel uncomfortable.” Lemieux said this was in violation of the Geneva Conventions. Lemieux said his Marine commander’s order was “Kill those who need to be killed and save those who need to be saved.”

In Anbar province, Lemieux said that anyone wearing a black head scarf was shot at. Eventually, anyone on the street became an enemy. In one case, Lemieux said an unarmed man stepping outside a door was shot and killed. Lemieux also said that anyone with a shovel was deemed a hostile target. In addition, Marines shot at anyone standing on a roof with a cell phone. Lemieux said his standing ROE was changed to “shoot if you feel threatened.” The same Marine commander who ordered Lemieux’s unit to “kill those who need to be killed” shot two old women who were carrying vegetables.

Former Marine John Turner provided gruesome photographs of dead Iraqis to substantiate his testimony. He revealed that Marines used a laser-guided missile on a Ministry of Health building where there were Iraqis being cared for medically. Turner substantiated other testimony about “drop weapons,” taken from Iraqi police, being left near the bodies of innocent Iraqis killed in error by US forces. Turner also said no respect was shown by Americans for Iraqi bodies “after a kill.”

Turner said his first “kill” was an innocent Iraqi man whose brains were splattered by the shooting. Turner said his Marine commander said any Marine who got his “first kill” by stabbing an Iraqi would get a four day pass after their return from Iraq. In a revelation that points to the complicity of the US corporate media with the war crimes in Iraq, Turner said that CBS News’ Laura Logan, a native of South Africa, was an embedded journalist with his unit. Turner said that his unit would normally not shoot civilians when Logan was present with her crew. Logan, who reports for “60 Minutes”, has experienced problems with CBS News management not using certain footage in Iraq. However, the mere fact that a CBS News crew was present with a unit committing suspected war crimes makes CBS a partner in the crime. The complicity of news organizations in the war crimes in Iraq cannot be downplayed in any future international or American tribunal to bring the perpetrators of such crimes to justice.

Turner also described house raids by Marines in which the occupants, especially men and boys, were segregated from the women and girls and were terrorized. Turner also said mosques were attacked and damaged without any fire being taken from the buildings.

Logan Laituri, a 82nd Airborne US Army veteran from Camden, New Jersey, served in Iraq in early 2004. While at Forward Operating Base Bernstein (named for First Lieutenant David Bernstein killed in the invasion), also known as Al Tuz airfield, 180 kilometers north of Baghdad, Laituri applied for conscientious objector status. Laituri was diagnosed with “maladjustment disorder.” Laituri said his unit’s ROE was verbal only: “Signal, Shout, Show [weapon], Shove, Shoot.” He said his unit was authorized to use their weapons anytime they felt it was necessary. Laituri showed a photograph of one of his colleagues pointing his rifle at an old man sitting in an alley in Mosul.

Laituri also revealed that white phosphorus (WP), a substance normally used for targeting purposes, was used on civilians. WMR reported the use of WP, also known as “Willie Peter” on civilians in Fallujah. In 2004, Laituri said anyone wearing black clothing with a green head band was ordered shot because this was the “uniform” of Shi’a leader Muqtada al Sadr’s brigade. Laituri said the shooting of civilians in Samara was a “litmus test” for the later US attack on Fallujah in 2004.

Laituri said his commander from Fort Irwin said it was US doctrine to plant “drop weapons” on Iraqi bodies after mistakes were made by US forces.

US Army Iraq veteran Garrett Repenhagen served in Baqubah, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad as a scout sniper. He said that all rules, including the Geneva Convention, were “thrown out” in Iraq. Repenhagen, a scout sniper for what was called “interdiction services,” said that two men found in a field after curfew were killed with a 50-caliber machine gun. Repenhagen pointed out that 50-caliber rounds are the size of salt shakers. Army rules normally prevent the use of such weapons on people. The two men were blown to pieces in the attack. It was later discovered the two men were simple farmers who could only work at night when the electricity was working to operate the irrigation pumps on which they were dependent. Repenhagen said his unit’s ROEs were changed. He said there were no briefings on ROEs and that ROEs were left up to individual units and even soldiers, adding that it was “fair game to shoot anyone determined to be a threat.” Repenhagen also described cases of fratricide. He pointed out his unit shot five men who later were discovered to be the bodyguards for the Deputy Governor of Diyala province.

Wayne Madsen is a Washington based investigative journalist. www.WayneMadsenReport.com

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The US Federal Government Is Manufacturing A Large Portion Of Our Country's Domestic Terror Threat

By JOE CRUBAUGH
Yes, it's a pretty sick accusation. But, just read the real stories behind five years of Homeland Security Alerts. What makes the accusation so sickening is that it's true.

Because it's hard to imagine some of the things our public servants have been up to over the past few years, I often employ playground analogies to help wrap my brain around the tricks and treats, so picture this...

Fake Terror: The Playground Analogy

It's a sunny spring day at school, seesaws and merry-go-rounds, and a campus bustling with healthy, laughing children.

Suddenly, from the corner of the schoolyard, a bully rushes down the sidewalk toward the merry-go-round, raises a loaded AK-47, and yells, "I'm

gonna kill every single one of you spoiled rich kids! Praise Allah!"

Luckily, the instant before the bully makes omelets out of spoiled rich kids' brains, Coach Sam jumps in front of the bully and wrestles the gun away. The bully goes to juvenile prison. Coach Sam gets many pats on the back, and lots of cash to help the school upgrade its security system.

Meet Coach Sam: (Homeland Security)

About a month later, Coach Sam admits that he befriended the bully during the weeks before the attack.

What's more, he helped get the bully — who had an IQ of 57 — interested in assault rifles by taking him to gun shows.

What's even more, Coach Sam introduced the highly-impressionable

and unstable bully to a priest at a radical mosque, and encouraged the bully to make Allah happy by killing as many spoiled rich classmates as possible.

All those kids on the playground sure are lucky they have Coach Sam to protect them from more bullies. And they're really lucky that Coach Sam owns a security company, so they got a great discount on all the new security cameras and metal detectors in the halls. Good ol' Coach Sam.

The FBI's Fear Factor

The playground analogy isn't as far from the truth as most people would like to believe.

With more than 100 task forces exclusively fighting terrorism, our government seems to be creating fear and chasing ghosts instead of finding any terrorists.

Since 9/11, the federal government

has — there's no other way to put this — recruited and nurtured a series of pathetic and hapless jihadists, trying to turn them into suicidal mall bombers. Most of these under-brained terrorist wannabes are incapable of carrying out attacks on their own, and they're completely unaware that their biggest enablers are actually undercover FBI agents and paid informants...agents who must produce some terrorists by any means possible, or find new careers.

But America is wising up, and she doesn't appreciate being fooled. And lately America, God bless her, seems to have had enough of this administration's concocted fear.

Joe Crumbaugh is a reclusive (starving) graphic artist, (weekend) travel journalist, (armchair) music critic, and (home) movie director, born in Tupelo, Mississippi.

Legitimate Terror Threat or Cynical Manipulative Diversion: You Make the Call

Are all the reported terror threats real or has the Bush administration been using color coded terror alerts as a cynical political ploy to manipulate the American public?

The following list of high profile terror alerts of dubious intent was compiled by Tim Dickinson for an article in *Rolling Stone Magazine*, called "Truth or Terrorism? The Real Story Behind Five Years of High Alerts" (Feb 2008)

February 12, 2002

The Threat: Yemenite terrorist set to attack US — today! "I want, to encourage... all Americans everywhere to be on the highest state of alert," warns Attorney General John Ashcroft.

The Reality: The threat hadn't been corroborated by US intelligence agencies — and the evidence actually pointed to an attack not in the US, but in Yemen.

The Real News: Announced the same day that Enron CEO Ken Lay appeared before Congress, and a week after the White House was instructed not to destroy its Enron-related documents.

May 19-27, 2002

The Threat: Dick Cheney kicks off Memorial Day weekend by calling a new al Qaeda strike "almost a certainty — it could happen tomorrow." FBI Director Robert Mueller adds, "There will be another terrorist attack." The FBI warns of strikes on the Brooklyn Bridge and the Statue of Liberty.

The Reality: The administration "made a political decision" to make public all threats — even those from "hoaxers," says a retired CIA counterterrorism expert. "The amount of chatter hasn't changed in volume," adds a defense official. As for the New York threats, "There really isn't any hard information," declares the former head of the FBI bureau in New York.

The Real News: The administration's failures in preventing 9/11 were under the microscope: Bush acknowledged receiving a briefing titled "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in US" a month before the attacks; the FAA said it had failed to alert airlines of the arrest of would-be hijacker Zacarias Moussaoui; the FBI admitted it had ignored a pre-9/11 warning that Al Qaeda had infiltrated American flight schools.

June 10, 2002

The Threat: US-born al Qaeda agent captured. John Ashcroft interrupts a trip to Russia to brag on live TV of bagging "a known terrorist who was exploring a plan to build and explode a 'dirty bomb' in the United States."

The Reality: The suspect, Jose Padilla, had actually been in custody for a month. The "dirty bomb" allegations were so flimsy that they were dropped after the administration agreed to try the case in federal court rather than in a military tribunal.

The Real News: The threat was announced four days after FBI whistle-blower Coleen Rowley testified before Congress that 9/11 might have been prevented if the FBI flight-school warning had reached federal agents investigating Moussaoui.

September 10, 2002

The Threat: Bush personally announces the first nationwide Orange Alert. Cheney flees to a "secure location" as Ashcroft warns that Al Qaeda appears to be targeting "transportation and energy sectors."

The Reality: There was no specific threat against any American target.

The Real News: The heightened terror alert went into effect just in time for the president's address to the nation from Ellis Island on the first anniversary of 9/11.

February 7, 2003

The Threat: Orange Alert. CIA Director George Tenet calls the threat "the most specific we have seen" since 9/11; says Al Qaeda may use a "radiological dispersal device, as well as poisons and chemicals."

The Reality: The alert, accompanied by a warning to stock up on plastic sheets and duct tape, was debunked within days; the main source failed an FBI polygraph. Threat level remained stuck on orange for two more weeks.

The Real News: The alert followed less than forty-eight hours after Colin Powell's speech to the United Nations in which he falsely accused Saddam Hussein of harboring Al Qaeda and training terrorists in the use of chemical weapons.

March 17, 2003

The Threat: Orange Alert. FBI warns of terror strikes by Saddam or "allied or sympathetic terrorist organizations, most notably the Al Qaeda network."

The Reality: Claim debunked by future CIA director Porter Goss, then chair of House intelligence committee: No intel suggests new attack.

The Real News: Nation's third Orange Alert came three days before Bush invaded Iraq, opening what he called the "central front of the War on Terror."

May 20, 2003

The Threat: For a second Memorial Day in a row, country is placed on Orange Alert following warning that "Al Qaeda has entered an operational period worldwide."

The Reality: No specific threat ever cited; alert issued because of what the Department of Homeland Security calls "the heightened vulnerability associated with the Memorial Day holiday."

The Real News: Two weeks after Bush declared "Mission Accomplished" in Iraq, administration's plan to implement Iraq, self-rule was postponed "indefinitely" due to looting and lawlessness.

July 29, 2003

The Threat: Homeland Security warns that new, 9/11-like strikes are in the works: "At least one of these attacks could be executed by the end of the summer."

The Reality: Not one of the alleged attacks ever materialized.

The Real News: Days earlier, the Bush administration revealed that the CIA forewarned the president about the lack of evidence for his claim that Saddam was seeking uranium from Africa.

December 21, 2003

The Threat: Orange Alert for the holidays. Ridge warns that threat of attack is "perhaps greater now than at any point since 9/11." Six flights are canceled; several passengers match terror watch list.

The Reality: The supposed "terrorists" included a Welsh insurance salesman, an elderly Chinese woman and a kindergartner.

The Real News: The alert came after 9/11 Commission chair Tom Kean suggested the 9/11 attacks could have been thwarted. Bush is also under fire for failing to find weapons of mass destruction.

May 26, 2004

The Threat: Memorial Day again: "They are going to attack and hit us hard," warns a senior intelligence official. Ashcroft relays an Al Qaeda threat that "ninety percent of the arrangements for an attack in the United States were complete."

The Reality: The threat Ashcroft attributed to Al Qaeda was actually made by a discredited group that falsely claimed credit for the Madrid train bombings. This group "is not really taken seriously by Western intelligence," says one expert.

The Real News: The Abu Ghraib torture scandal has come to a full boil.

June 14, 2004

The Threat: A shopping mall in Columbus, Ohio, is threatened by Al Qaeda bomber. "The American heartland was targeted for death and destruction," Ashcroft declares.

The Reality: The Somali suspect whose indictment Ashcroft trumpeted had been in custody for seven months. The charges against him made no mention of a shopping mall.

The Real News: John Kerry leads Bush by seven points in early Ohio polling.

July 8, 2004

The Threat: Tom Ridge warns that "Al Qaeda is moving forward with its plans to carry out a large-scale attack in the United States in an effort to disrupt our democratic process."

The Reality: The plot did not exist: Says a top European spy, "I am aware of no intelligence, nothing that shows there will be an attack before the US presidential election."

Real News: Two days earlier, John Kerry tapped John Edwards as his running mate.

August 1, 2004

The Threat: Orange Alert. Citing "new and unusually specific" intelligence, Ridge details a threat to the Citigroup building and the New York Stock Exchange. Adds Bush, "We wouldn't be, you know, contacting authorities at the local level unless something was real."

The Reality: The president allowed his own daughters to do a photo-op at one of the targeted buildings. Perhaps that's because the "new" intelligence was actually three years old. "There is nothing right now that we're hearing that is new," says a senior law-enforcement official.

The Real News: Alert came three days after Kerry took the Democratic nomination at the party's convention in Boston.

October 6, 2005

The Threat: FBI warns of Al Qaeda subway bombing "on or about October 9th, 2005." Bush claims to have foiled ten terror plots since 9/11.

The Reality: A counter-terrorism official calls the warning unfounded: "There was no there there." None of the plots cited by Bush were operational.

The Real News: Bush's nomination of Harriet Miers to the Supreme Court is failing.

June 23, 2006

The Threat: Miami-based terrorists plotting to topple the Sears Tower. "These homegrown terrorists may prove to be as dangerous as groups like al Qaeda," says Alberto Gonzales.

The Reality: FBI Deputy Director John Pistole terms plot "more aspirational than operational." Suspects armed to the teeth — with paintball guns — attempted to secure Al Qaeda funds at local 7-11.

The Real News: Abu Musab Al Zarqawi had been killed days earlier — removing the villain who was then America's poster boy of terror.

July 7, 2006

The Threat: New York Daily News breaks news of plot to bomb Holland Tunnel, flood Wall Street. FBI Assistant Director Mark Mershon calls threat "the real deal."

The Reality: Suspect had been arrested three months earlier, after bragging about his planned exploits in an Internet chat room. Said one CIA officer, "The plot, if that is what we would call it, was not well conceived, and there was no possibility of flooding Wall Street. There was no connection to a cell in the US. Finally, professional terrorists generally do not discuss targeting on open channels."

The Real News: News of plot leaked to coincide with the first anniversary of the July 7, 2005 London bombings.

July 10, 2007

The Threat: Homeland Security chief Michael Chertoff warns of his "gut feeling" that the US is entering "a period of increased vulnerability" of attack from terrorists: "Summertime seems to be appealing to them."

The Reality: Chertoff subsequently confessed, "We don't have specific intelligence about an attack, that is, a particular attack against the homeland, that is imminent or scheduled for the summer."

The Real News: Two days later, the intelligence community revealed Al Qaeda's strength was "undiminished" in spite of six years of the "War on Terror."

NEWS BITES

Prescribed Medications Still Not Helping Patients: Antidepressants are ineffective for most patients, study finds

According to a group of experts, led by Professor Kirsch at the University of Hull, UK, there is little reason to prescribe antidepressants to the majority of depressed patients. The study found that antidepressants are ineffective for most patients. In a study analyzing data from clinical trials of antidepressants, leading psychologists found that antidepressants have no clinically significant effects in all cases apart from a small group of the most severely depressed patients. The paper, "Initial Severity and Antidepressant Benefits: A Meta-Analysis of Data Submitted to the FDA", published in the journal *Public Library of Science Medicine* found that for most patients, antidepressants were no more effective than placebo.

US Still Not Taking Care of Her Vets: An Average of 17 veterans a day kill themselves

CBS News contacted the governments of all 50 states requesting their official records of death by suicide going back 12 years. They heard back from 45 of the 50. From the mountains of gathered information, they sifted out the suicides of those Americans who had served in the armed forces. What they discovered is that in 2005 alone — and remember, this is just in 45 states — there were at least 6,256 veteran suicides, 120 every week for a year and an average of 17 every day.

Saddam Still Not Linked to al Qaeda Pentagon Study Finds No direct link between late Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein and the al Qaeda network

WASHINGTON (AFP) - A detailed Pentagon study confirms there was no direct link between late Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein and the al Qaeda network, debunking a claim President George W. Bush's administration used to justify invading Iraq.

Coming five years after the start of the war in Iraq, the study of 600,000 official Iraqi documents and thousands of hours of interrogations of former Saddam Hussein colleagues "found no smoking gun (i.e. direct connection) between Saddam's Iraq and al Qaeda," said the study, quoted in US media recently.

We Still Don't Know What That Aug. 30 Nuclear Incident Was About

A new report on the August 30 incident in which six nuclear-armed advanced cruise missiles were effectively "lost" for 36 hours, during which time they were, against all regulations, flown in launch position mounted on a pylon on the wing of a B-52H Stratofortress, from Minot AFB in North Dakota across the continental US to Barksdale AFB in Louisiana, has left unanswered some critical questions about the event.

Directed by retired Air Force Gen. Larry D. Welch, the task force's Report on the Unauthorized Movement of Nuclear Weapons found plenty wrong with the way the US military handles its nuclear weapons, but appears to have dealt lightly with the specific incident that sparked the inquiry—only giving it a few paragraphs.

Could the Minot nuke incident have been something other than a mistake?

A careful reading of the Welch report—both what it says and what it fails to say—has to leave that question unanswered.

Read the complete David Lindorff story at ThisCantBeHappening.com

Carlyle Mortgage Fund Collapses: Into its Own Footprint at Freefall Speed

A mortgage-backed investment fund created by the Carlyle Group failed to meet its margin call, defaulting on \$16.6 billion of a \$22 billion portfolio. The highly leveraged mortgage backed section saw its shares free-fall from \$12 to 15¢ within hours. Carlyle Capital is a division of the Carlyle Group, a private investment fund that manages over \$18 billion in assets for a group of powerful, politically connected investors including Frank Carlucci, James Baker, both Georges Bush, assorted Saudi princes and Bin Ladens (couldn't happen to nicer guys).

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