



From The Wilderness

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

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THE ABYSS AWAITS

With Special Update

By
Michael C. Ruppert

“Organized crime is now officially legal and combined with the stock and capital markets -- all enforced by force and rigged profits. This is the economic infrastructure for fascism.” – Catherine Austin Fitts

June 14th 2006, 12:59pm [PST] – On three prior occasions in its eight and a half year history (2001, 2002, 2004) From The Wilderness has issued economic alerts to its subscribers. Two of those alerts (2001, 2002) proved to be astonishingly accurate.

Two days after our first alert was issued on September 9th, 2001, the “terror” attacks of 9/11 shut down Wall Street and allowed the government to open the US Treasury to flood massive amounts of taxpayer money directly into the hands of corporations that were on the brink of a major liquidity crisis. (FTW has never asserted that this was the primary motive for US government participation in the attacks. It was one of many motives as described in Crossing the Rubicon; chief of which was Peak Oil).

Just days after our second economic alert in 2002 a collapse of US financial markets began which saw the Dow drop by 1400 points and more than one trillion dollars in shareholder equity wiped out. We called that one perfectly.

And while the events predicted in our third December, 2004 economic alert did not transpire as predicted, I am perhaps most proud of having written and published this one. Because in it I wrote an almost clairvoyant description of the political, ecological, energy and economic worlds in which we live eighteen months later -- today.

The reasons why the events predicted in the third alert did not take place have to do with what my dear friend and colleague Catherine Austin Fitts calls the Tapeworm Economy; the ability of financial and criminal elites to manipulate the rapidly-hollowing shell and façade of a financial system destined to collapse. They do this while keeping appearances (controlled by major media) as normal as possible so that the “suckers” (you) will keep trusting and spending your money in ways that hurt you and progressively wither your needed survival skills and resources.

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

“Fast Crash or Slow Burn?” – Irrelevant!

This apparent longevity of a doomed system has led Fitts and me to agree to disagree about how things are likely to play out in the Empire’s final days or years. I believe that a fast-burn crash is likely (or at least must be prepared for).

From the Wilderness

Michael C. Ruppert
Publisher/Editor

Senior Writer Jamey Hecht, Ph.D.
Staff Writer Michael Kane
Newsletter Editor Brendan Flanagan
Military /Veteran's Affairs Editor Stan Goff
Operations Manager..... Zac Evans

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From The Wilderness

655 Washington St, Ashland OR, 97520

www.fromthewilderness.com

editorial: editor@copvcia.com

subscriptions and customer service:

service@copvcia.com

(541) 201-0090 * (541) 201-0091 fax

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The Tillman Files – Part 3

The Game Plan

By

Stan Goff

[After more than three days of sitting and reviewing over 2,000 pages of records made available to the Tillman family after Pat Tillman's negligent homicide by friendly fire, both Stan Goff and I were pretty disgusted and, in some cases, shocked. Stan is a retired veteran of US Army Special Forces and I am a former LAPD officer and narcotics investigator who was loaned to divisional homicide for two months. We have seen death, shootings and bloody “clusterf--ks” up close and personal. Pat Tillman's death – symbolic of the death of what little good faith remains between the American military and its leadership – is the cynical, short-sighted, callous and venal death of every American who trusts a system where truth telling has become a crime and “perception management” has emerged as the highest virtue of cultic priests.

We were all surprised last weekend when CNN ran a “new” investigative series on Pat's death using the same documents I had just retrieved from Pat's mother, Mary. She had given them to CNN a long time ago but nothing had transpired – that is, until FTW started writing about it. We're not surprised. Stan Goff and FTW scare Donald Rumsfeld and the Bush administration. We scare CNN. For about a month prior to FTW launching this series there had been no mainstream stories about the Tillman case. Since we published Part One I have seen eight new stories about him, including CNN's.

One thing is for certain. What Stan Goff and I publish and write on the tragic death of Pat Tillman will be nothing like what you'll see in the mainstream. I'm not sure that even William Shakespeare could have come with a tragedy like this one. There were crimes committed here and we will show them to you in all their bloody detail.

Pat Tillman's story makes me sick at heart as much as it makes me sick to my stomach. – MCR]

Let me say that again, because that – and not the question of Pat's actions – is what this is about: The Silver Star award was being drafted by people who had not been there, BEFORE THE PLATOON HAD EVEN RETURNED TO BASE. This has no precedent in any experience I had over a period of more than a quarter of a century in the Army. – Stan Goff

(continued on page 8)

('The Abyss Awaits' continued from page 1)

Fitts thinks it more likely that the elites, using technology like PROMIS software, their total control (ownership) of all branches economy produces a final whimper in the last-remaining "I-still-believe" consumer. It doesn't matter that each successive rabbit will be smaller and weaker. What does matter is the pathological willingness of most people to believe that – because a thimbleful of water is produced – a mighty conflagration might still be extinguished.

Fitts and I do agree that a fast burn (crash) would be much better than a slow burn. This is because a sudden slap in the face would leave individuals and families with more resources and tools available to adapt once they had relinquished their vision of a world that no longer exists.

The first thing that must be liberated in an emergency is the mind: so that it can see the emergency. Remember the old maxim about how easy it is to cook a frog by turning up the heat in tepid water slowly versus throwing a frog into boiling water. In the first case the frog just sits patiently and waits to be cooked. In the second case, recognizing the emergency, it jumps out immediately.

Taking into account a multitude of factors such as: unpredictable collapses of large oil fields (e.g. Burgan in Kuwait); global warming and hurricanes; rapidly spreading geopolitical instability; the collapsing housing bubble; soaring bankruptcies; exploding military budgets; the continuing ascendancy of nations like Venezuela, Iran, Russia and China; earthquakes; volatile insurgencies in West Africa; declining global food production and many others, I see things that the elites cannot control. These are (to one degree or another) wildcards that could leap into the game at any time, triggering chaos, war and/or collapse. The elites can influence these factors but there's a big difference between influence and control. History has demonstrated a perfect batting average when it comes to the inevitable fate of empires in decline and their inability to control events.

This fourth-ever economic alert will be different from the previous ones because rather than describing predicted events, it describes a state of affairs which is – in and of itself – so alarming that we no longer care about the "when." What we are warning about now is the certainty of the "what" and the necessity of being prepared to manage successfully in the face of a "fast burn," a "slow burn," and the wildcards.

To sum it up, large highly centralized corporations and banks – particularly those dependent on US government finances – are no longer worthy of investment.

No one reads tea leaves perfectly and no sound byte encompasses all realities. But if I were to sum up how I think a slow burn is being engineered, I would say that the two biggest manmade factors controlling the crash of the American economy are the Chinese and US governments. I sense a quiet consensus among and within all the economic powers-that-be that as long as the Federal Reserve

agrees to the slow strangulation of the economy by continuing to raise interest rates, the Chinese will incrementally respond by continuing, in small increments, to float the Yuan free from its dollar peg. This will allow a semi-orderly transfer (looting) of the most wealth (into gold, oil reserves, the Euro, the Ruble and the Yuan) while keeping suckers in the game.

More than any other two factors, the dollar and the Yuan are the ones which, if they get "sideways," could cause a crash, collapse or chaos at any minute. But these are only the human-controlled variables.

As it was with Robert Rubin in the Clinton years, Goldman Sachs has again acquired the "franchise" to operate the Treasury under its new Secretary Hank Paulson. Paulson will continue Treasury's role as a key member of the Plunge Protection Team to manipulate the markets, hide fatal maladies, manipulate investor confidence, and assure that the largest number of people continue to stay roped into the system until it is too late to avoid going down the drain in the largest organized crime bust-out in history.

To sum it up, the American economic system – as a result of recent developments – has become a parasitic Zombie that cannot and should no longer be trusted under any circumstances. It has become lethal, venal and – for lack of a better term – the enemy.

DEVELOPMENT NUMBER ONE – John Negroponte and the SEC

In Godfather Government, published at FTW just days ago, Carolyn Baker described one of the most significant and ominous developments in the continuing devolution of American government into a pure organized crime operating system.

Baker wrote:

... Business Week Online has just reported that George W. Bush on May 5 signed a memo entitled "Assignment Of Function Relating To Granting Of Authority For Issuance Of Certain Directives: Memorandum For The Director Of National Intelligence." In the document, Bush assigned intelligence czar, John Negroponte, the task of waiving Securities and Exchange Commission rules, established in 1934, pertaining to accounting disclosures by publicly traded companies. As a result of no longer needing to reveal financial information to shareholders in the name of national security, the cloning of Enron, having been in process for several years, is now complete. Instead of being required to disclose valid accounting ledgers, U.S. corporations have now been given carte blanche to maintain fiduciary legerdemain. I must ask: How can any sane human being persist in believing that a legitimate government exists in the United States?

Let me describe exactly what this means more succinctly.

The BusinessWeek article reported the following:

Now, the White House's top spymaster can cite national security to exempt businesses from reporting requirements.

President George W. Bush has bestowed on his intelligence czar, John Negroponte, broad authority, in the name of national security, to excuse publicly traded companies from their usual accounting and securities-disclosure obligations. Notice of the development came in a brief entry in the federal register.

Unbeknownst to almost all of Washington and the financial world, Bush and every other President since Jimmy Carter have had the authority to exempt companies working on certain top-secret defense projects from portions of the 1934 Securities Exchange Act. Administration officials told BusinessWeek that they believe this is the first time a President has ever delegated the authority to someone outside the Oval office. It couldn't be immediately determined whether any company has received a waiver under this provision...

The timing of this move is intriguing. On the same day the President signed the memo, Porter Goss resigned as director of the Central Intelligence Agency amid criticism of ineffectiveness and poor morale at the agency. Only six days later, on May 11, USA Today reported that the National Security Agency had obtained millions of calling records of ordinary citizens provided by three major US phone companies. Negroponte oversees both the CIA and the NSA in his role as the administration's top intelligence official.

FEW ANSWERS. White House spokeswoman Dana M. Perino said the timing of the May 5 Presidential memo had no significance...

AUTHORITY GRANTED. William McLucas, the Securities & Exchange commission's former enforcement chief, suggested that the ability to conceal financial information in the name of national security could lead some companies "to play fast and loose with their numbers." McLucas, a partner at Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr in Washington added: "It could be that you have a bunch of books and records out there that no one knows about."

The memo Bush signed on May 5, which was published seven days later in the Federal Register, had the unrevealing title "Assignment of Function Relating to Granting of Authority for Issuance of Certain Directives: Memorandum for the Director of National Intelligence." In the document, Bush addressed Negroponte saying: "I hereby assign to you the function of the President under section 13(b)(3)(A) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended."

A trip to the statute books showed that the amended version of the 1934 act states that "with respect to matters concerning the national security of the United States, "the President or the head of an Executive Branch agency may exempt companies from certain legal obligations." These

obligations include keeping accurate "books, records, and accounts" and maintaining a system of internal accounting controls sufficient "to ensure the propriety of financial transactions and the preparation of financial statements in compliance with "generally accepted accounting principles."

FTW made a little trip to the statute books also. This is section 13(b)(3)(A) of the Securities Exchange Act:

With respect to matters concerning the national security of the United States, no duty or liability under paragraph (2) of this subsection shall be imposed upon any person acting in cooperation with the head of any Federal department or agency responsible for such matters if such act in cooperation with such head of a department or agency was done upon the specific, written directive of the head of such department or agency pursuant to Presidential authority to issue such directives. Each directive issued under this paragraph shall set forth the specific facts and circumstances with respect to which the provisions of this paragraph are to be invoked. Each such directive shall, unless renewed in writing, expire one year after the date of issuance.

This is Paragraph 2

Every issuer which has a class of securities registered pursuant to section 12 and every issuer which is required to file reports pursuant to section 15(d) shall--

- A. Make and keep books, records, and accounts, which, in reasonable detail, accurately and fairly reflect the transactions and dispositions of the assets of the issuer;
- B. Devise and maintain a system of internal accounting controls sufficient to provide reasonable assurances that—
 - i. transactions are executed in accordance with management's general or specific authorization;
 - ii. transactions are recorded as necessary (I) to permit preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles or any other criteria applicable to such statements, and (II) to maintain accountability for assets;
 - iii. access to assets is permitted only in accordance with management's general or specific authorization; and
 - iv. the recorded accountability for assets is compared with the existing assets at reasonable intervals and appropriate action is taken with respect to any differences; and
- C. notwithstanding any other provision of law, pay the allocable share of such issuer of a reasonable annual accounting support fee or fees, determined in accordance with section 109 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.

In other words, the Bush administration has not opened the barn door, it has burned down the barn. Delegating the authority to Negroponte provides Bush with plausible deni-

ability and a scapegoat, if needed.

How Do We Know If It's Been Used?

FTW placed calls to both the offices of the National Intelligence Director (DNI) and the SEC. We were told in both cases that no public announcements would be made indicating which companies had received such exemptions. The only way to determine whether this enormous loophole has been opened, therefore, would be to obtain a list of all defense contractors (estimated in the thousands) and then perform a search of all SEC records listed in the Edgar data base to see which companies had submitted all required disclosure forms and which had not. The task would be further complicated by the fact that in many cases only certain forms might be excluded (see below).

A spokesman for the DNI told FTW, "We're not going to acknowledge in a public way which companies are involved. We don't expect such a list will ever be published."

A spokesman for the SEC said, "I'm not aware of any plans to disclose anything." When asked in more detail about how the mechanism would work, seemingly unable to answer, the SEC spokesman suggested that FTW contact a securities law professor.

That's exactly what we did.

Professor Stephen Bainbridge of UCLA Law is one of the nation's most-respected authorities on securities law. He shed some light on our questions.

If John Negroponte has this authority to entirely exempt companies from reporting requirements it could have a deleterious impact on the markets. It could prevent investors from making informed decisions.

However, he added that:

My understanding is that John Negroponte will not blanketly exempt corporations from all filings, but merely certain lines [portions] of business 10Q and 10K filings. Some of these are intended to have management describe, in a narrative fashion what their companies do. If they have the common sense God gave gravel they would do it that way.

The Bush administration has played anything involving national security close to the vest. A lot of pros at SEC are going to be not too happy with this instruction.

Bainbridge added that he expected Negroponte's authority to include the withholding of certain information from outside auditors which publicly traded corporations rely on to certify their own reports as a means of protecting stockholders.

At the same time however, Professor Bainbridge agreed that partial exemptions (from any portion of required filings) could conceal a multitude of sins, especially money laundering.

The problem is that any time the government allows non disclo-

sure it is fraught with the potential for abuses such as hiding losses and expenses. Your money laundering example is quite a good one.

Bainbridge then added that he hoped congressional oversight would prevent abuses. [FTW will attempt to see what, if anything, congress is contemplating or aware of and report back to you.]

REMEMBERING THE PAST

Over many years FTW has documented for you the theft of more than \$4 trillion dollars from the US Treasury. We have exposed how key internal accounting systems have been turned over to corporations such as Lockheed-Martin, CSC-DynCorp, AMS and others which function in the organized crime model so well described by Catherine Austin Fitts.

We have also described how Enron – now fading from memory – operated more than 700 subsidiaries of its electronic trading company Enron Online in the Cayman Islands (where there is no oil or gas) but where there is a lot of drug money.

Most will have forgotten that Enron, WorldCom, Reliant, Qwest, Tyco, Adelphia, Global Crossing, El Paso, Motorola, ImClone, Martha Stewart and Merck were all accused of cooking their books in 2002 and after. What this presidential directive does is open the door for it all to become virtually undetectable in the future for companies who are "partnered" with whatever administration is in office.

Whether it's drug money, US Treasury money, or a silent selling off and transfer of assets out of the country before the crash (which will leave stockholders holding the bag again), we now live in a government of the corporations, by the corporations and for the corporations.

Fitts Reacts, "Get Your Money Out Now"

I have known former Assistant Housing Secretary Catherine Austin Fitts since 1998. I consider the Wharton MBA holder and former managing Director of Dillon Read to be perhaps the most accomplished and innovative financial/economic mind I have ever met. Never have I seen her write anything as emphatic, direct and unequivocal as what she wrote for FTW in response to the SEC changes.

"The use of national security law to create exceptions to the SEC law requiring books, records and transparency means that the basic conditions of markets are now gone. The black budget can now be the official budget for both government and private banks and corporations.

"Organized crime is now officially legal and combined with the stock and capital markets -- all enforced by force and rigged profits. This is the economic infrastructure for fascism."

The End of Financial Markets?

It's pretty much a steady story. Gold and silver prices – despite their wild volatility -- are on a long term trend up, the Dollar and

the Dow are on a long term trend down. Real things count, Ponzi schemes don't.

Large corporations and banks have had an amazing run. The Fed and the Treasury have stood ready to print money and securities to pump up the economy and profits with government contracts, credit supports and all sorts of financial shenanigans. Indeed, these days it seems like the entire federal credit mechanism exists to serve the pump-and-dump of capital markets and to take responsibility for the failures, liabilities and ongoing droppings of corporate and banking dinosaurs.

After 9/11, the government, heretofore uncomfortable about their refusal to produce audited financial statements as required by law, adopted the attitude that it was just going to ignore the laws requiring books and records and a lawful basis for expenditures. This would make it easier to pump out more and more government largesse to large corporations, banks and defense contractors.

I have wondered how in the world corporations were going to account for this enormous flow of unaccountable money moving through their operations. Watching the news, there seem to be any number of strategies. One is to take large corporations private. Watch the news for more and more leveraged buyout deals banked by firms such as Goldman Sachs, KKR and Carlyle. (To see more about how this works, see my description of the RJR buyout by KKR in my latest, *Dillon Read & the Aristocracy of Prison Profits*).

The coup de grâce in creating black budgets for corporations and therefore the unified black budget GNP -- the required financial infrastructure for fascism -- came last week with the scoop by *BusinessWeek* that President Bush had delegated to the National Intelligence Director the power to excuse private companies from reporting requirements.

What this means is that private investors can take our tax dollars and our investment dollars to create and subsidize companies that have no fundamental economic or social purpose other than the cash flows they rig through governments and the control they exercise in the name of government and provide no financial transparency to their investors.

They have no obligation to provide the books and records that are the basis of accountability and the basic building block of liquid financial markets.

This is the real result of the Enron verdict. The politicians who enjoyed Enron's largess have created a mechanism where "it can't happen again."

The losing of the largess, that is.

Alas, our taxes and US treasury and agency security purchases have become a cash flow dedicated to financing Washington's shift of our assets into a few private global hands. Our investments in large corporate stocks and bonds do the same. We are financing our enemies to execute a coup d'etat against us.

What this means to you is that if you have money invested in

large corporations and deposits remaining at large banks, you need to withdraw them and switch to companies, banks and jurisdictions that continue to practice transparency, accountability and the rule of law.

The end of financial markets is not when governments and the private interests who control them exercise absolute power against our interests. The end of financial markets is when we continue to bank and invest in companies, governments and leadership who have proven themselves incapable of practicing, applying or succeeding at producing real products and competing in a real market.

It's up to you. Get your money out of large corporations, banks and governments now. The players who depend on the US governmental mechanism can fool some of the investors all of the time and all of the investors some of the time. They can not, however, fool all of the investors all of the time.

Get your money out now. Invest in life -- especially your own.

DEVELOPMENT NUMBER TWO – Alan Greenspan Introduces Peak Oil to the Markets

In another important development, for the first time – to FTW's knowledge – a Fed Chairman (either current or former) has acknowledged Peak Oil in congressional testimony.

On June 7, 2006 the *International Herald Tribune* reported:

Alan Greenspan, the former Federal Reserve chairman, offered a grim view on Wednesday of the world's rising vulnerability to high crude oil prices, saying he was skeptical that oil producers could pump enough crude to meet future demand.

Since the 1940s, U.S. consumers have shown an uncanny ability to shoulder rising energy prices, but consumers' immunity to oil price shocks was running out, Greenspan said.

"The United States, especially, has been able to absorb the huge implicit tax of rising oil prices so far," Greenspan told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in his first congressional testimony since leaving the U.S. central bank earlier this year. "However, recent data indicate we may finally be experiencing some impact."...

No kidding, Alan. It could be argued that you meant only that enough wells haven't been drilled yet, but even for all your decades of irrationally exuberant word bending, this is a pretty clear and direct statement.

Peak Oil has just been acknowledged in both the financial markets and in congress. I consider this to be a very ominous development that is sure to start having a real effect on shareholder equity by the end of the summer.

Perhaps everyone should think of it this way. From a financial standpoint, people starting to torch their SUVs to get out from under the payments and gas prices is just the beginning of the financial collapse that is sure to accelerate the coming, broader societal collapse.

AMERICA: FROM FREEDOM TO FASCISM

In just a little over a month, Aaron Russo's new documentary, *America: From Freedom to Fascism* will open in selected theaters in just a few states. A popular movement is growing to raise funds to expand the number of screens where it will show. It was just rated "Four-Star" by CBS and described as making Fahrenheit 911 look like *Bambi*. Catherine Austin Fitts is in this movie and so am I and a great many other American economic heroes, teachers and liberators. I have seen the film twice and am eagerly awaiting a final cut.

If what you read here is not enough to make you take action of some kind then this film all by itself would make a dead man get out of the grave to take action. Its subject matter is the private ownership of the Federal Reserve, its illegality and the fact that the 16th Amendment (income taxes) was never legally ratified by the states. It will lead you from there into a mind-bending experience of fascism as you are experiencing it today and will be tomorrow. There is no provision anywhere in the tax code which allows the US government to impose a direct, unapportioned tax on the people.

What you are facing now is open criminality which you must either choose to accept or oppose. It is the way money works that enables all of this malevolence to grow and prosper. Only you can change the way money works. Forget about writing letters to your congressperson. Forget about letters to the editor. As Thomas Jefferson reminded us, a little revolution is a good thing every now and again.

There are many ways to revolt but the simplest will not impose upon you the discomfort of actually talking to other people. God forbid. What you can do, what you must do to start your own personal revolution and liberation is to:

Wherever possible, stop spending money with major corporations trading their stock on Wall Street. Dump your AOL email account and go with a smaller company. Stop feeding the tape-worm because now you are only enabling it to eat you faster. What we have told you here is that there are no longer any "biological" restraints to keep it from eating you completely. Withdraw your 401(k) and other investments from large, US dollar-denominated stocks. Whatever you lose doing this will be nothing compared to what's coming.

Put at least some of your money into precious metals. (Pay no attention to gold's recent price drops. Gold is a long-term investment and still paying off handsomely.) The trend is still way up and any gold below \$600 an ounce is a terrific buy. Silver is also a solid buy. I still see gold at \$800 before year's end and possibly at \$1,000 by the middle of next year.

Restructure your portfolio into local investments, taking special care to open bank accounts with small locally-owned banks. Get rid of – by whatever means possible – credit cards from major banking institutions; especially those with variable rates.

If you have a large portfolio and need more information or advice on how to restructure, please visit Catherine Austin Fitts' web site, *Solari*.

Check the web and your neighborhood and see what's being done with local and regional alternative currencies in your area.

Regional and local currencies will save more lives than a thousand freeze-dried survival meals.

Do whatever you can to support local agriculture and farming. Start a vegetable garden yourself.

It doesn't sound so revolutionary, does it? But in reality it is. Perhaps it sounds like too much work.

You have been warned and there probably won't be a serious opportunity to issue another one.

The criminals are the government. As Mussolini once remarked, and as I quoted him in *Crossing The Rubicon*, "Fascism should more properly be called corporatism, because it is the perfect merger of power between the corporation and the state."

The more you disengage now, the less likely will it be for you to find yourself on the way to the ovens or – having gotten there – realizing that it was you, yourself who financed them and made them possible.

UPDATE – June 14, 1200 hrs

After this alert had been finalized another breaking story added to our concerns. The following has been extracted from an email dialogue with Catherine Austin Fitts as we prepared our selected stories for today's "Key stories from around the world" service for paid subscribers. It meshes perfectly with what we have written above.

Add these developments to what we already know and the warning lights flash clearer and brighter.

[Catherine Austin Fitts' brilliant observation on a story from yesterday's *Financial Times*.]

The economy can be hollowed out without a collapse. That is the nature of slow burn. It is the Orwellian scenario. The middle class is slowly drained of equity and political influence....but the process is managed. -- Catherine

Mike Ruppert wrote: <http://news.ft.com/cms/s/aa447f34-f973-11da-8ced-0000779e2340,s01=1.html>

[MCR - COMMENT]

Omigod! Fitts drew my attention to this story with the comment that IBM was calling for the elimination of white-collar jobs. She's absolutely right. But what we see here is so utterly revealing. These then, must be the last stages of the looting before the collapse. Why? When the white collar jobs start leaving, a lot of money (cash) stops circulating. How many jobs does a spending millionaire support? One of the main reasons why bubbles burst, I believe, is because of unemployment. The housing bubble is already bursting and when big-dollar homes start defaulting en masse it's like waving a red flag in front of a bull.

But that's not all that's being moved. The intellectual capital is going also. The equity is going.

In other words, the rats are starting to leave the ship. -- MCR

(‘The Tillman Files Part III’ continued from page 2)

“Information is an instrument of national power, just as military, economic and political. Like any weapon or tool, the United States Government needs to use it or cede the ‘battlefield’ to someone else.”

–John Rendon, Rendon Group

EMAIL [Top line redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Sent: Friday, April 30, 2004, 3:03 PM

To: [Redacted]

SUBJECT: Corporal Tillman SS Game Plan

Importance – High

[Next line redacted]

As we just discussed, it was a misstep by [redacted] on the premature release of draft [redacted] release announcing the approval of the Silver Star Award to Corporal Tillman. As is the standard practice for [redacted] among [redacted] sent the draft announcement to his [redacted] counterparts with a header of DRAFT only – NOT for release. [Redacted] will make the release later today. [Redacted] provided the info to several members of the Pentagon Press Corps on the mistaken belief the info was releasable. [Redacted] has expressed his displeasure to [redacted]. No immediate queries yet based on [redacted] action, and if asked, will forward to [redacted].
[Redacted initials]

June,2 2006 12:30pm PST -- **P**at Tillman was a serious young man, hard-working, highly inquisitive, studious, and critical; but that did not translate into humorlessness. Friends and family describe him as funny and playful, even about very serious matters.

A member of his platoon in 2nd Ranger Battalion recalls that Pat had become quite unabashed in his belief that the war in Iraq was “so fucking illegal,” and that – while riffing on that theme one day – Pat started making fun of the Bush administration. They needed some Ranger leadership up there, he quipped, because they didn’t show any effort. They wouldn’t even make the effort to construct a good lie. They were lazy.

When Pat was killed, however, on April 22, 2004, someone made the effort. Part of that effort was the award of a posthumous Silver Star to Pat Tillman. The above email, originating from the Special Operations Command (SOCOM), was a response to the premature announcement on April 30, 2004, by the United States Army Special Operation Command (USASOC) Public Affairs Office of the award of the Silver Star to Pat Tillman. The fact that the subject of the email is called an SS (Silver Star) Game Plan suggests that this particu-

lar fabric of lies was torn, and a “game plan” was required to prepare for... what?

To answer that, we have to first establish what the role is in today’s politico-military milieu for “public affairs.” Certainly the Bush administration has been characterized by a high level of arrogance and impunity during its tenure; but the fact they haven’t put forth much effort – and Pat was joking about that – has more to do with American cultural credulity than laziness. Most people didn’t make the effort that Pat Tillman did to understand what was really going on, and the Bush administration has consistently counted on that.

In fact, the Bush administration had spent millions upon millions of dollars, like administrations before them, in the construction of elaborate lies to sell military actions to the American public. Selling war with lies has become one of the most lucrative parasitic industries in Washington DC.

Anyone who has not seen the film, *Wag the Dog*, is herein encouraged to do so. The plot revolves around a manufactured crisis by a fictional administration to create a pretext for invading Albania. It is a dark comedy, but watching it now doesn’t elicit belly laughs so much as nervous chuckling because of its alarming verisimilitude.

On February 19, 2002, more than a year before the American ground offensive launched out of Kuwait and into its greatest military mire since Vietnam, the *New York Times* ran a story about a Pentagon outfit called the Office of Strategic Influence (OSI). The purpose of said office was “developing plans to provide news items, possibly even false ones, to foreign media organizations... to influence public sentiment and policy makers in both friendly and unfriendly countries.”

Rumsfeld, in a fit of arrogant pique at reporters in November of the same year, railed at them: *“There was the Office of Strategic Influence. You may recall that. And ‘Oh, my goodness gracious, isn’t that terrible; Henny Penny, the sky is going to fall.’ I went down that next day and said, ‘Fine, if you want to savage this thing, fine, I’ll give you the corpse. There’s the name. You can have the name, but I’m gonna keep doing every single thing that needs to be done’ and I have...”*

...fuck you very much.

Close my offices, but I’ll do any damn thing I want. By 2003, the Pentagon propaganda program had been re-packaged, and a secret 74-page directive emanated from Rumsfeld’s office, now struggling with the catastrophic cascade developing in Iraq, where key advisors had assured the administration a year earlier of a “cake walk.” That directive was the “Information Operations Roadmap” (IOR).

Using the almost painfully dissociative wordsmithing of good military bureaucrats, IOR was described thus:

"The integrated employment of the core capabilities of electronic warfare [EW], computer network operations [CNO], psychological operations [PSYOP], military deception, and operations security [OPSEC], with specified supporting and related capabilities to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp adversarial human and automated decisionmaking while protecting our own."

IOR was neither new nor innovative. Rumsfeld and one of his sycophants merely re-named what had been going on for some time, even before Rumsfeld. Rumsfeld's new "doctrine," which he has haughtily christened the "Revolution in Military Affairs" (RMA), is generally described in three components: high technology weapons and equipment, high technology air power, and lean, fast-moving ground forces.

In Southwest Asia, this doctrine – while it sounds great when one pitches it in a Washington drawing room – has been an unmitigated disaster. High tech systems are vulnerable to dangerously uncontrollable forces, like sandstorms and tough, angry people. High-tech air power was quickly replaced by the low-tech, but deadly and accurate A-10 Warthog (that has seeded thousands of years' worth of toxic and radioactive contamination throughout the CENTCOM Theater in the form of depleted uranium). And the lean, fast-moving forces have found themselves armoring up like Panzers in the face of low-tech combat solutions like improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Rumsfeld's nemesis on doctrine was then-Secretary of State Colin Powell – for all his moral failures, at least someone who had a smattering of combat experience – whose own "Powell Doctrine" said much that neither Rumsfeld nor his injudicious boss wanted to hear:

Powell, schooled under the parsimonious Caspar Weinberger, outlined his namesake doctrine as a set of questions that read almost like the interrogative for a business plan (people like Rumsfeld don't bother themselves with questions, since they already know the answers):

- * Is a vital US interest at stake?
- * Will we commit sufficient resources to win?
- * Are the objectives clearly defined?
- * Will we sustain the commitment?
- * Is there reasonable expectation that the public and Congress will support the operation?
- * Have we exhausted our other options?
- * Do we have a clear exit strategy?

This was an unwelcome doctrine in the Bush administration, so even after Powell went before the United Nations and told whopper lies for his boss, he was repaid by being sent away.

But there was one thing that Powell had become a kind of expert on, and Rumsfeld took this to heart, and even brought it to a higher art: the necessity of *perception management* as an essential component of modern imperial warfare. The difference was, Powell wanted to be sure the war was thought through with an eye to consequences. He remembered Vietnam. Rumsfeld, who flew Navy planes for four years during peacetime, didn't.

Rumsfeld was tasked as soon as he was appointed to begin drawing up "solutions" for Afghanistan and Iraq. After September 11, Rumsfeld's notes for communication with his boss included the very direct recommendation: "Go massive. Sweep it all up. Things related and not."

The attacks of that day provided the perfect pretext to militarize American policy, foreign and domestic, and to massively accelerate plans to "sweep it all up" – "it" being Afghanistan – which was already targeted for October – but also Iraq... then Iran... then Syria – driving a physical wedge between China and the region, setting up for a contest with Russia over the Caspian region, and perched on multiple doorsteps of the irreplaceable, but ever more politically volatile OPEC colossus, Saudi Arabia.

The Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld troika immediately launched a propaganda campaign unmatched in history, the target audience of which was the population of the United States. We have all become familiar by now with the degree of perfidy employed during the perception management campaign leading to the March 2003 ground offensive into Iraq. The October 2001 invasion of Afghanistan – once the word was out that Osama bin Laden was there, and with the already powerful but inaccurate identification of bin Laden with the Taliban government there – made this invasion an absolute certainty, even though it was planned *before* September 11th.

What few realize, however, is that these perception management programs are extremely well-planned, employ an army of public relations experts and professional spin-masters, and are hugely expensive. Just as Rumsfeld has hired more than 20,000 private mercenaries to fill in the gaps in Iraq and to conduct activities that escape Congressional oversight, the Bush administration (like the Clinton administration before it) has hired private contractors whose sole purpose in life is to re-construct the war in Southwest Asia as a story – using story conventions with which the American public is familiar and comfortable – that resonates emotionally and mythically with our media-conformed "social imaginary."

Before we begin weaving-in the next panel on our case, I want to make something abundantly clear, and I will reiterate it more than once. There was a phony story of heroism constructed about Pat Tillman in combat with "enemies." The real story – which we will re-construct in the next edition to the very best of our ability – is also a story of the courage and selflessness of Pat Tillman, in which he actually did save the life of a comrade and lose his own life in the process. That he did so in the face of withering "friendly" fire not only does not minimize his actions; it is the real story of a man who found himself in a situation that was as complex as it was dangerous, and whose courage purchased one human life at the terrible cost of his own.

In the previous installment for this series, we wrote about the connection between military careerism and the "disingenuous boss." Now we need to take that thread and weave it into the issue of perception management, because this is what will ultimately explain an aspect of the circumstances leading to the death by "friendly fire" of Pat Tillman, and many aspects of the actions taken through the chain of command afterward in the retrenchment cover-ups of cover-ups.

We'll begin by going back to October 2003, in Northern Iraq, also known as Iraqi Kurdistan. Our story is that of the then-Commander of 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade – Lieutenant Colonel Dominic Caraccilo.

The re-activated 173rd Airborne Brigade is the same unit with which I did my hitch in Vietnam, one that had been deactivated in August 1971. Caraccilo and his battalion were stationed in Iraqi Kurdistan's Kirkuk, near some of the richest oil fields in the world. While they are certainly living in comparatively austere circumstances, separated from loved ones, with many beginning to question the justifications for this war, they had not undergone the same kind of combat stress as soldiers around Fallujah and Tikrit.

In the first week of that month, 500 identical letters-to-the-editor were received by hometown newspapers across the United States, all from LTC Caraccilo's unit, signed by dozens of his troops, some with apparently forged signatures from troops who were unaware of the letter at all. The letter said, among sundry descriptions of New Eden, "After nearly five months here, the people still come running from their homes, into the 110 degree heat, waving to us as our troops drive by on daily patrols of the city... There is very little trash in the streets, many more people in the markets and shops and children have returned to school... This is all evidence, that the work we are doing is bettering the lives of Kirkuk's citizens."

This letter stunt was pulled, "coincidentally," at the same time the Bush administration launched its counteroffensive against critics of the war – which was going very badly.

To kick off this publicity counter-offensive, George W. Bush – who still hadn't recovered from the gaffe of saying "Bring 'em on" at a press conference in June – was at it again, telling National Guard troops in Portsmouth, NH, that "Americans are not the running kind." The interesting thing was that Paul Wolfowitz said exactly the same thing, in a different venue, on the same day. This was a scripted, well-coordinated Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) campaign, directed again at the American public.

Scripting is both a term and a practice that we need to keep foremost in our minds as we follow the story of Pat Tillman.

When the letters-to-the-editors scam was exposed, LTC Caraccilo – relying on the media protocol of granting authority its "presumption of good will and good faith" – publicly said he only wanted to "share the pride with people back home."

As part of his confession, he preempted a felony by saying no one was forced to sign the letter (before the question was even asked!), and consistent with the PSYOPS playbook, the administration exercised "plausible denial" (We didn't know about this – and you can't construct a *prima facie* case that we did) and hoped that this, too, would blow over. Which it did.

Presumption of good will and good faith, you see. The administration counted on the US press not to ask how curious it was that the Caraccilo "letter campaign" coincided with the PR counteroffensive of their very own National Command Authority – the same one that has openly declared its intention to manage public perception, even attempting to develop its own perception management agency, the Office of Strategic Influence; and after that was exposed and dropped, Rumsfeld declared in his moment of paternal rage that he would – by God – do exactly what the fuck he wanted, and you can all go to hell if you don't like it.

Soldiers from 2/503 Airborne Infantry confirmed, when asked, that this letter campaign *was* coercive and dishonest – both crimes under the Uniform Code of Military Justice – and the Pollyanna form letters were seen by all whose names were forwarded to the press, but the media story was the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs line:

"The intention was good, but the delivery system was probably not a good way to do it." Caraccilo accepted this criticism – as would the junior officers in the chain of command over Pat Tillman – and preserved his career (he will likely advance, since he now *has something* on his own

chain of command), and the king is safe. The Stepford press was not asking just what in the hell the *intent* was, even though a child could figure it out. The factors in confluence here – just as in Pat Tillman's case – were: (1) *perception management* when the war is going badly, (2) a *lie-and-leak crisis*, (3) the mainstream press protocol of *presumption of good will and good faith*, (4) *bureaucratic careerism* in the military, and (5) *disingenuous boss syndrome* (DBS) as an escape from accountability.

This story is just one of numerous examples to make this point.

I should explain something about the military for readers unfamiliar. No Lieutenant Colonel (like Carracillo) – a person with around 15 years in the Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS), one of the most ruthlessly unforgiving bureaucratic ladders in existence, where someone is always waiting for you to misstep – is *unilaterally* going to cook up and carry out something as harebrained as that letter campaign. He doesn't have the time under normal circumstances, because running an infantry battalion that is deployed into a hostile fire zone is very time-consuming, and he doesn't want to commit career suicide five years from his eligibility to draw a pension. If he had inaugurated this on his own, he'd have been flushed like a snotty Kleenex. The directive to write those letters came from higher, and at every step up the ladder, where the career competition becomes tighter and more pitiless, the likelihood of this particular brand of stupidity diminishes by orders of magnitude. That strongly suggests that the buck stopped past the uniforms, at the suits, that is, worn by the National Command Authority itself. It is a stupidity that is too massive – like a great stone – to *ascend*. It can only *descend*.

In other words, this kind of stupidity could only have come from the very top, probably with the able assistance of the Pentagon's hired PR guns. One key example: The Rendon Group.

The Rendon Group has been around through both the Clinton and Bush II administrations. It is not the only PR outfit feeding at the public trough for the purpose of shoveling bullshit at the very public who signs its checks, but Rendon is emblematic. Rendon stage managed much of the run-up to the current quagmire in Iraq, to include being largely responsible for the organization of the Iraqi quisling regime that was originally intended to take power – dubbed *by The Rendon Group* the "Iraqi National Congress," complete with the changed regime head and convicted embezzler, Ahmed Chalabi.

Said one unnamed State Department official in a moment of anonymous candor, "Were it not for

Rendon, the Chalabi group wouldn't even be on the map."

Rendon had picked up where Hill and Knowlton, the Gulf War I perception managers, left off. You remember H and K. On contract with the US government, they hatched the Kuwaiti-babies-thrown-from-their-incubators-by-Iraqi-soldiers story that mobilized massive press and public support for the Bush I invasion. Of course, the story turned out to be a complete fabrication, but it proved so persistent that an HBO movie about Gulf War I in 2004 actually echoed it again as fact. It should not surprise anyone that Victoria (Torie) Clarke, Pentagon spokesperson during the stop-and-start blitz at the beginning of this invasion, is a former Hill and Knowlton staffer.

Incidentally, Clarke went on to become the Pentagon's Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, an office she resigned in 2003; and we shall look more closely at her successor, Lawrence Di Rita, in the next installment.

Rendon Group was founded by the former Democratic Party operator, John Rendon. Rendon Group worked alongside Hill and Knowlton during Gulf War I, inside Kuwait, where they learned quickly how to mine America's consumer witlessness. Rendon even boasted about it to the National Security Council, saying, "If any of you either participated in the liberation of Kuwait City ... or if you watched it on television, you would have seen hundreds of Kuwaitis waving small American flags. Did you ever stop to wonder how the people of Kuwait City, after being held hostage for seven long and painful months, were able to get hand-held American flags? And for that matter, the flags of other coalition countries? Well, you now know the answer. That was one of my jobs."

Hill and Knowlton actually published a book with so many lies it was almost a new fiction genre, called *The Rape of Kuwait*. It was sent directly to troops prior to launching Desert Storm, presumably to remove their inhibitions and imbue them with the proper fighting spirit by dehumanizing their new enemy.

Retired Air Force Colonel Sam Gardiner in October 2003 published a remarkable document online, *Truth from These Podia* which I recommend. He found over 50 systematic and intentional lies that were generated for the express purpose of deceiving not some putative enemy, but the press and the people of the United States and Great Britain. He describes the evolution and structure of the White House's Office of Global Communications – an office almost run by Rendon people – and how they generated news stories out of CENTCOM and elsewhere faster than the press could keep up in order to push deadlines and competition and thereby inhibit fact-checking.

As the stories come apart, sometimes in mere days or hours, the Rendon technique counsels that fabrications be allowed to “linger” without comment. This tactic is combined with language control – explaining why “Americans are not the running kind” can show up in two separate speeches in the same day by different members of the administration. Redefining all opposition to US actions as “terrorists” is another example of building false associations through repetition – “echoing” as it is called in the perception management trade. How many times did we hear “September 11,” “terrorists,” and “Saddam Hussein” in the same breath? Gardiner shows how this is a PSYOPS technique, a method to “construct memory.”

When they get caught, they reconfigure the story with elliptical language, then let it “linger” some more. Weapons of mass destruction become a “weapons program,” then a “seeking” of WMD. George Tenet’s CIA “had questions” about the British forgery on Niger’s purported yellow-cake uranium. Caraccilo just “wanted to share the pride with the people back home.” And let the lingering constructed memory kick in as the next flurry of stories is released to bury the newly emergent lie. Caraccilo, curiously enough, took the heat off of Wilson-Plame, and who could even remember the Jessica Lynch fable, the stage management of Basra, the yellow-cake uranium, the Iraqi anthrax, the bio-weapons trailer, the Iraqis using American uniforms, the Iraqis who used white flags to lure in their prey, the ten-year-old soldiers, the disappearing Scuds, the Iraqi killer drones, the Iraqi woman hanged by the Fedayeen for waving to an American, and the whole wretched list of fabrications that came and went -- what I referred to in my book, *Full Spectrum Disorder*, as the CENTCOM lie-of-the-day. All echoed by the press in the name of presumption of good will and good faith.

And who will remember that little bump in the road with the uncontainable story that Pat Tillman was killed by his own men? Or overcome the convention of presumption of good will?

In March of this year, Mark Mazzetti, writing for the *Los Angeles Times*, filed a story entitled “Gen. Casey says U.S. to keep up Iraq PR program.” It makes reference to another PR agency called *The Lincoln Group*, that last year was exposed as the source for hundreds of faked stories that were being planted in Iraqi newspapers as part of the Pentagon effort to reacquire some semblance of the initiative there.

The U.S. military plans to continue paying Iraqi newspapers to publish stories favorable to the United States after an inquiry found no fault with the controversial practice, the top U.S. general in Iraq said Friday.

Army Gen. George W. Casey said that the review has concluded that the U.S. military has not violated any American laws or Pentagon guidelines by running the information operations campaign in which U.S. troops and a private contractor called Lincoln Group write pro-American stories and pay to have them planted without attribution in the Iraqi media.

“By and large, it found that we were operating within our authorities and responsibilities,” Casey said, adding that he has no intention of shutting the program down.

The information program has been heavily criticized both inside and outside of the military as detrimental to U.S. credibility and contrary to the principles of a free press in a nascent, embattled democracy...

...While the final report by Navy Adm. Scott Van Buskirk is not yet complete, Casey’s comments are the clearest sign that the U.S. military sees the propaganda effort as a critical tool for winning hearts and minds in Iraq. Van Buskirk’s report could pave the way for the Pentagon to duplicate the practice – which would be illegal for the military in the United States – in other parts of the world.

*Casey’s comments, made during a video teleconference with Pentagon reporters, also highlighted the split in attitude on the program between military commanders in Baghdad and some senior officials in Washington. After the existence of the Lincoln Group program was revealed in an article in the *Los Angeles Times* three months ago, White House officials said they were “very concerned” about the practice of paying Iraqi newspapers to publish unattributed stories written by American troops...*

...American troops write articles, called storyboards, which are given to the Iraqi staff of Lincoln Group to translate into Arabic. The contractor’s Iraqi staff pay newspaper editors in Baghdad to publish the articles without revealing their origin.

It would be credulous to the point of stupidity – absent the presumption of good will – for anyone to assume that this manipulative mindset did not also prevail in the public affairs handling of the death of Pat Tillman on April 22, 2004.

The “escape” of the email that led this installment was a tactical blunder by whomever. **No matter how credulous the press might be, the title “Silver Star Game Plan” raises a very big question. Why does a Silver Star require a “game plan”?**

Why did Cariccilo preemptively state that “no one was forced to sign the letter”?

According to the third investigation into the death of Pat Tillman, “official” notification of General Bryan “Doug” Brown, Commander of US Special Operations Command (SOCOM), of the conclusion by the initial investigator that Pat Tillman was killed by fratricide, Brown’s unsolicited and immediate

response was that fratricide “in no way can be construed to detract from Corporal Tillman’s heroism in the face of the enemy.” I have said that Pat Tillman’s real behavior was exemplary; but that is not what Brown is reacting to in advance. His concern is the accusation that the Silver Star award was fraudulent... which it was, because they were trying to re-cast the events of April 22nd to cover up what happened, and why.

Why did General Brown preemptively state that Pat Tillman’s death by friendly fire “in no way can be construed to detract from Corporal Tillman’s heroism in the face of the enemy”?

This is a cookie jar defense.

Here is an informed conjecture from someone who spent a long time in the Army, including assignments with Ranger Battalions. I am not granting the presumption of good faith and good will. This whole thing stinks to high heaven, and someone has to say that without all the mealy-mouthed equivocation.

The commander in chief was in an election year. The war in Iraq was going about as badly as could be imagined with a two-front rebellion that resulted in the tactical defeat of US forces in Fallujah by Iraqi guerrillas. By April 22nd, it was already the deadliest month for the US during the Iraq war. There was a growing recruitment and retention crisis in the military, because young people were weighing their fantasies of glory and their need for college money against the unmistakable reality that one could get killed or very seriously maimed in Iraq or Afghanistan. Meanwhile, informed commentators on Afghanistan were ridiculing the occupation and its inflated claims of progress, noting that US puppet president and former Unocal exec, Hamid Karzai was “the mayor of Kabul.” The need for perception management (PM) had never been higher; and we have already established that intentional, deceptive PM was (and is) a doctrinal constant in Rumsfeld’s ministry.

This is a syllogism.

Here is my conjectural telephone voice-over:

Fratricide! No, by God, you are not going to tell anyone that. You can’t prove that. If anyone asks, you tell them they can’t prove it either. What you’re going to do is this. You’re going to tell the American public how he died as a hero, how he made the supreme sacrifice for God and country. Make sure he gets a medal, some kind of high medal. If you don’t turn this into a recruiting poster, I’ll have someone’s ass on a platter.

And so it would begin. Rolling down through the ranks. Reaction to the emergency. Damage control. Then... only later... the fuller implications begin to sink in.

The Silver Star is awarded in cases of very intense fighting, for valor “above and beyond the call of

duty.” This was not intense combat. Moreover, this secret cannot be sustained. The whole platoon knows it... hell, the whole battalion knows it. Six hundred Rangers know that he was not killed in intense combat, but by a hummer full of other Rangers. And they are all going home in May.

(Reminding readers: this does not minimize the courage that the *real* Pat Tillman displayed in the *real* incident.)

Captain Bailey [from the third investigation]: *There were eight people out there who think they saw Corporal Tillman get killed. It would be the most insane thing I could think of to try and hide something like that.*

PRESS RELEASE (excerpt):

During a ground assault convoy in Afghanistan Tillman’s platoon was split into two sections. Tillman was the team leader of the lead section when the trail section began receiving suppressive mortar and small arms fire. The nature of the cavernous terrain made it extremely difficult to target enemy positions and there was no room for the trail element to maneuver out of the kill zone.

Although Tillman’s element was already safely out of the area under fire Tillman ordered his team to dismount and maneuver his team up a hill towards the enemy’s location. As Tillman crested the hill he maneuvered his team into positions and himself with the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW) returned suppressive fire.

Through the firing Tillman’s voice was issuing fire commands to take the fight to the enemy on the dominating high ground.

Only after his team engaged a well-armed enemy did it appear their fires diminished.

While Tillman focused his efforts, and those of his team members without regard to his personal safety he was shot and killed.

This was a lie, and this series will demonstrate that beyond any doubt. The well-armed enemy that Pat Tillman faced were five members of his own platoon.

We will also show that the Silver Star Award was written with the express intent of concealing the facts of the friendly fire incident, while at the same time carefully constructing the language of the award to insulate its authors and authorizers from the specific charge of fraud. We already have in our possession sworn statements that demonstrate the award was being drafted *before* the authors themselves were clear about what had happened outside of Manah on April 22nd.

Let me say that again, because that – and not the question of Pat’s actions – is what this is about: The Silver Star award was being drafted by people who had not been there, BEFORE THE PLATOON HAD EVEN RETURNED TO BASE. This has no

precedent in any experience I had over a period of more than a quarter of a century in the Army. "We began preparing that award either the night of the incident in which he was killed, or the following day; in either event, **we began preparing the award prior to the platoon returning to FOB [Forward Operating Base] Salerno** and before we suspected that his death may have been the result of fratricide."

An award – the third highest military award there is for valor – was being written *before* an after-action review had even been conducted, by people who were *not* on the scene, *before* those on the scene had returned to base. How can an award for a valourous action even be suggested and drafted before the facts of the action are even known? There is only one sensible answer to this.

Pat Tillman was no ordinary soldier. He was famous, and famous as a kind of American military-and-sports male icon – regardless of the real Pat Tillman in all his complexity... including his belief that the war in Iraq was "so fucking illegal." The reality of Pat Tillman the person, including the reality of how his life ended, were being expunged to spin a story. His name and public reputation were being transformed into a bit of Rumsfeldian perception management.

The order to draft a Silver Star award came from above – where exactly, we don't know. But come from above it certainly did. The emergency, which required the "game plan," was that someone let the press release go before the provable lies were edited into plausible deniability. This is where we can demonstrate beyond any doubt that this case had such a high level of "political sensitivity" that a story was being substituted for the truth before Pat's platoon had even driven back inside the wire at Khoust.

Next: "Firefight"

THE NY TIMES PUTS 9-11 QUESTIONS IN THE GRAVE

**As Sad As It Was Predictable
Story Marks the End of a Sequential and
Planned Campaign to Discredit Authentic
9/11 Research**

by
Michael C. Ruppert and Jamey Hecht

June 7th 2006, 1:28pm [PST] – "Ignominious" is the only word that comes to mind as I try to describe a June 5, 2006 New York Times story titled [500 Conspiracy Buffs Meet to Seek the Truth of 9/11](#). For the first time (to our knowledge) in the almost five years since 9/11, the nation's premier newspaper sent a reporter to cover a two-day conference sponsored by [9/11truth.org](#).

The term ignominious applies to both what remains of the 9-11 movement and the *Times* story itself. The Gray Lady's disingenuous but expectedly well-crafted character assassination will have a lasting historical footprint, but the 9-11 truth movement has been virtually consigned to a footnote in the dustbin of history as a result of mainstream media mind control and its own foolish choices.

The truth is that the real and best 9/11 researchers chose a long time ago not to ride willingly into the Little Big Horn massacre that was long prepared for, set up, and executed over the last few months. None of us takes any satisfaction in saying we told you so, but... we told you so.

Unless a movement alleging government corruption of this magnitude understands from the gate that every move must be planned with one question and only one question in mind, it will fail at the precise moment that it reaches the threshold of mass public consciousness. That question, very simply, is "When the mainstream media is forced to take note, how will they try to discredit our efforts?"

Avoiding the obvious ambush points is the best way to plan. Of course, that threatens the chance that a movement like 9-11 truth will ever reach the mainstream media; it also evokes the now-justified observation that the only movements questioning the government and exposing the complicity of the press that get the ink or airtime will be the ones that can easily be shot down in the public eye.

The headline pretty much sets the tone for a series of cheap shots that run very predictably throughout the story – cheap shots that most of the 9-11 movement stood up and volunteered for.

Among other things the *Times* article spun using the following terms and phrases:

- "splintered factions of the movement" (second paragraph)
- "In colleges and chat rooms on the Internet, this band of disbelievers has been trying for years to prove that 9/11 was an inside job" (4th paragraph) – The *Times* does not mention the three best-selling books on 9/11 after the Kean Commission report including [Crossing the Rubicon](#), [The New Pearl Harbor](#), or [The Terror Timeline](#).
- "It was in tone, half trade show, half political convention" (5th paragraph) – Nothing to take seriously here, this implies. It's only a bunch of people trying to make money selling things, have a few drinks and get laid.
- "Mr. Berger, 40, is typical of 9/11 Truthers – a group that, in its rank and file, includes professors, chain-saw operators, [Gee, as in *Texas Chain Saw Massacre?*], mothers, engineers, activists, used-book sellers, pizza deliverymen, college students, a former fringe candidate for the United States Senate and a long-haired fellow named

hummer (pronounced who-mook) who, on and off, lived in a cave for 15 years.” (7th paragraph) – By the time you get finished reading about the cave man you have forgotten about the professor and are now looking at this as a ridiculous piece.

- “Such ‘red flags,’ as they were sometimes called, were the meat and potatoes of the keynote speech on Friday night by Alex Jones, who is the William Jennings Bryan of the 9/11 band.” (9th paragraph) – Great, anoint a not-so-credible and easy-to-dismiss Jones as leader of the movement, wrap him up in a ball with the kooks and then flush the whole thing. Just ignore the real 9/11 pioneers like myself, [Michel Chossudovsky](#), [Paul Thompson](#), [Nafeez Ahmed](#) and [Dan Hopsicker](#) because we can’t be so easily dismissed. I’m certain that Jones’ pocketbook is flush, however, since he helped trash the movement which others made credible as he appropriated their research.

- “The controlled demolition theory is the sine qua non of the 9/11 movement.” (11th paragraph) – Says who? Not one of the authors of the three best-selling 9/11 books challenging the Kean Commission adopted or endorsed this position or made this statement.

“Its basic claim and, in some sense, the one upon which all others rest. It is, of course, directly contradicted by the 10,000-page investigation by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, which held that jet-fuel fires distressed the towers’ structure, which eventually collapsed.” There are more lies per square inch in this little passage than in a whole page of typical NYT fare (say, Judy Miller). First, the most widely respected 9/11 researchers have stayed completely away from physical evidence arguments, which will be discussed further below. The sine qua non of 9/11 research – as far as we’re concerned – is the original investigation and exposé that five simultaneous [wargame exercises](#) based on hijacked airliners were taking place on the morning of 9-11-01 in the Northeast Air Defense Sector and that these exercises — under the control of Dick Cheney — were what paralyzed air defenses that day. This is the one piece of hard evidence which cannot (and has not) been refuted or even acknowledged by the government.

The cited 10,000 page investigation is one of the [exact reasons](#) why *FTW* and other major researchers never touched the physical evidence aspects of 9-11: sufficient non-scientific (i.e. uncontested) evidence exists to prove government complicity, cover-up, and murder.

- “— the 9/11 Truthers are dogged, at home and in the office, by friends and family who suspect that they may, in fact, be completely nuts.” (13th paragraph)

“There is a plan by the British delegation (such as it is, so far) to get members of Parliament to watch ‘Loose Change’, the seminal movement DVD.” (16th paragraph) – This is one of the biggest whoppers of all. I have watched ‘Loose Change’ and in my expert opinion it is a very fine piece of CIA disinformation, one that fits an astute maxim by Professor Peter Dale Scott: “Disinformation, in order to

be effective, must be 90% accurate.”

Even though the film opens with some of my original research (including images taken from the FTW web site), it quickly sinks into a repeatedly debunked and confabulated hypothesis that no airliner hit the Pentagon. This film is so slickly produced (and on such a large budget) that it is hard to believe that amateur filmmakers could have made it. Once the audience buys into all the credible research at the front, they are quickly swept away in a flood of easily impeached high-tech nonsense, and that was the film’s intent.

Not long before “Loose Change” was released, a recently retired high-ranking US Naval officer approached me and tried to sell me on the claim that no plane hit the Pentagon. He even claimed that he had been inside the Pentagon on 9-11 and had seen no aircraft wreckage. He kept pushing but could not persuade me, because (as I told him) I was aware of more than 130 independent, non-military eyewitnesses who had been traveling on nearby I-395 who swore that they did see an airliner hit the Pentagon. Having driven on I-395 many times, I know that they had a perfect view.

My last correspondence with the retired Navy Captain was on May 3rd and in my message I made it very clear that I would not endorse the no-plane hypothesis and that I believed “Loose Change” to be (in impact) a CIA propaganda film, whether by design, trick or device, or the sheer gullibility of its makers.

On May 16th the Pentagon released what it claims was new video showing a Boeing 757 striking the building. It was clear that, realizing I would not fall for the “dangle,” the powers that be had decided that they would discredit the rest of the 9-11 movement who had accepted “no plane.”

- “Beneath the weekend’s screenings and symposiums on geopolitics and mass hypnotic trance lies a tradition of questioning concentrated power...” (18th paragraph) – “Mass hypnotic trance”? What the movement uses as a metaphor has been turned into a hyperbolic specific allegation.

“I hope you don’t end up dead somewhere,” a companion said to a participant... (last paragraph) – This is just a nice reinforcement that those who get it too accurately sometimes turn up dead. Psychologically, this is just the cherry on top. After all the other ridiculed and twisted logic, why should anyone go through the trouble of challenging authority if that’s the payoff one gets for being successful? “NO-PLANE”: TIMELINE OF A MEME ¹

October 2001: Michael Ruppert begins [timeline](#) of 9/11 attacks, turning up early evidence of U.S. complicity by focusing on actions by individuals, agencies, and corporations as evidenced in public media, legal proceedings, and government documents.

October 7, 2001: Thierry Meyssan posts webpage claiming that no plane hit the pentagon on 9/11, eventuating in his book *Pentagate*.

October 12, 2001: SECDEF Donald Rumsfeld, in an [interview with Parade Magazine](#), uses the word “missile” to describe what hit the Pentagon. This was probably a deliber-

ate intent to mislead gullible researchers. In military parlance a missile can be anything from a bullet, to an airliner striking a building, to a real missile. The first dictionary definition listed for missile states, "An object or weapon that is fired, thrown, dropped, or otherwise projected at a target; a projectile." Thus the airliners were missiles and Rumsfeld's choice of words was literally correct. How could anyone who understands the rudiments of evidence consider that as proof of anything?

November 25, 2001: At an annual meeting of the [Coalition on Political Assassinations](#), John Judge and T. Carter make a presentation regarding 9/11 in which Carter, an AA flight attendant, claims to have recovered from Pentagon wreckage the bracelet of a colleague killed in the crash of AA77.

November 26, 2003: Michael C. Ruppert publishes "[The Kennedys, Physical Evidence, and 9/11](#)," an essay that attempts to warn the 9/11 Truth Movement not to overinvest its energies and its credibility in questions of physical evidence which invite sabotage by U.S. counterintelligence programs (COINTELPRO).

October 1, 2004: New Society Publishers releases Michael C. Ruppert's [Crossing the Rubicon: The Decline of the American Empire at the End of the Age of Oil](#). This book is the most complete, early, logical and legally actionable case against American authorities – chiefly Dick Cheney – for complicity in the 9/11 attacks. It makes almost no reference to the physical evidence issues, precisely because they are so easily distorted.

October 7, 2004: *Washington Post* Staff Writer Carol Morrello publishes "Conspiracy Theories Flourish on the Internet," which uses the "no-plane" story to characterize the 9/11 Truth Movement in general.

March, 2005: [Popular Mechanics](#) publishes cover story claiming to debunk 9/11 skepticism. The article gives ample space to the "no-plane" straw man. While addressing almost every major 9-11 research group, the article fails to mention *Crossing the Rubicon*.

December 2005: The US State Department posts "Identifying Misinformation," a guide to 9/11 claims. In response, *FTW* contributing writer Mark Robinowitz publishes "[Identifying Misinformation: The State Department's Rosetta Stone for understanding 9/11 disinformation promotes 9/11 conspiracy hoaxes while ignoring Crossing the Rubicon and other authentic investigations](#)." The State Department web site also fails to mention *Rubicon*, which by now has gained worldwide recognition.

February, 2006: *The Village Voice* profiles the 9/11 Truth Movement in a negative article focused on the "no-plane" story. Again, there is no mention of *Rubicon* even though the *Village Voice* is known to have obtained at least one copy.

March 20, 2006: In an interview by radio host Alex Jones, Charlie Sheen disputes the 9/11 Commission Report on grounds that include the no-plane hypothesis.

March 25, 2006: Sheen makes similar claims on CNN Headline News' "Showbiz Tonight."

April, 2006: *USA Today* reviews "no-plane" based film "[Loose Change](#)."

April 21, 2006: Divorce court proceedings appear in the news, accusing Sheen of dangerous mental instability and an addiction to pornographic images of "very young girls." The stories about Sheen proliferate through the major media for several days.

May 16, 2006: The Pentagon releases images which it claims are proof that a Boeing 757 did indeed hit the Pentagon, discrediting the large portion of the 9/11 Truth Movement that had embraced the "no-plane" hypothesis.

May 19, 2006: *FTW* publishes "[It's the Timing, Not the Film: New Frames from Pentagon Crash Video Show Langley Embarrassing the 9/11 Truth Movement](#)." The moment *Crossing the Rubicon* was in print, copies were rushed to major news outlets including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *LA Times*, and *NEWSWEEK*. None of them has ever reviewed the book, though it is one of two best-selling texts on 9/11 from the skeptical point of view – nor have they ever even mentioned it. To quote Mark Robinowitz, *Rubicon* "has sold 100,000 copies despite a deafening silence from the media, an extremely unusual circumstance for a book. Even the publications that attacked *From the Wilderness* in the months after 9/11 for daring to connect the dots about 9/11 foreknowledge have refused to say anything (good or bad) about *Rubicon*."

If the thesis was flawed, surely someone somewhere would describe the errors." Indeed, this book accuses the sitting Vice President of the United States of mass murder, demonstrating means, motive, and opportunity. Surely if the book was in error it would have been challenged. Instead, there has been nothing but stony silence.

[Mr. Feuer's New York Times article](#) is an off-the-shelf hit piece, done in boilerplate prose, against a movement that should have had the sense to avoid this sort of thing. For a critique of the intellectual poverty of Feuer's language (shared by thousands of happy hacks on the gravy train), see "[Conspiracy and the State of the Union](#)." But Feuer and his ilk don't matter. The real lesson here is about how to oppose fascism: speak the truth, anticipate the propaganda, and make it impossible for disinformationists to discredit your [research](#). Remember: means, motive, and opportunity. Anything else is a slippery slope to the pillory.

This played exactly the way we said it would. It is too late to change things but perhaps someone, somewhere is paying attention to these bitter lessons. It might make a difference if there is another opportunity to fight the "Mighty Wurlitzer" of state-sponsored propaganda and mind control.

¹ The authors wish to thank Mark Robinowitz for assistance. See "History of the 'no planes on 9/11' hoaxes," at: <http://www.oilempire.us/bogus.html#history>.

Twilight in the Corn:

The Bulldozing of South Central

Farm Begins

By
Jamey Hecht



June 16, 2006 2:01pm [PST] - **F**or my FTW report on the South Central Farm in March of this year, I obtained court documents from Tezozomoc, the Farmers' main spokesperson, and worked up a timeline of the backstory behind this urban drama. The result was [THE FUTURE AT WAR WITH THE PAST: While South Central's Urban Farmers Face Eviction, Peak Oil Threatens Global Food Supply](#). After a survey of the legal issues, I closed with a reflection:

Most people assume that economic growth and commercial expansion are permanent trends, but a few hours at the [Peak Oil portion of FTW](#) is just one of myriad ways to learn how wrong that assumption is. Current trends actually point toward a massive and painful correction in every economic sector, followed by social upheaval and a terribly urgent effort to adapt. When the energy crash hit Cuba, its people endured a frightening interval of undernourishment called "the Special Period." It happened after Soviet oil exports dried up, but before the Cuban people learned to [powerdown](#) and grow their own food. We are headed toward a Special Period of our own.

Right now we are riding the crest of energy extraction. [Just past the Peak](#), we can only see the ground falling away beneath us if we open our eyes; otherwise, we simply feel how high we're rid-

ing and all seems well enough.... Los Angeles is blessed with 350 permaculturists whose work is on display for study and emulation at the South Central Farm. All we have to do is listen and learn. Let's hope we get the chance. We don't.

On June 12th some 120 L.A. Police and Sheriff's Deputies in riot helmets carried their batons into the 14 acre urban garden and arrested around 45 people. A bulldozer cut a 30-foot wide swathe through the crops, making way for a fire truck. From that vehicle, firefighters gently forced actress and committed eco-activist Darryl Hannah out of her perch in an old walnut tree that had been the rallying point for months of activism. That stunt and counter-stunt brought plenty of much-needed media attention while the ungentle eviction proceeded.

Here are some key quotations found in yesterday's [NBC4 coverage](#) of the eviction:

"In light of today's events and the fact that it appears the owner will not accept a proposal that





meets his asking price of \$16 million, I thought it was important to brief you," said Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. "Today's events were disheartening and unnecessary. After years of disagreement over this property, we had all hoped for a better outcome."

Owner Ralph Horowitz had said he would sell 10 acres of the land to the farmers for \$16 million, but the farmers -- even with the support of the mayor and celebrities -- have been unable to come up with the asking price.

"I'm not real happy with this group," Horowitz told NBC4. "Even if they raised \$100 million this group could not buy this property. **It's not about money.** I don't like their cause. I don't like their conduct. So, there's no price that I would sell it to them for.

"Where does this kind of 'you owe me' mentality end? How good is that for America? What they should have said to the taxpayers of LA and to me is, 'This is a gracious country. Thank you for letting us have our garden here, but we realize our time is up. We've had our 14 years.'"

I can't vouch for the diplomacy or social graces of the 300 poor families who had been feeding themselves through subsistence labor on the once-desolate plot. And at the vigil last night I did hear two or three L.A. kids chanting "Got out the way, pig, get out the way." That certainly seems

rude. But the only "conduct" I can see as a referent for Horowitz' remark is the Farmers' uppity practice of using the legal system to defend their livelihood.

Any fool can see that Horowitz is right, *within his frame of reference*. It is equally clear to some of us that this frame of reference is truncated by shallow self interest and spiritual poverty. Land tenure is not some eternal and universal institution, whereby the United States owns the Moon because Buzz Aldrin planted the flag there in 1969. Of course not.

Of course those 14 acres and the rest of the Southwest were once Mexican land. Of course the United States (like the Mexican state) is the result of a genocidal clash between Europeans (who had exploited their own resources to the brink of collapse, and sailed in search of more) and Mayans (who had exploited their own resources to the point of collapse) and Aztecs (who were a flourishing urban civilization when Cortez arrived). Everybody knows that.

Everybody knows the South Central Farm was something rare and wonderful, that it created community and health and hope out of the ashes of the Rodney King affair. Mr. Horowitz seems to see this as a contest between two private claimants to a single piece of property. But the Farmers' use of the land was not private and individual, it was public and communal; it did not represent a free ride for three hundred teeny-tiny versions of the big developer, it was a thoroughly different kind of land use, underwritten by a different culture's assumptions about what land is and what it should do.

The South Central Farmers are the past, because most of them belong to temporarily conquered indigenous peoples with an ancient claim. They are also the future, because they represent this country's best example of local food production in an urban center. All Mr. Horowitz represents is himself — a product of his times, blind to the significance of what happened here and ready to put the land to some 20th Century use that will take cheap energy for granted, just as that energy disappears.

FTW Precious Metals Advisory

COMEX DROPS PRICE FLUCTUATION LIMITS FOR GOLD, SILVER

**Precious Metals Still the Best Long Play
Wild Price Swings Should Not Deter, Alarm Investors**

by
Michael C. Ruppert

June 16th 2006, 1:43pm [PST] – In another quiet economic move of major importance, following on the heels of recent announcements by the SEC and the Federal Reserve, the New York Commodities Exchange (COMEX), effective June 5th, eliminated all price fluctuation limits for commodities. Previously, daily price fluctuations in gold prices had been limited to \$75 and those for silver prices had been limited to \$1.50.

This will open the doors for wild and probably pretty nasty daily variances in spot prices but the risks involved are only for those playing shorts in the gold market. *FTW* has never recommended any short plays for our subscribers. The reasons for this should be fairly obvious. We have established over the years that almost every major financial market is rigged, lacking in transparency, and subject to intense manipulation by major players. But these manipulations work only in the short term.

Gold fundamentals remain unchanged. There is still roughly five times more paper gold out there than there is gold out of the ground. And while the decades-long manipulation (suppression) of gold prices has been well documented, the last two years have shown that the anti-gold cartel is fast losing its ability to suppress gold prices over the long term.

Oil prices are going to continue to rise. Both the Chinese and Russian central banks have recently announced their intention to make large gold purchases. Demand for the real stuff is, and will remain, strong.

What this move does is open the door for a wild-west type of speculative market where gold “day-traders” will be able to arbitrage paper gold transaction through a very volatile global market. This is not a game for amateurs and small traders. Short-term gold prices will now be used in Catherine Austin Fitts’ Tapeworm Economy model to whack small time players and drive them out of very risky short positions. I’m certain that this will also facilitate large liquidity and cash-flow positions of central banks as economic conflict becomes more commonplace.

I tend to agree with some who have commented that, at least in part, this looks like a desperation move by those seeking to halt gold’s inevitable long-term breakout to, and probably past, the \$1,000 mark. Perhaps the one question I get asked most frequently by subscribers is about daily or weekly swings in the gold price. I calmly say that if you get nervous over these fluctuations you shouldn’t buy gold at all. That’s even truer now because the range of daily price swings now possible is going to look terrifying.

That, in fact, may be one of the intents here. First time gold buyers, failing to understand that the long term trend of

gold is upward, tend to get real hinky when they see large one-day drops. I don’t even pay attention to them. I bought my first gold when it was \$320 an ounce. I made my last purchase at \$520 and then, seeing gold leap into a rapid (unjustified by the fundamentals) upswing past \$700, have just sat on the sidelines watching.

If I had the cash I would buy more gold now and just sit on it.

The other thing that might emerge from this now is that gold prices might become a weapon of war between nations and competing economic factions. People are not the only ones who get tempted and caught up in the allure of fast cash. Governments and major financial institution play shorts on gold frequently. So wild price fluctuations, engineered by various powers that be, might trigger large liquidity or currency crises when people get caught holding short positions at the wrong moments.

None of that should be of concern to us. Just hold on to your gold and sleep soundly.

We know where it’s going.

]

Diesel Devastation

**High Fuel Prices, Stolen Fuel and Poor Crop
Yields**

by
Michael Kane
FTW Staff Writer

[FTW readers are used to seeing stories about fuel thefts in Nigeria and Indonesia. Only the smuggest and most arrogant would think that it can’t, won’t – or isn’t – happening here. In addition to having to worry about security for this precious commodity, farmers, who tend to buy diesel in bulk quantity are now having to become economic forecasters as they try to guess when to buy their essential diesel and how much. – MCR

June 21st 2006, 10:16am [PST] – New York–

Around the world the economic and social fabric of “fuel security” is drastically changing throughout the countryside. Not only is the skyrocketing price of diesel fuel hitting farmers where it hurts, so are criminals. Diesel and gasoline thefts have recently been reported throughout rural sections of Britain,¹ New Zealand,² Australia,³ New York,⁴ and in Merced County, California⁵ where copper wire was also reported stolen from Hunter Farms.

Scott Hunter, owner of Hunter Farms, said although he has seen rural ag (agricultural) crimes on his family farm for many years, during the past two years – as diesel and copper prices have risen dramatically – the pace has really picked up. “Copper and diesel are the biggest issues in ag crime,” said

Merced County Sheriff's Department spokesman Scott Dover.⁶

The rising price of diesel is making fuel more attractive to criminals in rural areas, where bulk fuel is often stored in unlocked sheds. In Australia, Albury County Police have just appointed a fulltime rural crime investigator, Sen-Constable Scott Barton.

"(Farm property owners) should always remove keys from vehicles, lock properties and sheds when away, inform friends or neighbors when going away for long periods and ask them to make regular checks of the property," he said.⁷

This trend is not isolated to the countryside. Fuel theft is rising everywhere:

[New Zealand MTA reports increase in petrol theft.](#)

[Thieves siphon \\$1,200 of diesel from Montana Food Bank Network.](#)

[Thief siphons 5,000 litres of fuel in British Columbia.](#)

[500-gallon fuel trailer stolen in Florida.](#)

[Thieves going after gas in Hawaii.](#)

[Gas theft in Chicago.](#)

[Fuel thieves become more devious.](#)

[People are taking precautions as gasoline theft rises in Southern California.](#)

The Economics of Fuel on the Farm

Diesel prices usually rise in the summer, making the spring a good time for farmers to stock-up. But price-spikes came early this year in March just as tractors were gearing up for the planting season. This has left many farmers wondering when the right time will be to buy in bulk.

"Buy when you need it," recommends Mike Howard, co-owner of Lakeview Petroleum in Yuba County.

"You only buy as much as you need. Don't buy for the whole year, not when it's this high. It's too late to buy for the whole year."⁸

But price increases may be seen again in the near future. Rising fuel prices are a general long-term trend, so summertime increases could be just around the corner. Farmers who chose not to stock up on fuel this spring because of the price may be in for a shock come harvest time. The guessing game of when to purchase diesel fuel in bulk is not fun, nor easy. The upward trend in the price of diesel is hard on farmers, but it is a nightmare for truckers who are an integral part of our modern food chain. They have to pay the price at the pump, which is much higher than the bulk rate.

As *FTW* readers [already know](#), high fuel prices are also reflected in the cost of pesticides and fertilizers. The "oilification" of agriculture that is a direct result of the green revolution is now starting to feel real stress, although the system is not bursting at the seams – at least not yet.

To adapt to all of these higher prices farmer John Voelpel said, "We are making some adjustments

like the guys don't idle the tractors too long. If they stop in the field, they shut them off, or turn off the air conditioning that cools the cab."⁹

Using manure instead of commercial fertilizer when possible, combining till and planting methods to reduce tractor use, and making sure tire pressures are always adequate may help farmers partially absorb the increasing costs of hydrocarbon products for the time being. But these are only band aids.

The final judgment comes from the real boss – nature. Farming is not for the lighthearted, even when using the modern marvels of hydrocarbons in all their various forms. Growing food depends upon the generosity of the land, air, water and sunlight all magically working in unison to sustain the process.

The wheat forecast for this year has gone from bad to worse, with production lows not seen in decades.¹⁰ Dry temperatures resulted in unexpected insect damage. While it is good for farmers that wheat prices are currently high, it is meaningless if they can't grow the bushels to get to market. The rice crop planted in Louisiana has been reduced by 30% after Hurricane Rita carried salt water many miles inland into the fields and bayous.¹¹ Rice experts are unsure what's having the hardest impact on the coming harvest – the contaminated fields and bayous or economic conditions.

Today farmers are relying more heavily on jobs away from their land in nearby towns and cities to stay alive. The economics of modern agriculture in America requires taxpayer subsidies to offset massive losses constantly faced by farmers while their incomes continue to decrease significantly.¹² Net farm income in the United States is expected to total \$56.2 billion this year, down 22.3 percent from last year.¹³ On multiple levels modern agriculture is simply unsustainable and that trend can only get worse for oil-dependent farmers.

Hardship is not uncommon in agriculture; never has been, never will be. But if a perfect storm brews where any or all of the above mentioned variables hit hard enough, the results could be catastrophic. What will hurricane season and climate change bring us this year? Where will drought hit the hardest? How high will the price of diesel get and how quickly will it rise? How desperate will criminals become?

Unfortunately it may take catastrophic change before people ask themselves the most important question of the 21st Century: "How are we going to eat?" But we must admit that another question they may have to ask is, "How much risk are we willing to take to keep thieves from stealing our fuel before Peak Oil does?"

¹"Fuel price link to diesel theft," *BBC News*, May 18, 2006 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/south_of_scotland/4993818.stm

Peter Brown, "Diesel Theft Alert Grows," *TNN.co.uk*, May 17, 2006 <http://www.tnn.co.uk/UKNews/Crime/plonearticle.2006-05-16.1143786309>

Graeme Smith, "Farmers told to tighten security after diesel theft," *The Herald*, May 18, 2006 <http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/62247.html>

² Michele Nelson, "Fuel thieves become more devils," *The Ashburton Guardian*, June 19, 2006 <http://www.ashburtonguardian.co.nz/index.asp?articleid=7304>

³ "Theft on the up as petrol prices soar," *Bendigo News*, June 10, 2006 http://bendigo.yourguide.com.au/detail.asp?class=news&subclass=gen-eral&story_id=486588&category=General&m=6&y=2006

⁴ "County employee charged with stealing diesel," *Auburnpub.com*, June 9, 2006 http://www.auburnpub.com/articles/2006/06/09/news/breaking_news/break02.txt

⁵ Carol Reiter, "Rural crimes on the rise," *Merced Sun-Star*, June 15, 2006 <http://www.mercedsunstar.com/local/story/12316661p-13050023c.html>

⁶ Ibid

⁷ "Farm crime targeted. Rural crime investigator full-time in Albury County," June 1, 2006 <http://www.bordermail.com.au/news/bm/local/254327.html>

⁸ Ching Lee, "Diesel price spikes hit at planting time," California Farm Bureau Federation, March 16, 2005 <http://www.cfbf.com/agalert/AgAlertStory.cfm?ID=239&ck=555D6702C950ECB729A966504AF0A635>

⁹ Thomas Hartley, "Fuel costs add to farmers' challenges," *Business First of Buffalo*, May 12, 2006 <http://www.bizjournals.com/buffalo/stories/2006/05/15/story6.html?page=1>

¹⁰ Libby Quaid, "Already-bad wheat forecast worsens," *Associated Press*, June 9, 2006 http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D814PA100.htm?sub=apn_home_down&chan=db

¹¹ "Salt levels, high fuel prices take toll on Louisiana rice acres," *Delta Farm Press*, May 31, 2006 <http://deltafarmpress.com/news/060531-salt-fuel/>

¹² Steve Arnold, "Struggling farmers starved for cash," *The Hamilton Spectator*, June 13, 2006 http://www.hamiltonspectator.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=hamilton/Layout/Article_Type1&c=Article&cid=1150149010652&call_pageid=1020420665036&col=1112101662835

¹³ Ted Shelsby, "Prospects not so good for farmers this year," *BaltimoreSun.com*, June 11, 2006

http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/harford/bal-ha.farm11jun11_0_6060547.story?page=1&coll=bal-local-harford

A Small Rabbit Out of a Big Hat

The Significance of Al Zarqawi's Death

by
Stan Goff

FTW Military and Veteran's Affairs Editor

June 9th, 2006 11:30 [PST] -- Abu Musab al-Zarqawi is apparently dead. The United States armed forces in Iraq have been bombing al-Zarqawi hideouts almost weekly since May 2004 when American businessman Nicholas Berg was shockingly beheaded on film, and someone claiming to be Zarqawi is said to have taken credit for it. With a \$25 million reward on his head, there were surely a series of tragic mistakes based on opportunistic calls. It's hard to say who was more interested in transforming the Jordanian Bedouin fighter, formerly Ahmad Fadhil Nazzal al-Khalayleh, into a legend -- Zarqawi himself or the American military.

Now the Bush administration will reap the short-term reward for this dramatis persona... and the long-term grief. This is the latest symbolic rabbit that the administration has pulled out of the hat labeled "turning the corner." The press will tune in and turn on to this docudrama with monotonous predictability. The Bush administration will get a little bump in the polls as people divert their attention from its other political chicaneries and snatch at the last threads of hope that: the war is about terrorism, after all, and we are the good guys; the lives lost will not be in vain, and we will really "turn the corner" this time... the Iraqis and the world will see that we are a benign and beneficial nation.

But the attention deficit disorder of the media and a society inebriated on the instant-gratification of the consumer bacchanalia will watch this triumphalism fade, in days, not weeks, and the grating realities of our culture's meaningless drudgery and vacuous need to be entertained, the steadily mounting casualties, rising gas prices, the Haditha massacres... all of it, will return. When it does, the draught will be that much more bitter. The war will continue. The blood will spill.

Even fewer people will retain the capacity to fall, yet again, for the old Turning-The-Corner parlor trick.

Moreover, the Pentagon and the White House will have lost the personification of evil that Zarqawi represented to justify the war. As Scott McClellan -- before his ticket was punched -- said hundreds of times, like one of those dolls

with a string on its back, "Iraq is the front line in the global war on terror." Zarqawi was the ultimate "foreign fighter," one who willingly adopted the name "al Qaeda in Iraq," feeding the mistaken notion that there is actually an organization called al Qaeda, an official enemy that is global and eternal, and now manifest on this particular part of the oil patch.

Just this year, the *Washington Post* published a document showing that the Pentagon had an active program to legitimize Zarqawi.

"The Zarqawi campaign is discussed in several of the internal military documents. 'Villainize Zarqawi/leverage xenophobia response,' one U.S. military briefing from 2004 stated. It listed three methods: 'Media operations,' 'Special Ops (626)' (a reference to Task Force 626, an elite U.S. military unit assigned primarily to hunt in Iraq for senior officials in Hussein's government) and 'PSYOP,' the U.S. military term for propaganda work..." (Washington Post, 10 April 2006)

Leverage xenophobia response.

The Pentagon public relations staff, with the active assistance of an obsequious US press, successfully portrayed Zarqawi as a one-man dynamo, an evil genius who was single-handedly running most of the "insurgency" in Iraq, a take-off on the earlier theme of foreign fighters being the majority of the resistance. This, and we should remember when the British SAS was caught in the act of planting bombs last year, would have been attributed, undoubtedly, to Zarqawi.

"They won't have Ahmad Fadhil Nazzal al-Khalayleh to kick around any more," to coin a phrase. No they won't; and it will be their loss. Zarqawi will be sorely missed in Washington.

The rabbits in the Turn-The-Corner hat get smaller with each passing day.

DEAD WRONG!

"Too Hot Not to Handle"

Dangerous Renewable Energy Propaganda

by
Michael Kane
FTW Staff Writer

"Perhaps the greatest flaw in the Peak Oil movement's current operating paradigm is that, a part of the movement at least, instead of building lifeboats in the face of an immediate disaster, is delusionally focused on trying to build alternative-powered luxury liners that operate just like the paradigm we as a species need to be abandoning. Not only is this a fu-

tile effort, it may well be responsible for killing or destroying the lives of people who at least partially understand Peak Oil and who are trying to find the best courses of immediate action for themselves and their families."

Michael Ruppert, [THE PARADIGM IS THE ENEMY](#), Speech delivered at the Local Solutions to the Energy Dilemma Conference, April 29, 2006

June 6th 2006, 1:06 PST (FTW) – New York – **T**he recent HBO Documentary, "[Too Hot Not to Handle](#)," does an outstanding job of outlining the reality of global warming, but completely drops the ball when dealing with renewable energy. It leaves the viewer feeling as if the technology is currently available to allow over-consumption to continue without changing the "American way of life."

This is dead wrong.

The damage being caused by this irresponsible renewable energy PR campaign is hard to overstate. "Too Hot Not to Handle" is merely one small example of a much larger problem that is running rampant throughout the media. FTW cannot deconstruct every piece of renewable BS that is put out there otherwise that would be all we could do: there is more bad information than good being pushed now.

But since this documentary is such a high quality production, presenting all of the proper information on climate change from prominent scientists and researchers, we must shine a spotlight on the deceptive handling of renewable energy information in "Too Hot Not to Handle."

It is likely that some, even most, of this deception is unintentional, but that is effectively meaningless. Just because those producing the false information believe it doesn't make it any better. What makes this campaign potentially deadly, and perhaps unstoppable, is how desperately the populace at large wants to believe in it.

No one wants to change his or her lifestyle or have to think too hard. People just want renewables added into the equation of the current suicide economy so they can keep leading the same destructive lifestyles they've become hypnotically comfortable in. Both industry and the populace at large want to use renewables to supplement over-consumption instead of fostering sustainability.

Wrong.

Renewable energy works great within sustainable systems but not in a suicide economy of over-consumption. Those who have been following FTW's maps of Peak Oil, renewable energy and the economy are in better shape than most; these people are best equipped to analyze this gigantic push for Big Renewables in the proper, realistic (and perhaps lifesaving) context.

I am amazed to see just how effective this Big Renewables campaign has been from both the left and the right. It is an amazing Zeitgeist of our time. For years renewable energy has received vocal support from liberal environmentalists, but now we see the likes of Michael Savage and other conservative pundits jumping on the bandwagon especially since gas prices broke \$3.

People want to believe. Everyone wants to believe. The hard truth is that we are all looking for a renewable savior to save us from ourselves. A false sense of security is the last message we need drilled into our heads as Peak Oil and climate change become undeniable realities, but that is what we are getting because it is what we want. "No need to change our way of life because the renewable solutions are already here," goes this PR-driven argument. "We just need to implement them."

DEAD WRONG!

As is almost always the case, not all of the information presented on the reality of renewable energy in "Too Hot Not to Handle" is bad. The documentary showed that cities and localities have been leading the way in conservation and efficiency efforts due to a lack of national leadership: very true. In Portland, Oregon, it took 13 years for the city to curb their CO2 emissions 13% while its economy grew 16%.

This is somewhat good news, but not good enough. On both a national and global level CO2 emissions are continuing to rise, not fall. And the sad reality is that the damage has already been done. CO2 emissions from 30 years ago are just now showing signs of affecting the climate. Science now tells us to brace for the inevitable. It is hardly the time to be celebrating a city's 13% reduction of CO2 emissions in the face of our ecological habitat falling off a cliff.

Where this documentary fails miserably, and unforgivably, is that it never addresses the necessity of a Powerdown strategy that would include drastic lifestyle changes and massive conservation efforts that far exceed the drop in the bucket we are currently seeing from U.S. cities and localities.

Increased efficiency was presented in this documentary as a way to curb CO2 emissions, but the fact that increased efficiency leads to more (not less) consumption was never addressed. When more efficient air conditioners and refrigerators were invented, people bought bigger ones and often more than one. With cars that get better gas mileage, motorists drive longer distances more often. Efficiency is great in theory, but it is delusional to ignore human behavior in the final analysis.

So why were such important truths omitted?

It would not be "hopeful" for the viewer to see and hear the harsh reality of global warming if they

weren't presented with readily available solutions that would not change their way of life; solutions that are palatable and non-intrusive. A deep look into the reality of renewable energy would not create the feel-good Hollywood viewing experience that the filmmakers of "Too Hot Not to Handle" were obviously going for.

Big Solar Propaganda

In Part 4 of FTW's series on [Renewables](#), we debunked the ridiculous PR myth that a 100-square-mile Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) installation in the Mojave Desert could supply all of America's electricity. Stirling Energy Systems (SES), who is currently building the first massive 4-square-mile CSP installation in the Mojave Desert, is a big supporter of this myth. "Too Hot Not to Handle" utilized this piece of PR in conjunction with a stunning 3D graphic portraying one small dot in the desert lighting up the entire nation.

Wow! Just imagine that!

This was very effective propaganda, but still dead wrong.

FTW Published the following on March 4, 2006:

SES boasts that it would take one CSP installation of 100 square miles to produce all of the electricity consumed in the United States, but that is nothing more than wishful thinking used as a public relations tool. This hypothetical installation – which could never possibly exist – would need to be operating constantly at peak output to produce such massive amounts of energy. Since CSP operates at 30% efficiency, this imaginary project could only be counted on for 30% of America's electricity production.

What would such a mammoth installation do to the ecosystem of whatever desert it was installed upon? How would you transport energy from the desert throughout the entire U.S.? The longer the transmission lines transporting the energy, the more energy lost in accordance with the laws of thermodynamics. So there goes CSP's 30% efficiency down the tubes.

Whether or not CSP technology will make a significant dent in the energy market is questionable, but the limitations of this technology make it impossible to mitigate the coming energy crisis of Peak Oil even when considered in conjunction with the largest renewable energy source available today, wind turbines. CSP may offer a "benefit" to the Southwest since there is plenty of arid desert land, but if we consider the growing problems this area already has with available fresh water supplies CSP may be a Trojan horse!

Should we continue to supplement over-consumption and exponential growth in a region that is destined for water wars with neighbors? Increasing available energy in the Southwest will bring economic growth, which inevitably intensifies

stress on fresh water supplies that are already being utilized at unsustainable rates. Population continues to rise in this region due to over-zealous real estate investors interested solely in the bottom line.

Big Wind in Focus

Big Wind farms are advocated as a real solution to climate change in "Too Hot Not to Handle," but the complex problems facing wind installations are completely avoided.

What do you do when the wind doesn't blow?

"Shadow stations" are needed on stand-by, ready to produce electricity for this very regular occurrence. Usually natural gas is a good counterbalance to wind because gas-powered turbines can be powered-up immediately. But natural gas supplies in North America have peaked.

What we are about to see is an increase in coal-fired power generation, and as more wind turbines are installed, more coal plants will be needed as "shadow stations" for when the wind doesn't blow. This is why upstate New York is now anticipating new coal-fired power generation. And since the wind doesn't blow when electricity demand is highest in New York (hot summer days), upstate wind farms may end up being little more than smoke screens for more coal!

Is this a real solution for global warming?

Every wind project is different, and each one needs to be analyzed individually. Many will hate to hear this, but the hard truth is that it is not always a good idea to build more massive wind turbines. One study conducted by Scientist David Keith, using computer generated simulations, has shown that if enough wind turbines were operating throughout the world, global wind patterns could be significantly altered contributing to climate change.¹ This thesis is still being explored, but it reinforces the fact that the problem is not energy but over-consumption.

Even renewable resources can be over-consumed. Case-in-point: water. We've all been taught that water is a renewable resource, but when consumed at unsustainable rates, fresh water becomes a precious commodity due to pollution, over-population, over-consumption and draught.

Yes, we can use the wind to produce electricity when it blows, but if we think that thousands of miles of gigantic wind turbines can be installed across the world to maintain over-consumption with no environmental impact on global wind patterns then we are crazy, and we will get what we deserve.

Some local cooperative wind energy systems, using smaller (often vertical) turbines, have already been implemented. There are battles brewing between big corporations and small cooperative movements,

and FTW will be reporting on this soon. Local cooperatives should be the focus of a new energy bill, funded with tax-payer money, but don't hold your breath. The federal government works to protect global capitalism above all else and in this instance that means supporting Big Renewables over local cooperatives.

These are just a few of the problems facing wind farms. For a more in-depth look at the complexities and shortfalls of wind energy see [Renewables Part 1](#) and [Renewable Energy, Too Little, Too Late](#).

In China, villagers have revolted over a proposed wind farm that will negatively impact (if not entirely destroy) the local fishing economy, according to local villagers.² What is more important: electricity or food, or fuel?

Biofuels: Contributing to the Problem

This brings us to what may be the most critical of all the aspects in the energy debate: biofuels. Ethanol and biodiesel are being presented to us the holy grail of transportation fuels. It is repeatedly ignored that once you exploit biofuels *on a large scale*³ there will be an inevitable head-to-head competition between food and fuel with ecological damage that is hard to overstate.

"Too Hot Not Too Handle" never addresses this. Instead they flashed questionable, un-sourced statistics on the CO2 emissions they claim are saved when using biofuels. This is merely pro-biofuels' propaganda that addresses none of the critical issues of using food as fuel. Whether biofuels provide as much of a CO2 benefit as stated in this documentary is highly questionable. Some research has shown that it takes 29% more fossil energy to turn corn into ethanol than the amount of fuel the process produces.⁴ Other studies show about a 1:1 rate while a few show a marginal positive energy return of (e.g) 1.2:1.

This is not sustainable.

At [Petrocollapse II](#), after delivering a speech outlining many of the facts in this report, I was given two pamphlets on biofuels that were written by Alexis Zeigler. One of them was [Biodiesel and Other Bio-fuels in Ecological Perspective](#), which does a good job of portraying biofuels and the "oilification" of agriculture in the proper perspective.

Professor David Pimentel of Cornell is cited in this report. Many say he is a controversial figure. Perhaps he is, but his math on the agricultural and ecological impact of biofuels is correct. The numbers Pimentel presented to Congress upset a few congressional members from corn producing states, so they had the Governmental Accountability Office (GAO) investigate his report. The GAO produced a significantly longer report than his and found Pimentel was 100% correct.⁵

One notable absence from Pimentel's work is that he never accounts for the fact that biofuels are said to be produced from "agricultural waste" because the protein of the plant is used to produce cattle feed. The carbohydrates "left over" are not used to fertilize the topsoil because commercial fertilizers are currently made from natural gas. Once we fall off the natural gas cliff this system will fall apart and it is anyone's guess what the final outcome of that crisis will be.

Despite this blank spot in Pimentel's work, it takes nothing away from the thrust of his argument. Some say he is controversial because he is opposed to illegal immigration, but that is simply unfair. Look at the man's scientific work, not his politics. The truth is the truth, no matter who tells it. Don't muddy the waters of the energy debate with a separate, non-scientific debate that will never be resolved by those who hold opposing views. We should not allow the truth to get lost in politics; it happens way too often and the stakes are too high here.

As *FTW* and other publications have reported in the past, it is impossible to grow enough feedstock for biofuels to power even a small fraction of our national fleet of vehicles. According to Professor Pimentel: ⁶

- U.S. produces 3.4 billion gallons of ethanol a year, which is less than 1% of the total fuel consumed by our vehicles.
- 14% of total U.S. corn production is needed to produce 3.4 billion gallons of ethanol.
- If 100% of U.S. corn production went to ethanol, it would provide 7% of the total fuel consumed by our vehicles.
- If we were able to dedicate 100 million hectares of land to cellulosic ethanol production (which may not even be possible), we would produce 1% of U.S. fuel consumption.

If we made biodiesel from soybeans – the most efficient crop to utilize – it would take all of the arable land in America to produce enough fuel to power the U.S. fleet of trucks (not including cars). Farmers do not decide what their crops are used for. American industrial farmers essentially grow one of three crops; corn, soy beans or sugar. Whether they end up as food for humans, as cattle feed, or in automobile gas tanks is determined by the market. Money takes precedent over people. Food and fuel will compete in America as biofuels are further exploited, just as they did in Brazil. Bean production dropped in that country as sugar cane crops took over more land to produce ethanol. The poor had to pay more for beans and other staples while rich motorists filled their gas tanks with ethanol.

What is the morality of using food as fuel?

We must recognize that biofuels will not solve the problems that over-consumption has brought us. From there we can move on to look for real, decentralized, local solutions.

think small, think local

Not one of the above critical points is ever addressed in "Too Hot Not to Handle." We are certain to see many more manifestations of the Big Renewables' Zeitgeist permeating through the media, so when it comes around again remember this report. Don't get sucked into the feel-good Big Renewables propaganda campaign. There is no more time to waste. No longer will we pray to the gods of centralized power in hopes they can save us from ourselves.

The energy motto of the 21st Century is "*think small, think local.*" *FTW's* focus on renewable energy systems is now gearing up in this direction. Many people have asked me, "What small wind turbines would *FTW* recommend investing in? What renewable systems will be sustainable Post-Peak?" This is where we will find real answers. The time of self-empowerment has come, even if long overdue, and *FTW* hopes to lead our subscribers in the right direction by pointing to local solutions that are now being implemented.

¹ Interview with Scientist David Keith: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4161624>,

² Edward Cody, "Police Open Fire on Rioting Farmers, Fishermen in China," *Washington Post*, December 8, 2005 http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/ww3/121905_china_plant.shtml

Larry Chin, "South China dispute over wind power plant turns deadly," *FTW*, December 16, 2005, http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/ww3/121905_china_plant.shtml

³ There are small-scale, sustainable biodiesel projects being implemented at the local level. Each one needs to be analyzed individually as every situation is different.

⁴ "Research shows ethanol isn't worth the energy," *Associated Press*, July 17, 2005 <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/8607389/>

⁵ Pimentel stated this during the Q&A session after his presentation at Local Solutions to the Energy Dilemma Conference in New York City on April 28, 2006.

⁶ All figures as publicly stated by Professor David Pimentel's presentation at the Local Solutions for the Energy Dilemma Conference in NYC on April 28, 2006.

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