

RUNNYMEDE GAZETTE

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EDITORIAL

THE POLITICS OF THE GLACIER

That the killing in Woolwich was gruesome indeed. Yet from the wall-to wall media blitz which ensued, we might have thought that the Prime Minister himself had been assassinated.

However the message has been absolutely constant. Through all this we have had to endure a relentless procession of the Good and the Great telling us that what we most need is a Snooper's Charter.

Now, strangely, the Snooper's Charter has been much in the news lately after Nick Clegg's veto (although how much this veto will be qualified, as usual, remains to be seen). The vociferous unanimity of the mainstream media is also odd. In this media storm, hardly a murmur of dissent from the Snooper's Charter has been heard. And yet again we learn that the security services might have had some foreknowledge of a possible problem. Is this all a mere coincidence?

From time to time campaigners across the Democratic Resistance ... privacy, civil

liberties, localism, Europe, you name it ... may kid themselves that they have won the day. We must be absolutely clear in our minds that what might be called 'Deep Agenda' issues ... ID cards, Genetic Modification, Orwellian mass surveillance, secret courts, the destruction of such fundamental liberties as the presumption of innocence, 'European integration', the list goes on ... never go away. Even if the oligarchs suffer a setback it will only be temporary. The issue will be back on the table, often in some disguised form, at some stage soon. We must understand that there is nothing on this planet so glacially relentless as an oligarchy that has made up its mind.

THE PSYCHOPATHY OF POWER

Recently I was watching a drama documentary on the Nuremberg Trials. After it is all over the lead character is seen musing as to the nature of evil. He concludes that the root of evil lies in the lack of empathy. Most psychologists would agree.

That centres of wealth and power are both created by, and attractive to psychopathic individuals is not a new observation. Aristocracies here and around the world are largely descended from brigands who got lucky. Latter day brigands abound.

Sadly, we have this predisposition to look upwards rather than sideways for our sources of authority, morality and governance. The root causes of the Reformation are forgotten. So history is so often prone to aggrandize and admire the psychopath, with the poverty and the corpses providing only background scenery.

In *The Prophet*, Kahlil Gibran says that we do not do evil 'without the hidden will of (us) all'. So two thought-provoking pieces by Colin Todhunter and Brian Basham serve to remind us that that the seeds of our problems might lie within our own deeper psyche.

Frank Taylor

UK HOME SECRETARY: EXPANDED SNOOPING POWERS “ESSENTIAL” FOLLOWING WOOLWICH ATTACK

Steve Watson; Infowars.com; via John Newell

The British Home Secretary went on record yesterday to echo other ministers' calls for vastly expanded government surveillance powers in the wake of last week's murder of a soldier in the streets of London.

Despite the fact that the suspects were already known to MI5 for eight years, and that one of them had even been offered a job as an informant by the intelligence agency, Home Secretary Theresa May urged Sunday that it is “essential” that the security services have greater access to everyone's communications data.

“Intelligence agencies need access,” May told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show, further stating that she will seek to resurrect the Communications Data Bill, otherwise known as the “snooper's charter”; legislation that was shelved recently over invasion of privacy fears.

“I've always been clear that access to communications data is essential for the law enforcement agencies and intelligence agencies.” May stated, “There is a reducing capability in relation to access to communications data and as far as I'm concerned I think this is a very important thing we need to ensure we are giving our law enforcement agencies and intelligence agencies access to the tools that they need to fight crime, paedophiles and terrorists.”

The Home Secretary also argued that “hate speech” laws should be altered to set the threshold for such rhetoric at a much lower level. “We need to look... at the question of whether perhaps we need to have banning orders, to ban organizations that don't meet the threshold for proscription. We need to look at organizations outside government as well as what government is doing. Whether we've got the right processes, the right rules in place in relation to what is being beamed into people's homes,” she told the

BBC.

The alleged killer, Michael Adebolajo, had been recorded at multiple extremist protests and events by the security services, and had been deported to Britain after he appeared in court in Mombasa on terrorism related charges in November 2010. Anti-terror police in Kenya have accused the British of ignoring their warnings that Adebolajo was a dangerous jihadist radical who attempted to join the ranks of the Al Shabaab terrorist group in Somalia.

Despite these glaring intelligence failures, government ministers are now arguing that British intelligence do not have enough access to potential extremists' communications data. They are using their own intelligence errors to push for legislation that would see the creation of a dragnet surveillance database, allowing police and intelligence agencies to effectively monitor the communications of everyone in the country.

The so-called "snoopers' charter", a proposed data mine of everyone's internet and phone usage, was blocked last month by The Deputy Prime Minister, and Liberal Democrat leader, Nick Clegg, who cited "significant reduction in personal privacy".

However, Conservatives in government intentionally left the door open for a revival of the legislation.

Former Labour Home Secretary Alan Johnson also repeated sentiments he first aired last week, noting on the same BBC show that "We need to get this on the statute book before the next general election and I think it is absolutely crucial. Indeed I think it is a resignation issue for a Home Secretary if the Cabinet do not support her in this central part of what the security services do." Johnson added.

Former Met Police counter-terrorism chief Peter Clarke also told Sky News that new surveillance legislation should be enacted "as quickly as possible". "I fully subscribe to the views expressed by some very eminent people... The intelligence agencies and police should be given the opportunity to keep up with modern technology, which is all this bill is about." Clarke said.

Liberal Democrat peer Lord Carlile, a former reviewer of terrorism legislation, also told Sky News that the Deputy Prime Minister made a mistake in blocking the snooping bill. "All the bill tried to do was to update what is already being done day-by-day and throughout Europe." Carlile said.

UK Privacy advocates have launched a scathing attack on the ministers' proposals.

"It is remarkable for politicians to be jumping to legislation to monitor the entire country when all the evidence to date shows this horrific attack would not have been prevented by the communications data bill," said Emma Carr of the UK's Big Brother Watch in a statement released on Sunday.

Carr further argued that vastly expanded surveillance laws would hinder, rather than help with anti-terror operations, noting that it "would divert resources from focused surveillance operations at a time when the agencies are already struggling to cope with the volume of information available."

Civil liberties campaigner Nick Pickles agreed/. Security Services say they struggle to monitor 4,000 leads; how would giving them access to 60m help?

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U.K. WARNED - CIA WILL ACCESS ALL GOVERNMENT DATA

**Conrad Jaeger; Privacy World <privacy@privacyworld.com>;
via Judith Hitchin; Runnymede Messenger**

U.S. intelligence agencies will soon be able to trawl through all British government documents stored online including ministerial files, local authority records and public sector data thanks to an unchallenged amendment to a spy law in Washington. Britain's ambitious plans to store all government data on the so-called G-Cloud have led to warnings from the European Union that security will be compromised now that U.S. intelligence agencies have the legal right to survey all data held on U.S. owned Cloud services.

At least four U.S. companies are involved in the U.K. Government's G-Cloud project which Whitehall hopes will slash costs and "deliver fundamental changes in the way the public sector procures and operates." Eventually, it is hoped the G-Cloud will hold the bulk of State data in addition to that of

schools, charities, the BBC and police, even the Bank of England.

While the recent amendments to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) have received scant attention in the British Press, there are a few Members of Parliament so concerned that they want Britain to think about ending all intelligence cooperation with the U.S.

"The Americans have got to remember who their allies are and who their enemies are," Conservative MP David Davis told *The Independent*, warning of "a whole cascade of constitutional and privacy concerns for ordinary British people".

Cloud storage is increasingly popular in the U.K. where around 35 per cent of businesses and an unknown number of private users employ some form of remote storage from U.S. based companies like Apple, Amazon and Google. The government wants to see even greater use of Cloud storage across all sectors in what it describes as a robust "public cloud first policy."

The FISA amendments now give the CIA and NSA the right to access all this data not just in Britain or Europe, but anywhere in the world. U.S. citizens are excused this intrusion by the Fourth Amendment, but everybody else is included. In the case of Britain, by putting all government data online - including health and criminal records - every facet of peoples' lives will be open to scrutiny by intelligence analysts across the Atlantic. Many warn that this will also lead to activists, journalists, politicians, Muslims and others being specifically targeted without the need to justify national security.

"In other words, it is lawful in the U.S. to conduct purely political surveillance on foreigners' data accessible in U.S. Clouds," warns the report for the European Parliament, *Fighting Cyber Crime and Protecting Privacy in the Cloud* by the Centre for the Study of Conflicts, Liberty and Security.

While most of the attention has been focused on Cloud storage and the effect FISA will have on Europe, the actual wording of the amendment speaks of "remote computing services" which could literally mean anything stored on a computer other than your own. As it is, every financial transaction passes through U.S. intelligence channels. With the new extension, no stone need remain unturned. Every time you comment on a book, join a club, or do absolutely anything that passes through a computer owned by a U.S. company, you are open to scrutiny.

The Cloud, however, comes with other concerns. There is debate as to who legally owns what if it is stored or edited in the Cloud, and you can't even bequest your online music collection to a loved one when you die.

NSA aside, hackers can easier access data en-route to the Cloud than they can on a local area network, and the Cloud administrators might one day be compromised. The companies themselves may go bust or be taken over. They might suffer some catastrophic event or decide to amended their terms and conditions.

The European Union is being urged to add a warning to all U.S. Based Cloud services, with clear wording that anything stored in the Cloud will be under direct scrutiny by Federal authorities. The report also wants to see E.U. citizens given the same rights as Americans in U.S. courts.

"A lot of people wouldn't realize where data is stored, and hence wouldn't expect to be subject to U.S. law," cautions another Member of Britain's Parliament, Julian Huppert of the Liberal Democrats.

He wants to know if the government has received any guarantee from Washington that sensitive data will not be scrutinized as foreign intelligence fodder.

"If the U.S. will not give a clear assurance about government data," he says. "Then we will have to stop using the Cloud, as we cannot allow that to happen."

Until next issue, stay cool and remain low profile!

TEN STEPS TO A TOTALITARIAN STATE;

Critical Thinking

Secret courts are used by totalitarian states to suppress opposition and remove individuals from society. They are also used to cover up illegal activities of the state, eg. torture, rendition and murder. Transparency is desirable for good governance but essential in matters of law to avoid catastrophic abuse of power. The Justice and Security Bill will allow the government to subject individuals to a Kafkaesque process of detention without proper trial for crimes they will not be made aware of. Such a prospect would have been shocking in Britain only 20 or 30 years ago but is now accepted as part of the escalating cycle of violence and suppression by the state against individuals. If this Bill receives royal assent, we will be yet further on the road towards a totalitarian, police state. Press regulation under statute, secret courts, etc...the brief post-war era of

freedom and democracy is coming to an end - unless people wake up.

In *The End of America: Letter of Warning to a Young Patriot*, Naomi Wolf takes a historical look at the rise of fascism, outlining 10 steps necessary for a fascist group (or government) to destroy the democratic character of a nation-state and subvert the social/political liberty previously exercised by its citizens:

1. Invoke a terrifying internal and external enemy (Islamic fundamentalism, Axis of Evil)
2. Create secret prisons where torture takes place (Extraordinary rendition, Guantanamo, Bagram)
3. Develop a thug caste or paramilitary force not answerable to citizens (G4S, Serco, Blackwater, etc.)
4. Set up an internal surveillance system (CCTV, security checks, email and phone monitoring)
5. Harass citizens' groups (kettling, infiltration of opposition movements)
6. Engage in arbitrary detention and release (arrests of groups and individuals around the time of the Olympics)
7. Target key individuals (Julian Assange, Bradley Manning, David Kelly... a long list of whistleblowers etc.)
8. Control the press (post-Leveson press regulation)
9. Treat all political dissidents as traitors (all those who refuse to sanction illegal wars)
10. Suspend the rule of law (Justice and Security bill)

THE SINISTER SPREAD OF JUSTICE BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Christopher Booker; via John Newell

Wanda Maddocks was jailed 'in secret' for trying to remove her father from a care home where his family thought he was in danger of dying

Most disturbing of all is that it is only thanks to persistent inquiries by the Mail that we know of her fate at all — for the court heard the case in secret and chose not to publish the ruling containing details of her sentence.

The court that conducted itself in this manner is the mysterious and secretive Court of Protection, set up in 2005 under the Labour government's Mental Capacity Act to give state officials quite extraordinary powers over the lives of people who are deemed no longer fit to handle their own affairs.

Miss Maddocks was found guilty of contempt because she ignored the Court of Protection's orders not to interfere with her father's life in the care home.

What angered the judge and the council involved, Stoke-on-Trent, was not just that she took her father away but that she desperately tried to publicise what was happening to him by writing a leaflet about it. Of course, the case is complicated and highly emotive — one in which family members concerned for their ailing, elderly father are pitted against professionals and state employees who insist they know better.

But it is also part of a deeply worrying trend of secret justice taking hold across Britain, where journalists, the public and even defendants are barred from hearing evidence, while those in the dock often have no legal representation. The Court of Protection is making huge numbers of judgments in secret which devastate families such as that of Wanda Maddocks.

Only this week, there was the tragic case of a 64-year-old mother from a working-class family who left her husband and ran off with her neighbour to the Midlands, without an explanation.

The family spent months trying to track her down, and finally found her in a nursing home after she had suffered a massive stroke that left her needing 24-hour care. When they called to see her, the nursing home — claiming she had written letters saying she wanted to break off contact with them — called the police.

John Maddocks was being held in a care home against his families wishes under the Labour government's Mental Capacity Act. After hearing the evidence in secret, the judge decided the family should no longer have contact with their mother — even though an American forensic expert who used computer analysis on handwriting testified that he was '99.9 per cent' certain the letters were written by the man she ran off with.

For months I have been following a terrifying case involving a council which cannot be named, and

which has similarly been hidden away from public view by another judge of the same Court of Protection. The story would make your hair curl. But because it is under the aegis of the Court of Protection, I am forbidden from reporting on it at all. None of its details can be made public.

Local press that did cover the story so irked the council and the judge that other media were told that any further reporting of the case would be a contempt of court, punishable by imprisonment.

Like the case of Miss Maddocks, it highlights a tendency to allow Britain's courts to hide their workings from public view behind a wall of secrecy.

The Mail mounted a hard-hitting campaign for open justice after the Government proposed last year that judges could be allowed to hold secret hearings in terrorist cases, on the grounds that allowing these to be reported might be damaging to 'national security'.

Similar concerns have been expressed over the fear that the Leveson inquiry might trigger a massive extension in the powers of judges to throw up a blanket of secrecy around other types of cases they are hearing, such as those involving celebrities keen to preserve their reputation.

But the terrifying fact is that we already have a whole swathe of secret courts in this country, where judges are allowed to exclude the public and the Press, and to issue draconian gagging orders to prevent anything being reported of what goes on.. Any breach of those orders can be ruled a contempt of court, punishable not just by imprisonment but by the confiscation of an offender's possessions.

One of the most glaring examples of justice behind closed doors is to be found in the extraordinary goings on of our so-called 'child protection' system, where social workers using family courts can too often tear families apart for the flimsiest and most dubious of reasons,

In such cases, all the normal principles of British justice can be turned on their heads. The rules, which in criminal courts require evidence to be put to a proper test, can be routinely ignored.

Social workers and lawyers can trot out hearsay allegations which are accepted by the court as if they were proven fact, 'expert psychologists' are paid thousands of pounds to come up with patently ridiculous reports, which parents fearful that they may lose their children for ever are not permitted to question.

Police could soon be banned from identifying people they have arrested by a recommendation of the Leveson Inquiry. What is so shocking to parents who fall foul of this system — as I have learned from talking to scores of them over the years — is how they can find themselves being treated, without any need for proof, as criminals, having to listen to any kind of allegation being made against them without being given a right of reply.

The point is that none of these abuses could take place if the judges had not been allowed to hide away the workings of these courts behind a far greater wall of secrecy than anything intended by the politicians who passed the supposedly well-meaning Acts of Parliament which gave them their powers in the first place.

The overwhelming moral of all this is that wherever courts are allowed to operate in secret, the system is likely to be corrupted. Few things are more sinister in Britain today than all those pressures to extend even further that suffocating blanket of secrecy, for we can already see — as in the frightening case of Miss Maddocks and the Court of Protection — how easily it can lead to any sense of justice being thrown out of the window

GET WIRED EVENT 23RD JUNE 2013: ALFRISTON, SUSSEX

via Britcong

<http://stopsmartmeters.org.uk/getwired2013/>

Following news of the Government's Smart Meter U-turn yesterday, we are pleased to announce we will be hosting a groundbreaking outdoor conference ~ GET WIRED ~ in the beautiful Sussex countryside on Sunday 23rd June 2013. The aim is to raise awareness about the proliferation of harmful wireless technologies and present ideas for taking action to protect yourself and your loved ones.

The event will feature speakers from the medical, scientific, film-making and activist communities who will share their knowledge and experiences in encouraging necessary and urgent resistance to wireless technologies, including new-generation energy 'Smart' Meters.

It will also feature the long-awaited and internationally-acclaimed official UK premiere of

“TAKE BACK YOUR POWER” – a feature-length, critical investigation of Smart Meters and the Smart Grid led by a Canadian film-maker, Josh del Sol. £3 from all ticket sales will go directly to Josh’s team to help market and complete the film for release onto DVD and across the web.

Each of our speakers will shed light on different, crucial aspects of wireless technologies and we are delighted to welcome as our special guest, Stop Smart Meters (California) director, Josh Hart. Josh will talk about his experiences in tackling Smart Meters on the west coast of America and how communities there have mobilised to defend their hard-won rights to privacy and freedom from harm. Our confirmed speaker line-up includes:

Josh Hart – Director, Stop Smart Meters! (California) – USA experiences, taking action

Dr. Isaac Jamieson – Director, BioSustainable Design - Impacts of wireless radiation on our environment

James Russell - Director & Producer - Resonance: Beings of Frequency

Ian R Crane - Researcher/Analyst, Deep Geopolitics – The Global Control Grid

Dr. Elizabeth Evans + Michael Mitcham - Co-Founders, Stop Smart Meters! (UK) - Impact of wireless radiation on people ... with more to be confirmed soon.

WHERE ... GET WIRED will be held at a wonderful farm location in the village of Alfriston in the South Downs. The exact address will be provided with your ticket purchase.

The venue has various gardens and an indoor sports hall where the screening of Take Back Your Power will be shown and some talks will be held. The lovely village of Alfriston has numerous B&Bs for overnight accommodation. Overnight camping is available on-site as well as caravan hook-ups for anyone wishing to stay overnight in a low-EMF area of outstanding beauty (we will be requesting anyone attending with mobile phones to switch them off as a courtesy to attendees with electro-hypersensitivity – enjoy a day out without your mobile).

WHEN Sunday 23rd June 2013. Arrive 10:30am for 11:00am start, finishes approx 18:00 with Q+A panel session. There will be c.75 mins for lunch (not provided) and comfort/coffee breaks after each session providing an opportunity to chat with other attendees and speakers.

Small print: The event may be subject to changes – but rest assured that we will do our best to ensure this is a fantastic event!

Given the event is only a few weeks away, all efforts to help us promote this event would be appreciated even if you cannot attend yourself. Please tell all your friends and print out a copies of the flyer (above – right click, save as..) for any local noticeboards or shop counters that may be happy enough to have them (health food shops, health clinics, supermarkets, sports clubs, day care centres, tree-lined avenues...etc.)

PLEASE JOIN US for what promises to be an extremely important and timely event – providing an opportunity to learn about this critical issue directly from experts and activists in the field and meet like-minded people who are prepared to start taking action to protect present and future generations. If you have friends and family that still need alerting to this issue, this will be a great opportunity to let them absorb some quality information.

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE TO BUY NOW AT – www.GetWired.eventbrite.co.uk

Link to this page: www.StopSmartMeters.org.uk/getwired2013

SOME OF THE SHEEP ARE NO LONGER ASLEEP

Dave Hodges; Activist Post

(This item poses the interesting notion that to have any chance of advancing, any concept has to gain the assent of at least 10% of the population. Whether that is true or not, and whether or not the alternative media is anything like as influential as the author claims, there article reflects the very widespread misapprehension that all we need to do is to understand, and that once that is achieved all will fall into place of its own volition. The article may be just another example of wishful thinking.

That the article admits that the Globalists are tooling up for civil unrest, likewise admits that something more than mere Eureka may be needed.

Yet again, this article is from the US, and written in that context. There have been complaints about the amount of US based material in RG. Yet there is a great dearth of such material from within the UK. Is that the sign of a country which has given up on itself? Ed)

The world is finally beginning to wake up to the global tyranny that is threatening all of humanity. In the past two months I have heard from people that I have not heard from or seen for 10-20 years. I have heard from former players, students, friends and neighbors.

Several people contacting out of my distant past may not sound significant, but I had zero expectation of hearing from any of these people again. And all of the contacts were motivated by their concern for the decimation of our Republic and my work towards reversing the trend curve.

Sometimes as I pound away at my keyboard in the middle of the night, I wonder if I am making a difference with regard to awakening the multitude of sheep in this country. Frequently, I have wondered if any of us are making a real difference. Yet, I have met so many gifted morally upstanding people in our Patriot movement. The majority of the people in the alternative media, too many to mention, have talent, charisma, intelligence, education, a love of God and country and are only motivated by the desire to live in a society which is governed by people who want to help their fellow man, not to enslave them.

I am very gratified to say that my personal barometer says that after a long battle, the journalists in the truthful media are beginning to reach a critical mass of influence.

In the classic book written by Malcom Gladwell, *The Tipping Point*, he postulates what it takes to get an idea to go viral. True to Gladwell's premises, we in the alternative media have dramatically increased our contact base and our subsequent reach.

Just Who Is the Alternative Media?

One does not have to maintain a website or host a talk show to have an effect in the war on corruption and tyranny. I have met several people on Facebook who share articles that they identify with and they send these articles to scores of people. Many of these same people will also write an accurate and succinct summary of world events in a paragraph or two, insert a clever picture, which serves to enhance the meaning, and then send it on. They, too, comprise the alternative media.

I am simply awestruck at the reach that we are acquiring in the alternative media. We are having a dramatic impact and the effect is incredible given the fact that we are demonized in the MSM and the globalists control 98% of the corporate media. And, yet, America is still waking up.

All of us, whether we write, broadcast, share on Facebook or simply educate our neighbors and friends, should all take a look in the mirror and pat ourselves on the back because we are being successful in the first step towards taking our country back, which is to awaken the sleeping masses.

How Does the Process of Awakening Work?

Scientists from the prestigious Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute have determined that if just 10% of any given population holds to an unshakable idea, that the idea will become adopted by the majority of the country. However, the scientists who belong to the Social Cognitive Networks Academic Research Center (SCNARC) found that if the ideas are shared by less than 10% of the population, the idea will not progress and will eventually die out. The research was first published in a peer reviewed E Journal in an article titled "Social consensus through the influence of committed minorities."

Computational and analytical methods were used to discover the tipping point where an obscure idea eventually becomes the majority opinion. The finding has dramatic implications for those of us trying to wake up the sheep in this country.

The SCNARC scientists found that the 10% figure was applicable whether they were talking about the spread of innovations or to advance a political ideal.

Our Friends Did Not Fund this Research

The research was funded by the Army Research Laboratory, with its obvious DARPA connections, through SCNARC. Additionally, the Army Research Office, and the Office of Naval Research contributed as well. SCNARC's corporate and academic partners consist of IBM, Northeastern University, and the City University of New York, as well as collaborators from Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, New York University, Northwestern University, the University of Notre Dame, the University of Maryland, and Indiana. As most of you will recognize, many of these organizations are fronts for

globalist projects. Therefore, you can bet that the other side has a vested interest in limiting the number of sheeple that we are able to reach and convert.

Now does it make sense as to why the globalists are out to control the Internet? Why they seek to enact draconian legislation such as the NDAA and the PATRIOT Acts so they can create a matrix on who is being effective in the awakening of our country and then have a means to arrest the influential subversives who would oppose the emerging totalitarianism? It is obvious that the globalists seek to control the dialogue so that the critical mass of 10% is never reached. However, it is too late. The proof that the 10% threshold has been breached is apparent given the explosion of the alternative media and, unfortunately, there is one more factor to consider.

An Ominous Sign of Success

While most of us were still asleep, we would have been allowed by the globalists to lead lives of quiet desperation. However, as we awaken and seek to take action against the criminals who have hijacked our government in such scandals as Benghazi, the AP scandal and the abuse of power by the IRS, the globalists must take action. Simply put, our new-found awareness is becoming problematic for the globalist plans for world government and the unfolding of eugenics programs designed to dramatically reduce the population.

The globalists know that we are an incident away from running down every one of them so that we can get our hands on them and then subsequently hang them from the light poles on Wall Street. Why do you think that 30% of Congress has announced they are not seeking re-election? They are frightened and they know what is coming and so does DHS. Oh yeah, you say, as you suddenly remember that DHS has purchased 2.2 billion rounds of ammunition and 2,700 armored personnel carriers. DHS is declaring war on the American people and, in particular, they are going to go after veterans, Christians, gun owners, Libertarians, Constitutionalists and former supporters of Ron Paul.

Success Comes With a Price

Our new-found awareness comes with a price tag. You, I, and anyone who reads these types of articles are a threat to the establishment and must be dealt with. Assassination is no longer a widespread option for the globalists, as there are too many of us. To deal with what could evolve into an awakening monster, the globalists are meeting in secret this weekend in order to decide how to deal with us.

I think prudent people would be asking why the G-7 nations have called a highly unusual emergency meeting this weekend outside of London. This was unscheduled and can only be considered as an emergency meeting.

Bank Holiday or Worse?

Is a "bank holiday" coming in our immediate future which would likely be preceded by a false flag event in which martial law is rolled out? I know, I know, that this is only the talk of a conspiracy theorist. However, I have always maintained that a revaluation of assets and currencies would eventually take place. The globalists forced down the price of gold by manipulating the market and bought as much gold as they could at the depressed price. Why would a rich person buy as much gold as they could? Of course, they are seeking to convert their soon-to-be worthless cash into gold preceding the coming calamity.

Additionally, I have happened across some information which is suggestive of the fact that globalists are going to be collecting much more than gold, they will soon be collecting people. More on that and other issues as well in part two.

RELATED ARTICLE: *Tyranny's Last Stand: The Tipping Point is Here*

Dave is an award winning psychology, statistics and research professor, a college basketball coach, a mental health counselor, a political activist and writer who has published dozens of editorials and articles in several publications such as Freedoms Phoenix, News With Views and The Arizona Republic. The Common Sense Show features a wide variety of important topics that range from the loss of constitutional liberties, to the subsequent implementation of a police state under world governance, to exploring the limits of human potential. The primary purpose of The Common Sense Show is to provide Americans with the tools necessary to reclaim both our individual and national sovereignty.

THE WEALTH OF THE COMMONS: A WORLD BEYOND MARKET & STATE

Leo Burke; via Anna Betz; School of Commoning

(The 'Commons' is sometimes confused and conflated with notions of corporate State Socialism. Nothing could be further from the truth, except that corporate State Socialism has often hijacked such ideas to gild a power-centred narrative of its own. The concepts of the Commons and of the 'Common Weal' dates right back into tribal Europe, and is indeed fundamental to the functioning of most tribal societies.

Modern polemicists of both 'left' and 'right' often argue as to whether humans are collective or individual animals. Yet such shadow boxing so often ignores the politics of institutional scale. For humans are both collective and individual animals. It is not a question of 'either/or' but of 'both/and'. Yet the dichotomy can only be resolved, and all demands satisfied and all freedoms fulfilled, when power is highly localised - Ed)

This book review by Leo Burke, advisor to the School of Commoning, was published in the Winter 2012 edition of the Kosmos Journal

If I were to be marooned on a desert island and could take along only two commons-related books, they would be Elinor Ostrom's 1990 classic, *Governing the Commons*, and David Bollier and Silke Helfrich's *The Wealth of the Commons*. This remarkable anthology of seventy-two essays by authors from six continents represents a milestone in the commons literature. The quality of the essays is not uniform, but, taken as a whole, they offer a glimpse into the breadth of the emerging commons narrative that is unparalleled. It is an extraordinarily hopeful book. The authors include activists, academics and practitioners. The editors do a skillful job of partitioning the contributions into five logical sections: (1) the Commons as a New Paradigm, (2) Capitalism, Enclosure and the Commons, (3) Commoning—A Social Innovation for Our Times, (4) Knowledge Commons for Social Change, and (5) Envisioning a Commons-Based Policy and Production Framework. Even so, themes and motifs interweave themselves throughout the book like the colorful threads of a common rope.

Central to the book is an understanding that commons represent not merely sets of resources, products or artifacts. Rather, they reflect social and cultural practices that both require and engender participation, trust, cooperation, reciprocity and empathy. As Jacques Paysan says simply in the very first essay, "There is no commons without communing!" In other words, resources without people are not commons, per se. David Bollier notes, "Commons require the active participation of the people in formulating and enforcing the rules that govern them."

It is this sense of active participation that distinguishes this book from others in the field. There are indeed several noteworthy texts that document and analyze the management of resources. These scholarly works contribute significantly to the field. *The Wealth of the Commons*, in contrast, has a leadership agenda—it suggests that many of society's seemingly intractable issues are best reframed within the context of the commons. The book's many and, at times, divergent views give us a sense of the great diversity and potential of the commons as an approach to living that cultivates both individual responsibility and collective self-determination.

An enjoyable feature of this anthology is the inclusion of essays of varying scope. Some authors highlight local and regional issues, while others describe dynamics occurring at a global level. For example, in the section on enclosures anthropologist César Padilla examines the role of mining industries in South America. Physicist Vinod Raina documents the destructive consequences of India's dam building policies. And activist Ana de Ita argues that the establishment of Mexico's protected natural areas usurps indigenous land management rights. On a global scale, international development advisor Liz Alden Wily traces land expropriation trends over the

centuries. Free culture activist Beatriz Busaniche offers a useful analysis of the impact of intellectual property rights and free trade agreements on the commons. And financial reformer Antonio Tricarico offers an incisive critique of the global financial system, particularly the increasing commodification and ‘financialization’ of the commons. Speaking of enclosures, it should also be noted that in the introduction to the book, Bollier and Helfrich insightfully identify one of the most invisible and pervasive enclosures—language. They write, “...[the] language of capitalism validates a certain set of purposes and power relationships, and projects them into the theaters of our minds. The delusions of endless growth and consumption are encoded into the very epistemology of our language and internalized by people.”

There are numerous examples of commoning-in-action. And these are both hopeful and cautionary. Whether it is urban gardens in Germany, fisheries in Chile, forests in Nepal, shared public spaces in the Netherlands, or emerging credit commons everywhere, ordinary citizens demonstrate over and over that we have the innate capacity to self-organize and co-manage resources of mutual interest. In addition, commons-oriented structures can incubate significant creativity and innovation. Inspired by the free software movement, new approaches to open hardware include not only circuit board projects like Arduino, but building designs through the Open Architecture Network, artificial limbs through the Open Prosthetics Project, and 3D printers that can replicate themselves. On the cautionary side, research continues to find that resource commons subject to multilevel governance often face conflicting cross-pressures. Property regimes in most countries continue to heavily favor private ownership over communal property. And as a means of addressing budget shortfalls, governments at all levels are increasingly relying on the privatization of public resources.

There are promising essays on how the commons framework can address some of the most pressing matters of our day. David Bollier and law professor Burns Weston introduce a model of ‘commons- and rights-based ecological governance’ for addressing a wide-range of environmental issues. Attorney Christine Godt and her colleagues show how the ‘equitable licensing’ model is an effective way to protect the medical commons so that the world’s poor can have access to life-saving pharmaceuticals. Energy expert Julio Lambing considers the need for an electricity commons as a way of efficiently incorporating renewable energy into the grid. Economist Ottmar Edenhofer and his colleagues make a compelling case that the atmosphere must be treated as a well-managed commons if we are to make headway in addressing the overproduction of anthropogenic carbon.

If Bollier and Helfrich had the interest and energy to develop a second volume, I would ask them to expand on three key themes. The first is education. There is a brief article by George Pór on his pioneering work with the London-based School of Commoning. George and his colleagues are attempting to address society’s vast knowledge deficit about the commons. Vibrant and varied educational strategies are needed worldwide to accelerate citizen support for the commons.

Second, we need to understand more regarding strategies that successfully scale. The Internet greatly facilitates ‘horizontal scaling’—how successful commons in one locality or domain can be replicated elsewhere. An example of horizontal scaling is the proliferation of Transition Towns; lessons learned from the Transition movement are discussed in three articles in the book. The more challenging issue is ‘vertical scaling.’ That is, under what conditions can the value memes of successful initiatives at one level of governance be applied at another level? For instance, is there a critical mass of Transition Towns that might give birth to a Transition Region that cuts across international boundaries and, in effect, begins to set up provisional, non-state-based forms of representative governance?

Third and lastly, we need to reflect more deeply on the matter of sovereignty. At present, when we think of the commons, we tend to do so within the context of a fixed set of boundary conditions set by governmental authorities. But such a view reflects an insufficient position. These days, governments tend to represent interests (as in special interests) rather than people. Yet inherent in being human is an intrinsic set of rights and responsibilities. Under what conditions do ordinary people have the right to exercise claims of sovereignty over common resources for the sake of all

those affected, including the unborn? In his essay, “Why Distinguish Common Goods from Public Goods?” James Quilligan introduces a provocative notion: “People’s sovereignty for a commons is legitimated through global citizenship, and this global citizenship is legitimated through the local sovereignty of their commons.” Much discussion and debate is needed to unpack this seminal concept. Looking to the future, the courageous assertion of well-considered claims of sovereignty will be essential to establishing broad-scale commons, especially those that transcend national boundaries.

We live in interesting times. Particularly since World War II, the moral authority of the nation-state has steadily evaporated. As a form of governance, it can no longer fulfill its social mandate of providing security and well being for its citizens. Nor is it structurally capable of collaborating with other such entities for the welfare of the totality, e.g., developing workable treaties on global carbon emissions. The market, particularly as a result of unregulated growth in the financial sector over the last thirty years, has imposed an endless-growth-at-all-costs logic on human civilization that is neither environmentally sustainable nor ethically justifiable. Things as they are, are not working. It is time for something new. And this something new will include viable commons at local, regional and global levels. The Wealth of the Commons points the way to a future that is both possible and necessary. Enjoy.

Excerpt from Wealth of the Commons Website

Over the past few years an explosion of innovative activism, scholarship and projects focused on the commons have been gaining momentum around the world. This growing movement consists of activists fighting international land grabs and the privatization of water; commoners collectively managing forests, fisheries and farmlands; Internet users generating software and Web content that can be shared and improved; and urban dwellers reclaiming public spaces. The Wealth of the Commons brings together the most vibrant strands of this burgeoning international work into a single volume, revealing the significant potential of the commons as a new force in politics, economics and culture.

It has become increasingly clear that we are poised between an old world that no longer works and a new one struggling to be born. Surrounded by an archaic order of centralized hierarchies on the one hand and predatory markets on the other, presided over by a state committed to planet-destroying economic growth, people around the world are searching for alternatives. That is the message of various social conflicts all over the world—of the Spanish Indignados and the Occupy movement and of countless social innovators on the Internet. People want to emancipate themselves not just from poverty and shrinking opportunities, but from governance systems that do not allow them meaningful voice and responsibility. This book is about how we can find the new paths to navigate this transition. It is about our future.

<http://www.wealthofthecommons.org>

BIG BROTHER WATCH BULLETIN

Nick Pickles; Big Brother Watch

NHS data victory as patients given opt-out

Last month we warned that new NHS plans to share patient GP records posed a major threat to privacy unless patients were given the choice over their data being shared. At the time, the NHS said patients would not be able to opt-out and we said we would campaign to change this.

Now Secretary of State for Health Jeremy Hunt has confirmed that in response to our concerns, patients will be given an opt-out, as the Daily Mail reported.

We have now written to the Secretary of State to urge him to confirm that patients who have opted-out of any existing NHS system will have their choice transferred to the new system. We have also warned that the timescales involved, less than two months, makes it extremely challenging to

properly communicate with patients what will be changing and how they can exercise control over their medical records.

This is another important victory for Big Brother Watch to defend people's confidential information and as we take on future campaigns your support is crucial to our work.

Can you support Sgt Danny Nightingale?

Yesterday the Military Court at Bulford confirmed that Sergeant Danny Nightingale will face a retrial on July 1st. Today, the Medical Board of the British Army has today recommended that Sergeant Danny Nightingale of 22 SAS should be medically discharged as a result of serious brain damage caused following his collapse in the Amazon jungle in 2009.

Sally, Sergeant Nightingale's wife said "Danny belonged to one of the finest Regiments in the world because he is a fighter. Although he is obviously upset that his career is over, we'll get it through together and once the Court Martial is over, start his re-integration to civilian life. A bigger question for me is how the Service Prosecuting Authority felt able to say repeatedly during the Court of Appeal proceedings that Danny had been certified fit for duty when it is clear that the opposite was in reality the case".

The campaign to support Sergeant Danny Nightingale has been covered by the Sun, Daily Telegraph, BBC News and has been incredibly well supported. We are deeply grateful to everyone who has donated so far. With costs potentially running to £150,000 for a prolonged battle, every donation makes a big difference and we urge you to give generously.

Big Brother Watch in the media:

Clegg vetoes Communications data bill:

BBC News, Sky News, City AM, Guardian, NBC, the Inquirer, Computerworld, IT Pro,

The rise of CCTV surveillance:

The Telegraph, CNN, BBC, Bloomberg

Plans to put spy chips in every fridge:

Mail on Sunday, Radio 4 Today, TechRadar, RT, Energy Live News,

CRB makes 40 blunders every week: Daily Mail

Blog of the week:

Is anonymous whistleblowing under threat from the grim RIPA? HMRC has used surveillance legislation to identify a whistleblower who uncovered a 'sweetheart' deal with Goldman Sachs, accessing details of the emails, internet search records and telephone calls of a revenue solicitor, and his wife, Claudia.

MEDIA DISINFORMATION AND THE CONSPIRACY PANIC PHENOMENON

James F. Tracy; Global Research

Url of this article: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/media-disinformation-and-the-conspiracy-panic-phenomenon/5336221>

To posit that one's government may be partially composed of unaccountable criminal elements is cause for serious censure in polite circles. Labeled "conspiracy theories" by a corporate media that prompt and channel emotionally-laden mass consent, such perspectives are quickly dispatched to the memory hole lest they prompt meaningful discussion of the political prerogatives and designs held by a global power elite coordinating governments and broader geopolitical configurations.

Cultural historian Jack Bratich terms such phenomena "conspiracy panics." Potentially fostered by the coordinated actions of government officials or agencies and major news organs to generate public suspicion and uncertainty, a conspiracy panic is a demonstrable immediate or long-term reactive thrust against rational queries toward unusual and poorly understood events. To be sure, they are also intertwined with how the given society acknowledges and preserves its own identity—through "the management and expulsion of deviance."^[1]

In the American mass mind, government intelligence and military operations are largely seen as being

directed almost solely toward manipulation or coercion of unfortunate souls in foreign lands. To suggest otherwise, as independent researchers and commentators have done with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the CIA-Contra-crack cocaine connection, and 9/11, has been cause for sustained conspiracy panics that act to suppress inquiry into such events by professional and credentialed opinion leaders, particularly journalists and academics.

At the same time a conspiracy panic serves a subtle yet important doctrinal function of manifesting and reproducing the apt ideational status quo of the post-Cold War, “War on Terror” era. “The scapegoating of conspiracy theories provides the conditions for social integration and political rationality,” Bratich observes. “Conspiracy panics help to define the normal modes of dissent. Politically it is predicated on a consensus of ‘us’ over against a subversive and threatening ‘them.’”[2] These days especially the suggestion that an official narrative may be amiss almost invariably puts one in the enemy camp.

Popular Credence in Government Conspiracy Narratives

The time for a conspiracy panic to develop has decreased commensurately with the heightened spread and availability of information and communication technology that allows for the dissemination of news and research formerly suppressed by the perpetual data overload of corporate media. Before the wide access to information technology and the internet, independent investigations into events including the JFK assassination took place over the course of many years, materializing in book-length treatments that could be dismissed by intelligence assets in news media and academe as the collective activity of “conspiracy buffs”—amateurish researchers who lack a government or privately-funded sinecure to overlook or obscure inquiry into deep events.

Not until Oliver Stone’s 1991 blockbuster film JFK, essentially an adoption of works by author Jim Marrs, Colonel L. Fletcher Prouty, and New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, did a substantial conspiracy panic take shape as a response to such analysis thrust upon the public in popular narrative form. This panic arose from and centered around Hollywood’s apt challenge to traditional journalism’s turf alongside commercial news outlets’ typically deceptive interpretation of the event and almost wholly uncritical treatment of the Warren Commission Report.

Shortly thereafter investigative journalist Gary Webb’s “Dark Alliance” series for the San Jose Mercury News demonstrated the internet’s capacity to explain and document a government conspiracy. With Webb’s painstaking examination of the CIA’s role in the illicit drug trade hyperlinked to a bevy of documentation and freely distributed online, the professional journalistic community and its intelligence penumbra fell silent for months.

In the interim the story picked up steam in the non-traditional outlets of talk radio and tabloid television, with African Americans especially intrigued by the potential government role in the crack cocaine epidemic. Then suddenly major news outlets spewed forth a vitriolic attack on Webb and the Mercury News that amazingly resulted in the Mercury’s retraction of the story and Webb’s eventual departure from the paper and probable murder by the US government.[3]

Criticism of Webb’s work predictably focused on petty misgivings toward his alleged poor judgement—specifically his intimation that the CIA intentionally caused the crack epidemic in African American communities, an observation that many blacks found logical and compelling. So not only did Webb find himself at the center of a conspiracy panic because of his assessment of the CIA’s role in the drug trade; he was also causing mass “paranoia” within African American communities allegedly predisposed toward such thinking.

Since the mid-1990s conspiracy panics have increasingly revolved around an effort by mainstream news media to link unorthodox political ideas and inquiry with violent acts. This dynamic was crystallized in Timothy McVeigh, the principal suspect in the April 19, 1995 Oklahoma City Murrah Federal Building bombing, who through the propaganda-like efforts of government and major news media was constructed to symbolize the dangers of “extremist” conspiratorial thought (his purported fascination with white supremacism and *The Turner Diaries*) and violent terrorist action (the bombing itself). Conveniently overlooked is the fact that McVeigh was trained as a black ops technician and still in US Army employ at the time of his 2001 execution.[4]

Through a broad array of media coverage and subsequent book-length treatments by the left intelligentsia on the “radical right,” the alleged lone wolf McVeigh and the Oklahoma City bombing became forever coupled in the national memory. The image and event seemingly attested to how certain modes of thought can bring about violence—even though McVeigh’s role in what took place on April 19 was without question one part of an intricate web painstakingly examined by the Oklahoma Bombing Investigation Committee [5] and in the 2011 documentary *A Noble Lie: Oklahoma City 1995*.

The Quickening Pace of Conspiracy Panics

Independent researchers and alternative media utilizing the internet have necessitated the rapid deployment of conspiracy panic-like reactions that appear far less natural and spontaneous to neutralize inquiry and bolster the official narratives of momentous and unusual events. For example, wide-scale skepticism surrounding the May 1, 2011 assault on Osama bin Laden's alleged lair in Pakistan was met with efforts to cultivate a conspiracy panic evident in editorials appearing across mainstream print, broadcast, and online news platforms. The untenable event supported only by President Obama's pronouncement of the operation was unquestioningly accepted by corporate media that shouted down calls for further evidence and alternative explanations of bin Laden's demise as "conspiracy theories."

Indeed, a LexisNexis search for "bin Laden" and "conspiracy theories" yields over five hundred such stories and opinion pieces appearing across Western print and broadcast media outlets for the week of May 2, 2011.[6]

"While much of America celebrated the dramatic killing of Osama bin Laden," the Washington Post opined, "the Sept. 11 conspiracy theorists still had questions. For them and a growing number of skeptics, the plot only thickened."[7]

Along these lines retired General Mark Kimmitt remarked on CNN, "Well, I'm sure the conspiracy theorists will have a field day with this, about why it was done? Was it done? Is he still alive?"[8]

"The conspiracy theorists are not going to be satisfied," Glenn Beck asserted. "Next thing you know, Trump is going to ask for the death certificate, and is it the real death certificate? And then all hell breaks loose."[9]

Like 9/11 or the Gulf of Tonkin, the narrative has since become a part of official history, disingenuously repeated in subsequent news accounts and elementary school history books — a history handed down from on high and accepted by compromised, unintelligent, or simply lazy journalists perpetuating nightmare fictions to a poorly informed and intellectually idle public.

This psycho-symbolic template is simultaneously evident in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting and Boston Marathon bombing (BMB) events and their aftermaths. Indeed, the brief yet intense Sandy Hook conspiracy panic, and to a lesser degree that of the BMB, revolved at least partially around the "conspiracy theory professor," who, as a credentialed member of the intellectual class, overstepped his bounds by suggesting how there are many unanswered questions related to the tragedies that might lead one to conclude—as social theorist Jean Baudrillard observed concerning the 1991 Gulf War—that the events did not take place, at least in the way official pronouncements and major media have represented them. It is perhaps telling that critical assessments of domestic events and their relatedness to a corrupt media and governing apparatus are so vigorously assailed.

Yet to suggest that the news and information Americans accept as sound and factual on a routine basis is in fact a central means for manipulating their worldviews is not a matter for debate. Rather, it is an empirically verifiable assertion substantiated in a century of public relations and psychological warfare research and practice. Such propaganda efforts once reserved for foreign locales are now freely practiced in the US to keep the population increasingly on edge.

Still, a significant portion of the population cannot believe their government would lie to or mislead them, especially about a traumatic and emotional event involving young children or running enthusiasts. To suggest this to be the case is not unlike informing a devoted sports fan that her team lost a decisive game after she's been convinced of an overwhelming win. Such an allegation goes against not only what they often unconsciously accept to be true, but also challenges their substantial emotional investment in the given mediated event.

In a revealing yet characteristic move the reaction by corporate media outlets such as the New York Times, FoxNews, CNN, and in the case of the BMB the New York Times-owned Boston Globe, has been not to revisit and critique their own slipshod coverage of the Newtown massacre or BMB that often bordered on blatant disinformation, but rather to divert attention from any responsible self-evaluation by vilifying the messenger in what have been acute conspiracy panics of unusual proportion.

As a disciplinary mechanism against unsettling observations and questions directed toward political leaders and the status quo, conspiracy panics serve to reinforce ideas and thought processes sustained by the fleeting yet pervasive stimuli of infotainment, government pronouncements, and, yes, the staged events that have been part and parcel of US news media and government collaboration dating at least to the Spanish-American war. Despite (or perhaps because of) the immense technological sophistication at the dawn of the

twenty-first century a majority of the population remains bound and shackled in the bowels of the cave, forever doomed to watch the shadows projected before them.

Notes

[1] Jack Z. Bratich, *Conspiracy Panics: Political Rationality and Popular Culture*, Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 2008.

[2] Bratich, *Conspiracy Panics*, 11.

[3] Alex Jones and Paul Joseph Watson, "Evidence Begins to Indicate Gary Webb Was Murdered," *prisonplanet.com*, December 15, 2004; Charlene Fassa, "Gary Webb: More Pieces in the Suicided Puzzle, Pt. 1," *Rense.com*, December 11, 2005.

[4] *Death Certificate of Timothy James McVeigh*, June 11, 2001, <http://www.autopsyfiles.org/reports/deathcert/mcveigh,%20timothy.pdf>

[5] *Oklahoma Bombing Investigation Committee, Final Report on the Bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building*, April 19, 1995, 2001. See also *Oklahoma City: What Really Happened?* Chuck Allen, dir., 1995.

[6] See James F. Tracy, "State Propaganda, Historical Revisionism, and Perpetuation of the 911 Myth," *memoryholeblog.com* and *GlobalResearch.ca*, May 6, 2012.

[7] Emily Wax, "Report of bin Laden's Death Spurs Questions From Conspiracy Theorists," *Washington Post*, May 2, 2011.

[8] Gen. Mark Kimmitt on *CNN Breaking News*, "Osama bin Laden is Dead," *CNN*, May 2, 2011.

[9] Glenn Beck, "Beck for May 2, 2011," *Fox News Network*, May 2, 2011.

PSYCHOPATHY, POLITICS AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

Colin Todhunter; Global Research

Url of this article: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/psychopathy-politics-and-the-new-world-order/5334458>

When attempting to analyse what is happening in the world, it is important to appreciate past economic, social and political processes that led us to where we are today. Understanding the tectonic plates of history that led certain countries towards fascism, communism or capitalist liberal democracy, for example, is essential (1) (2).

At the same time, however, it can become easy for us to push aside the individual as we focus on theoretical perspectives that refer to the 'underlying logic of capitalism' or some other notion that draws heavily on theory. It can get to the point where individual motive or intent (agency) is airbrushed from the narrative because human action is deemed to have been shaped by the dead weight of history or forces beyond our control.

While not wishing to understate the role that such constraints have on human action, I wish to draw attention to researcher Stefan Verstappen who provides valuable insight into how individual agency has shaped and continues to shape society (3).

While Machiavellianism has long been associated with politics and public conduct, Verstappen shifts focus somewhat by arguing that people with psychopathic personalities have for thousands of years tended to grasp power and impose their views and deeds on the rest of us. In order to get power, he concludes that people cheat, kill or lie their way to the top. Whether it has been due to the butchery or lies of royalty, religious leaders, politicians or corporate oligarchs, nice guys have tended to finish last.

What leads him to conclude this?

Psychopathy is a personality disorder identified by characteristics such as a lack of empathy and remorse, criminality, anti-social behaviour, egocentricity, superficial charm, manipulativeness, irresponsibility, impulsivity and a parasitic lifestyle (4).

With that definition in mind, look around: the criminal, parasitic activities by bankers that have plunged millions into poverty; the destruction, war and death brought to countries in order that corporations profit by stealing resources; the dropping of atom bombs on innocent civilians in 1945 or the use of depleted uranium which again impacts innocent civilians; and the many other acts, from the use of death squads to false flag terror, that have brought untold misery to countless others just because powerholders wanted to hold onto power or to gain more power, or the wealthy wanted to hold onto their wealth or gain even more.

Based on these terrible deeds, it becomes easy to argue that the people ultimately responsible for

them do not adhere to the same values as ordinary people. It may be even easier to conclude that it's not the cream that rises to the top, but, in many cases, the scum.

Now such a scenario might seem awful enough, but the people who tend to control the world, the ones responsible for these acts, try to impose their warped world view and twisted values on everyone else. Hollywood films, commercials and political ideology are all engaged in forwarding the belief that it's a dog eat dog world, war and violence abroad is necessary, competition and not cooperative is what counts, aggression and not passivity is the key to 'success' and that success equates with amassing huge amounts of personal wealth and lavish displays of conspicuous consumption.

"A person with a psychopathic personality, which manifests as amoral and antisocial behavior, lack of ability to love or establish meaningful personal relationships, extreme egocentricity, failure to learn from experience, etc." - definition of a psychopath from Dictionary.com

Again, bearing this definition in mind too, the acts mentioned above are not those of properly functioning social beings that contribute to a sense of communality, altruism, love or morality; quite the opposite in fact.

Yet this is the type of stuff that is rammed down our throats as constituting normality every day. Whether it's the 'Big Brother' TV show or 'The Apprentice' show, these values are promoted day and night. The 'Big Brother' winner is the one who can survive and outdo the competition in terms of the duplicity and backstabbing involved along the way. The winner of 'The Apprentice' must be more aggressive, more duplicitous, more devious and cunning and more willing to trample over everyone else. And the winner is judged as such by a multi-millionaire who himself was cunning and ruthless enough to have made it to the top of the pile and has amassed millions for his own personal benefit. These are the role models to be admired and emulated! These are the measures of success, of sanity, of normality.

"It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society." – Jiddu Krishnamurti

Apprentice competitors are highly driven individuals: not driven by a need to help humanity, but by egocentricity and greed. And, ultimately, these are the values that many mainstream opinion leaders, senior politicians and their corporate masters hold dear.

These values of egocentricity, aggression, competitiveness, duplicity and greed are not confined to some TV show. They are part of a much more sinister process. They are inextricably linked to and underpin the actions that resulted in the killing of half a million children in Iraq for geo-political gain (5) and the sending in of military forces into the jungles of India to beat, rape and dispose of a nation's poorest people because they stand in the way of profit and greed (6). From Congo and Libya to Syria and beyond, we witness the outcome of a terrifying mindset that is nurtured and encouraged throughout society.

Too many people have become "well adjusted to the values of a profoundly sick society," whether residing in middle England, middle America or the gated communities of south Delhi or Mumbai. Humanity is being beaten down to be neurotic, vicious and to regard these traits as constituting normal, acceptable behaviour. Thanks to the media, this becomes engrained from an early age as comprising 'common sense', and those who question it are merely sneered at or ridiculed by a system that promotes a mass mindset immune to its own lies.

Whether this is all due to psychopathy, narcissism or 'Machiavellian personalities' is open to debate. Moreover, as implied at the outset, historical and sociological factors often compel usually decent people to act in terrible ways. The debate within academic sociology between structure and human agency is after all a very long one (7). Whatever the underlying reason, however, as a global community we are being force fed a diet of perverse values and destructive actions, all spuriously justified on the basis that 'there is no alternative' and 'needs must'.

Corporate capitalism, consumerism, the new world order, a war on terror (or drugs or poverty, take your pick), neo-liberalism – call it what you will, but it's all based on the filthy lie that those in control have wider humanity's interests at heart. They don't. By any means possible – war, murder, torture or propaganda, they seek to convince people otherwise. What price human life? None whatsoever for such people.

Notes

1) Robert Brenner (1976), *"Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-industrial Europe". Past and Present 70*

2) Barrington Moore (1993) [First published 1966]. *Social origins of dictatorship and democracy: lord and peasant in the making of the modern world (with a new foreword by Edward Friedman and James C. Scott*

ed.). Boston: Beacon Press.

3) *Defense Against the Psychopath* (2013): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQkDvO3hz1w>

4) Polaschek, D. L. L., Patrick, C. J., Lilienfeld, S. O. (15 December 2011). "Psychopathic Personality: Bridging the Gap Between Scientific Evidence and Public Policy". *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* 12 (3): 95–162.

5) Reuters report (2000), *UN Says Sanctions Have Killed Some 500,000 Iraqi Children*: <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines/072100-03.htm>

6) BBC Newsnight interview with Arundhati Roy (2011): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrYQmRBdMPQ>

7) Colin Hay (2001), *What Place for Ideas in the Structure-Agency Debate? Globalisation as a 'Process Without a Subject'*: http://www.criticalrealism.com/archive/cshay_wpisad.html

BEWARE CORPORATE PSYCHOPATHS – THEY ARE STILL OCCUPYING POSITIONS OF POWER

Brian Basham; Independent' via Critical Thinking

Over the years I've met my fair share of monsters – rogue individuals, for the most part. But as regulation in the UK and the US has loosened its restraints, the monsters have proliferated. In a paper recently published in the *Journal of Business Ethics* entitled "The Corporate Psychopaths: Theory of the Global Financial Crisis", Clive R Boddy identifies these people as psychopaths.

"They are," he says, "simply the 1 per cent of people who have no conscience or empathy." And he argues: "Psychopaths, rising to key senior positions within modern financial corporations, where they are able to influence the moral climate of the whole organisation and yield considerable power, have largely caused the [banking] crisis'.

And Mr Boddy is not alone. In Jon Ronson's widely acclaimed book *The Psychopath Test*, Professor Robert Hare told the author: "I should have spent some time inside the Stock Exchange as well. Serial killer psychopaths ruin families. Corporate and political and religious psychopaths ruin economies. They ruin societies."

Cut to a pleasantly warm evening in Bahrain. My companion, a senior UK investment banker and I, are discussing the most successful banking types we know and what makes them tick. I argue that they often conform to the characteristics displayed by social psychopaths. To my surprise, my friend agrees.

He then makes an astonishing confession: "At one major investment bank for which I worked, we used psychometric testing to recruit social psychopaths because their characteristics exactly suited them to senior corporate finance roles."

Here was one of the biggest investment banks in the world seeking psychopaths as recruits.

Mr Ronson spoke to scores of psychologists about their understanding of the damage that psychopaths could do to society. None of those psychologists could have imagined, I'm sure, the existence of a bank that used the science of spotting them as a recruiting mechanism.

I've never met Dick Fuld, the former CEO of Lehman Brothers and the architect of its downfall, but I've seen him on video and it's terrifying. He snarled to Lehman staff that he wanted to "rip out their [his competitors] hearts and eat them before they died". So how did someone like Mr Fuld get to the top of Lehman? You don't need to see the video to conclude he was weird; you could take a little more time and read a 2,200-page report by Anton Valukas, the Chicago-based lawyer hired by a US court to investigate Lehman's failure. Mr Valukas revealed systemic chicanery within the bank; he described management failures and a destructive, internal culture of reckless risk-taking worthy of any psychopath.

So why wasn't Mr Fuld spotted and stopped? I've concluded it's the good old question of nature and nurture but with a new interpretation. As I see it, in its search for never-ending growth, the financial services sector has actively sought out monsters with natures like Mr Fuld and nurtured them with bonuses and praise.

We all understand that sometimes businesses have to be cut back to ensure their survival, and where those cuts should fall is as relevant to a company as it is, today, to the UK economy; should it bear down upon the rich or the poor?

Making those cuts doesn't make psychopaths of the cutters, but the financial sector's lack of remorse for the pain it encourages people to inflict is purely psychopathic. Surely the action of cutting should be a matter for sorrow and regret? People's lives are damaged, even destroyed. However, that's

not how the financial sector sees it.

Take Sir Fred Goodwin of RBS, for example. Before he racked up a corporate loss of £24.1bn, the highest in UK history, he was idolised by the City. In recognition of his work in ruthlessly cutting costs at Clydesdale Bank he got the nickname "Fred the Shred", and he played that for all it was worth. He was later described as "a corporate Attila", a title of which any psychopath would be proud.

Mr Ronson reports: "Justice departments and parole boards all over the world have accepted Hare's contention that psychopaths are quite simply incurable and everyone should concentrate their energies instead on learning how to root them out."

But, far from being rooted out, they are still in place and often in positions of even greater power.

As Mr Boddy warns: "The very same corporate psychopaths, who probably caused the crisis by their self-seeking greed and avarice, are now advising governments on how to get out of the crisis. Further, if the corporate psychopaths theory of the global financial crisis is correct, then we are now far from the end of the crisis. Indeed, it is only the end of the beginning."

I became familiar with psychopaths early in life. They were the hard men who terrorised south-east London when I was growing up. People like "Mad" Frankie Fraser and the Richardson brothers. They were what we used to call "red haze" men, and they were frightening because they attacked with neither fear, mercy nor remorse.

Regarding Messrs Hare, Ronson, Boddy and others, I've realised that some psychopaths "forge careers in corporations. The group is called Corporate Psychopaths". They are polished and plausible, but that doesn't make them any less dangerous.

In attempting to understand the complexities of what went wrong in the years leading to 2008, I've developed a rule: "In an unregulated world, the least-principled people rise to the top." And there are none who are less principled than corporate psychopaths.

Brian Basham is a veteran City PR man, entrepreneur and journalist

IS CAMERON'S BRITAIN WHAT WE FOUGHT FOR IN THE WAR?

Harry Leslie Smith; the Guardian; via Dave Barnby

(This wistful and eloquent reflection from an old soldier on our present predicament deserves reproduction simply on merit. - Ed)

Every year, the spring rains fall hard and heavy to a parched and hungry earth. Life is reborn from the long slumber of winter. For me the beauty in this annual transformation stings as if I caught my finger on a thorn from a rose. These lengthening days remind me of another time, when I was a young man. Back then the sun's rays were just as warm and sensuous but the splendour of nature being reborn was tainted with death. It was 1945, and Europe was still caught in the dying grasps of a cruel and unforgiving world war.

It was a conflict that consumed tens of millions of lives through military battles, air bombardment and pure and simple mass murder. For five years of war, through defeat and bitter struggle, the calendar changed from humid summers to crisp fall days, to the bitterness of winter and then back to the optimism of spring. As clocks in every household and in every town square moved forward, day by day, marking our mortal time through this struggle between good and evil, soldiers were maimed or killed on all our military fronts, convoys sunk in the cold North Atlantic, cities reduced to rubble and children left hungry orphans.

Across the world death moved, for too many years in lock step with both the season for sowing and for reaping. We were a world at war, and for those of us in Britain the cost was enormous in lost and ruined lives. But it didn't matter because we believed that the cause was just and that, whether we came from humble or refined stock, we were all in this war together. It was that common and shared faith in ourselves and in the notion that everyone's contribution, large or small, was important to the war effort that saw us through those dark hours. It was what kept us buggering on until our fortunes turned and the war against Nazi Germany reached its bloody end in the spring of 1945.

In those heady days leading to peace, I was just twenty-two and as green as the grass that had started to shoot up across the silenced killing fields. As I travelled from liberated Holland to the crumbling remnants of Nazi Germany, I was sure of one thing: I was a lucky man. I had what was called back then a good war and I was not disappointed by my survival. I had done my bit and I never shirked my paymaster's orders, but I was

one of the fortunate few; death had eluded me while I served in the RAF.

I felt blessed by luck because so many others – friends, neighbours, acquaintances and complete strangers – had not been so lucky. They were never going to see twenty-five or be able to put down roots and raise a family and enjoy the fruits of peace. I knew like the rest of my compatriots knew, the dead had reluctantly sacrificed their existence to preserve civilisation for the living.

Perhaps that is why even though I am now 90, I still go every spring to my local cenotaph and commune with unfamiliar names etched in stone. I read out their simple epitaphs, their age and wonder, what if these young men had lived? What would their lives have been like? Would they have found true love, happiness, a rewarding profession and had healthy children? Would they have felt content with the democracy they had fought so selflessly to preserve? It has been almost 70 years since the guns of the second world war fell silent and I am no longer sure if the dead would agree that their lives were worth the price of today's society.

To me, this brave new world feels all wrong, out of tune with what the men and women of World War Two accomplished with our "blood, sweat and tears". It just seems too flippant, too easy, too profane in this present world; for our politicians, our media pundits, and our industrial military complex to intone the beaches of D-Day, Sword, Juno, Gold and Omaha as if it were the catechism for freedom, when our individual and collective liberty is more at risk now than it has ever been since the end of Nazism.

We have somehow broken our solemn bond with those warriors of yesterday and forgotten that when the survivors of the Second World War returned to their homes, they were like a tide that raised all boats. My generation's shared experience of suffering, of witnessing genocide, ethnic cleansing, and enduring unspeakable privations as both soldiers and civilians made us vigilant when it came to demanding our peace dividend. We knew what we deserved and that was a future that didn't resemble our hard-scrabble past. The Green and Pleasant land was for everyone after the war because we had bled for it and died for it. We demanded a truly democratic society where merit was rewarded and no one would be left behind because of poverty, poor health or an inadequate education.

After the war we revolutionized the western world and introduced the notion that all human beings deserved dignity, freedom of movement, due process before the law, and social safety nets to protect those affected by economic uncertainties. We knew the cost of not creating a just society was the end for democracy, and a life sentence of misery for too many people in our country. We knew the price of failing to create and maintain universal health care was a return to a two-tier society where the few held dominion over the many.

Today, however, in a world where our reservoirs of wealth are as deep and enormous as all the mighty rivers of the world combined, our politicians, financial institutions and megalithic industries tell us we can no longer afford these human rights that men sacrificed their lives for: the freedom to live with dignity in a compassionate society. We are told by those in charge that we can no longer live with luxuries like healthcare, proper state funded pensions, decent wages, trade unions and most aspects of our social safety network.

At 90, I am too old to take up the fight, too old to stand in demonstrations with a placard denouncing this madness. All I can do is bear witness to my times and our heroic struggle fought so long ago against Hitler and against men who would wreck the foundations that made civilisation tolerable and decent for its inhabitants.

The problem with society, today, is not lack of money or debt but lack of ideas, lack of commitment by our government to realise that its constituents are the people, not city bankers and hedge fund managers whose loyalty is to their ledger books rather than to the community. I don't know if we will come out of this present darkness. Perhaps humanity will simply retreat into the caves whence our ancestors came because we were cowed by self-serving political parties and dubious leaders of business. I hope not, for the sake of the generations to come, but there is one thing I am certain of: had the politicians and business mandarins of today been in power in 1939, they wouldn't have had the bottle to fight Nazism. There would have been no Dunkirk, no Battle of Britain, no Finest Hour. Our leaders today on either side of the house would have allowed the lights across Europe to grow dim, because after all that would have been the cheapest and most prudent solution to Hitler's tyranny.

THE CAPONE MOMENT: COULD LIBOR FRACTURE THE INTERNATIONAL BANKING CARTEL?

Steve Rushton; Occupy.Com; via Critical Thinking

The connections and complicity evident in the LIBOR rate-rigging scandal – especially on the part of regulators – are a weak point for the global banking cartel, which connects a broad network of financial institutions that until now have been discussed as "too big to jail." But a brief look at the way Al Capone's crime network was toppled by tax evasion in the 1930s reveals similar, delicate threads that could quickly unravel the current criminal banking regime.

Through male-dominated hierarchical structures, the gangsters in Capone's time rose to dominance through a ruthless pursuit of profits at any price. The crimes were right in people's faces, but they got away with them. Controlling markets as rackets, they co-opted and intimidated authorities. They made enormous riches through organized violence, money laundering and fear-based domination. With an air of invincibility, it seemed at the time that Capone's empire would grow and last forever. Authorities knew he was a criminal overlord who ordered murders, yet none of the charges stuck — until finally he was brought to justice, not for violence, but for tax evasion.

The crimes of the modern banking industry invoke comparisons to the rule of mafia mobs of the 1920s in terms of their projected power and institutionalized acceptance. However, it is worth asking whether the "arrestable" moment for systemic crimes committed in connection with the LIBOR rate-rigging scandal may be nearer than we think.

By manipulating the London Interbank Offered Rate, or LIBOR – the fluctuating interest rate indicator that shows what banks are charged when they borrow from other banks – financiers have revealed not that the system is broken, but that it's entirely rigged. The scandal, which broke in June of last year, involved collusion and complicity between bankers and traders, all well-documented through communications in which traders asked for a LIBOR rate rig alongside money, champagne and other bribes. But it's not just the banksters who are guilty: it is the regulators and government authorities who went right along with the act.

The LIBOR rates calibrate between \$360 and \$500 trillion worth of derivatives. Centered in London, the rate-rigging affair has been a globalized effort involving traders and submitters from Asia, Europe, North America, South America, Africa, Oceania — just about everywhere.

Connecting the Crimes

Further similarities appear between the banking crimes of today and the success of mafia operating a century ago. In December, the Huffington Post identified HSBC and 12 other banks known to launder money for dictators, terrorist groups and drug cartels over the past decade. The most infamous case recently involved Mexican drug cartels and Al Qaeda, for which the bankers were found guilty yet not sent to jail.

In other instances, banks – including U.K. state-owned RBS – have invested in tar sands and other practices that cause human rights abuses and ecological destruction. Meanwhile, evidence shows Barclays cooking the books for manufacturers of illegal cluster bombs. And within a few miles of these operations, Goldman Sachs speculators profiteer from grain speculation that causes starvation.

In response, Move Your Money is a U.K. campaign that encourages people to shift to ethical banks away from the "too big to jail" banks. The group reports on banking crimes that include the support of illegal arms sales, casino banking, investment banking, abusing government support, food speculation, mis-selling of financial products — not to mention the bankers' own huge bonuses even when the banks fail and require taxpayer bailouts.

Rampant tax evasion by funneling money into tax havens is also a key aspect of modern banking. But it is the LIBOR scandal that may provide the potential tie — and the undoing — of the "too big to jail" banks.

"It looks as if the entire game is rigged from beginning to end," said professor Costas Lapavitsas of the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies, speaking on RealNews. "In other words, it isn't simply collusion and illegality. The game is rotten...[and] it's about time the public realized what's happening and demanded intervention."

As other commentators have suggested, LIBOR may be the banking industry's "Tobacco Moment" – the point when the public realizes, and acts on, the long-term harmful impacts of unregulated big banks. If their crimes can be exposed clearly enough, we might also call it the Capone Moment. There are over 20 banks currently being probed for LIBOR rigging, which is expected to draw greater public attention in the weeks and months ahead.

Mainstream media outlets and big finance commentators have frequently referred to LIBOR as a "victimless crime" and something too complicated for most of us to understand. But despite the whitewash, a flood of research and articles are continuing to build public awareness while uncovering the real costs of the scandal. U.K. authorities have so far reacted meekly, with relatively small fines imposed on Barclays, UBS and RBS. However, their own findings showed the ways big banks manipulated rates downwards during the bank bailouts.

Using these findings, the Occupy News Network recently exposed how hidden bank charges, as part of the larger bailout, cost the U.K. hundreds of millions of pounds. This report was followed up by a detailed account of how LIBOR cost local councils in Britain.

Former U.S. Treasury official Neil Barofsky, who worked on the TARP bailout and wrote the book "Bailout: An Inside Account of How Washington Abandoned Main Street While Rescuing Wall Street," has said openly that the regulatory process is "captured by the bankers." He was responding to then-U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner who admitted his awareness of the LIBOR fixing with the excuse: "You have to choose a rate, and we did what everybody did — use the best rate available at the time."

Naming and Shaming

In Britain, the LIBOR scandal shows how regulation is not only captured by bankers, but is entrusted to them. Until this year, LIBOR was regulated by the British Banking Authority, a lobby group that among other things advocates for huge banker bonuses. During the LIBOR scandal, the BBA was led by Angela Knight, previously a senior government minister in the U.K. Treasury. Along with her responsibilities at the BBA to oversee LIBOR, Knight was director of Brewin Dolphin, a firm that trades in over £25 billion worth of investments, all pegged to LIBOR.

In late 2008, Knight defended LIBOR as a "reliable benchmark" and the "envy of world markets" that "served the financial community worldwide extremely well." Understanding where her interests lied, the comment possibly had more candor than she intended.

Another key player in London who deserves further scrutiny is Hector Sants. Sants worked at the Financial Service Authority throughout the financial crisis. A former senior Scotland Yard police detective, Rowan Bosworth-Davies, has since accused Sants of being "exactly what is wrong with the city and its style of regulation." Sants was heavily criticized by a committee of MPs for being "asleep at the wheel" during his time at the regulating authority. Nevertheless, Sants has since been knighted by the Queen and now works as the head of compliance and regulatory relations at Barclays — the bank that launched the global LIBOR scandal.

The biggest disparity between Al Capone and modern banking criminals is that the latter have not just bought out the authorities — but they are themselves the authorities, making it far more difficult to prosecute those who abuse the law. The widening LIBOR scandal has a possibility to break the bankers, but it will take a massive wave of public pressure which forces those captured authorities into action. In polls, 89% of U.K. citizens are demanding that bankers who break the law be jailed for their crimes. Numerous class action lawsuits are already underway. But how, and when, the managers of the global banking racket will be put behind bars has yet to be seen.

“DARK ALLIANCE” 2.0: THE FEDERAL RESERVE, WALL STREET AND THE LAUNDERING OF DRUG MONEY

Tom Burghardt; Global Research

Url of this article; <http://www.globalresearch.ca/dark-alliance-2-0-the-federal-reserve-wall-street-and-the-laundering-of-drug-money/5330215>

In October 2005, at the height of the speculative financial bubble that eventually cost taxpayers

trillions of dollars and devastated millions of lives, Citigroup Equity Strategy analysts Ajay Kapur, Niall Macleod and Narendra Singh published their provocative, though accurate portrayal of bourgeois amorality, *Plutonomy: Buying Luxury, Explaining Global Imbalances*.

According to these worthies, the egregious economic disparities between the filthy ruling rich and the rest of us revolve around the salient fact that the “world is dividing into two blocs—the plutonomies where economic growth is powered by and largely consumed by the wealthy few,” and the great mass of proletarians who need to sit down, shut up and worship at the feet of their masters.

To whit, their evocation of “disruptive technology-driven productivity gains, creative financial innovation, capitalist-friendly cooperative governments . . . overseas conquests invigorating wealth creation” as the engines driving capitalism’s criminogenic “wealth waves . . . exploited best by the rich and educated,” recalled Orwell’s dystopian vision of a future which imagined “a boot stamping on a human face—forever.”

In a follow-up piece published in March 2006, Citi claimed that “so long as the rich continue to get richer, the likelihood of these conundrums [obscene income disparities] resolving themselves through traditionally disruptive means (currency collapses, consumer recessions etc) looks low.”

Indeed, “While we have concerns about the spending power of the middle-income consumer in the US in the event of a housing slowdown, the richest 10% are less exposed to a housing slowdown, as their wealth is more diversified.”

In other words, while Citi’s “plutonomic” clients were gobbling up an ever greater share of the world’s wealth, hyperinflating the real estate bubble and peddling fraudulent “investment instruments” that still threaten to drive the global economy into the abyss, “we believe that the rich are going to keep getting richer in coming years, as capitalists (the rich) get an even bigger share of GDP as a result, principally, of globalization.” “We expect the global pool of labor in developing economies to keep wage inflation in check,” they opined, “and profit margins rising—good for the wealth of capitalists, relatively bad for developed market unskilled/outsource-able labor.”

If you’re an average worker, even one with an advanced degree and mountains of student debt, well, too bad suckers!

What could go wrong with this rosy picture? “Beyond war, inflation, the end of the technology/productivity wave, and financial collapse, we think the most potent and short-term threat would be societies demanding a more ‘equitable’ share of wealth.” (emphasis added)

Worry not dear plutonomes, there’s an app for that too in the form of militarized police deploying the latest in “less than lethal” technologies—pepper spray, tear gas, tasers and the like to keep those uppity proles at bay!

Lost amidst their prattle about the merits of investing in firms which cater to the rich (“do I buy Bulgari, Burberry and Coach or do I limit my options to Hermes and Toll Brothers?” The consensus opinion: “Buy them all!”), was any discussion of the social costs of these massive frauds, bloody imperialist wars of conquest or the hyperinflation of bank balance sheets with veritable “wealth waves” generated by the global drug trade and organized crime, some “3.6 percent of GDP (2.3-5.5 percent) or around US\$2.1 trillion in 2009,” according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

There you have it, “market wisdom” in all its glory from an insolvent, bailed out bank!

Handed some \$45 billion (£29.78bn) in TARP funds, the Treasury Department and Federal Reserve secretly backstopped more than \$300 billion (£197.31bn) in toxic assets on their books in addition to the “\$2.5 trillion (£1.64tn) of support from the American taxpayer through capital infusions, asset guarantees and low-cost loans,” as financial analyst Pam Martens pointed out in *Wall Street on Parade*.

‘Dark Alliance’ 2.0

Although journalists and researchers have spent decades documenting the links between secret state intelligence agencies like the CIA and organized crime conglomerates who butter their bread through global narcotics rackets, the role of major financial institutions in the grisly trade continues to be relegated by corporate media to the realm of “conspiracy theory.”

But in the wake of rising public anger over the Obama administration’s collusion with Wall Street drug banks, we were informed by *The New York Times* that the “Federal Reserve hit Citigroup with an enforcement action on Tuesday over breakdowns in money laundering controls that threatened to allow tainted money to move through the United States.”

According to the *Times*, the Federal Reserve “took aim at Citigroup and its subsidiary Banamex USA over failure to monitor cash transactions for potentially suspicious activity.”

The Fed’s Consent Order charged that Citigroup and Banamex USA “lacked effective systems of governance and internal controls to adequately oversee the activities of the Banks with respect to legal,

compliance, and reputational risk related to the Banks' respective BSA/AML [Bank Secrecy Act/Anti-Money Laundering] compliance programs."

An unnamed bank spokeswoman told the Times, "Citi has made substantial progress in a comprehensive manner across products, business lines and geographies," and will continue "to take the appropriate steps to address remaining requirements and build a strong and sustainable program."

Nothing to see here, right?

Tellingly however, neither Citigroup nor Banamex USA admitted wrongdoing. In what is standard boilerplate in such agreements, the Fed meekly submitted that their "enforcement action" was issued "without this Order constituting an admission or denial by Citigroup of any allegation made or implied by the Board of Governors." Nor did the Fed "give specific examples of problems" at either bank, Reuters reported.

During Senate Banking Committee hearings last month, Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) grilled federal banking regulators over their non-prosecution of Wall Street drug banks.

Referencing penalties levied against HSBC after the British banking giant was caught red-handed laundering billions of dollars for Colombian and Mexican drug cartels, Warren demanded: "What does it take? How many billions of dollars do you have to launder for drug lords" before a criminal prosecution?

Judging by the actions of Obama's Justice Department, apparently the sky's the limit. But if history is any guide to current Citigroup "lapses," you can bet that the bank's balance sheet is awash with dirty money. As a prelude to the Federal Reserve's Consent Order, last April the Office of the Currency (OCC) issued a cease-and-desist order charging Citigroup with "deficiencies in its BSA/AML compliance program."

OCC regulators stated that the bank had "failed to adopt and implement a compliance program that adequately covers the required BSA/AML program elements due to an inadequate system of internal controls and ineffective independent testing."

According to OCC, Citigroup "did not develop adequate due diligence on foreign correspondent bank customers and failed to file Suspicious Activity Reports ('SARs') related to its remote deposit capture/international cash letter instrument activity in a timely manner."

In their infinite wisdom, the Federal Reserve did not include fines against the bank, but the Board of Governors hastened to assure Citigroup's masters (their future employers?) that the Consent Order was issued "solely for the purpose of settling this matter without a formal proceeding being filed and without the necessity for protracted or extended hearings or testimony."

You bet it was!

Citigroup and Banamex: The Salinas Affair

If all this sounds familiar, it should.

One of the more infamous cases involving taxpayer bailed-out Citigroup's ties to money laundering drug cartels emerged in the late 1990s when Raúl Salinas de Gortari, the brother of former Mexican President Carlos Salinas, was arrested after his wife, Paulina Castañón, attempted to withdraw \$84 million from a Swiss account controlled by Raúl under an alias.

Salinas, who spent ten years in prison over the murder of his brother-in-law, political rival José Francisco Ruiz, was released in 2005 when a Mexican appeals court overturned that conviction.

After nearly 13 years of legal proceedings into the origins of the Salinas fortune, SwissInfo reported that "Switzerland will hand over \$74 million (SFr77.3 million) to Mexico from bank accounts linked to the brother of a former Mexican president. The funds—more than \$110 million in bank accounts linked to Raúl Salinas—were originally frozen after the Swiss authorities initiated criminal proceedings against Salinas in 1995 for money laundering."

But as Narco News investigative journalist Al Giordano reported back in 2000,

"The Chief Operating Officers of drug trafficking are not Mexicans, nor Colombians: they are US and European bankers, those who launder the illicit proceeds of drug trafficking. Institutions like Citibank of New York—as this report documents—are the true beneficiaries of the prohibition on drugs and its illegal profits."

Indeed, "some of these men," Giordano asserted, "like Banamex CEO Roberto Hernández Ramírez—are rags-to-riches stories. Hernández, according to Forbes magazine, could not afford to finance an American Express credit card in 1980. Today he earns the largest annual salary in Mexico—reported as \$29 million dollars—and is a billionaire presiding over Mexico's top banking institution."

According to Narco News, when former President Carlos Salinas initiated bank privatization during

the 1990s at the urging of the Bush and Clinton administrations, “the single biggest winner” was none other than his old pal Roberto Hernández. And Hernández, according to investigative journalist Mario R. Menéndez Rodríguez, the editor of *Por Esto!*, was “the financial engineer of the Gulf Cartel, launched in the 1980s by Juan N. Guerra and based in the Texas border city of Matamoros, Tamaulipas.”

Reprising their earlier investigations, Giordano reported that “Hernández had been accused—publicly and via a criminal complaint—by the daily newspaper *Por Esto!* of trafficking tons of Colombian cocaine through his Caribbean coast properties on that peninsula since 1997.”

“The newspaper,” *Narco News* averred, “published photos of the drugs, the smuggling boats, the Colombian garbage strewn upon the shores, the airfield and small airplanes that, witnesses testified, brought the cocaine north to the United States, with confirmation from sources as diverse as local fishermen and high officials of the Mexican Armed Forces.”

For their investigative efforts both Giordano and Menéndez were sued for libel by Banamex and Hernández in 2000, a case summarily dismissed by the New York Supreme Court, which “established, for the first time, First Amendment protections for Internet journalists in the United States.”

Banamex was bought by Citigroup in 2001 for the then princely sum of \$12.5 billion (£8.21bn).

As *El Universal Gráfico* journalist José Martínez reported at the time of the Citibank-Banamex buy out, “One of the mechanisms utilized by Mexican investors is the opening of secret accounts in foreign banks that have business in this country. There, the exclusive Citibank, for decades, has been the preferred bank of the elite of wealthy and powerful people involved in the middle of scandal. In recent years this financial institution has been involved in innumerable cases connected to the management of dirty money.”

According to Martínez, “Citibank has been linked to the political scandals derived from the diversion of funds by part of the Mexican elite, among them some narco-traffickers.”

And as Mexico City’s *Milenio* newspaper columnist Jorge Fernández Menéndez detailed in his 1999 book *Narcotráfico y Poder* in reference to Raúl Salinas:

“The relation of of Raúl Salinas with the Gulf Cartel presumably surged at the end of the 1980s and began with Juan N. Guerra, who since the middle of the decade had led this organization dedicated to drug trafficking (above all, marijuana) and contraband. In 1989, Guerra made various investments in construction projects, mainly in Villahermosa, with Raúl Salinas. But, already an old man with grave health problems, with a limited vision of his activity, Juan N. Guerra was not the ideal individual to head the project that would be settled by the strong growth of the Cali Cartel: the change from marijuana to cocaine.”

Fernández noted that when the Gulf Cartel was taken over by Juan García Abrego, “...as the person responsible for the operation of the cartel, Raúl Salinas de Gortari [w]as the presumed chief of political relations and power of the same.” Never mind that before his arrest on money laundering charges, Raúl only earned an annual salary of \$190,000 as a “public servant,” Swiss and US investigators uncovered an illicit cash horde to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Where did Salinas’ money come from?

In addition to the outright theft of funds from the Treasury as alleged by federal prosecutors in Mexico, according to a 1995 *Los Angeles Times* report, Salinas “amassed at least \$100 million in suspected drug money.”

Switzerland’s top prosecutor at the time, Carla del Ponte, “launched the investigation after the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration supplied information that led Swiss agents to the accounts in Geneva, where they arrested Raúl Salinas’ wife and her brother on Nov. 15 as the pair attempted to withdraw more than \$83 million.”

Del Ponte told the *Los Angeles Times* that after observing Salinas’ interrogation by Mexican federal prosecutors the sums found in those accounts were “suspected to be from the laundering of money related to narcotics trafficking.”

In 1998, when Swiss prosecutors completed their Salinas investigation, *The New York Times* disclosed that “Swiss police investigators have concluded that a brother of former President Carlos Salinas de Gortari played a central role in Mexico’s cocaine trade, raking in huge bribes to protect the flow of drugs into the United States.”

That Swiss report stated, “When Carlos Salinas de Gortari became President of Mexico in 1988, Raúl Salinas de Gortari assumed control over practically all drug shipments through Mexico. Through his influence and bribes paid with drug money, officials of the army and the police supported and protected the flourishing drug business.”

Leveraging “a low-profile position in the administration’s food-distribution agency,” Swiss investigators revealed that “Raúl Salinas commandeered Government trucks and railroad cars to haul

cocaine north, skimming payoffs that the Swiss estimate at upwards of \$500 million. On what some of his reputed former associates referred to as 'green light days,' he arranged for drug loads to transit Mexico without concern that they might be checked by the army, the coast guard or the federal police."

But without the complicity of major banks, amassing and then hiding, that much loot would be impossible. Enter Citibank's "Private Banking" division.

A 1998 report by the General Accounting Office (GAO) pointed a finger directly at Citibank. Investigators revealed that "Mr. Salinas was able to transfer \$90 million to \$100 million between 1992 and 1994 by using a private banking relationship formed by Citibank New York in 1992. The funds were transferred through Citibank Mexico and Citibank New York to private banking investment accounts in Citibank London and Citibank Switzerland."

With the connivance of bank officials, in 1992 Salinas was able to "effectively disguise" the source of those funds and their destination. Indeed, with hefty fees secured from assisting their well-connected client Salinas, Citibank "set up an offshore private investment company named Trocca, to hold Mr. Salinas's assets, through Cititrust (Cayman) and investment accounts in Citibank London and Citibank Switzerland."

Forget due diligence or "know your customer" (KYC) rules firmly in place under the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA), Citibank "waived bank references for Mr. Salinas and did not prepare a financial profile on him or request a waiver for the profile, as required by then Citibank know your customer policy" and "facilitated Mrs. Salinas's use of another name to initiate fund transfers in Mexico."

This should have triggered alarm bells over at OCC, but like today's banking scandals involving Wachovia, HSBC and JPMorgan Chase, US "regulators" sat on their hands and did nothing.

Eager to extract those fees from a dodgy client, Citibank's Vice President for Legal Affairs was forced to admit to GAO investigators that the bank "only" violated one aspect of their KYC policy, their failure to prepare a financial profile of Salinas.

However, a 1999 Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations report on "Private Banking and Money Laundering" revealed that "a culture of secrecy pervades the private banking industry."

"For example," Senate investigators disclosed, "in the case of Raul Salinas . . . the private bank hid Mr. Salinas' ownership of Trocca by omitting his name from the Trocca incorporation papers and naming still other shell companies as the shareholders, directors, and officers. Citibank consistently referred to Mr. Salinas in internal bank communications by the code name 'Confidential Client Number 2' or 'CC-2.' The private bank's Swiss office opened a special name account for him under the name of 'Bonaparte'."

And despite the fact, as Senate staff averred, "Federal Reserve examiners stated in internal documents that the Citibank private bank lagged behind other private banks they had reviewed," and that Citi's Swiss headquarters had received the "worst possible audit rating" in 1995, and that Citibank's "poor audit score were 'not taken seriously' within the private bank," no regulatory action was taken.

Two years later, a Federal Reserve examiner wrote: "The auditors are a key asset of [the private bank]. The problem is that for years audit has been identifying problems and nothing has been done about it. In 1992 [the private bank had] 66% favorable audits in 1997 the percentage of favorable audits was 62%. . . . It appears that there are no consequences for bad audits as long as [the private bank] meets their financial goals."

Bingo!

As Time Magazine investigative journalist S.C. Gwynne reported at the time, Citibank and the soon-to-be-merged with Travelers behemoth now known as Citigroup (that 1998 merger was illegal under Glass-Steagall, but that's another story, one which directly correlates to the Act's 1999 repeal by the Clinton crime family and their Republican co-conspirators in Congress), private banking for upscale clients with the means to invest at \$1 million "is now the crown jewel in the financial giant's strategy for growth."

"That strategy," Gwynne wrote, "calls for Citibank and its parent, Citigroup, to reduce their reliance on cyclical corporate and real estate lending, which tends to be high risk and relatively low profit. It will emphasize the lower-risk, higher-margin business of consumer banking—and especially one-stop financial shopping for the world's booming population of the newly rich."

Keep in mind, Gwynne was writing in 1998 before the real estate bubble was inflated and Wall Street banksters dove head first into the dubious "residential mortgage" marketing machine that nearly sunk, and still threatens to sink, the capitalist economy under endless waves of fraud and corruption.

"At Citigroup and like-minded institutions around the world," Gwynne noted, "folks with six- and seven-figure portfolios can find not only traditional banking services like checking and savings accounts but also strategic financial advice; introduction to high-yield investment vehicles like hedge funds; tax advice and accounting; estate planning and all manner of insurance. They can also get help in protecting their assets from potential claimants like creditors and ex-spouses, which can involve moving

money discreetly from country to country.”

Indeed, private banking funds were “part of a \$17 trillion global pool of money belonging to what bankers euphemistically call ‘high-net-worth individuals’—a pool that generates more than \$150 billion a year in banking revenue.”

Hidey holes in the Cayman Islands and other destinations used for squirreling-away illicit cash, such as the world’s largest financial black holes, the US State of Delaware and the City of London, remain convenient resting places for loot amassed by various global narcotics combines.

Limited at the time by an “ongoing Department of Justice investigation,” a lawyerly dodge that prevents corporate criminality from ever coming to light, GAO investigators “could not determine whether Citibank’s actions violated law or regulation.”

The Federal Reserve were also less than forthcoming and “did not comment on whether Citibank’s actions were violations because information available to it at the time we inquired was insufficient for it to make a determination.”

According to asleep at the wheel regulators at OCC, Citibank’s “actions did not violate civil aspects of the Bank Secrecy Act” since under rules then in place “private banking’s know your customer policies are voluntary and not governed by law or regulation.”

But as the Mexican weekly news magazine *Proceso* reported in 2001 during the Salinas affair, “Citibank of New York was transferring Juárez drug cartel money to Uruguay and Argentina, where Mexican drug lord Amado Carrillo Fuentes and his associates went calmly about their business, with help from local politicians and businessmen. Not long after, investigations would reveal that in 1998-99, more than \$300 million belonging to Mexican drug traffickers went through Citibank.”

As *El Universal Gráfico* noted, when the self-described “Lord of the Heavens” sought refuge in South America, he “had account # 36111386 in Citibank of New York. From this place, the financial operators of the narco-trafficker passed large sums in millions of dollars to ghost banks like MA Bank of the fiscal paradise of the Cayman Islands.”

In late 2000, when the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations again began looking into drug money laundering allegations against Citibank, they received information from Argentine legislators who claimed there was “a gigantic political-financial conspiracy involving even Citibank President John Reed.”

Years later, those suspicions were corroborated when a US investigation, Operation Casablanca, “revealed that [money from] the Juárez cartel entered Argentina through two Citibank accounts and others in shell banks in the Cayman Islands and the Bahamas.”

Juan Miguel Ponce, the head of Mexico’s Interpol branch, “took advantage of Operation Casablanca to explore the vein of Juárez cartel allies in Argentina. He claims to have discovered documents in Mexico proving that large contributions were made by the cartel to 1999 campaign in Argentina of Peronist presidential and vice presidential candidates Eduardo Duhalde and Ramon ‘Palito’ Ortega,” *Proceso* disclosed

As James Petras reported in 2001, when Salinas was arrested “and his large-scale theft of government funds was exposed, his private bank manager at Citibank, Amy Elliott, said in a phone conversation with colleagues (the transcript of which was made available to Congressional investigators) that ‘this goes [on] in the very, very top of the corporation, this was known ... on the very top. We are little pawns in this whole thing.’” Fast forward twelve years: More than 120,000 Mexican citizens have paid with their lives as a result of the grisly trade and the American people are still the pawns of “plutonomic” banksters whose “wealth waves” come from the perverse influence bought by oceans of drug money flowing through a thoroughly corrupt capitalist system.

Tom Burghardt is a researcher and activist based in the San Francisco Bay Area. In addition to publishing in Covert Action Quarterly and Global Research, he is a Contributing Editor with Cyrano’s Journal Today. His articles can be read on Dissident Voice, Pacific Free Press, Uncommon Thought Journal, and the whistleblowing website WikiLeaks. He is the editor of Police State America: U.S. Military “Civil Disturbance” Planning, distributed by AK Press and has contributed to the new book from Global Research, The Global Economic Crisis: The Great Depression of the XXI Century.

THE FOOD DIMENSION; FOOD JOBS & WARS

Mario Molinari

My focus on food responds to a need to reach out to people. For me food raises hopes for a better today. Not only 'food', of course, but all the activities that go with it including water, energy and land activities. The temptation then would be to say that thanks to food we could achieve the goal of a fair and equitable world. Backing up this claim is the pledge to make food the entry point for joyful and compassionate living.

Economies of War

Paraphrasing from a Quaker publication, violence is with us whenever we drink from a plastic cup or beer can. Land, deserts and seas are grabbed and exploited every day. Human and physical resources are incidental and expendable.

German President Horst Koehler resigned from his position in 2010 due to remarks he made during a visit to Afghanistan. In his views,

A country of our size, with its focus on exports and thus reliance on foreign trade, must be aware that military deployments are necessary in an emer-gency to protect our interests, for example, when it comes to trade routes, for example, when it comes to preventing regional instabilities that could negatively influence our trade, jobs and incomes.

Here we touch a raw nerve. Trade, industry, science and technology, the balance sheet, logistics, media reporting, military and civilian deployments... it is impossible to separate them.

Our jobs depend on the roller coaster of wars. We end up supporting them out of choice or necessity. Who do you work for? Where are you located? Which central bank doles out the cash? And talking of which, what do you spend your pocket money on, who benefits from your spending habits, etc.?

Connect a few dots and you can easily establish that each job is linked to wars and war-like activities at home or other countries. All dots will take you to the riches and resources of the land.

In plain English, no wars no jobs. If we identify this as a problem to grap-ple with then I would suggest that what we need to do is to renew, value and make good use of the resources of the land. That's why they are called resources.

Supporting Wars: Where do I Fit in?

In light of the above, to have a 'proper job' acquires a rather different and interesting meaning. We need a breakthrough and this means putting solutions first.

One small part of me says that to campaign against wars ('when bombs are dropping') or to give them the extra oxygen of publicity by mounting campaigns all year round misses the point altogether. Here too, in plain English, we cannot campaign against what we support every day.

Can we do better than that? It is an all-consuming full-time job, to say the least, to campaign and agitate but what do we have to show for it? One thing to bear in mind is that we are always part of the system we happen to describe. It cannot be otherwise. Do you want a proper job? Would you like one? Are you resolute in your determination to expose how this system works? In your determination to seek justice? Fine, you can do all that and the only way to do it is to run a different agenda not the one laid on you by the powers that be.

No country ever would go to war without brutalising its citizens first into believing that wars are necessary. It is your resolve which is at stake here. The strategy must change if the problems which I am trying to describe affect us at such deep level as to neutralise us. We experience tension,

conflict and war in our blood and jobs right now. It is that close. Wars or else... Mandatory campaigning is not the answer.

In a sense we don't know what peace is. We need a new start.

'U Start with Food'

'U Start with Food' is an all-inclusive proposal to institute a virtual University of Food. Inclusiveness relates to all matters food. No aspect of living is left untouched by it! Food is the real socio-economical driver thanks to which we can:

- * create communities
- * shape the economy
- * promote learning

Is this small change? A frivolity? Compare this (because compare we must) to what we have to face up to most of the times. The shopping list reads:

- * the horrors we are capable of
- * food and water wars
- * formidable challenges
- * a fearsome economy
- * fragile social structures
- * hungry cities

So is food as in food-for-good and as a socio-economical transformer still such a trivial matter? There is nothing trivial about food if in her book, *A Taste of War*, Lizzie Collingham rightly sets out to explore the 'often overlooked dimension' of food to our understanding of WW2. We need to turn our attention to the dimension of food. All in all, food is big if you get my gist.

In particular, the food proposal as submitted provides a new term of refer-ence that can unite individuals and groups. It suggests looking at food, water, plants, wellbeing, climate and rocks as ONE. 'One' stands for the 'environ-ment' of which we are part.

The approach therefore should be to establish a core food strategy – the new strategy – channelling the goodwill of many as we anchor ourselves to what sustains us and to the ground we stand on. Lest we forget the 'often over-looked dimension' of food to our understanding of how we live and work. Food is the driver, the pointer, the backdrop and the capstone. Get the ecosystem on a spin. Get the big locomotive going and all the rest will follow in its wake.

Food of course is also nutrition and dinner parties but someone must grow that food, harvest that water and generate that energy in the first place. Done. It must be said, you would need to stretch your imagination to the limit to call all this (i.e. getting things done, accomplishing, leading from the front) much of a challenge. Of course, we all want a challenge but this is a doodle! That's the point, it is our job! The fact is that food is a simple proposition and the baseline for human understanding.

To 'do' food opens up a world of possibilities. This is the beautiful world, rising just above the ordinary world, of work, affections and relationships. Looking for volunteers, interns? Is this something up your street?

With 'U Start with Food' we can hope to address many of our social and economic ills.

<http://recentissuetoday.com/headline/2792/german-president-horst-koehler-resigns-from->

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POSITIVE MONEY BULLETIN EXTRACTS

Positive Money Team

We have a new website! New design, new content, a more open and accessible feel... and a brand new video! We're working hard to find the right format, right style and right language to get as many people as possible interested in the problems with the way money is created by banks. Have a look at our new website - we hope you like it and want to share it with your friends.

Challenge: can you get 3 friends to look at our new website and sign up to receive our fortnightly newsletter?

We're very pleased that with your support, we're currently covering over 50% of its costs from monthly donations from supporters, combined with book sales. But we really need to increase our supporter base to continue our research, education, and campaigning work, and to keep up with the new opportunities that come up every week. We can't do it without your help. You can help by sharing the new website and video or alternatively by donating monthly or once-off.

New video: What is money?

We all use money, we all rely on money. But do we know how money works? Where does money come from?

Campaigns outside UK

There are already similar campaigns in 10 countries and more are starting! Check out this page for organisations who argue the case for monetary reform along the same or similar lines as Positive Money. We are going to be launching an international money reform website very soon!

Conference "Fixing the Banking System for Good" – Video

A very interesting conference took place on 17th April 2013 in Philadelphia, USA. This was the first conference ever where top academics, including: Adair Turner, Laurence Kotlikoff, Michael Kumhof and Jeffrey Sachs, were seriously discussing ending fractional reserve banking. Now you can watch the recording of their presentations - highly recommended:

"One of the most fundamental insight is that banks simultaneously create new credit and new money ex nihilo. And that is one of the most fundamental, important things for people to be taught, which economics undergraduates should be taught about the nature of how monetary economy with banks works." - Lord Adair Turner

Become a director of Positive Money

Positive Money is looking for new board members to join our board of directors who can make a significant and positive contribution to the governance of the organisation. In particular we're looking for directors with at least 10 years experience in areas such as finance, management, corporate governance and risk management, company law, fundraising and HR.

What do you think needs to change in finance?

What do you think needs to change in finance? You have an opportunity to let us know your opinion in a survey below. There was a remarkable conference in USA last week and the video presentations are available now. The Transforming Finance conference is happening in London next week. Please find out more below. We want to know what YOU think needs to change, to make finance work in the long term interests of people and planet. If you'd like to come to the Transforming Finance conference, do book your place soon, as space is running out.

Upcoming Events

University of Cumbria, Fri 7th June - Talk 'The Money Myth' by Prof Bendell
London, 10th-11th June - Economics is for everyone (Workshop organized by the Jubilee Debt Campaign)

Latest from the Blog

The solution we are all looking for... – Modernising Money Book Review
BBC Radio 4 – Stephanomics
Ending 'Too Big To Fail'
Debt must be cut while banks are encouraged to lend more. What is the answer?
George Selgin advocates fractional reserve...Or does he?
Dirk Bezemer on Positive Money: A Response
The City and the Common Good – Good Money (video) - video from the last week's event at St Paul's with Lord Skidelsky, chaired by BBC's Stephanie Flanders
Banks must deal in 'real' money to recover economy (video) - interview with Ben Dyson (2 min)
Poor old George
Charter for a New Financial System
How will Positive Money reforms affect Debt & Inequality

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