I remember watching *The Matrix* for the first time and feeling horrified at the prospect of waking up to find myself in an alternate reality that I had no notion existed until that moment. More importantly, the new reality was *the* reality, reducing my previous so-called life to one long dream invented by others for purposes I could not fathom.

After 9/11, many Americans have been slowly waking up to extremely harsh realities that none of us could have conceived of a decade before. Many voters had an inkling that politicians lied, and most knew that special interests were at the head of the line for funding. But few could imagine that legislators would deliberately undermine the sovereign status of individual Americans with an unprecedented expansion of government, the exponential growth of the national debt, and ever-increasing taxation without representation - all for the purpose of eventually merging American production with that of foreign nations to create a single centralized economy. It is the stuff of movies ... and nightmares.

To wit, consider:

- Common law, as stipulated by the Seventh Amendment of the Bill of Rights, is not recognized by the federal government. If this is true, then what law is?
- According to the U.S. tax code, only government employees are required to pay income taxes to the IRS. So why does everyone who earns income pay?
- The Federal Reserve Bank, created in 1913 and a private banking cartel, is not registered for business in any of the 50 states of the United States, which makes it a foreign corporation/entity.
- Federal Reserve Notes (dollar bills) are not actual money, but loan paper that attaches liens.

- In 1933, President Roosevelt declared a national emergency and confiscated all Americans' gold coins and gold certificates under threat of criminal penalties. By executive order, and no vote of Congress, it was illegal to own gold in America until the mid '70s, when Nixon rescinded the order.
- Goldman Sachs has had one of its own installed in a cabinet position, usually as Treasury Secretary, for the past two decades, beginning with Robert Rubin under Clinton, who brought co-chair of Goldman Sachs Larry Summers with him. Rubin left this position to become the CEO of Citigroup, while Larry Summers was named as Obama's director of the White House National Economic Council; Henry Paulson under Bush named Goldman Sachs Vice President Neel Kashkari as his assistant treasury secretary; and now Timothy Geithner under Obama is carrying on this insider tradition. Geithner left the New York Federal Reserve Bank to become Treasury secretary, bringing in Mark Patterson, a top lobbyist for Goldman Sachs, as his assistant secretary treasurer and overseer of the $700-billion TARP bailout, $10 billion of which went to Goldman Sachs. Geithner also held leadership positions with the Council on Foreign Relations and the International Monetary Fund, and his father managed the Ford Foundation's Asia grants.
- In the late 1990s, then Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) Director Brooksley Born warned Congress during hearings about a newly created securities instrument called a Credit Default Swap (CDS) that appeared to have potentially disastrous financial consequences, because these investment instruments had little regulation or oversight, and were shrouded in secrecy. She was met with push-back from the top down, including Alan Greenspan, then director of the Federal Reserve Bank. In 2000, a law was enacted to exempt the CDSes from any regulation by the SEC. In other words, all participants, including Congress and regulators, were not only well aware of the CDSes' dangers but also colluded to unobstruct any volume of the high-risk investment, allowing calamitous activity to run its course in a climate of "too big to fail."
- MSNBC and NBC are owned by General Electric, whose financial future depends on the passage of Obama's health-care and cap-and-trade plans. Without this legislation, GE will likely fold. Not 48 hours after the health-care bill passed, GE launched its advertising campaign to promote its new Electronic Patients Network! GE's network is the keystone to a centralized, government-controlled health-care system.
- Most banks issuing mortgages do not loan their own money, but only act as transfer agents for the federal government. Does this mean that, as United States citizens, we do not actually own our property, but only have occupancy privileges?
- The current stock market no longer reflects the health of Main Street, only that of Wall Street. It has little relevance as an economic indicator for most Americans because of complex accounting, codependent relationships between Wall Street and Washington, tax advantages/consequences, and myriad investment securities/strategies that are unavailable to ordinary investors.
- Science has effectively proven that when global temperatures rise, increases in carbon dioxide occur *after* the rise, not before. This debunks the theory that human-produced carbons are responsible for global warming. Yet our government is still pursuing a punitive tax policy on carbon output per individual/household, while all other major countries have opted out.

- Obama is advancing a Bush initiative that would give an international board of five members complete oversight of the Financial Reporting Standards (FRS) for American businesses. FRS is currently regulated by the Securities & Exchange Commission, whose influence would be reduced to one seat on the international board (IFRS). This measure is eagerly endorsed by the four largest accounting firms in the world.

- Once elected, Obama appointed two Citigroup CFOs, Jacob Lew and Michael Froman, in prominent roles in the State Department's economic divisions, working closely with Rubin and Summers, who both now sit on the National Economic Council. He also appointed Goldman Sachs partner Gary Gensler as head of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission despite his role as a treasury official in securing a law that exempted the $58-trillion credit-default-swap market from oversight. Is it any wonder that Goldman Sachs and Citigroup were at the front of the line for bailouts? The entrenched relationships that prevail between Wall Street and Washington are proving to be devastating to our free-market economy.
- More recently, in early 2010, it was reported that a whistleblower, Andrew McGuire - a trader on London's Commodities Exchange Commission - warned the CFTC Enforcement Division that JP Morgan was manipulating the price of silver by naked short-selling the precious metal, effectively driving the price down, simultaneously keeping the dollar high. The risk is due to the excessive leverage involved with trading silver - 100 to 1 meaning for every 100 ounces of paper silver traded there exists only one ounce of physical silver. There is speculation that the Federal Reserve was eager to orchestrate the Bear Stearns bailout because Bear Stearns was on the verge of having to cover its substantial silver short position, a position that JP Morgan took over from Bear Stearns. The CFTC was unresponsive, nor did the mainstream media report the event. The Gold Anti-Trust Action Committee made the event public, but it still remains woefully unreported, considering what is at stake.