
National News

'Bailout Ben' Demands Fiscal Restraint, Now

June 3—Sometimes you don't know whether to laugh or cry. Such a moment occurred today when Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke addressed the House Budget Committee, and urged fiscal restraint. Imagine that! Bail-out Ben, whose Fed has spent, lent, and guaranteed trillions of dollars to zombie banks to delay them from suffering the inevitable consequences of the most monumental financial stupidity in history, actually has the nerve to lecture others on fiscal responsibility!

"Either cuts in spending or increases in taxes will be necessary to stabilize the fiscal situation," Bernanke said. "The Federal Reserve will not monetize the debt."

Too bad he doesn't have the same position on the bailouts of Wall Street, the City of London, and other parasites!

Bernanke also thoroughly debunked his own claim that "green shoots" of recovery had begun to appear. "The pace of economic contraction may be slowing" and the housing market has "shown some signs of bottoming," he said, while adding that businesses "continue to reduce their workforces and capital investments," and that consumer spending, after plunging last year, "has been roughly flat since the turn of the year." In other words, the economy is still falling. Perhaps you have to be an "economist" to see the "growth."

Obama Administration Is Fascist, Says Nader

June 2—In an interview with Amy Goodman of Democracy Now! today, consumer activist Ralph Nader called the Obama Administration fascist. Nader was being interviewed on the GM bankruptcy, along with University of California at Berkeley "labor" professor Harley Shaiken. Nader repeatedly said that the bankruptcy judge is a "tool" of the Obama Administration, and that the court is a means to scapegoat a policy of

sending of jobs overseas (not the strongest of objections). He then mentioned Felix Rohatyn's protégé Steve Rattner, the top advisor to the Administration on the auto industry, who refused to answer a question from Nader on the fate of assets of GM in China, something to which Nader said Rattner certainly knew the answer.

"We're dealing here with a corporate state," Nader continued, "the kind of corporate state that Franklin Delano Roosevelt called fascist, in a statement to Congress in 1938—that is, when government is controlled by private economic powers, that's fascism." Host Goodman quickly changed the subject.

Fascist Infrastructure Bank Bill Introduced

June 5—A major step was taken May 20 toward the creation of a National Infrastructure Bank (NIB) as proposed by Felix Rohatyn, when Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) introduced a bill in the House, which would authorize the creation of a privatized NIB. Fascist Felix was there at the press conference announcing the scheme. Rohatyn's bill has three Democratic co-sponsors: Keith Ellison of Minnesota, and New Yorkers Tony Weiner and Steve Israel. The bill has not-unexpected, short-sighted support from the construction unions' National Construction Alliance, the Building and Construction Trades Department, the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the AFL-CIO. But more telling was the presence at the press conference of Lazard fascist Rohatyn, industrialist-turned-speculator Bernard Schwartz, and Anna Burger opf the Service Employees International Union.

That some who advocate necessary physical development of the economy could be hoodwinked into supporting the fascist legislation is explainable only by the lack of a real national development plan by the Obama Administration, which, under the control of top economic advisor Larry Summers, could care less about the physical economy. For his part, Rohatyn

called the NIB an "essential," and "transparent" institution, "modelled on the European Investment Bank," which "can leverage significant private capital for infrastructure projects."

Private capital? From where?

Is Summers About To Get Caught Taking Kickbacks?

May 29—AlterNet.com today raised the question: "Is Larry Summers taking kickbacks from the banks he's bailing out?"

When he was forced to step down as president of Harvard University, Summers joined the board of a company called Revolution Money in 2006 (when it was called GratisCard), which was set up by former AOL chief Steve Case, to rival PayPal, an online payment company. Summers' longtime chief of staff, Marne Levine, joined Summers at Revolution, where she served as director of product management.

In September 2007, Revolution Money announced that it had raised \$50 million from Citigroup, Morgan Stanley, and Deutsche Bank. Revolution's ability to raise this amount was based on the political connections of Summers and another board member, Frank Raines, the former CEO of Fannie Mae, who is still on the board.

When he joined the Obama Administration in January 2009, Summers resigned from the Revolution Money board. However, just three months later, on April 6, Revolution Money announced that it had just raised another \$42 million from Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, and Morgan Stanley, all of which had been bailed out by Summers.

Ames concludes: "Everything about Summers, from his horrible track record in the developing world in the 1990s, to the sleaze and plunder he's overseeing in the White House should make us terrified.... Summers ... has seen his gelatinous layers of neck-fat swell up like an amphibian guarding its eggs ever since he took control of the economy. Get this monster out of the White House now, before he devours us all."