

American Capitalism Is Based on Plunder

The plunder is getting worse

By Paul Craig Roberts

August 19, 2019 "[Information Clearing House](https://informationclearinghouse.info/52128.htm)" -American capitalism is based on plunder. With the continental USA plundered, American capitalism hoped to continue enriching itself by plundering Russia as it did under Yeltsin, carefully including the Russian "Atlanticist Integrationists" in the spoils in order to have support from the liberal, progressive forces in Russia for stripping Russia of its assets. But Putin more or less put a halt to the American/Israeli rape of Russia, although it still continues through the neoliberal economics that Harvard brainwashed into the Russian central bank and economics profession. Brainwashed Russian economists are the main reason Washington is able to punish a powerful country such as Russia with economic sanctions.

The dependency of American capitalism on plunder is the reason Washington seeks to overthrow the people's government of Venezuela. Chavez established a reformist government in Venezuela, one continued by Maduro. The reformist government nationalized Venezuela's oil reserves. Instead of the profits being carted off by the American oil companies, they were kept at home where they raised the literacy rate and lowered the poverty rate. American capitalism wants the revenues back. Thus Washington's attack on Venezuela.

The same for Iran. The Iranians were the first and most successful in throwing off the yoke of American imperialism. They overthrew the American puppet, the Shah in 1979, and used the oil revenues for the development of Iran instead of the purchase of arms from the US military/security complex. All of the propaganda against Iran is part of the effort, supplemented by sanctions, to regain control of Iran's oil wealth and to shut down Iran as a supplier of the Hezbollah militia that has prevented Israel's occupation of Southern Lebanon.

Are You Tired Of The Lies And Non-Stop Propaganda?

Get Your **FREE** Daily Newsletter

No Advertising - No Government Grants - This Is Independent Media

Russia and China are also targeted, and the governments of both countries continue in their gullibility to play into Washington's hands. Both governments permit American-financed Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to operate in their countries in open treasonous activities against the governments. The ongoing street protests in Hong Kong are a Washington operation directed at undermining the reputation and stability of the Chinese government. One must wonder why the Chinese government sets itself up as a target for Washington.

The Pultin government's toleration of American-paid traitors resulted in the recent riots and protests that the Russian police were pressed to control. The Russian government investigated not the protesters and their American financiers, but the police for protecting public order in Russia! The Russian police were criticized for being "too brutal" in the Russian government's view in putting down the American organized attack on the Russian government. A government this confused has a low survival rate. Perhaps the situation is different inside Russia from how it is presented in the US media, but the way it is presented in the US is the way the world sees it. And it is not to Russia's advantage.

Little wonder Washington regards Putin and the Chinese leadership as polititians who can be trifled with.

Perhaps Russia and China are so desperate for Western approval that they prove how democratic they are by permitting foreign orchestrated insurrection. The Hong Kong youth waving American flags must be unaware that the US is ruled by a smaller and worse oligarchy than China.

The US allows no foreign countries other than Israel to finance NGOs dedicated to influencing the United States Government. I am unaware of any Russian, Chinese, Iranian, or Venezuelan NGOs that are permitted to operate in the US. Who can imagine Israel permitting Palestinian NGOs to operate in Israel and stage street demonstrations and riots. In the United States the President is not even permitted to communicate with Russia without being accused of being a "Putin stooge" involved in a conspiracy to sell out America to Russia.

Russia has one economist who understands economics. His name is Sergei Glazyev. Glazyev, the most competent economist in Russia, understands that Russia's economic development does not depend on foreign loans and capital from abroad. Loans from the West are simply a way of ensnaring Russia in the hands of external creditors, as happened to Greece. According to a recent report, Glazyev has been removed from his position as an adviser to Putin. It seems as if the pro-American Atlanticist Integrationists are going to keep Russia down until Russia has to submit to Washington for a bailout.

Awaiting the chance to resume exploitation of Russia, Iran, Venezuela and China, American capitalism in the meantime is going to plunder what is left of the public's lands—the national forests, parks, monuments and wildlife refuges. You can read about it below.

Trump Regime Opens US National Forests to Plunder by Private Timber Companies

<http://www.addisonindependent.com/news/proposed-change-would-cut-public-input-green-mtn-national-forest>

If a proposed change in federal land use rules goes through, the 90,000 acres of Green Mountain National Forest that fall within Addison County could see a lot more commercial logging, road building and utility corridors — all without environmental review or public input.

“Basically, the rules would take the ‘public’ out of public land management,” said Jamey Fidel, Forest and Wildlife Program Director for the Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC).

At issue is a proposal by the United States Forest Service (USFS) to revise the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which is the foundation of environmental policy making in the United States. It requires agencies like the USFS to analyze the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions.

The USFS proposal would drastically alter those requirements by greatly expanding the number and type of projects that would count as “categorical exclusions,” which can be approved without environmental assessments or impact statements.

Projects the USFS would reclassify as “categorical exclusions” include:

- Commercial logging, including clear cutting, on areas up to 4,200 acres at a time.
- Building new roads through the forest up to five miles at a time.
- Reconstructing old roads through the forest up to 10 miles at a time.
- Bulldozing up to four miles of pipeline and utility rights-of-way through the forest.
- Closing roads and trails used for recreational purposes.

Adding illegally built roads and trails to the official USFS road and trail system.

New rules would also allow the USFS to bypass public input on nearly every project decision. According to estimates from a number of forestry and environmental organizations, the proposal would eliminate public and environmental review from more than 90 percent of all USFS projects.

The Forest Service says it needs to do this because, among other things, the agency has a backlog of “special use permits or renewals” that “are awaiting environmental analysis and decision affecting more than 7,000 businesses and 120,000 jobs.” [The jobs are not needed if in fact the US has a full employment rate of 3.5% unemployment.]

In addition, such challenges as the recent increase in wildfires are taking up more and more of the agency's resources and personnel. [In other words, global warming is using up the agency's budget fighting fires.]

What the USFS does not mention, however, is that according to the Congressional Research Service, the Trump administration has proposed cutting Forest Service spending by nearly \$1 billion for fiscal year 2020, including a \$654.4 million cut in Wildland Fire Management.

"This (proposed change to NEPA) is happening at a time when the Forest Service is slashing its own budget, and lacks the resources to evaluate what it's doing," wrote Sam Evans in The New York Times.

Evans, who works in the Southern Appalachian national forests, went on to call the USFS proposal "an attack on the very idea" of public lands.

"If the Forest Service has its way, visitors won't know what's coming until logging trucks show up at their favorite trailheads or a path for a gas pipeline is cleared below a scenic vista."

The USFS insists that the changes "meet both the spirit and intention of the NEPA," but critics see the recent proposal as part of a larger trend.

Last December, after revoking permits that would have allowed the Atlantic Coast Pipeline to build through parts of the George Washington and Monongahela national forests, as well as across the Appalachian Trail, the 4th U.S. Circuit of Appeals rebuked the Forest Service for granting permits that violated both the National Forest Management Act and NEPA.

The three-judge panel concluded that the agency had "abdicated its responsibility to preserve national forest resources." Of particular note was the way the Forest Service's "environmental concerns ... were suddenly, and mysteriously, assuaged in time to meet a private pipeline company's deadlines."

IN THE GREEN MOUNTAINS

In Vermont, recent USFS projects in the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) have sparked concern among a number of environmental organizations, including the VNRC.

"In the past, when the Forest Service has undertaken major projects on the GMNF there has been ample opportunity (in accordance with the NEPA) for public comment and involvement," wrote VNRC officials in a May 3 blog post. "VNRC has participated in these opportunities and we have enjoyed a collaborative relationship with the GMNF."

But starting in the second half of 2018, the USFS began limiting public comment on projects — one to conduct even-aged timber harvesting on 15,000 acres in the southern half of the forest, and another that would require dozens of miles of new roads to implement 9,630 acres of timber harvesting.

Altogether, according to the VNRC, "the Forest Service is planning to construct 84 miles of road (57 miles of new and temporary roads and 26.7 miles of reconstructed roads over the next 15 years) with no opportunity for public comment on the environmental impacts of these activities."

The Green Mountain National Forest is one of only two national forests in New England. It was established in 1932 in response to excess logging, fire and flooding. As of 2011, the GMNF covered 821,040 acres, nearly half of which was federally owned.

More than 18 percent of Addison County lies within the forest.

The Independent was unable to reach GMNF officials for comment in time for this story. Supporters of public and environmental review see the proposed NEPA changes as an attempt by the Trump administration to codify the Forest Service's recent practices. And many of them are fighting back.

Organizations ranging from the National Audubon Society to the Sierra Club to the National Parks Conservation Association are urging concerned citizens to submit a public comment on the proposed rule changes.

The deadline for commenting is Aug. 26.

“Please make your comments specific and unique to your concerns and relate your comments to a particular national forest, like the Green Mountain National Forest,” wrote VNRC officials on July 25. “The Forest Service will lump together (similar comments) and count them as one comment, so please make your comments unique to be counted.”

According to the Forest Service website, comments may be submitted:

- online via <https://www.regulations.gov/comment?D=FS-2019-0010-0001> (Note: This info has been updated from the print version of this article.)
- or by mail to NEPA Services Group, c/o Amy Barker, USDA Forest Service, 125 South State St., Ste. 1705, Salt Lake City, UT 84138.
- or by email to nepa-procedures-revision@fs.fed.us. (Note: This info has been updated from the print version of this article.)

Reach Christopher Ross at christopherr@addisonindependent.com .

Dr. Paul Craig Roberts was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy and associate editor of the Wall Street Journal. He was columnist for Business Week, Scripps Howard News Service, and Creators Syndicate. He has had many university appointments. His internet columns have attracted a worldwide following. Roberts' latest books are The Failure of Laissez Faire Capitalism and Economic Dissolution of the West, How America Was Lost, and The Neoconservative Threat to World Order. Donate and support Dr, Roberts Work.

The views expressed in this article are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Information Clearing House.