

Oregon standoff was a predictable reaction to oppression

"The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and cruelty by the bad people but the silence over that by the good people."
Martin Luther King, Jr.

When rational environmentalism became radical environmentalism in the 1970's, the aggression AGAINST the rural landowner has grown to an all out war ON the rural landowner, enforced by ever-growing, ever-expanding federal agencies that have morphed into a Nazi-like, heavily-armed police force. A way of life on the range that grew out of the American West and raised the protein that Americans consume, has been determined by the environmentalists and the government to be an anachronism and passé, in favor of the creatures and the plants. Legal grazing and water right allotments, with the force of law, have been unilaterally overturned by federal agencies, irrespective of the law of allotments, protected by U. S. Supreme Court decisions. Allotment fees have been raised by several factors and grazing and water permits have been reduced, or eliminated. Private lands have been saddled with massive buffers and conservation easements, or outright confiscation. Due process is a mirage as many landowners have found out the hard way.

We depict this ongoing assault on rural landowners in our video entitled, "Rural America in the Crosshairs."

The government, at the behest of the radical environmentalists, has decided to turn the American West into a private reserve for flora and fauna where no human can go. Much of America has become off limits to any human activity. Ranches and farms are being seized and raided by government,

or are being forced out of business by government actions. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) are the tools that government, the environmentalists and lawyers use to do their dirty work. The individual landowner is helpless when the all-powerful government sets its sights on a rancher or farmer.

In a recent article in the Independent Sentinel they wrote this:

“The land grabs began more than two decades ago.”

“Thanks to the extremists involved in The Wildlands Project of 1992 and their cozy relationship with greedy government bureaucrats, ranchers throughout the West are being squeezed off their land. The extremists work in conjunction with liberal Federal judges who aid and abet the theft.”

“Ranchers are having their cattle seized and being refused water and grazing rights so the government can take over Western land and declare it “open spaces.”

“The Wildlands Project, now called the Wildlands Network, works in coordination with the government and other extremist groups. They have “set aside the goal of preserving 50% of the North American continent as ‘wild land’ for the preservation of biological diversity, according to their own stated goals on their website. It conforms to the UN plan.”

“The Wildlands plan is to create larger public lands by acquiring private lands adjoining public lands. Re-wilding the land that they have set aside for nature, requires moving humans into human settlements.”

That’s right. The environmentalist’s stated goal is to move “man” out of the rural areas and into big cities with mass transportation, where they can walk or ride their bicycle to work. No cars. Cars are bad. National and international environmentalists have seduced the U. S. Government to pass

legislation to further that goal and they are well on their way to achieving it.

Those that live in big cities and are dependent on government for just about everything, are all for shoving "man" off the land to join them in their dependent cities. Thanks to endless government and environmental propaganda on the airways, in newspapers, in our public schools and our liberal colleges, the general, un-informed public, thinks it's a great idea.

People always say that times change and they do, but not so when you are raising America's food and protein. It takes a lot of rangeland and water to raise cattle and sheep. It takes a lot of flat land to raise crops. If we give the land all away to the plants and animals and drive the ranchers and farmers out of business, what will American's eat?

All across the West, resistance to government oppression, driven by radical environmentalism and Agenda 21, is on the rise. The government is restricting access to known water rights and cutting off access to private lands that must go through public lands, even though the access is granted by deed or allotment. The reaction by one landowner was swift and succinct. "Our fight was about our land. They wanted me to put a fence 180 feet from my creek and keep my livestock from using it. I paid for that land, and I'll be damned if the feds are going to tell me I can't use even a sliver of it."

In the West, range wars were fought over water and grazing rights and fencing off the open range. Many people died in those wars. Then, it was private landowner at war with other private landowners or settlers who were fencing off the land for farming. Now the war is private landowners against the government.

But what the GOVERNMENT giveth, the GOVERNMENT can taketh away.

From the middle of the 1800's to 1934, the government allowed

virtually unrestricted cattle and sheep grazing on unreserved public lands. These grazing "rights" were called allotments. Then in 1934, it was determined that the government should better manage unreserved public lands and passed the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 that provided for the regulation of grazing and water rights. Currently, there are some 182,000,000 acres of public land under grazing allotments. 182,000,000 acres is larger than the State of Texas.

As we said, it takes a lot of land to raise cattle and sheep. The government allotments allowed ranchers to expand their herds on other than private land holdings. Those allotments came with water rights because you can't raise cattle and sheep without water. Under the Taylor Grazing Act, the allotments were actual contracts with ranchers and were good for 10 years, but renewable. The ranchers had to pay grazing fees during the life of the allotment contract. Grazing cattle and sheep on public lands became a necessary and vital component of feeding a growing and hungry nation.

Along came environmentalism in the 1970's and grazing cattle and sheep on the "public's" land just wouldn't do. Environmental laws were passed that mandated the government to take back the grazing and water rights on public land from the ranchers, in the interest of "protecting" the environment and the protection of endangered or threatened species. The environmentalists were intent, with government's help, to re-wild America and they didn't care that it was eliminating one of the vital components of feeding this hungry nation, land and water. To facilitate their goal, the government started dramatically raising allotment fees, or canceling allotment contracts at the end of the 10-year term. Unreserved public land for grazing and water rights was evaporating right under the ranchers' noses.

Many ranchers have tried to fight back in the courts, only to find the courts were rigged in favor of the government and the environmentalists. The Wayne Hage family, Nevada ranchers,

found out the hard way about just how powerful the federal government really is. The Hage story and others that have come up against an intransigent, dictatorial government, was chronicled in a Fox News Special entitled, "Enemies of the State." That special can be viewed at the video below.

Over the last several decades, small, local skirmishes, sometimes violent, started erupting in different parts of the West, in response to the government and environmental land grab, which led to the Sagebrush Rebellion in the 1970's. The skirmishes started to grow in size which culminated in the Bundy Ranch standoff in 2014 between 200 heavily-armed BLM agents and a couple of hundred private citizens carrying guns. A shooting war where private citizens would start dying in the desert for all to see at the hands of federal agents, wouldn't play well with public opinion. The event was widely covered by the news media and the government wisely stood down.

Emboldened by the success of the Bundy Ranch standoff, Ammon Bundy, son of Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy, with the help of a bunch of rag tag armed militia, took over the Malheur Wildlife Preserve in Southeastern Oregon. They came there in defense of Oregon ranchers' Dwight and Steven Hammond, who ended up in jail on a trumped up arson charge at the hands of the BLM. The Hammond's had continuous run-ins with the BLM over grazing, water rights and back-burn wildfires. The arson charged appeared to be a way for the BLM to get even.

By now, most of the public knows how the Oregon armed standoff ended. One man was shot dead by law enforcement and the rest have been or will be arrested. Those arrested will probably spend some considerable time in jail. The federal court in which they will be tried, will not be sympathetic, nor will any jury of their peers. It was a lose-lose proposition unless their martyrdom triggers more rural Americans to stand up and be counted. We have described the Hammond ranch events in Oregon on the NARLO website on a dedicated web page [HERE](#).

A story out of Okanogan County, Washington further illustrates the divide between ranchers, farmers, government management of public lands and wildfires. That story can be read [here](#).

But this isn't the end of the story in the West. The government may have won this battle in Oregon, but they have only incited greater anger in Western landowners. Where that goes is anyone's guess, but from our perspective and the reading of the tea leaves, it does not appear to end peacefully.

Many will ask, is the fight against government by rural landowners a righteous fight? After all, the government allegedly owns the land upon which the ranchers' cattle and sheep are grazing. But isn't the better question, does the government under the U. S. Constitution, have the right to own, control and manage the land in the first place? In Article 1, Section 8, Clause 17, the federal government is only supposed to own and control such lands as follows:

"To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings."

If the literal translation of Clause 17 is true, then Ammon Bandy, Wayne Hage and all other Western ranchers are right in their demand for the federal government to cede the public land back to the states and cease and desist government's attack on the ranchers and farmers.

The issue is far from settled and this is what has given rise to the current conflict. When the government was reasonable in managing the unreserved federal lands, everything went fairly

smoothly. But when government started clamping down on the ranchers' legal contract rights to government allotments in the name of environmentalism, the smooth-running relationship between rancher and government evaporated and a land war has ensued.

When in a war, and we are in a war with the government, there are going to be all kinds of twists and turns and skirmishes in that war. The Oregon standoff was just one of the twists and turns. There will be many more to come as the wall between government and the citizens gets higher and higher. It has to come to a head eventually. We can only hope the outcome will be in favor of freedom and the Republic, but it is not a sure thing.

There are millions of Americans that still believe in individual, unalienable rights and want the government to stay the Hell out of their lives. Unfortunately, the government has shoved its ugly head in every "tent" and some of the people are beginning to balk, a totally predictable reaction to rising government oppression. The Oregon armed standoff was a symptom of the people's resistance to that oppression, not a cause.

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