

# TIME TO REBEL

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*By Henry Lamb*

Cowboys saw it coming nearly 40 years ago. People who had never even seen a meadow muffin, or a calf arriving in the world, or a rattlesnake coiled for business persuaded the feds to lock up the land. Prewar socialists had been working on the project for years. Way back in the 1930s, Benton Mackaye and Eugene V. Debs, both avid socialists, along with Robert Marshall and Aldo Leopold, founded the Wilderness Society. They published a book called "The People's Forest," which advocated government control over all forests.

The Wilderness Society's director, Howard Zahniser, and Laurence S. Rockefeller were primarily responsible for getting the Wilderness Act passed in 1964. Rockefeller headed the Kennedy-appointed Outdoor Recreational Resources Review Commission, which produced a 1962 report calling for more government control over land use. Congress obliged. The Wilderness Act set aside nine million acres as wilderness, defined to be essentially places where humans were not welcome.

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund then financed a series of three publications over the next 15 years. The first, in 1972, was called "The Use of Land: A Citizen's Policy Guide to Urban Growth." It is significant that this publication was edited by none other than William K. Reilly, who later became administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency for President George H.W. Bush. The document begins with a quote from Aldo Leopold: "It is time to change the view that land is little more than a commodity to be exploited and traded. We need a land ethic that regards land as a resource which, improperly used, can have the same ill effects as the pollution of air and water, and which therefore warrants similar protection."

City dwellers paid no attention to the publication. That was a mistake. Rep. Morris King "Mo" Udall paid attention. The document provided the Arizona congressman fodder for a five-year campaign to enact the Federal Land Use Policy and Planning Assistance Act. This ambitious legislation promoted multiple ways to lock up the federal land (mostly western land) that was covered by

sagebrush and good for little more than grazing.

Throughout the 1960s and '70s, the federal government tightened the restrictions on the use of federal lands. Land designated as wilderness grew from nine million acres to nearly 38 million. The Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area expanded



*Buckets of water from Lake Ewamana were passed hand to hand for two miles through Klamath Falls, Ore., to the A-line irrigation canal in support of farmers in 2001. It was a gesture of defiance against the federal government which had cut off critical irrigation supplies to 1,400 productive farms to "save" a sucker fish that wasn't even endangered.*

from 26,000 acres to more than 539,000. In Alaska, the feds locked up 104 million acres, which prohibited all resource development.

The terms "land use policy," and "planning assistance" meant nothing to the folks east of the Mississippi. But the terms meant survival—or not—to ranchers whose livelihoods depended on using the resources Udall's bill wanted to lock up.

## INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCE

The control of land use was an obsession with government bureaucrats. Few people realized that all the attention to land-use control was ginned up by the United Nations. William K. Reilly, for example, the same guy who edited the Rockefeller Brothers Fund publication on land use, represented the United States at the 1976 U.N. Conference on Human Settlements that met in Vancouver, British Colum-

bia. On behalf of the United States, he signed the final U.N. document, which says that "Land...cannot be treated as an ordinary asset, controlled by individuals and subject to the pressures and inefficiencies of the market. Private land ownership is also a principal instrument of accumulation and concentration of wealth and therefore contributes to social injustice.... Public control of land use is therefore indispensable."

The same year, Congress passed the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which put a padlock on all federal lands. Colorado Gov. Richard Lamm summed it up pretty well at the time when he told a reporter for the *U.S. News and World Report* that "what the federal government fails to do is differentiate between its role as landlord and its role as sovereign. They [government bureaucrats] can't figure out whether they're landlord or king."

Legislatures in Nevada, New Mexico, Washington, Wyoming, Utah and Arizona all introduced legislation trying to claim control over the federal land in their states. Passions were so heated that Alaskan rebels burned an airplane that belonged to the National Park Service. Alaskan voters approved a special Statehood Commission to reconsider and recommend "appropriate changes" in the state's relationship with the federal government.

Charlie Lee, a third-generation rancher in New Mexico who leased more than 90,000

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acres of federal land during the 1970s, complains that "bureaucrats now tell him how many cattle to run, where to pasture them and where, when and what type of windmills, fences and corrals he can build. When the feds take control to that extent," he says, "the ranch operator is no longer necessary; he's a federal-government caretaker."

In Wyoming, the Bureau of Land Man-

agement discovered that a 47-year-old house owned by Gerald Chaffin had been built on land claimed by the BLM. Rather than find a solution that allowed Chaffin to keep his house, the BLM required the house to be

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removed. Chaffin's choice was a fine of \$6,000 and 18 months in prison, or a match. He chose the match and a gallon of gasoline.

The election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 infuriated the land-control zealots and green advocacy groups (which some rebels insisted on calling GAGs). The control agents drew in their domestic horns and turned again to the United Nations. The World Commission on Environment and Development, headed by the vice-chair of the International Socialist Party, Gro Harlem Brundtland, worked for four years and in 1987 released its report, "Our Common Future." This publication set the stage for the 1992 U.N. Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. This is the event that planted the seeds that produced the policies that are spawning a revival in the art of rebellion.

### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The election of Bill Clinton and Al Gore in 1992 was in part the result of work done by the land-control zealots and GAGs. It was rumored at the time that the only reason Gore agreed to the VP slot was that Clinton promised to turn over to Gore all matters related to the environment. Gore was an excellent gardener. He nurtured the government-control seeds planted in Rio. To comply with the Rio document, "Agenda 21," an executive order was issued that created the President's Council on Sustainable Development. Tons of federal dollars were funneled to organizations that used the phrases "sustainable development" and "comprehensive planning." The EPA and other federal agencies bribed local communities to create "visioning councils," and funded nongovernment organizations to train facilitators to help local communities develop a "Vision 2020 Plan of Action." All these plans were remarkably similar. They all recommended policies that matched those set forth in the U.N.'s Agenda 21. All the policy recommendations gave government more control over land use and other affairs of private citizens.

The feds then funded the American Planning Association to produce model legislation for states to adopt, which would write into state law the Agenda 21 policies on comprehensive planning and land use. Terms such as "urban boundaries, urban sprawl, green belt, light rail, viewshed, foodshed, urban gardening," and many others entered the modern vocabulary.

The same government obsession to control land use that spawned the sagebrush rebellion was next focused on people east of the Mississippi. South Carolina Rep. Joe Neal went on the warpath when he discovered that a comprehensive land-use plan in the counties he represented blocked all development on some private land in his district while encouraging development on other lands. Strangely, the land that could not be developed was mostly owned by descendants of slaves, while the land designated to be developed was mostly owned by the descendants of slave owners.

Throughout the nation, similarly comprehensive plans were adopted through which government determined what land could be developed, how it could be developed, and who could develop it. The free market was revoked in favor of government control. Land located outside the urban development zone lost its value overnight. The value of land inside the development zone skyrocketed, as did the power of the government bureaucrats who drew the lines on the planning map.

The first signs of a new rebellion emerged when the U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity was not ratified by the Senate in 1994. Sovereignty International, People for the U.S.A., and several other organizations were successful in getting the treaty removed from the Senate calendar one hour before the scheduled vote. Vice President Al Gore decided to implement the goals of the treaty anyway. He developed what he called his "Ecosystem Management Policy," which was implemented administratively by appointed bureaucrats without the benefit of congressional debate or approval. The election of George W. Bush angered Gore's green land-control crowd, but did little to stop the expansion of government control. While Bush did block participation in the U.N.'s Kyoto Protocol, he also decided that the United States rejoin UNESCO, which reopened another U.N. agency's government-control influence over U.S. policy. Even so, it was the election of Barack Hussein Obama in 2008 that really triggered the current rebellion.

Obama wasn't kidding when he told a

throng of admiring supporters that "we're just five days away from fundamentally transforming the United States of America." From the moment he took office, it was clear that his idea of government control was not limited to land use. Obama is the champion of those people who believe that government must control and manage every facet of human existence in order to "spread the wealth around," to equalize prosperity (or, as many believe, to equalize poverty).

America's founders limited the power of federal government for a reason. In Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, they deliberately described 17 specific areas in which Congress may exercise legislative power. The president's powers are set forth in Article 2, Section 2. Nowhere does the Constitution authorize any government official to fire the chairman of General Motors. Nowhere does the Constitution authorize the appropriation of tax dollars to give or lend to private businesses. Nowhere does the Constitution authorize the federal government to go into the auto-manufacturing business, or the insurance business, or the health-care business, or the consumer-finance business. Nowhere does the Constitution authorize the federal government to dictate the type or source of energy a private citizen or business may use. Nowhere does the Constitution authorize the

## **The ruling class called the unruly town-hall meetings the work of ignorant right-wing tea-baggers.**

federal government to dictate how private property—or the resources found there—may be used.

In short, the federal government no longer even pretends to care what the Constitution says, and many Americans, mad as hell about it, are mounting a rebellion the likes of which has never been seen. The nation got a glimpse of it on April 15, 2009, when tea parties sprang up across the nation. Tens of thousands of people showed up in hundreds of cities across the country to say we're taxed enough already, and to express their dissatisfaction with government's disregard for constitutional limitations of power and government's disregard for deficit spending, measured now in the trillions.

The ruling class quickly discounted the April 15 event as manipulations by right-wing hate groups. Janeane Garofalo told an

MSNBC audience that the protesters were a “bunch of confused racists who had no idea what the Boston Tea Party was all about.” She said the protesters were just “tea-bagging red-necks who couldn’t stand to see a black man in the White House.”

The ruling class was wrong. When congressmen returned to their districts for their August vacation, they got little rest. Their constituents demanded town-hall meetings to ask their representatives unusually hard ques-



The patriotic 131st annual Lone Homecoming Parade in California.

## **This rebellion is not about race, or political parties; it is about the very heart of America.**

tions, such as: Where does the Constitution authorize you to take over the health-care industry? How are you planning to pay this trillion-dollar deficit? Why are you even considering a cap-and-trade bill that will send energy prices to the moon?

Many congressmen were visibly shaken. John Tanner, a Tennessee Democrat, refused to even hold a meeting with his constituents, as did several other congressmen. These Americans are on the move, and they are manipulated by no one. The organizations they are creating do not apply for federal grants. Their expenses are not paid by George Soros or by fat-cat foundations. They are motivated by the love of freedom, the love of country, and the determination to repel all forms of Marxism, whether disguised as land-use planning, critical habitat, cap-and-trade emissions reduction, “public option” health care, or any other government-control concoction not authorized by the U.S. Constitution.

The September 12 march on Washington

followed the August town-hall confrontations. From Freedom Square to the Capitol, people stood shoulder to shoulder in protest of government’s arrogant indifference to their appeals to return to the principles of freedom enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. Even though the media quickly reported that as many as 50,000 people participated in the event, the D.C. park police told attendees that their estimate was at least 1.5 million. Aerial photographs revealed crowds larger than those that attended the Martin Luther King “I Have A Dream” speech, or the Million Man March, and perhaps even larger than the Obama inauguration shindig.

Americans are tired of writing to their congressmen and being ignored, or worse, getting a stock reply that fails to answer the questions asked in a constituent’s letter. They are tired of getting the run-around by staff interns when they call their elected officials. They are tired of watching 1,000-page bills being enacted into law before anyone has time to read them. They are tired of watching Congress pile debt upon debt upon generations yet to be born. They are mad as hell, and they’re going to rebel. For this rebellion, bullets are not required. Ballots, however, are in great demand.

Frustrated Americans are doing more than marching and attending town-hall meetings. They are organizing in every county and every precinct. They are holding neighborhood learning sessions in homes, in restaurants, in churches and in high-school gyms. They are registering voters—real people, not the Disney characters, football teams, and dead people ACORN members are paid to register. They are setting up phone teams. They are studying the voting records of incumbents and examining the qualifications of new candidates. They are getting ready for the rebellion: Election Day 2010.

### **CHOOSING AMERICA’S FUTURE**

Americans will choose their future with the next election. The stakes are high: freedom or government control. Freedom21 is a national organization working with dozens of local groups in an effort to get all candidates to sign a pledge to uphold eight principles of freedom in every official act, or to explain publicly why they will not. These principles are:

1. All people have inherent, natural, unalienable rights to life, liberty, and property, in their pursuit of happiness.
2. Governments exist expressly to protect these rights.

3. Government’s power derives from the consent of the governed, and is limited to those powers enumerated in the U.S. Constitution.

4. Public policies which constrain people’s rights must be enacted only by representatives elected by the people—not by appointed agency officials.

5. Freedom requires a free market economy—with minimal government intrusion.

6. Freedom and security demand abundant, affordable energy and food production, which requires high priority utilization of domestic carbon-based and alternative-fuel resources, as well as land and water resources.

7. Government has no authority to restrict or suppress nonviolent religious expression.

8. No foreign or international government shall supersede the authority of the government of the United States.

These principles are nonnegotiable if the United States of America is to remain the land of the free. This rebellion is not about race, class, gender, or political parties. This rebellion seeks to identify, embrace, and elect people who subscribe to the principles of freedom as set forth in the nation’s founding documents, and to remove from public office and reject every candidate who embraces the principles of collectivism set forth by Karl Marx and his followers.

The rebellion is well underway. Old-timers who cut their political teeth during the Sagebrush Rebellion as well as newcomers are now joining forces to restore constitutional values to our nation. The Founding Fathers provided a method, and encouragement to rebel whenever government abuses its constitutional limits. Millions of Americans now agree that the abuses demand action, and so America is now in a state of peaceful rebellion. This time, it’s not just a sagebrush rebellion in the West. It reaches from sea to sea and from border to border. Its soldiers include every race, the rich and poor, young and old, men and women. It is truly an American rebellion preparing to deliver a nationwide broadside to every official who has dishonored his or her oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. ■

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