

## Americans Are Serfs Ruled By Oligarchs

Пише: Paul Craig Roberts  
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*"In a little time (there will be) no middling sort. We shall have a few, and but a very few Lords, and all the rest beggars."*

R.L. Bushman

*"Rapidly you are dividing into two classes – extreme rich and extreme poor."*

Brutus



Americans think that they have "freedom and democracy" and that politicians are held accountable by elections. The fact of the matter is that the US is ruled by powerful interest groups who control politicians with campaign contributions. Our real rulers are an oligarchy of financial and military/security interests and AIPAC, which influences US foreign policy for the benefit of Israel.

Have a look at economic policy. It is being run for the benefit of large financial concerns, such as Goldman Sachs.

It was the banks, not the millions of Americans who have lost homes, jobs, health insurance, and pensions, that received \$700 billion in TARP funds. The banks used this gift of capital to

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make more profits. In the middle of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, Goldman Sachs announced record second quarter profits and large six-figure bonuses for every employee.

The Federal Reserve's low interest rate policy is another gift to the banks. It lowers their cost of funds and increases their profits. With the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act in 1999, banks became high-risk investment houses that trade financial instruments such as interest rate derivatives and mortgage backed securities. With abundant funds supplied virtually free by the Federal Reserve, banks are paying depositors virtually nothing on their savings.

Despite the Federal Reserve's low interest rate policy, beginning October 1 banks are raising the annual percentage rate (APR) on credit card purchases and cash advances and on balances that have a penalty rate because of late payment. Banks are also raising the late fee. In the midst of the worst economy since the 1930s, heavily indebted Americans, who are losing their jobs and their homes, are to be bled into bankruptcy by the very banks that are being subsidized with TARP funds and low interest rates.

Moreover, it is the American public that is on the hook for the TARP money and the low interest rates. As the US government's budget is 50% or more in the red, the TARP money has to be borrowed from abroad or monetized by the Fed. This means more pressure on the US dollar's exchange value and a rise in import prices and also domestic inflation.

Americans will thus pay for the TARP and low interest rate subsidies to their financial rulers with erosion in the purchasing power of the dollar. What we are experiencing is a massive redistribution of income from the American public to the financial sector.

And this is occurring during a Democratic administration headed by America's first black president, with a Democratic majority in the House and Senate.

Is there a government anywhere that less represents its citizens than the US government?

Consider America's wars. As of the moment of writing, the out-of-pocket cost of America's wars

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in Iraq and Afghanistan is \$900,000,000,000. When you add in the already incurred future costs of veterans benefits, interest on the debt, the forgone use of the resources for productive purposes, and such other costs as computed by Nobel economist Joseph Stiglitz and Harvard University budget expert Linda Bilmes, "our" government has wasted \$3,000,000,000,000--three thousand billion dollars--on two wars that have no benefit whatsoever for any American whose income does not derive from the military/security complex, about which five-star general President Eisenhower warned us.

It is now a proven fact that the US invasion of Iraq was based on lies and deception of the American public. The only beneficiaries were the armaments industries, Blackwater, Halliburton, military officers who enjoy higher rates of promotion during war, and Muslim extremists whose case the US government proved by its unprovoked aggression against Muslims.

No one else benefitted. Iraq was a threat to no one, and finding Saddam Hussein and executing him after a kangaroo trial had no effect whatsoever on ending the war or preventing the start of others.

The cost of America's wars is a huge burden on a bankrupt country, but the cost incurred by veterans might be even higher. Homelessness is a prevalent condition of veterans, as is post-traumatic stress. American soldiers, who naively fought for the munitions industry's wars, for high compensation for the munitions CEOs, and for dividends and capital gains for the munitions shareholders, paid not only with lives and lost limbs, but also with broken marriages, ruined careers, psychiatric disorders, and prison sentences for failing to make child support payments.

What did Americans gain from an unaffordable war in Iraq that lasted far longer than World War II and that put into power Shi'ites allied with Iran?

The answer is obvious: nothing whatsoever.

What did the armaments industry gain? Billions of dollars in profits.

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What about President Obama? "A corporate marketing creation," sums up the distinguished British journalist John Pilger.

Obama is the presidential candidate who promised to end the war in Iraq. He hasn't. But he has escalated the war in Afghanistan, started a new war in Pakistan, intends to repeat the Yugoslav scenario in the Caucasus, and appears determined to start a war in South America. In response to the acceptance by US puppet president of Columbia, Alvaro Uribe, of seven US military bases in Columbia, Venezuela warned South American countries that the "winds of war are beginning to blow."

Here we have the US government, totally dependent on the generosity of foreigners to finance its red ink, which extends in large quantities as far as the eye can see, completely under the thumb of the military/security complex, which will destroy us all in order to meet Wall Street share price expectations.

Why does any American care who rules Afghanistan? The country has nothing to do with us.

Did the armed services committees of the House and Senate calculate the risk of destabilizing nuclear armed Pakistan when they acquiesced to Obama's new war there, a war that has already displaced two million Pakistanis?

No, of course not. The whores took their orders from the same military/security oligarchy that instructed Obama.

The great American superpower and its 300 million people are being driven straight into the ground by the narrow interest of the big banks and the munitions industry. People, and not only Americans, are losing their sons, husbands, brothers, and fathers for no other reason than the profits of US armaments corporations, and the gullible American people seem proud of it. Those ribbon decals on their cars, SUVs and monster trucks proclaim their naive loyalty to the armaments industries and to the whores in Washington who promote wars.

Will Americans, smashed and destroyed by "their" government's policy, which always puts

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Americans last, ever understand who their real enemies are?

Will Americans realize that they are not ruled by elected representatives but by an oligarchy that owns the Washington whorehouse?

Will Americans ever understand that they are impotent serfs?

<http://www.counterpunch.org/roberts08192009.html>