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Trump's 100 Days of Rage and Rapacity

By Ralph Nader

April 28, 2017

The Lawless-loving corporatists have worked overtime to besmirch the word “regulation” (or law and order for corporations) and edify the word “deregulation,” to help bring about their dream state of dismantled or weakened regulation.

Here is one little-mentioned ongoing disaster of non-regulation costing our country. The patsy FAA, for decades after the hijacking of planes to Castro's Cuba, refused to require the airlines to install toughened cockpit doors and stronger locks to prevent entry by terrorists bent on making the aircraft a destructive weapon. Why? Because the airlines objected to the mere \$3000 cost per aircraft and, by its very nature, the FAA acquiesced.

Then came 9/11, followed by “mad dog” George W. Bush (and Dick Cheney, his handler) launching an all-out attack on Afghanistan, rather than leading a multilateral force to apprehend the backers of the attackers. Later, Bush's criminal war devastated the county and people of Iraq. Iraq is still convulsing violently today.

All for not regulating the airlines to protect their cockpits and pilots. Sure, the hijackers could still have hijacked the planes, but they could not have piloted them into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Government regulations have led to life-saving motor vehicle standards. They have required safer pharmaceuticals, improved the safety of mines, factories and other workplaces, and

diminished the poisonous contaminants of air, water food and soil. According to the Center for Auto Safety, the federal programs for highway and vehicle safety have averted 3.5 million deaths in the US since 1966.

In an industrialized economy with corporations, hospitals and other commercial activities producing old and new hazards, regulations are needed to foresee and forestall many human casualties and damage to the natural world.

The role of sensible regulations has been all but ignored by Donald J. Trump in his regime's first 100 days of rage and rapacity. The Trump administration continues to take away basic protections that save both money and lives. With his cruel and monetized Republicans controlling Congress, he has eliminated 13 safeguards issued by the Obama administration.

Proudly, he and House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell have turned their backs on ensuring cleaner waterways, and making coal-polluted air less toxic, enforcing workplace protections and preserving our public lands. Disastrously for our country, Trump has joined forces with the Republicans in Congress to immobilize our government's research and action regarding accelerating climate change. Here he even is scaring big business, including the insurance industry.

The worst of Trump's egregious attacks on regulatory protections are coming out of his mindless Executive Orders (EO) to federal agencies. While many are of dubious legality – they would require Congressional legislation – his intent is clear: roll back major protections of Americans wherever they eat, breath, drink, work, drive and receive healthcare.

One EO requires agencies to repeal two regulations for every one they issue. Such an empty but dangerous gesture is mindless but emblematic of the prevaricating, boasting, failed gambling czar. The Trump administration's rejection of essential roles for government is stunning.

Trump would weaken the laws protecting your savings, investments and retirement security from what shredded them during the 2008-2009 Wall Street crash. No Wall Street bosses ever were jailed, so they're prone to keep speculating with your money and pocketing huge fees from your accounts in the process.

Trump is even putting off a Department of Labor rule requiring your investment advisers to put your interests ahead of their conflicting interests – the so-called fiduciary rule. Trump – who betrayed creditors, employees, investors and consumers alike during his business career – readily knows what that accountability mechanism is all about.

When Trump's formal budget is announced next May, it will starve the already strained enforcement budgets of the health and safety regulatory agencies such as the FDA, EPA and OSHA. Trump even wants a sharp cut of the Centers for Disease Control's program to head off deadly global epidemics.

In addition, Trump has broken his campaign promises, surrounding himself with Wall Street insiders and intensifying Obama's belligerent and militaristic foreign policy around the

globe. He is also demanding that Congress add fifty-two billion dollars more to the already bloated Pentagon budget, decried by many liberals and conservatives. Fifty-two billion dollars is far greater than all the combined federal regulatory budgets for the agencies that provide the health, safety and economic protections for Americans from costly corporate crimes, abuses and frauds.

The fallout of these ominous 100 days is not escaping millions of lawyers, accountants, physicians, engineers, scientists and teachers at all levels. And it isn't escaping those blue collar workers who rolled the dice and voted for Trump, despite his opposition to raising the minimum wage and fair labor standards.

Yes, there are signs of stirrings among these citizens. But will there be action against the Trumpsters and Trumpism in the coming weeks and at the polls next year? Will the people continue to turn out in ever greater numbers at marches, rallies and Congressional town meetings (see indivisibleguide.com), whether arranged by their Senators and Representatives or, if not, by the citizenry summoning their 535 members of Congress to peoples' town meetings?

Only you, the American people, one-by-one and by joining together, can answer these questions.