



# Private Empire: ExxonMobil and American Power

By Steve Coll

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An “extraordinary” and “monumental” exposé of Big Oil from two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Steve Coll (*The Washington Post*)

**Includes a profile of current Secretary of State and former chairman and chief executive of ExxonMobil, Rex Tillerson**

In this, the first hard-hitting examination of ExxonMobil—the largest and most powerful private corporation in the United States—Steve Coll reveals the true extent of its power. *Private Empire* pulls back the curtain, tracking the corporation’s recent history and its central role on the world stage, beginning with the Exxon Valdez accident in 1989 and leading to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. The action spans the globe—featuring kidnapping cases, civil wars, and high-stakes struggles at the Kremlin—and the narrative is driven by larger-than-life characters, including corporate legend Lee “Iron Ass” Raymond, ExxonMobil’s chief executive until 2005, and current chairman and chief executive Rex Tillerson, President-elect Donald Trump's nomination for Secretary of State. A penetrating, news-breaking study, *Private Empire* is a defining portrait of Big Oil in American politics and foreign policy.

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## Editorial Review

### From Bookforum

Coll employs language that's plain, clear, and free of accusation. Though some of the details recounted across the sprawling narrative of *Private Empire* are outrageous, the reporting is deep and fair. — Coral Davenport

### Review

"ExxonMobil has met its match in Coll, an elegant writer and dogged reporter... **extraordinary... monumental.**"—THE WASHINGTON POST

"**Fascinating...** *Private Empire* is a book meticulously prepared as if for trial, a lawyerly accumulation of information that lets the facts speak for themselves... a compelling and elucidatory work."—BLOOMBERG

"*Private Empire* is **meticulous, multi-angled and valuable**... Mr. Coll's prose sweeps the earth like an Imax camera."—Dwight Garner, THE NEW YORK TIMES

"ExxonMobil has cut a ruthless path through the Age of Oil. Yet intense secrecy has kept one of the world's largest companies a mystery, until now. *Private Empire: ExxonMobil and American Power* is **a masterful study of Big Oil's biggest player... Coll's in-depth reporting, buttressed by his anecdotal prose, make Private Empire a must-read.** Consider *Private Empire* a sequel of sorts to *The Prize*, Daniel Yergin's Pulitzer-winning history of the oil industry... Coll's portrait of ExxonMobil is both riveting and appalling... Yet *Private Empire* is not so much an indictment as a fascinating look into American business and politics. With each chapter as forceful as a New Yorker article, the book abounds in Dickensian characters."—SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

"Coll makes clear in his **magisterial** account that Exxon is mighty almost beyond imagining, producing more profit than any American company in the history of profit, the ultimate corporation in 'an era of corporate ascendancy.' This history of its last two decades is therefore **a revealing history of our time, a chronicle of the intersection between energy and politics.**"—Bill McKibben, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS

"**Groundbreaking...** Masterful as a corporate portrait, *Private Empire* gushes with narrative."—AMERICAN PROSPECT

### About the Author

STEVE COLL is most recently the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Private Empire*. He is the president of the New America Foundation, a nonpartisan public policy institute headquartered in Washington, D.C., and a staff writer for the *New Yorker*. Previously he worked for twenty years at the *Washington Post*, where he received a Pulitzer Prize for explanatory journalism in 1990. He is the author of six other books, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning bestseller *Ghost Wars*.

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