



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on March 28, 2012

“Drug Lords” Targeted in Fast & Furious Worked for FBI

In another significant embarrassment to the scandal-plagued Obama administration, newly released documents revealed that the supposed “drug lords” being targeted in the deadly federal “Fast and Furious” gun-running operation were actually working for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) all along.



Thousands of American weapons were illegally offered to violent Mexican cartels by the Justice Department as part of the controversial program — many of them paid for by U.S. tax dollars through the two FBI assets supposedly being targeted in the investigation. Those guns were later linked to hundreds of murders, including the killings of U.S. federal agents.

The operation came to a screeching halt after it was exposed in Congress and the media by whistleblowers from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (still known as ATF). The government responded to the scandal by claiming it was simply attempting to investigate Mexican cartels using a program that went tragically wrong.

But the facts paint a much different picture. According to documents [obtained](#) recently by the *Los Angeles Times*, the ATF zeroed in on a suspected gun trafficker named Manuel Fabian Celis-Acosta. He was detained in May of 2010, questioned, and eventually released after promising to cooperate with investigators seeking to track down two supposed “drug lords.”

Those two cartel chiefs, it turned out, were actually already on the FBI’s payroll. According to a source [cited by](#) Fox News, both of the men were considered “national security assets” who were “off limits” and “untouchable.” The ATF apparently did not find out until mid-2010.

“This means the entire goal of Fast and Furious — to target these two individuals and bring them to justice — was a failure,” noted Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif., pictured above) and Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa), who are investigating the scandal, in a memo to other members of Congress. ATF has refused to comment, citing ongoing investigations.

Rep. Issa and Sen. Grassley also noted that the agency should have known the two supposed “targets” of the purported “investigation” were working for the FBI, blasting “the serious management failures that occurred throughout all levels during Fast and Furious.” That would have allowed the deadly operation to be shut down before thousands of taxpayer-funded high-powered firearms were handed over to violent cartels.

A lawyer representing Celis-Acosta, the alleged gun runner who was arrested and released by the ATF, suspects that the various federal agencies involved in the scandal purposely withheld the critical information. “When one hand is not talking to the other, perhaps somebody is hiding something,”



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attorney Adrian Fontes told the *Times*. "Was this intentional?"

Supporters of the Second Amendment had [long suspected](#) that the administration's firearm-trafficking operation was aimed at demonizing gun rights and imposing more unconstitutional restrictions on Americans' right to keep and bear arms. Official documents later [confirmed](#) those suspicions, revealing that the bloody fallout from the scheme was being used to advance more gun control.

More recently, analysts have pointed to scandalous [video footage](#) of Attorney General Eric Holder before he took over the Justice Department. In the speech, then-U.S. Attorney Holder proposes a massive tax-funded propaganda campaign to "brainwash" — in his words — America's youth against gun rights.

His anti-gun campaign, however, appears to have backfired spectacularly. After [bragging](#) about the gun-running program in Mexico during a 2009 speech, Holder later claimed — under oath — that he had not heard of it until it was exposed in the media. He later [admitted](#) that was not true.

Since then, Holder has been [caught lying repeatedly](#) even as he lashed out at the media and investigators. Over 100 members of Congress are already calling for his resignation. And if he continues his efforts to cover up the Fast and Furious scandal, Rep. Issa has [warned](#) that he could be held in contempt.

Incredibly, after the latest public disclosures surrounding the two FBI "drug lords," the Department of Justice vowed to break more federal laws by refusing to comply with congressional subpoenas. In a letter to Rep. Issa and Sen. Grassley, Assistant Attorney General Ronald Weich claimed their staffs were exposing the criminality to the public.

"While we do not know who provided these letters to reporters, we are deeply disturbed that the sensitive law-enforcement information contained in them has now entered the public realm," Weich [wrote](#). "This public disclosure is impeding the department's efforts to hold individuals accountable for their illegal acts." He also said the Department would not be handing over any more information due to the purported "sensitivity" of supposed "ongoing operations."

A spokesman for Rep. Issa, however, said the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee would not put up with such lawlessness. "It is troubling that the attorney general continues to express the outlandish view that his compliance with lawful and binding subpoenas is merely optional," Issa spokeswoman Becca Watkins told CNN.

Issa's Committee is also attempting to investigate a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) scheme to [launder the profits of Mexican drug cartels](#). The Justice Department has so far refused to cooperate, but pressure is still growing after the *New York Times* blew the whistle on the program late last year.

And it is not just Congress that is growing weary of the administration's antics. A [recent survey](#) of ATF agents reveals an extreme lack of trust in leadership. According to the study, less than half of those surveyed believed the agency's senior leaders maintained high standards of honesty and integrity.

The Fast and Furious scandal — and the retaliation against brave whistleblowers who exposed the scheme — contributed to the dismal results. "The controversies plaguing ATF over the last year have weighed heavily on the morale of employees and their faith in senior leadership," ATF spokesman Drew Wade told Fox News. "Mistakes were made."

More than a few top [drug bosses](#) and even [government agents](#) have claimed the U.S. government is arming and protecting certain drug cartels. And as the administration continues to stonewall while top



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Justice officials [plead the Fifth Amendment](#), public suspicion is only growing.

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