Written by **Thomas R. Eddlem** on October 11, 2011

Calls Grow for Holder Resignation Over “Fast and Furious”

"Mr. Attorney General," Issa wrote in reply to a Holder letter to the House Oversight Committee, "you have made numerous statements about Fast and Furious that have eventually been proven to be untrue. Your lack of trustworthiness while speaking about Fast and Furious has called into question your overall credibility as Attorney General.... Whether you realize it yet or not, you own Fast and Furious. It is your responsibility."

"Fast and Furious" involved the transfer of some 2,020 firearms to the Sinaloa Drug Cartel of Mexico from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (still known as ATF) beginning at least as early as 2009. The firearms included weapons such as AK-47s, AR-15s, and at least two different models of armor-piercing, .50 caliber sniper rifles. The idea officially behind the gun-walking scandal was to track the guns and arrest the cartel leaders. But the ATF and other liaising agencies never had a practical plan to track the guns. In any event, the guns were lost as soon as they changed hands to Sinaloa cartel members.

The guns have appeared at more than 500 violent crime scenes in the United States and Mexico, including one where U.S. Border Patrol Agent Brian A. Terry was killed by drug gang members. The ATF ended the gun transfers to the gang after news that the guns were used to murder Terry became public in December 2010.

This writer has suggested the (unproven) possibility that the U.S. government was worried about the rival and more powerful Las Zetas drug cartel taking over the Mexican government, and that the Sinaloa cartel was armed deliberately as a counterweight to the Las Zetas threat.

Holder had testified before Congress May 3, 2010 that he had "probably heard about Fast and Furious for the first time over the last few weeks." But this was more than five months after the death of Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry had made national news; guns found at the scene were instantly recognized as "Fast and Furious" weapons and Justice Department officials quickly ended the program of arming the Sinaloa cartel after Terry's death.

Issa wrote to Holder, "This statement, made before Congress, has proven to be patently untrue. Documents released by the Department just last week showed that you received at least seven memos about Fast and Furious starting as early as July 2010." Issa is preparing more subpoenas on the

scandal, according to multiple press reports. "People at the top of [the] Justice [Department] were well briefed, knew about it and seemed to be the command and control and funding for this program," Issa told CNN.

Holder continues to insist he had "no knowledge of 'Fast and Furious' misguided tactics" and accused Issa and other GOP members of Congress of "irresponsible and inflammatory rhetoric." Holder wrote to members of the House Government Oversight Committee October 7 that he didn't know about "Fast and Furious" because his office was deluged with paper reports and his staff didn't tell him about the program. "Those suggestions mischaracterize the process by which I receive information concerning the activities of the Department's many components. On a weekly basis, my office typically receives over a hundred pages of so-called 'weekly reports' that, while addressed to me, actually are provided to and reviewed by members of my staff and the staff of the Office of Deputy Attorney General." Interestingly, Holder has retained his Chief of Staff, Gary Grindler, despite his accusations that his staff did not properly inform him about the program.

In his letter Holder went on to characterize congressional investigations into "Fast and Furious" as politically motivated, and ended in a political call for more federal gun-control laws. "While failing to interdict weapons is an unacceptable tactic to stop the flow of illegal weapons, it seems clear to me that some in Congress are more interested in using this regrettable incident to score political points than in addressing the underlying problem. Even in the face of an unprecedented flow of guns across the border, too many in Congress still oppose every effort to reform our gun laws in ways that would make the United States and our Mexican neighbors safer."

Issa responded by claiming that "efforts were designed to circle the wagons around DOJ and its political appointees." Issa summarized his findings: "Incredibly, in your letter from Friday you now claim that you were unaware of Fast and Furious because your staff failed to inform you of information contained in memos that were specifically addressed to you. At best, this indicates negligence and incompetence in your duties as Attorney General. At worst, it places your credibility into serious doubt."

Issa also charged that a Justice Department coverup of the scandal is ongoing, arguing that the Justice Department's "cooperation to date has been minimal. Hundreds of pages of documents that have been produced to my Committee are duplicative, and hundreds more contain substantial redactions, rendering them virtually worthless. The Department has actively engaged in retaliation against multiple whistleblowers, and has, on numerous occasions, attempted to disseminate false and misleading information to the press in an attempt to discredit this investigation."

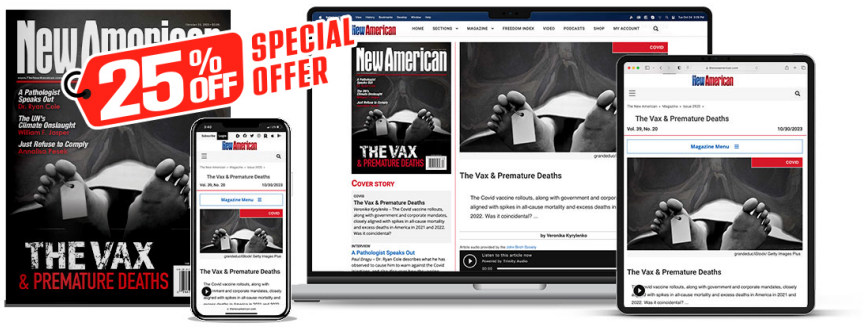
Photo of Eric Holder: AP Images

Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative,
non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



What's Included?

24 Issues Per Year
Optional Print Edition
Digital Edition Access
Exclusive Subscriber Content
Audio provided for all articles
Unlimited access to past issues
Coming Soon! Ad FREE
60-Day money back guarantee!
Cancel anytime.

Subscribe