



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on February 12, 2016

Cliven Bundy Charged With Conspiracy. What About the Court Charge of Conspiracy by BLM?

Nevada Rancher Cliven Bundy (shown), [arrested Wednesday night](#) at the Portland International Airport, was charged with multiple felony counts in a federal criminal [complaint](#) filed yesterday in federal court. Bundy, father of Ammon and Ryan Bundy, leaders of the occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge near Burns, Oregon, is accused of a series of crimes pertaining to the [2014 Bundy Ranch standoff](#) against the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM), to wit:



- conspiracy to commit an offense against the United States
- assault on a federal law enforcement officer
- carrying a firearm in relation to a crime of violence (2 counts)
- obstruction of justice
- interference with commerce by extortion

Prosecutors say that, if convicted, Bundy, 69, could face up to 42 years in prison and up to \$1.5 million in fines. Ammon Bundy, 40, and Ryan Bundy, 43, were [arrested on January 26](#), at the same time and at the same FBI/Oregon State Police roadblock incident in which fellow refuge occupier LaVoy Finicum, an Arizona rancher, was shot and killed. According to the FBI/OSP account of the shooting, Finicum was shot because he was reaching for a loaded gun in his pocket. However, the only eyewitnesses who have spoken out thus far, other than the law enforcement spokesmen, are two women who were in Finicum's vehicle at the time of the shooting, and both say LaVoy Finicum was shot while unarmed, with his hands in the air. (See [here](#) and [here](#).)

Conspiracy vs. Conspiracy

It is not surprising that the [left-dominated "mainstream" media](#) have uniformly supported the federal government's jihad against the Bundys, [the Hammonds](#), [the Hages](#), and other western ranchers, portraying the BLM and Forest Service as guardians of the "public lands," while ranchers, farmers, miners, and loggers are caricatured as rapacious destroyers.

The major media have also been reliable propagators of the "welfare rancher" meme of the radical environmental groups and the federal agencies. NPR, for instance, in a February 12 [article](#) on Cliven Bundy's arrest, states that "Bundy owes the federal Bureau of Land Management, or BLM, more than \$1 million in leases and fines." This oft-reported charge, is sometimes inflated to \$1.5 million or \$2 million. Similarly, *The Oregonian* reported on February 11 that "Bundy owes the agency \$1 million in unpaid fees and penalties." However, in a previous article, a different writer for *The Oregonian* had challenged the BLM's exorbitant claims and pointed out that the agency refused to divulge how it had arrived at its calculations.



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In an article entitled, [“BLM won’t back up claim rancher Cliven Bundy owes \\$1 million”](#) *Oregonian* staff writer Les Zaitz reported that “BLM officials say [Bundy] kept \$1 million he owes for grazing without permits.” “But that sum is unproven,” noted Zaitz, “and the agency’s diligence in collecting any sum from Bundy is questionable.” *The Oregonian* story continued:

Bundy told *The Oregonian* Thursday he doesn’t owe anything. And one more thing: “I’ve never been billed.”

The BLM’s public pronouncement about the debt led to head scratching among Oregon cattle ranchers, puzzled how one rancher could rack up and then evade such a debt. The BLM, which manages about one-fourth of Oregon’s acreage, diligently collects fees from ranchers around the state. The total outstanding debt from Oregon ranchers in April was \$18,759.

BLM officials, however, have repeatedly refused to document the basis for their \$1.1 million claim and initially wouldn’t say a word about its attempts to collect the debt.

According to Zaitz, “Bundy is suspicious about the figure. He said agency officials were publicly saying he owed \$300,000 in fees in the weeks leading up to the confrontation.” “BLM is keeping secret how the \$1 million was calculated,” *The Oregonian* reported.

In addition, many other unsavory facts began coming out about the BLM’s actions in the Bundy case. “The agency’s stature earned another black eye last week from the Nevada sheriff who initially agreed to help BLM gather up Bundy’s cattle,” *The Oregonian* reported. “Clark County Sheriff Doug Gillespie said in interviews with Las Vegas newspapers last week that the BLM lied to him about circumstances of the cattle roundup. He said agency officials told him Bundy’s sons weren’t in the area when in fact they were. He said he was told the agency had a place to store the cattle when it didn’t.”

BLM critics says this is standard operating procedure for the Bureau of Lying Miscreants. They point to, among many other pieces of evidence, the harsh rulings against the BLM and USFS by Chief Judge Robert C. Jones of the Federal District Court of Nevada, especially in the case of Nevada rancher Wayne Hage, which we have quoted many times, but which have been ignored by the major media.

As we [reported previously](#):

Chief Judge Robert C. Jones of the Federal District Court of Nevada issued a blistering decision that charged officials of the BLM and other agencies with malicious and criminal conduct, and actually engaging in a decades-long “conspiracy” against the Hages.

Judge Jones said he found that “the government and the agents of the government in that locale, sometime in the ’70s and ’80s, entered into a conspiracy, a literal, intentional conspiracy, to deprive the Hages of not only their permit grazing rights, for whatever reason, but also to deprive them of their vested property rights under the takings clause, and I find that that’s a sufficient basis to hold that there is irreparable harm if I don’t ... restrain the government from continuing in that conduct.”

“In the present case,” declared Judge Jones, “the Government’s actions over the past two decades shock the conscience of the Court.”

The findings of Judge Jones in the Hage case should be borne in mind as tensions mount in Clark County, where the actions of the BLM are shocking the conscience of the entire nation....

While sympathetic to and supportive of the Bundys and other family farmers and ranchers who are being subjected to illegal and unconscionable actions by federal “public servants,” *The New American*



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magazine and this writer have not been advocates of all the actions and tactics chosen by the Bundys and their supporters, in either the Nevada or Oregon standoffs.

However, as [we predicted](#) in 2014, lawlessness and tyrannical abuse on the part of federal agencies would inevitably lead to more desperate property owners choosing confrontation to capitulation and ruin. “We’re friends with the Hages and we supported them,” Cliven Bundy told this reporter in 2014, “But look what happened to them. They fought the Forest Service and BLM in the courts for years and decades and won ruling after ruling. They exposed the criminal actions of the government. And every time they won the government — using their own money against them — appeals and delays and appeals and delays, and ignores the judge’s injunctions. They have all the resources and can just wear you down. It’s corrupt, and its impossible to get justice, and that’s why we say we have to fix it according to the Constitution, which says (Article 1, Section 8) the federal government isn’t even supposed to have the land, it belongs to the states and to the people.”

Photo of Cliven Bundy: AP Images

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