



Judge Blasts Federal Conspiracy; Ranch Family Vindicated — Again!

Between the beginning of June and the end of August, an amazing drama unfolded in the courtroom of Robert C. Jones, chief judge of the United States District Court of Nevada. It should have received front-page billing across the country, but has been completely ignored by the major media.



In a June 6 bench statement, Judge Jones charged federal officials of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with violating previous court judgments and engaging in a decades-long conspiracy against Nevada rancher Wayne Hage and his family. Judge Jones described the agencies' actions against the Hages as "abhorrent," and also noted that he had asked the local U.S. attorney to attend the hearing for consideration of criminal prosecution of BLM field manager Tom Seley and USFS ranger Steve Williams for contempt of court. However, the judge suggested that it may be necessary for the Department of Justice to appoint an outside prosecutor, since the local U.S. attorney may already be compromised. He instructed the U.S. Attorney's office: "I will require them to account back to me in six months — within six months, as to any action they've taken."

On August 31, following a weeklong show-cause hearing for contempt charges, Judge Jones issued a blistering bench statement accusing USFS officials of lying to the court, attempting to mislead the court, abusing agency regulatory powers, and engaging in a pattern of threats and intimidation to coerce witnesses. The judge charged that Seley and Williams had used illegal means in an attempt "to kill the business of Mr. Hage." Judge Jones, in effect, "fired" Seley and Williams. "Mr. Seley can no longer be an administrator in this BLM district. I don't trust him to be unbiased. Nor can he supervise anybody in this district," the judge stated in his order from the bench.

First, back to Judge Jones' June 6 bench ruling. "So I'm finding and concluding as a matter of law," said the judge, "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



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on November 19, 2012

I don't — and it's in the public interest, if I don't restrain the government from continuing in that conduct."

Seley and Williams attempted to extort money out of third-party ranchers who had leased cattle to Wayne N. Hage. They issued trespass notices for which they demanded payments, and in one instance coerced a \$15,000 settlement.

"Especially the collection from innocent others of thousands of dollars for trespass notices is abhorrent to the Court," the judge stated, "and I express on the record my offense of my own conscience in that conduct. That's not just simply following the law and pursuing your management right, it evidences an actual intent to destroy their water rights."

In fact, Judge Jones accused the federal bureaucrats of "racketeering" under the federal RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corruption Organizations) statute, extortion, mail fraud, and fraud.

The August show-cause hearing gave further evidence the abuses that so offended the court were not limited to localized actions by Seley and Williams. The USFS and BLM sent a high-powered lineup of officials from Washington, D.C., and state and regional offices to defend their policies, practices, and employees. But Judge Jones was not buffaloed. He subjected them to intense questioning and made witness credibility findings in which USFS Region 4 Director Harv Forsgren was found to be lying to the court, and the Nevada head of the USFS, Jeanne Higgins, was found not entirely truthful. After those findings, several other named federal officials did not testify. Judge Jones also let it be known that some of the named officials — particularly Seley and Williams — may be personally liable for thousands of dollars in fines and damages.

Longtime readers of The New American will recognize this case; we have been reporting on the *Hage v. U.S.* property rights case for many years. We have featured interviews with, and articles by, Wayne Hage. For many years, Wayne Hage — cowboy, author, scholar, patriot, patriarch, Christian gentleman — fought an epic and lonely battle against a conspiracy of lawless bureaucrats who operated under the color of law. He repeatedly won judgments in court, only to see them ignored or appealed in an endless appeals process by the offending bureaucrats, who had access to unlimited taxpayer funds — including Hage's own taxes. Wayne Hage died in 2006, but his family has carried on his fight.

The outrage expressed by Judge Jones should be echoed by all Americans — and should be directed at members of Congress to exercise their duties to restrain, penalize, and/or abolish the federal agencies that are involved in abusive, criminal, and unconstitutional actions against the American people.



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