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Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2011 12:57 PM

Subject: Raids on Gibson

This is really scary and makes me wonder what is going on in the Obama admin and the Feds in general. It generates fear of Government, something we should not have. If you have not heard of the armed Federal agents raiding Gibson guitar check in ioxnews.com. I do not know if it appears in the mainstream press but Fox covered this story which is esp interesting since Gibson is a big employer in Bozeman.

John R.

The following is a posting from Bill Gonder on the Fed's seizure of Indian Rosewood. Bill used to work for Gibson in Bozeman. Taylor and Martin use Indian Rosewood, yet they weren't targeted.

from Bill Gonder '61

As far as Gibson Guitars.....? Well there are two issues. Everyone should know the owner Henry is a strict conservationist. He sat on the board of the Rainforest Alliance for many years. When Brazilian Rosewood became an endangered species Henry was the first guitar manufacture to voluntarily quit using it. This hurt the Montana factory as the most popular guitar we made was Brazilian. Henry said stop and we did. That was in May of 2003. The rest of the industry still uses it. When Madagascar Rosewood started becoming an issue Henry stop using it. That was a year and a half ago.

I digress a bit. When third world countries started emerging they always try to raise their standard of living by selling off their natural resources. The reason The United States was so successful was our vast store of natural resources. We led the world in destroying natural forests and mining. The sale of our resources made us wealthy. Well... the rest of the world is following our example. We managed to cut everything down and dig everythig up and have nothein left. Then we sent all our jobs away and we are fast becoming a third world country . Sigh. Madagascar was a beautiful island in the Indian Ocean and had wonderful forests. Their government took control and started selling them for the money they represented. The rest of the world looked on in horror. They cut all their trees down and sold them. The guitar industry bought 1% of the wood the

rest went to the furniture business around the world. The exact same thing happened in Brazil earlier. Gibson's production of instruments is small in comparison to other manufactures. When Henry stopped using endangered wood the rest of the industry laughed.

Two years ago the Interior Dept. / Fish wildlife and Parks raided Gibson in Nashville and took Indian Rosewood and Madagascar Ebony. Henry had bought it thru a broker and it was legally brought into the country by the broker and then Henry purchased it. It and the paperwork were inspected and approved by the Customs Dept. The government seized the wood and refused to file any charges. Henry sued to get the legal property back two years after the raid. That upset the Fish and Game and they raided again to shut him up.

The wood they took this time was Rosewood and Ebony grown on tree farms in India and sold to a broker by the Indian Gov. This was totally legal wood all paperwork was fine and there was no question. Well..... it seems that the Rosewood and Ebony were to be used by Gibson to make parts for guitars. Mainly Fretboards. The Fish folks dug up an obscure Indian law that says all wood sold must be in it's final form and manufacturing must take place in India. This was interpreted by the U.S. agency as being a violation as Gibson was going to turn the fretboard blanks into fretboards here in the U.S. When Henry contacted the Indian gov. They had not filed a complaint nor were they aware of the so called Indian law. Gibson is MADE IN THE USA. Not India. The Obama is trying to force Gibson off shore? What the heck? Fox news is following it. The mainstream media is ignorant.

Henry took his complaint to the court of public opinion and seems to be winning the battle except the Government still refuses to address the first two year old complaint. No one knows why the Gov. felt the need to serve a search warrant on a corporate office with 26 men in body armor and automatic weapons.

I honestly don't know what this is all about Dennis. Henry is at a loss. He is a conservationist and probably did contribute to conservative causes but there are bigger fish out there that have done more than Henry. I doubt that it is political. It may have been prompted by an insider that was upset and told the feds bad information and they don't know how to get out of a mistake. That seems to be the most plausible explanation. The wood that is being held can't cost more than a few thousand dollars so Gibson is just fine.