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## **Cincinnati NBC reporter Eric Flack obediently beats the drum for more gun control**

By Tim Inwood

<http://www.buckeyefirearms.org/article4058.html>

If you had put your hand to your ear and listened to the East, you would have heard the presses going at the Brady Campaign as they put out press releases begging the media to begin to bang the drums calling for new gun control laws. Ever the obedient creature, the press obeyed. For the past several months I have noted shrill voices coming across the television and radio calling for much needed new gun control regulations.

The talking heads have called for banning .50 caliber rifles, as well as reinstating the worthless Clinton Semi-automatic firearms ban. Worse, they want to expand the parameters of the original ban to include innocuous guns like the little Ruger 10/22. As of late, the call has been to close the "Gun Show Loophole".

On Thursday the 15th, I was contacted by Eric Flack of WLWT Channel 5 News in Cincinnati. He told me he was doing a story on criminals obtaining guns at gun shows and wanted someone to come down and talk with them. We talked for several minutes and finally agreed that I would come down around 8PM for a studio interview. I had my apprehensions about doing this: The media rarely gives gun owners a fair shake, and sadly this was no exception. In a four minute report, I was on air for ten seconds at best.

### **The Interview**

We sat for 30 minutes discussing the issue. He opened the interview by asking what I wanted to get across to the audience. I told him the major point I wanted the audience to understand was this was a non-issue. I said the Bureau of Justice had done two studies showing that gun shows were not how criminals got their firearms. The BJ study of 1991 found 0.6% of criminals got their guns from gun shows. A larger sample in 1997 said 0.7% got their guns at gun shows. 39% got them from a fence, stole the guns themselves or through some other illegal source. 40% got weapons from family or friends. He asked if there were other studies; I told him the National Institute of Justice did a study finding much the same result, coming in under 2%.

I told him that my own family had been touched by criminal misuse of a firearm; my niece was the wife of the Butler County Ohio Deputy Sheriff who was shot in April 2005. Luckily, he is a tough as nails fellow and survived being gut shot with a illegal sawed-off 12 gauge shotgun that was loaded with deer slugs. The criminals who shot him are now serving life sentences. I said, "I am thankful that every time they look up to see the sky it will be ringed in barbed wire." I told him as a responsible gun owner and as a result of this tragedy in my family I certainly did not want to see guns in the hands of criminals, but I also would not swallow additional pointless gun regulation.

He then asked me, "Wouldn't it be worth making everyone at a gun show go through a background check if it would save one life?" I told him I rejected the argument. The Brady's had spoon fed that line to the press one too many times. When the Brady Act was passed in 1993, the hollow words, "if it saves one life", was used ad nauseum. Point in fact, the five day waiting period cost lives. The National Rifle Association and others documented the sad stories of women, in particular, who were brutally murdered by those whom they had restraining orders against, all while they were waiting for approval on their handgun purchase. The Brady Act with its original five day waiting period killed these unarmed women.

He seemed a bit flustered that I would not concede to his points and seemed mildly annoyed. This was confirmed by comments posted on his blog after the report ran:

First I want to thank all the people, both pro gun and pro gun control, that spoke with me for this story. I know my friend Tim Inman [sic], member of the Buckeye Firearms Association, believes statistics provided by the Brady Group are biased and in some cases, flat out wrong. I tend to believe that each group has it's own agenda, and that numbers from both sides need to be taken with a grain of salt. That said, it floors me that there are ways to get high powered firearms in this country without going through a background check. Even if the number of criminals who get their guns from gun shows is small, any action that might make it harder for the bad guys to pick up guns is worthwhile in my book. My friend Tim said he doesn't buy the argument that "one life saved" makes something worth it. With all due respect, I disagree. While I support the rights of those who wish to bear arms, I fight for the rights of those who want to take every step to keep guns out of the hands of those who shouldn't have them.

I have to respectfully disagree with him too. He is as wrong as he got my last name. Friends, after all, usually get the Inwood right!

I told him that I rejected the term "gun show loophole", as there was no loophole; private sales have always been permitted. I also pointed out the term loophole was a politically loaded term. I said if you use the term a tax loophole, folks automatically want to close it because they think someone is getting an advantage they are not. The same is true here, so I reject the term gun show loophole.

I pointed out that there is heavy law enforcement presence at every show I go to. Many police officers are shooting enthusiasts. When I go to gun shows, I see police officers I know on a regular basis. Since we were doing in the interview in Cincinnati, I pointed out that I see a friend who is a Hamilton County Jailer at the Sharonville show often. A criminal at a gun show is just begging to be arrested for being there, as they are under disability to be around firearms. Who better to identify a felon than the guy who had him in the lock-up for days or months on end?

I also talked at length about the economics of the issue. Thugs have chosen a life of crime and based on that must make wise economic decisions. If Johnny Q. Badguy is walking down the street and sees a police officer coming at him, he knows he may have run and in the process throw away the gun he is carrying before the policeman catches him. He doesn't want that additional gun charge. If he goes to a gun show, he is going to pay close to retail for that gun. That is pretty expensive for something you may have to ditch. So is it more likely he is going to pay \$750 for that HK USP at the gun show, or buy it from a fence selling stolen goods on the street for \$50-100? Better yet, from the economic point of view, it is cheaper for him to steal it himself. Low and behold, the statistics and studies

by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Institutes for Justice show this is exactly what they do.

These are the arguments I presented to Eric Flack as to why this is a non-issue and the statistics back up what I was saying. What we got when the program aired at 11PM on November 19th was what I feared it would be: biased reporting by someone who knows very little about guns, along with soundbites from the Brady Campaign and, to top it off, a grieving mother who lost her son in a robbery during the summer. All this was piled atop one gun rights activist--me. All I can say is I am delighted that I can get my version of what happened out.

## **The Report**

The story (which can be viewed in streaming video here) opened with Eric going to a gun show in Kentucky. With hidden cameras (something gunshows prohibit, but there are no restrictions on the First Amendment when trying to restrict the Second Amendment), they began interviewing folks selling firearms. People can say stupid things when they don't know they are being recorded, and this was no exception as they cherry-picked the crowd for bumpkins who would say the wrong thing.

Most comic were the comments made by the reporter as he looked over the guns. Clearly he knew little about firearms. The blithering about the LAR "Grizzly" pistol in .45 Winchester Magnum ("designed so they can kill Bears with one shot") was amusing. Sure, lots of people take on Grizzly bears with a pistol and survive... I chuckled at his being stunned one could buy the dreaded "powerful SKS assault rifle". At one point he was carrying on about something holding 90 rounds; I suspect it had to be when he was talking to the fellow about the semi-auto AK-47. I think he translated 3- 30 round magazines into 90 rounds total in the gun, or at least that is how it sounded. He made the gratuitous comment about how these guns had "more power than what the police have". That blurb tells me Eric did not go talk to police officers who carry some form of Armalite rifle in the patrol car. Again he clearly knew nothing about guns and it showed. I must admit I was a bit embarrassed for him. But he walked into this minefield on his own.

While footage of students fleeing Columbine High School ran, Eric talks about how the Harris and Klebold guns were bought at a gun show. What he does not say is that it is well known those were purchases made for them by older friends. That is illegal and it is called straw man purchase. The BATF knew where those guns came from because there was a trail of 4473 forms leading them to the buyers of those guns...

Then they showed the representative from the Brady campaign wringing his hands about how criminals were going to shows buying as many and what ever type of gun they wanted unrestricted. Naturally, he did not back this up with anything, as nothing so firm as hot air is the foundation of his claim.

At this point I appear on screen, all ten seconds of me. What little footage they used of me was frustrating as it was not the key point I was trying to make, not even close. The quote was butchered and somewhat out of context. I was talking about how the situation had only gotten worse with guns being used in crime since the enactment of the 1968 Gun Control Act because it made it more difficult for the law abiding to get a gun, while making it all the easier for predatory criminals who prefer unarmed victims. I also discussed how a total prohibition like that of Washington D.C. made Washington the murder capitol of the United

States for years. Those comments were, of course, not shown. What is shown is when he said, "So you are saying get rid of the waiting period all together?" I said, "No, I am not saying the whole background check should be done away with, I am saying it is not proven effective." He then asked, "So expanding it does not help anything?" and I said, "Expanding it makes no sense whatsoever"... That is the end of what was broadcast of what I had to say. What I went on to say, that was cut out, was "based on what we know, there is no justification for spending millions more dollars enforcing something we do not know to be working." or something to that effect. (Since I don't have a tape of what I said, I am having to go from memory.)

He took that out of context because I had told him earlier in the interview no academic study had been done showing the efficacy of the Brady act in stopping criminals from getting guns. I also told him their claim of 700,000 kept out of criminal hands (in the show the Brady rep told him over a million guns) was fallacious. I explained that was an estimated number of initial denials, which were usually overturned on appeal because the applicant had the same name as a criminal. They followed up my few seconds with Ms. Stephanie Couch, whose son, Bryan Couch, was killed this past summer. They made it sound like he was a child. In reality, he was a 22 year old, deep in the rapper scene, whose street name was "B-Chubb". He was shot and killed at 2:30 AM, when most good citizens are in bed. I don't know if the thugs who shot him have been caught, but, of course, to insert this tale into this particular news story, without knowing where the gun used to kill Bryan was procured, was irresponsible. If it did not come from a gun show, then it is a gratuitous assertion designed to sway the public with emotion, not fact. Anyway, I came away from that part of the report with the understanding we are supposed to blame guns that Bryan Couch AKA "B-Chubb" made the decision to be part of the criminal culture that is the rap scene. With many big name rappers like Notorious BIG and Tupak Shakur who have been killed by fellow rappers, why should we be surprised this young man died like so many others he aspired to be like? Certainly his mother should not be surprised. As a parent I understand her sadness at her loss. But infringing on our rights to make up for the fact she let her son get involved in "Gangsta" culture is not logical.

I was concerned after the interview when Eric made the comment to me that he was not too terribly interested in the statistics backing my view. I was relieved and to his credit he did use information I had given him concerning the studies. He admitted at the end of the report that the National Institute of Justice study showed less than 1% of criminals got their guns from gun shows. However he went on to talk about the BATF study I mentioned to him, claiming many crime guns come from gun shows. However he did not mention the details I also gave him that showed the study was seriously flawed. The BATF cherry-picked the details of 314 cases over a smattering of years, not sequential and certainly not random, to get the result they wanted. Federal agencies, needing to justify their bloated budgets, often do such things to the Nation's detriment. This is no different.

In the end I was very unhappy with the end result of Eric's "investigation". It struck me that a conclusion was drawn well before I came down to talk to him. I was merely there so they could tell the FCC our side had a chance to speak, in the event complaints followed.

## **Wrapup**

So, my friends, as you are watching television and the emotionally charged segment comes up demanding this or that new anti-gun regulation, just remember the folks bringing you the story are well-intentioned, but are ill informed on the subject and, as Eric admits

in his blog, have an agenda. Eric's closing words are these:

I fight for the rights of those who want to take every step to keep guns out of the hands of those who shouldn't have them.

Sadly, those who are pushing this non-issue forward are the Bradys. We also know what steps they wish to take. The Brady Campaign's original name was Handgun Control Inc. The founder, the late Pete Shields, made his goals clear in an interview in with the New Yorker Magazine in 1976:

We'll take one step at a time, and the first is necessarily -given the political realities - very modest. We'll have to start working again to strengthen the law, and then again to strengthen the next law and again and again. Our ultimate goal, total control of hand-guns, is going to take time. The first problem is to slow down production and sales. Next is to get registration. The final problem is to make possession of all handguns and ammunition (with a few exceptions) totally illegal.

The name may have changed but the goal remains the same, even if they won't admit it openly today.

So please remember those who are willing to take "every step" to keep guns away from criminals are willing to take too many steps over our rights. Their reckless abuse of the First Amendment to damage our Second Amendment rights, bears our eternal vigilance and resistance.

Tim Inwood is the current Legislative Liaison and Past President of the Clinton County Farmers and Sportsmen Association, an Endowment Member of the NRA, Life Member of OGCA, and a volunteer for Buckeye Firearms Association.

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**MCSM addition**

In 2004 I was interviewed by Craig Demchak of Television Station WBFF, Fox channel 45 in Baltimore Maryland. The story was about the Second Amendment Coalition, a voter information and registration drive that was focused on gun owners and gun shows. Craig interviewed me at my office park and we discussed the many aspects of firearms, the Second Amendment, voting and political activists at gun shows. The news story aired a few days later, unfortunately in the middle of the Republican Political convention and I had to go head to head with Vice President Richard B. Cheney for air time, they cut the report short. The item ran about 4 minutes of which I was on for a total of about one minute, an eternity in TV news.

All in All it turned out very good, I have a video file of it. The station did a 10 second tease twice in the first 30 minutes of the hour long news show using some flyers I provided to him with the MCSM call to action line, "Have Gun Will Vote". We talked about the importance of getting active AND getting your friends active and to VOTE. Even the counter argument made by a liberal political pundant played into the message I presented. He said something like, "apparently these people intend to pick off anti-gun candidates one-by-one." I could not have said it better.

I was lucky, the reporter wanted to do a fair story on the line of political action - pro-gun -

voting efforts. I was able to feed him some very good one liners for the show. I encourage you to speak out whenever asked and hope you too can be effective, but if you have problems with a biased reporter and your words are twisted, keep slugging and take further action.

1) Write a detailed statement and letter to the station regarding the incident, including descriptions of what was actually said and how it was edited to falsely imply you had a different meaning. Include any quotes of the language used to illustrate the bias or actual errors in the reporting. Point out that your intention and position is falsely represented in the report.

2) Direct the station to place a copy of the letter in the stations Public File. The Public file is a station internal file in which they must keep copies of all material germane to the stations status of a public licensee such as complaints and it must be available for inspection by the general public.

3) About 3 or 4 weeks later visit the station about mid day and ask to see their public file. They must bring you the file or take you to it. If they ask you what item you want to see, just explain you want to see the whole file for the last year. They must make it available to you. You should not have to identify yourself. Look for your letter. If it is not there, take notes of what you see for the dates preceding and after the date you sent the letter. If it is not there, thank them and leave. Have someone else come in two weeks later and confirm and document that it is still not there.

4) File a complaint to the FCC headquarters in Washington and to the local station area field office that the letter you sent to the station is not in its public file. This is one requirement that the FCC Still takes seriously. If the FCC inspects the station and issues a fine to the station, you can get creative; perhaps suggesting that the station make time available to you or your spokesperson on a regular basis to provide a rebuttal to the anti-gun news.

Further action might be to post messages on the stations own feed back or story discussion web pages. If they get edited out then post copies of them directly to the others posting on the page if addresses are available or to discussion groups interested in the station or local media.

Do not let false or misleading statements survive.

Thanks,

Bob Culver, MCSM <[www.mcsm.org](http://www.mcsm.org)>