

Good Morning

Chairman Chaffetz, Ranking Member Cummings, honorable members of this Committee, thank you for your continuing efforts and investigation into this and the many other matters that come before you. Your duty is an important one.

I am honored and humbled to have received an invitation to again address this body and to take part, however small, in such a fundamental and important proceeding in the governing of our Nation. It is a privilege that I do not take lightly.

Nearly six years ago to the day, I sat at this table with my fellow whistleblowers as we described for you the ATF's ill-conceived and deadly gunwalking operation known as Fast & Furious. Today, I have been asked to return and tell you what has transpired since – the aftermath if you will.

First, allow me to say that it is not my desire nor my intent to sit here and cry foul, purport myself as a victim, or to seek sympathy. Nothing I say here today can compare to the ultimate sacrifice of Brian Terry, or to the immeasurable loss and injustice suffered by the Terry Family. I am here simply to tell you my story, and you will conclude from it what you will. But it is just that – mine alone...just one of many from an untold number of whistle-blowers. Each of whom have a story all their own, some having fared better...some worse, but each important, each personal to them, and all worthy of being heard.

It is my hope that my story will not give cause to dwell on those things that have already occurred, but rather utilized to help us pursue a common goal – that of learning from the past to better ourselves as individuals, as a government, and as a Nation.

Since the moment I first voiced objection to the strategy of gunwalking and pointed out the all too foreseeable and tragic consequences of it, I began being subjected to reprisals. Initially from my immediate supervisors, then my chain of command, and soon thereafter – from the uppermost echelons of my Agency, the ATF. Later, after being compelled to blow the whistle and bring the deadly ramifications of it to the light of others, to you, and to the public, I found myself squarely in the crosshairs of the Department of Justice itself. That decision, the single act of standing up and saying “What we are doing is wrong”...instantly took my standing from being that of an Agent of the Government – to an Enemy of the State.

United in their Hubris, and without ever once talking to me, asking me a single question, or properly investigating what it was that I was actually reporting, ATF and DOJ officials implemented an all-out campaign to silence and discredit me.

When I began preparations for this Hearing, I started to list the many acts of retaliation and retributions that had befallen me as a result of blowing the whistle. Truthfully, that list soon grew much too long and much too cumbersome to be recited here before you today. No less than three plots to have me arrested and criminally charged; Subjected to multiple Internal Affairs Investigations; My Communications Monitored and my Activities Surveilled; I was Lied about; Disparaged; Publicly Attacked; Ridiculed; Libeled; Transferred 11 times; Denied Promotion; Ostracized; Barred from Government Workplaces; Banned from Public Buildings; and the list goes on and on...

Suffice to say – The last 6 to 7 years at ATF have not been the best for me or my career.

Of all the things that I have encountered and experienced over the past few years, the single most challenging aspect of all of this for me has been the ostracism. When I had a valid viewpoint to share that was viewed as unfavorable to the agency, I immediately became the outcast, dubbed the one who can't get along, accused of being unethical, and became the one who's opinions and views were not even valued enough to simply be heard. Open discussion was off the table and the order was handed down - "Contact with Dodson is detrimental to any ATF career." The ignorant assumptions about my motives and the absurd judgements of my character being used as the reasons to cast me out, simply are not true. Yet they have been and continue to be, the single most difficult reprisal strategy for me to personally overcome.

You see, the fact is, before Fast & Furious...I was a good agent; experienced and dedicated, hardworking and respected. ATF had always been good to me. I believed that I worked for a good Agency, full of good people; I felt that I was part of something bigger, and I was proud to carry the badge.

Never could I have foreseen the many twists and turns of how this would eventually end-up effecting every aspect of my life - personally and professionally. These days, I remain in a state of purgatory...an agent with no Agency. All that has happened and all that has transpired was not because I had done something wrong - but because I did what I thought was right...what I thought I was supposed to do...merely what I thought was expected of me.

As an ordinary GS-13 Field Agent, I found myself in an extraordinary situation, adrift in some deep and unfamiliar waters and having to navigate the many storms and the perilous hazards. But this journey, despite hardships, mistakes, failures, and loss, has taught me much more than I ever knew I needed to learn. Woven in the battered sail of life's biggest trials is where we can find the threads of life's greatest lessons - if only we are willing to learn them.

My desire here today is to offer insight for calming the seas for future whistleblowers, as well as helping Brian Terry's family in getting their deserved answers to the so many lingering questions. In doing so, I hope to assist this committee in its prescribed duty of oversight and reform which is essential to our government's original purpose - serving the people of this Nation. I welcome and encourage all questions that will assist this committee in achieving these outcomes.

Thank you.

John Dodson  
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