



Written by [John F. McManus](#) on March 16, 2018

Fast and Furious

It started during the George W. Bush administration. Back then it was termed “Operation Wide Receiver.” The program later became known as “Gunwalking” and ended up being labeled “[Fast and Furious](#).” An ill-conceived scheme from its outset, it eventually cost the lives of an unknown number of Mexican citizens and one U.S. Border Patrol agent.

The ill-conceived gun distribution project employed by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) allowed, even encouraged, licensed firearms dealers in the U.S. to sell large quantities of weapons to straw buyers. These individuals were known to be conduits for weapons that would end up in the hands of Mexican drug dealers. The scheme had as its ostensible goal the eventual arrests of Mexican drug lords and the collapse of their cartels.



[Fast and Furious](#) was supposed to make detection, arrest, and prosecution of drug lords easier. It relied in part on cooperation of law enforcement agencies in Mexico even though their rampant unreliability was no secret. At one point in the program’s life, a monitoring of its results showed that approximately 700 weapons had been recovered out of over 2,000 that had been allowed to be purchased and quickly transferred to Mexico. And no interruption in drug trafficking occurred.

Criticism of the operation rose rapidly among ATF agents and the legal U.S. gun dealers who cooperated with U.S. authorities. The guns sold in the program were used in crimes committed on both sides of the U.S.-Mexican border. In 2010, [U.S. Border Patrol agent Brian Terry](#) was killed and weapons that were made available to criminal gangsters via Fast and Furious were found at the scene of his death.

Spurred to take action after the death of Agent Terry, the U.S. Congress and the Department of Justice began investigating this growing fiasco. When Obama administration Attorney General Eric Holder refused to cooperate with a legitimate inquiry in 2012, he became the first sitting member of a presidential Cabinet to be formally cited for criminal contempt of Congress. Simultaneously asked about this incredible program, President Obama invoked “executive privilege” and refused to cooperate with the congressional probers. These [high U.S. officials were obviously hiding something](#).

The entire scheme seems now to have been created to have many guns in the hands of killers, drug lords, et al. and to become a stimulus for Congress to enact stricter gun laws for all Americans. The current Department of Justice is planning to reopen an investigation of Fast and Furious and its predecessors. This is long overdue.



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The early years of the Obama administration featured Rahm Emanuel as the president's Chief of Staff. He's the man who famously stated, "A crisis is a terrible thing to waste." To that revealing assessment should be added what seems to have been the Obama/Holder policy, "If no crisis exists, create one."

The U.S. government's war on the ability of Americans to defend themselves must cease. [Anti-Second Amendment](#) partisans seem willing to stop at nothing to overcome the people's right to defend themselves. The conduct of Obama administration officials including the president must fully become known. Agent Brian Terry's death and the deaths of hundreds in Mexico should not be forgotten. And scheming to abolish the American peoples' right to keep and bear arms must cease.

John F. McManus is president emeritus of [The John Birch Society](#). This column appeared originally at the [insideJBS](#) blog and is reprinted here with permission.



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