



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on May 7, 2018

At Massive NRA Convention, Media Hypes Tiny Anti-Gun Protests

DALLAS — Outside the National Rifle Association convention in Dallas, Texas, this weekend, that brought together some 80,000 gun-rights supporters, a small group of fringe anti-gun demonstrators — a few hundred at most — blasted the NRA and demanded “common-sense gun-safety” legislation. The protests were dwarfed by counter-protests supporting what more than a few heavily armed attendees described as the God-given right to keep and bear arms. The pro-gun activists at the rally, not all with the NRA, set up a massive white banner with an image of an “assault rifle” on it with the words “Come and Take It” across the bottom. But in yet another illustration of the media bias and dishonesty decried by so many at the NRA convention, the establishment press largely focused on hyping the tiny anti-gun protests and their discredited conspiracy theories.



The protesters were certainly creative and imaginative. A truck driving around the area, for instance, featured a picture of NRA Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre and Russian strongman Vladimir Putin, along with Russian-style writing. Questions such as “How much money have you taken from Russia?” and “Why have you cozied up to Vladimir Putin’s Kremlin?” adorned the sides of the advertisements. The implication was clear: Anybody who stands against the establishment agenda of gun control, Big Government, globalism, and the far-left must be an agent of Big Government leader Putin. At the NRA conference, though, attendees mocked the idea as more of the same bogus conspiracy theories along the lines of those falsely linking President Trump and others in the GOP to the Kremlin.

More than a few protesters who spoke with *The New American* magazine, including Cassi Marietti, who identified herself as a leader with the group “Indivisible Rockwall,” echoed the claims made on the side of the trucks. “The NRA is a vehicle for Russia,” she told this reporter, sounding totally serious. When asked to elaborate, she claimed that “Russia” had “given money” to the NRA and President Trump. Some of her associates vigorously nodded in agreement and made similar claims. When asked for evidence, though, the best they could come up with was that they had read it “somewhere.” By contrast, they denied receiving funding from billionaire anti-gun extremist George Soros, who has bankrolled much of the anti-Trump, anti-NRA machine.

Fake news is clearly taking its toll on public discourse. Other protesters, for instance, [apparently](#)



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[reading too much propaganda from the establishment media, carried signs attacking the NRA for allegedly banning guns at its own convention](#). In reality, though, guns were everywhere throughout the massive convention hall and all around it — openly strapped to people’s waists, concealed under their belts, on display in cases on the convention floor, and more. The only exception to the ubiquitous presence of guns was when the U.S. Secret Service took control over one area of the convention so President Trump and the Vice President Mike Pence could give speeches. Obviously, guns were not allowed there by Secret Service order — after all, more than a few anti-Trump activists have openly called for his assassination.

Protester Elizabeth Besadesky, a young woman who was also with Indivisible, claimed “many” of the protesters there had been “victims” of “gun violence.” When asked to elaborate, she said an armed robbery had occurred near her school, forcing it to go into lock-down. She did not know whether criminals who violate laws against robbery would obey gun regulations. But she was adamant that the NRA was bad. “The NRA is not a charity, they are a business,” claimed Besadesky, who said she wanted to become president. “I don’t like the way they buy off politicians and prevent common-sense gun-safety legislation.”

When asked what they wanted, and whether gun-rights activists were correct in asserting that the protesters wanted to take away guns, most of those interviewed by *The New American* insisted that they had no intention of disarming Americans. Instead, they called for “common-sense gun-safety” laws, a carefully crafted marketing slogan that has been pushed by gun-control groups and media outlets that realize Americans overwhelmingly support the constitutionally protected right to keep and bear arms. “We do want to ban stock bumps,” said one of the Indivisible Rockwell protesters. Another quickly chimed in: “Bump stocks, we want to ban bump stocks.” Another said all gun owners should be licensed and registered, “like car owners.” All of them agreed that they wanted “automatic weapons” banned, perhaps unaware that such weapons have been practically illegal for civilians for generations.

Marietti, the one identified as the leader of the small band of half-a-dozen female protesters from nearby Rockwall, also argued against arming teachers. Among other concerns, she said it would lead to police shooting them. “The police will come in and shoot the coach,” she insisted. And she called for a gun-buyback program such as the one implemented in Australia. But when this writer pointed out that this was essentially mandatory gun confiscation, she quickly said that her envisioned program would be optional. “But I would love to take their AR-15s,” added Marietti, referring to America’s most popular rifle. She pointed to her poster, which featured a gory wound on somebody’s arm or leg that she said had been caused by an AR-15.

During his well-received speech, Trump showered praise on the NRA and its members. He celebrated them for standing strong for “those sacred rights, given to us by God, including the right to self-defense.” Unsurprisingly, he also ridiculed CNN, which he routinely derides as “fake news,” for promoting what he described as a “witch hunt” against him and Americans. And indeed, there was probably nobody less popular at the NRA convention than CNN, which was widely ridiculed by attendees as the “Communist News Network” and the “Clinton News Network.” Stung by the criticism, CNN published a furious and petty piece by Chris Cillizza attacking Trump’s speech that read like something a petulant kindergartner might write.

But other media outlets were even more dishonest than CNN. Tax-funded propaganda outlet National Public Radio (NPR), for instance, showered coverage on the anti-NRA protesters, with its essentially “fake news” story headlined “[Students, Celebrities And The Faithful Protest Outside Of The NRA](#)”



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[Convention](#)” being picked up by tax-funded affiliates nationwide. But the piece was more than a little dishonest, to put it mildly. Indeed, the report was a perfect example of everything that is wrong with the media in America. “Thousands of gun enthusiasts,” NPR “reporter” Sasha Ingber claimed, were there to “revel in displays of firearms and hunting accessories.” In reality, almost 100,000 gun enthusiasts were there — and their primary purpose was to defend the Second Amendment and stand by those who protect it, not “revel” in “displays of firearms.”

It got even worse from there. Suggesting equivalency, Ingber continued by claiming that “some crowds are staying outside to protest.” In reality, the alleged “crowds” of protesters represented less than one fourth of one percent of the number of those who gathered for the NRA convention, if that. But reading the article without knowing more, a naive reader outside Dallas could easily be duped into believing the “crowds” were equal and opposing forces, rather than over 80,000 mainstream Americans on one side versus a few hundred fringe activists on the other all whipped into a frenzy by fake news and [front groups for anti-gun billionaires such as George Soros and Michael Bloomberg](#).

The dishonest article goes on to quote a number of those fringe activists, never challenging the false assumptions and outright falsehoods they parroted. In what has become standard operating procedure for the establishment media, the tax-funded propaganda outlet even dishonestly led people to believe that these so-called “groups” were really “groups.” For instance, the NPR report claimed a “group” called “Faith Forward Dallas” hosted a so-called “vigil.” During the entire weekend, *The New American* never observed more than four people associated with the “vigil.” And even some of those were also representing other groups such as “Moms Demand Action” that were similarly hyped by the media as if they represented an equal and opposite force to the NRA. The NPR report failed to mention the fact that even far outside the NRA convention, pro-gun rallies dwarfed the minuscule anti-gun rallies.

Even Fox News ran an Associated Press article making a big deal out of the tiny protest under the headline “[Protesters gather as NRA members meet in Dallas](#).” The focus of the article was the fact that a fringe group of extremists — Reuters estimated the anti-gun crowd at about 200 — showed up. But the AP, which is notoriously liberal, acted like that was the news. According to the report, a group called #NoRA, founded by the practically unknown actress Alyssa Milano, was behind the rally. Milano told AP that her group was “trying to shine the light on the NRA’s stronghold over policymaking in Washington.” With millions of politically active members and a positive reputation among most voters, it is hardly a surprise to anyone that the NRA is influential in policymaking, so it was not immediately clear why Milano and her group found it necessary to “shine the light” on that.

Inside the convention, dozens of attendees interviewed by *The New American* ridiculed the so-called “mainstream” media, blasting them as “pathetic,” “fake news,” “anti-American,” “liars,” and more than a few words that cannot be printed here. One man photographed by this reporter outside the convention wore a t-shirt reading “CNN Terrorist,” ridiculing the far-left activist network masquerading as a “news” operation for its constant stream of what he derided as “fake news.” Indeed, disdain for the media — and the “fake news” kings at CNN in particular — was ubiquitous among the massive crowds in attendance. The establishment press seemed to be even less popular than gun-grabbing far-left Democrat politicians.

Even heavyweights at the convention were not amused by the media’s antics. Dana Loesch, an NRA spokeswoman who has become something of a celebrity among pro-gun citizens, also ridiculed the press in comments to *The New American*. “The fake media, the so-called mainstream media, I haven’t even seen any of them here, so I don’t know how they think they can write about these folks with any



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accuracy,” said Loesch, who was mobbed during a CNN “debate” on guns. “These folks here are the real America. These are the nicest people you’ll find anywhere. The media doesn’t want to show that.” And indeed, the media did not show that, focusing instead on the anti-gun crowd outside.

With the brazen dishonesty of the media on full display, it’s no wonder that [less than one third of Americans in polls](#) have even a “fair” amount of trust in the press. If they keep this up, even those last stragglers may eventually wake up.

Photo at top: The New American

Alex Newman is a contributor to The New American, covering economics, education, politics, and more. He can be reached at anewman@thenewamerican.com. Follow him on Twitter [@ALEXNEWMAN_JOU](#) or on [Facebook](#).

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