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Ken

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

(P)

CABINET ADMINISTRATION STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 24, 1981 NUMBER: 018742CA DUE BY: --
SUBJECT: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Response to NRA

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
ALL CABINET MEMBERS	☐	☐	Baker	☐	☐
Vice President	☐	☐	Deaver	☐	☐
State	☐	☐	Alien	☐	☐
Treasury	☐	☐	Anderson	☐	☐
Defense	☐	☐	Garrick	☐	☐
Attorney General	☐	☐	Darman (<i>For WH Staffing</i>)	☐	☒
Interior	☐	☐	Gray	☐	☐
Agriculture	☐	☐	Beal	☐	☐
Commerce	☐	☐	Gergen	☐	☒
Labor	☐	☐	Speakes	☐	☒
HHS	☐	☐	Ursomarso	☐	☒
HUD	☐	☐			
Transportation	☐	☐			
Energy	☐	☐			
Education	☐	☐			
Counsellor	☐	☐			
OMB	☐	☐			
CIA	☐	☐			
UN	☐	☐			
USTR	☐	☐			
	☐	☐			
	☐	☐			
	☐	☐			
	☐	☐			

Remarks: The ATF response to NRA charges is attached.
(It was suggested that a response be circulated
in Thursday's Senior Staff meeting.)

RETURN TO: Craig L. Fuller
Deputy Assistant to the President
Director,
Office of Cabinet Administration
456-2823

STATEMENT OF G. R. DICKERSON
DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS
IN RESPONSE TO NRA FILM

ATF welcomes the opportunity to be fully responsive to the allegations made by the NRA, but clearly this film does not reflect the policies or the practices of the Bureau objectively or with any sense of fairness to the issues.

Specifically, the NRA has characterized the cases in this film as representative of ATF's enforcement of the Gun Control Act of 1968. They are not.

Since its inception in 1972, ATF has completed over 120,000 investigations. The four cases referred to in this film have been responded to time and time again before various judicial bodies as well as the Congress. Let me just say that at no time has the Bureau or one of its agents been found to have violated the civil or constitutional rights of a defendant. Not one of the alleged "Gun Victims" has won a judgment against any ATF agent for alleged civil rights abuses.

For the record, I had a survey conducted of ATF cases over the past 18 months. The findings were very interesting. For example:

- ATF recommended prosecution in 2,017 firearms cases involving 3,824 suspects, of which 3,213 were recommended for prosecution. Over two-thirds (67 percent) of these suspects had prior criminal records and 45 percent of all suspects were convicted felons.
- In 21 percent of these cases, the defendants were armed at the time of arrest.

Following is a breakdown of significant features of ATF's Firearms Program:

- 22 percent of the cases involved interstate trafficking of firearms.
- 10 percent of the cases involved international arms trafficking.
- During this 18 months period, 15,500 firearms were purchased or seized, 4,612 of which were gangster-type weapons such as machine guns and silencers.
- Additionally, 2,560 stolen firearms were recovered.

The 18-month survey further showed that a significant number of these investigations involved dangerous offender classes which commit violent crime. NRA alleges that ATF case quality has been aimed at law abiding gun owners. A breakdown of ATF cases shows:

- Less than 3 percent of the total defendants recommended for prosecution were licensed firearms dealers (108 of the 2,017 cases recommended for prosecution)
- 499 narcotics traffickers
- 257 organized crime figures
- 192 outlaw motorcycle gang members
- 74 terrorists (KKK, Nazi party, etc.)
- 464 stolen property fences
- 206 international arms traffickers
- 450 interstate traffickers

The survey further showed that in 96 percent of the 1,642 cases which reached final judgment, the defendants pleaded guilty or were found guilty.

ATF's record in the Federal Government's war against violent crime is well known with such organizations as the International Association of Chiefs of Police and other local and State law enforcement agencies. As I testified before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on criminal justice, ATF's role in enforcing the Gun Control Act of 1968 has provided a key strategy for law enforcement agencies against criminal groups such as the KKK, outlaw motorcycle gangs, narcotics traffickers, and organized criminals. Our efforts have spanned the law enforcement spectrum from arson crime to union violence.

As recently as last month the Washington Post reported ATF's work in thwarting the bombing of a Jewish temple in Nashville, the bombing of the NAACP headquarters outside of Baltimore, the seizure of over 1,400 silencers in Florida and Texas, as well as the arrest of paramilitarists in their attempt to invade a Caribbean Island. These are but a few examples of the cases which this agency is involved.

In summary, this film misrepresents the mission, goals, and methods of ATF in enforcing the firearms laws which are to assist State and local law enforcement agencies in their fight against crime and violence.