

CBS Nightly News with Katie Couric

ATF Segment – March 3, 2011

Doddson's job is to stop gun trafficking across the border. Instead, he says he was ordered to sit by and watch it happen. Investigators call the tactic letting guns walk. In this case into the hands of criminals who would use them in Mexico and the U.S. Doddson's bosses say that never happened. Now he's risking his job to go public.

I'm boots on the ground here in phoenix and telling you we've been doing it everyday since I've been here. Here I am. Tell me I didn't do the things that I did. Tell me you didn't order me to do the things I did. Tell me it didn't happen. Now you have a name on it, you have a face to put with it. Here I am. Someone. Now tell me it didn't happen.

Reporter: agent Doddson and other insiders say the gun-walking strategy was approved all the way to the justice department. The idea was to see where the guns ended up, build a big case and take down a major cartel and it was all kept secret from Mexico. A.T.F. named the case "fast and furious." This surveillance video obtained by CBS news shows suspected drug cartel suppliers carrying boxes of weapons to their cars at a phoenix gun shop. Those long boxes being loaded into the red car are a.k.-47 type assault rifles.

Reporter: so it turns out A.T.F. not only allowed the guns to walk, they videotaped it. Documents show the inevitable results. The guns A.T.F. let go began showing up at crime scenes in Mexico and as A.T.F. stood by watching thousands of weapons hit the street, the fast and furious group supervisor noted the escalating Mexican violence. 958 killed in March, 2010, the most violent month since 2005. The same e-mail notes "our subjects purchased 359 firearms during March alone, including numerous Barrett 50 caliber rifles. Did you feel that A.T.F. was partly, perhaps, to blame for the escalating violence in Mexico and on the border?"

I even asked them if they could see the correlation between the two. The more that our guys buy, the more violence that we're having down there.

Reporter: senior agents including Doddson told us they confronted their supervisors over and over. And what was the answer, what did they say in

If you're going to make an omelet you've got to scramble some eggs.

Reporter: there was so much opposition to the gun walking that an A.T.F. supervisor issued an e-mail noting a schism among the agents. "Whether you care or not people at rank and authority of headquarters are paying close attention to this case. We are doing what they envisioned. If you don't think this is fun, you're in the wrong line of work. Maybe the Maricopa county jail is hiring detention officers and you can get \$30,000 to serve lunch to inmates."

We just knew it wasn't going to end well. There's no way it could.