

Ted Cruz Discusses Gun Control, the Debt Ceiling and Chuck Hagel on 'Meet the Press'

By: Mark Whittington – January 21st, 2013

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz was a guest on "Meet the Press" on Sunday, where he found himself jousting with host David Gregory and fellow guest New York Sen. Chuck Schumer on a variety of topics, especially gun control, the debt ceiling and Chuck Hagel.

Cruz: no gun show loophole

According to the transcript, Cruz suggested that there was no such thing as a "gun show loophole," which some gun control advocates claim allow guns to be sold without proper background checks. In this he echoes a study by the Cato Institute. Cruz pointed out that licensed dealers are required to run such background checks whether they are at a gun show or in their places of business. Individuals selling firearms to individuals are not required to run background checks. Cruz did go on to suggest that there was room for improvement, since a background check did not prevent Adam Lanza from perpetrating the massacre in Newtown.

The NRA children protection ad

According to the transcript, Gregory brought up a controversial ad produced by the National Rifle Association that suggested that President Barack Obama and his supporters were being hypocritical for advocating restrictions on gun ownership when the president's children are protected by armed Secret Service whereas most children are not. Even some conservatives have expressed discomfort over the ad. Cruz, however, refused to back down, suggesting that the charge of hypocrisy was valid. Cruz also advocated for armed police guards to be deployed in public schools.

Assault weapons ban

Cruz, according to the transcript, argued with Schumer over the effectiveness of a so-called "assault weapons ban." Cruz pointed out, and Gregory seemed to agree with him, that the previous ban enacted in the 1990s was ineffective in preventing gun-related crimes. The idea of reviving the ban is considered a tough sell in any case.

The debt ceiling and the budget

The transcript reports that the conversation turned to the impending debt ceiling and the failure of the Senate to pass a budget for the past few years. Cruz supported the current strategy advanced by some congressional Republicans to tie a short-term extension of the debt ceiling with forcing the Senate to pass a budget. Schumer suggested that the Senate would pass some kind of budget in response to the Republican gambit.

Chuck Hagel for Secretary of Defense

The transcript shows that Cruz expressed a great deal of skepticism over the nomination of Chuck Hagel to become Secretary of Defense. While Schumer, after some hesitation, has come out in favor of that nomination, Cruz pointed out that Schumer and Hagel are at odds over a variety of issues, including Israel, Middle Eastern terrorism, and Iran.

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