

# T.I. Cannot Be Defended

Contributed by John Torrey -- Black College Wire  
Tuesday, 25 November 2008

He made "an idiotic decision" to purchase illegal weapons

Everybody loves Paper Trail, and they should. It's a fantastic album, filled with witty lyrics and the necessary "club bangers" to make an album a hit.

But on one song, "Ready for Whatever," T.I. crosses a line in defending his actions that led to him being arrested and punished. Call me cynical, call me attacking the wrong person, but I'll tell you right now — T.I.P. Harris deserves every minute of jail time he gets, and should be made into an example of what happens when you believe your own hype. My concern came after the song itself was finished. T.I. began talking his mind about how if you haven't lived a day in his life, you can't expect to understand why he did what he did.

All right, TIP, let's just say I follow you on that train of thought — I don't seek to understand why you made an idiotic decision to purchase illegal weaponry from, of all places, a parking lot, but that's not the issue here.

The issue is that you are trying to justify it in a monologue explaining yourself by saying you won't explain yourself. You don't have to tell me why you chose to purchase illegal weaponry. I could care less, but here is something you failed to mention: if you really needed a gun to protect yourself because your own security was inadequate or you're paranoid, you could have bought one legally. (Is that possible, having already had probation for, of all offenses, a marijuana charge?)

I need you to avoid masking your inability to say, "I shouldn't have done it because it put myself and my family in a useless scandal and because I didn't need that kind of firepower in the first place." Instead you have a passionate monologue where you refuse to criticize your own actions.

The only admission he made was that he did something wrong because he broke the law, but that is a cop-out. Whenever you speed, you break the law. When you smoke weed, you break the law. The reason he won't express what I would hope any grown man or woman would be able to is because he's only sorry he got caught. I know I'm getting on T.I.'s case, but believe me, it is warranted. He says we do not know what he has to go through. He's absolutely right; I have no idea what the life of a millionaire is.

I currently do not live that lavish life, but I had no idea it included illegal firearms as part of the deal. What I'm trying to get across here is that buying into the hype of being a thug finally backfired on a mainstream star, and nobody seems to take issue with the fact that he will not admit why it was a mistake. It's a mistake because people blamed the bodyguard (the bodyguard!) for flipping T.I.

It's a mistake because Mr. Harris fell into the thug life trap, and had the nerve to compare himself to the deceased Sean Taylor, saying that if Taylor owned a gun, he'd still be alive. We don't know if Taylor had security, and we definitely don't know if he did own a gun — maybe he did and couldn't get to it in time. Either way, it seems to be extreme to decide that, to prevent my death in a possible home invasion, I will go buy machine guns and silencers.

But you're absolutely right, T.I. I can't understand the life of a millionaire who's able to house his mother and his children and claims to have responsibility for them but cannot admit his own mistake was just that, a mistake. {moshaloscan}John Torrey, a student at Morehouse College, wrote this article for Black College Wire. Articles in the Voices section represent the opinions of the individual writers and do not reflect the views of Black College Wire.