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AFTER-ACTION DISCOURSE - WHAT TO SAY TO THE COPS



One of the things that is incessantly being discussed in the CCW/LEO community is the **after-event-discourse**. In other words, what do you say...or not, after you have whacked an attacker. As expected, the variety of advice is as different as people's choices in guns and ammo. A prevailing attitude is to simply shut up and say nothing under any circumstances. I disagree and here is why –

I have been in more than a few of these and also investigated quite a few of these. I noted some trends and tried to use those trends to my benefits when it was my turn at the plate.

First is the fact that the bad guys will not be "keeping quiet". They will be telling the cops you pulled your gun on them, perhaps create some appearance of racism if they can exploit it, and generally make it look like you are the over-reacting, racist, bad guy. What happened may not be obvious to the cops who come out to investigate...specially if the majority of witnesses are against you.

So picture this scene. Two guys have been, as we used to say, "eye f*cking you", and followed you for some time, maybe yelling threatening stuff at you. While you did your best to avoid the issue, you were unsuccessful in getting away and they pressed the confrontation, attacking you with sufficient force to justify a gun solution.

You shoot one of them, maybe wounding him - maybe killing him, and the other one runs off into the night. You saw the first man drop his pistol in a clump of ivy and the other man throw his knife on a rooftop as he ran away.

You immediately call 911 and give a very cryptic account of what happened..."there has been a shooting...I'm the victim...send help".



In the meantime, one of the assailants...the one who got away, is also calling. His story is a little different. According to him you called them "Dirty Ghetto Norwegians", and pulled your gun on them, shooting his buddy. As far as the police know...they got two calls. One a cryptic call, from someone who seemed to be concealing something, and another reporting what amounts to a racial hate crime by a right wing Nazi.

They arrive on scene and after controlling the event, ask you what happened. What you do now will have a bearing on the rest of your life.

The guys who advocate saying nothing will not be able to point to the two weapons which were discarded...and which will disappear as soon as the scene is cleared. The police may not even look for them since no one told

them they were in existence. No one will tell them you are a good guy who was a victim of an attempted robbery, as the ONLY info paints you as some KKK wannabe.

Sure...you'll have a lawyer...but all of the evidence the police may have collected will no longer be available, and the investigation will not have been an even and equal one, but rather one where you alone are the suspect.

See the point?? I know a man who did just that...kept his mouth shut because of what a shooting instructor advised him to do and he spent several weeks in jail, had two criminal trials, and is now facing a civil suit from one of his attackers.

Is it hard to control your mouth? Yes it is. But no harder than to control your trigger finger, your desire to drink to excess, or to control the vertical displacement of your zipper. On self control, it is a learned thing and must be practiced daily. Maybe self control is too hard for the modern, self-indulgent, metro-sexual male, but as the Nike commercial said....Just Do It.

It, like many other things, can be trained and developed. If you ignore it, it will never be developed.

Think in these terms...you train gun handling and shooting skills to make them reflexive in the most stressful event someone is ever likely to face....and we tend to do fine. The guys who never train...thinking they will "rise to the occasion" invariably fail. To say, "I will simply say nothing", is in that same line of thinking is it not?

What I have done, with success, is this. I give a very limited statement, focusing on the actions of the bad guys, and then excuse myself from any further questions until my mouthpiece...I mean, attorney, arrives. Anything I say focuses on what the bad guy(s) have done and not on what I may have done. Something like this -

"Officer. I am glad you are here. Thank God."

"I am a good guy. I was minding my own business on my way home when those two guys attacked me."

"The one in the blue shirt had a knife. He threw it up there on the roof as he

ran away. There should be some blood on it from my arm when I blocked his attempt to stab me."

"The guy on the gurney was armed with a pistol. He dropped it right there in that pile of ivy when he fell."

"I was terrified. I am still terrified. Boy am I glad you guys are here. "

"Listen...I am still a little shaken up. I want to cooperate with you guys. This has never happened to me (or this hasn't happened in a while). I have heard stories of good guys getting sued later for saying too much. My attorney is on his way and as soon as he arrives I will be happy to give a full statement with him there. Until then, I think I need to sit down and calm my blood pressure."

At that point things are no longer in your control but you have set the investigation on the proper course, and the truth will be determined instead of being overlooked.