

Vigilante justice in Edmonton # one

by Roberta Franchuk

A survey of owners of small convenience stores in Edmonton has uncovered some differing attitudes towards the recent 'vigilante' shootings in Calgary and Montreal.

"I worry about robbery," said Yong Chung, owner of a food store on 99 St. But, he said, he would not want to have a gun around in case of a robbery. "I don't care about guns, myself."

Chung has not been robbed in the three months he has owned the store. He says he takes some precautions against robbery and burglary, but on the whole his attitude towards the prospect "hasn't changed" since the recent incidents.

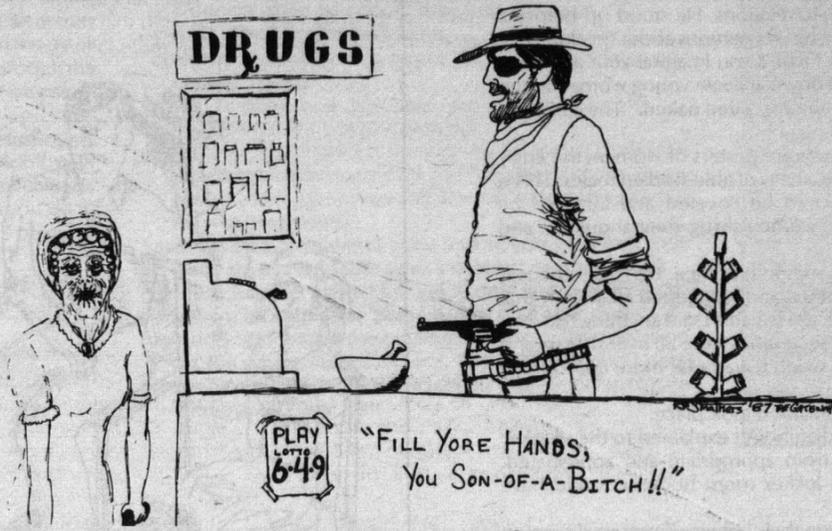
Salim Halabi, who owns a convenience store near the University, has a different attitude.

"If some kid comes to rob you and you don't defend yourself, he's going to come back again."

Halabi has been robbed three times. The first time, when a man with a knife demanded cash, Halabi disabled him with a foot long iron bar that he keeps under the counter.

"I knew he's after something," Halabi said of the incident. "I was ready with the bar. I grabbed him and hit him right away."

The second robbery was with a machine gun. This time Halabi offered no resistance.



"He took the whole thing — the till and everything."

Halabi has not considered having a gun under the counter. "I like guns, but I know what is after the gun. It's going to be trouble."

The Calgary storeowners have his backing. "I 100 per cent support them. I sent them money (for their defense)," Halabi said.

The owner of the small corner convenience store is most likely to have trouble with robberies.

Both of the large convenience chains, Mac's and 7-11, have Robbery Prevention Programs designed to limit the amount of cash a robber

can get in one shot. Neither store condones the use of weapons.

A recent memo from Mac's Head Office emphasizes, "Violence breeds violence. Mac's Stores policy is VERY SPECIFIC. No weapons of any type are allowed within the store."

According to Darrell Wronko, owner of a Mac's store, this policy even extends to the point where Mac's stores "will not sell anything that can be used as a weapon." Meat cleavers are no longer stocked — the largest knife on the premises is a paring knife.

shopkeepers, would-be robbers and the public might be left believing gun control is too lax in Canada.

The people in charge of firearms registration with Edmonton City Police do not even know how many weapons there are in the city.

"I wouldn't even venture a guess," is their response.

There are three categories of weapons in Canada: unrestricted, restricted, and prohibited.

Unrestricted weapons are essentially shotguns and some rifles. To be in possession of an unrestricted weapon requires only a Firearms Acquisition Certificate (FAC). These are available through the firearms registration detail of the City Police. The police check for past records of criminal or violent acts.

Handguns and rifles manufactured shorter than eighteen and a half inches in the barrel or twenty-six inches overall are restricted weapons. In addition to the FAC, owners of restricted weapons must be members of a gun club and obtain a carrying permit from the police.

Restricted weapons must be registered either to a house or a place of business. "Ottawa likes to have all the firearms registered at one spot," said Constable Sidor of Edmonton's firearm registration detail.

Prohibited weapons include any rifle of the same dimensions designated for restricted weapons that was not manufactured that way (ie. sawed-off weapons), and any fully automatic weapon (machine gun).

Even prohibited weapons are not entirely out of circulation. Anyone who was a fully automatic weapons collector before 1979 (when the new gun control laws came into effect) is still legally allowed to maintain a collection.

How many fully automatic weapons are there in Edmonton?

"Lots. Lots registered and lots not registered," said Sidor. However most problems arise not from machine guns, but from handguns and other easily concealable weapons.

"Our Act covering weapons is fairly good," said Vern Macintosh, a sergeant with the EPD, "it allows hunters and sportsmen to attain them (weapons)."

But the apparent lack of information on the number of weapons, who has them, and where, is disconcerting.

Two

by John Watson

Mr. Brown was patiently waiting through the final ten minutes of his evening. His corner store closed at eleven and he was ready to lock up.

A fellow that Brown did not recognize was searching for something in the back of the store. As he approached Brown to pay for his box of Jello, he put his right hand in his jacket pocket. "Give me all the money," he said.

Shaken, Brown obediently opened the till, pushed all the bills at the thief, and backed away. As the man reached the door, Brown shot him in the back with his handgun.

With the recent spate of armed shopkeepers fighting back in Canada it is difficult to say whether Mr. Brown will be put in jail for murder or not.

Canada's criminal code says you can shoot someone if they show intent to harm you. But, according to Professor Jim Robb, you cannot do so to protect your possessions. The question, says Robb, is "whether or not they are doing it (shooting) in self-defense."

You cannot shoot someone if gun control prevents you from having a gun either. But, in five cases in Canada in the last three months, lack of a gun has not been a problem.

In fact, as friends and neighbours rally in support of shoot-em-up

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FEES DUE January 16

The last day for payment of the second instalment of fees and for payment of fees for Second Term only registrants is **JANUARY 16, 1987**. A penalty of \$15.00 will be charged if payment has not been received by this date.

An additional penalty of \$15.00 per month will be assessed for each month in which a student's fees remain unpaid. Students are reminded that the University cannot accept responsibility for the actions of the post office if payments are not received by a deadline date. Also, if payment is dishonored and not replaced by the appropriate deadline date, the penalty will apply.

The Regulations further state that should payment not be made by January 31st, registration will be subject to cancellation.

Fees are payable at the Office of the Comptroller, 3rd Floor, Administration Building, or by mail addressed to the Fees Building, or by mail addressed to the Fees Division, Office of the Comptroller, The University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2M7.

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