

SHOOT FIRST, ASK QUESTIONS LATER
Thursday
February 7, 2013

Law enforcement authorities seem to have adopted a "shoot first, ask questions later" policy. According to statements in the media, on two separate occasions, officers opened fire on innocent civilians simply because they were driving a vehicle resembling a suspect's. In neither did they even first attempt to determine who owned the vehicle, or who was in the car. Fortunately for everyone involved, despite dozens of rounds being fired into the vehicles, no one was killed, although at least two people ended up in the hospital.

The suspect in question is a former police officer with extensive military training. According to the authorities, he's believed to have been involved in shooting and killing two civilians, followed by killing a police officer and trying to kill two other officers. Not having been there myself, I can't say one way or the other whether or not there's any truth to these accusations, but for the purpose of this article, it's immaterial. The simple fact of the matter is that, unlike civilians, police officers are supposed to be vigorously trained to identify and assess threat levels, and to do this **before** taking action. By all accounts, this is something the completely failed to do. Again, while no one was killed by the actions of the officers, this wasn't intentional on the part of the officers. The numerous bullet holes in the vehicles confirm this.

Supposedly, the suspect has a grudge against his former officers for their immoral and illegal actions on the job, behavior he tried to report and was fired for. While I'm certainly not condoning his behavior, after hearing about the events which took place earlier today, I can't help but wonder whether or not there may have been some truth to the accusations he'd made. After all, if you or I, untrained civilians, had shot at someone simply for driving a vehicle similar in appearance to one driven by someone trying to hurt us, we would have been immediately arrested and thrown into jail. However, these officers, all of whom were presumably trained extensively, not only in how to identify and assess threat levels, but also on the applicable laws, do not seem to have been arrested, let alone charged, for their conduct. One can only hope that there will be some serious consequences for this "shoot first, ask questions later" policy that seems to have been adopted. This is the very reason we treat people as innocent until proven guilty, and it only reinforces the suspect's belief that he can't safely turn himself in.

Shawn L. Perrot CDCR# V-42461
CMC-East Cell# 6326
P.O. Box 8101
San Luis Obispo, CA 93409-8101