

GIVE THEM NOTHING ⁶⁹

By Marko Kloos

A long time ago, I had a discussion with my former mother-in-law about my desire to carry a gun for protection. She was very much opposed to the concept, to put it mildly. When I asked her what her plans were if she ever got robbed at gun- or knife-point, she replied that she'd try and talk it out with her attacker, or just give them what they want.

"Everybody wants to be respected," she said. "We're all just human beings."

I told her that she was nurturing a very dangerous misconception, one that could very well get her hurt or killed someday.

There are people in this world to whom you're not a human being. They don't want to be respected by you. They don't care about you – they're not even really aware of you. They only care about the food you represent, the money that's in your pocket. You're not a person to them, but an obstacle. You're just in the way of the reward, like a wrapper around a candy bar, and these people are willing to discard you just like that wrapper in order to get what they want.

If you don't believe that, if you are one of the people who think that "everyone wants to be valued and respected," you are deluding yourself, to put it mildly. There are literally hundreds of surveillance camera videos out on the Internet that show criminals injuring or killing people for the transgression of not handing over the money or opening the safe fast enough. For those of you who think that "if you give them what they want, they'll go away," there are almost as many videos out there of people getting hurt or killed after handing over the goods, simply because they're now witnesses to a crime that allows for a lengthy jail term. Leaving you alive greatly increases the chance of getting caught, you see, and the extra ten years for shooting you don't enter the thug's mind. Besides, few people ever commit a crime expecting to get caught.

Whenever I see the camera footage of some poor convenience store clerk getting shot at point-blank range just because the robber is angry at the lack of cash in the drawer, or the fast food manager being shot as he is lying prone in front of his safe after the robbers have already removed the cash, I get angry. I feel anger at the thought of these low-lives, people who have never known another way of making a living than to take what they want from others by force. I feel anger at the sight of someone casually taking another's life over a few hundred bucks – taking a husband from his wife, a son from his parents, or a father from his children, just because they're in the way. Can you imagine your life ending tonight, with you taking your last breaths on the dingy linoleum floor of some convenience store, just because you had the bad luck of drawing third shift? Can you imagine what it would be like to have everything

taken from you in a few moments – your history, your knowledge, your hopes, your dreams, your consciousness – all over a few pieces of paper? If you can, don't you, too, feel white-hot anger when you think of the person who would do such a thing to you without a second thought just so they can get a fix, pay the rent, and get a new game for the Playstation?

It's mind-boggling to me that there are people who perpetuate the dangerous myth that you can rely on the humanity and reason of a person who is already threatening to kill you over the contents of your wallet, an entirely inhumane and unreasonable act in itself.

"Violence begets violence," they say, as if that's somehow a bad thing. In the words of the late Jeff Cooper, *I would certainly hope that it does*. That's the whole point of self-defense: when reason doesn't

work anymore, then naked force is the only thing that's left other than abject surrender. It would be a great and awesome world where the majority of criminals are the ones who end up in the body bag, and not their victims.

Appeasement doesn't stop the bully or the thug, and neither does submission. What stops them is the knowledge that they're likely to bite off more than they can chew, which is why they invariably pick their targets among those who are perceived as meek or soft.

Think about it for a second, and pretend you're someone who makes a living by sticking guns in people's faces. Which kind of society would encourage you to keep doing what you're doing – one where you know people are being told to "give them what they want and don't resist," or one where people refuse to go quietly into that good night, and where they will fight back with anything that comes to hand?

No, the appropriate response to violence is not submission. Submission encourages the thugs, and it gives them absolutely no incentive to consider a career change. When you preach submission, you only guarantee

more of the behavior that takes advantage of that submission. The only appropriate response to violence is white-hot anger. When someone sticks a gun in your face and threatens to kill you over the contents of your wallet or your register, your response ought to be *rage*. The very thought of some low-life thug threatening to snuff you out and make your children orphans for no reason other than the money you carry ought to make you *furios*.

And then you need to put that fury to good use. Yield *nothing*, not an inch, not a penny, not a hair on your head, without fighting for it tooth and nail. Do your level best to ensure that if someone has to end up in a body bag this hour, it won't be *your* body in that bag. And even if it should happen to be your turn to take your seat in Valhalla, you might as well put your best effort into making sure that you arrive there with your attacker in a firm headlock. **D**

