



(b) Now give an instance in which you or others relied on yourselves and it turned out badly. Again, don't identify the people involved.

3. It is generally considered proper for people to defend themselves, their families, and their property from harm. Give some possible instances in which you or your family would be justified in taking the law into your own hands in defense of family or property.

4. In defending oneself or one's property, the question is exactly how much defense is proper. In each of the following situations, decide what is or is not justified, and suggest alternative solutions to each problem. If there are no other solutions, give the reasons why.

(a) The neighbor's boy is beating up your little sister. To teach him a lesson and to protect her, you beat him up.

JUSTIFIED? YES NO

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION(S)

(b) It is night and you hear a prowler. He has opened the window and stuck his head into the living room. You hit him soundly over the head with a baseball bat you are carrying.

JUSTIFIED? YES NO

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION(S)

- (c) You and your friends are walking home from a night ball game when you hear screams from an alley. A man is attacking a woman who is screaming for help. When you approach, the man turns on you with a knife. Two of the guys go for him with boards they found lying in the alley. You all jump in to help.

JUSTIFIED? YES NO

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION(S)

- (d) Your mother is driving you someplace when her car gets a fender bender. The other driver jumps out of his car and is coming toward your mother with a mean look and clenched fists.

JUSTIFIED? YES NO

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION(S)

5. The ultimate in defense of people or property comes when someone takes the life of an intruder or attacker. Self-defense has long been recognized as a valid legal defense in certain instances. Only a hundred years ago in the American West, it was considered self-defense when a man killed another during an argument so long as both men were armed.

The current thinking is that killing another in defense of one's own life or the lives of others may, at times, be justified. It is almost never considered legally acceptable to take a person's life when only property is involved.

When Colorado's legislature passed the "Make My Day" law, there was considerable comment raised



throughout the nation. Colorado's "Make My Day" law says that a citizen fearing extreme bodily harm or death is allowed to protect himself or herself, as well as other people. If this protection results in the death of the attacker, the one defending himself, herself, or others is innocent of causing wrongful death.

However, there are certain conditions under which this law operates. The law states that the person defending against attack normally must be on his or her own property.

Further, it pretty generally requires that the defender must be inside his or her own house and the attacker must have entered the home. At least the attacker must be attempting to make a violent entry, such as kicking down the door or coming in through a window he or she has just broken.

This law has resulted in very little loss of life. Only a handful of Colorado residents have killed someone invading their home.

You have done a lot of thinking, discussing, and writing on the subject of taking the law into your own hands. How does the "Make My Day" law fit into what you know about our laws and how laws are intended to enable us to live together in society?

6. Finish this section by writing a statement in which you explain just how far you may go when it comes to taking the law into your own hands.