

State / National

Gun lobbyist once involved in killing

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United Press International
LAREDO — Gun lobbyist Harlan G. Carter, a National Rifle Association executive, was once convicted of killing a Hispanic teen-ager whom Carter wanted to question about a theft, court records showed Tuesday.

Carter, then 17, was convicted in a Webb County (Texas) court for the March 13, 1931, murder of Ramon Cassiano, 15. He was indicted on March 21, 1931, convicted on April 16 and sentenced to a three-year jail term for the killing.

Carter appealed the murder conviction that was eventually overturned by a Texas appeals court.

The 67-year-old executive vice president for the NRA was re-elected Saturday at the gun group's national convention in Denver. He was elected NRA executive vice president in 1977.

The Laredo Times first reported Carter's murder conviction, and Times managing editor Odie Arambulano said the decision to revive the murder trial was made because Carter is an important public figure.

"When you have a person in a high position calling the shots, you should know his entire background," Arambulano said. "When Carter applied for his job with the NRA, I doubt whether he told

them he had killed a man." Arambulano said reporters discovered Carter's previous murder conviction while investigating reports of alleged Border Patrol abuses against illegal aliens. He said the anti-gun lobby was not involved in the story about the 50-year-old murder.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals overturned Carter's conviction in December 1931, saying the lower court had not given a fair hearing to Carter's plea of self-defense, court records show.

The late State District Judge J.F. Mullally dismissed the murder charge against Carter on Jan. 19, 1933, and accepted the self-

defense plea. Carter, a former U.S. Border Patrol chief, could not be reached Tuesday for comment.

According to accounts of the slaying in 1931 editions of the Laredo Times, Carter had returned home from school when his mother told him she had seen three or four teen-agers hanging around a family shed near their house. The Carter family car had been stolen a few weeks before the shooting, and Carter said his mother was concerned about an attempted theft of the family cow.

Carter testified during the

three-day trial that he left house with a shotgun and a fronted four youths, including Cassiano, as they were returning to a local swimming hole.

Carter, whose father was a Border Patrol officer, said he was to force the youths to his home, was interrogated by his mother, Cassiano drew a knife.

"You think I won't use the shotgun," Carter said, telling the court he fired the shotgun from point-blank range and hit Cassiano in the shoulder.

'Store wars' predicted for the future

United Press International
DALLAS — Groceries will be in such fierce competition in the 1980s that raiding customers will

be the key to success, an industry analyst told the annual convention of the Food Market Institute Tuesday.

The "store wars" will be the result of a saturated market, Jay Kurtz of the Kappa Group of Miami, Fla., said. Kurtz also told store owners to take quasimilitary strategies in their approach to competition.

"The only way a store can grow in a saturated market is by understanding that you must take away more business from a competitor than he takes away from you,"

Kurtz said. "Expanding into unpenetrated markets doesn't work any more, because there are no unpenetrated markets."

"If you aren't prepared to fight for what you have, you will lose it. The key concern today is competition. You must develop strategies to take away business from a competitor."

Kurtz' presentation was built around a military theme with references to Normandy, fire fights, counter attacks and smashing competition. He presented "offensive, defensive, flanking

and guerrilla" schemes for groceries and urged the leaders in a market area to "burn, rape and pillage the competition as it's coming up."

Strong No. 2 competitors must attack the leaders' weak points — be it prices, service or quality, he said. Less competitors should "flank" the leaders by seeking areas where their following is weak and move in. The "guerrilla" strategy requires finding a small market segment that can be defended, but can provide a quick escape if necessary.

Leo Kahn, chief executive of Boston-based Purity-Super Co., said the winners will be stores that offer consumers a best opportunity to stay within their established food budgets.

Kahn's groceries are "warehouse" stores that offer deep prices in lieu of sacks, carry-boys, free bags, check cashing, vice and variety.

"Despite inflation," he said, "consumers are still determined not to spend more on food."

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Vietnamese lawsuit questioned

United Press International
HOUSTON — Ku Klux Klansmen and Texas fishermen Tuesday asked a federal judge to dismiss a lawsuit by Vietnamese shrimpers seeking government protection from hostile Texans who want the refugees to leave the coast.

The defendant Klan members and fishermen also asked U.S. District Judge Gabrielle K. McDonald, a black woman, to withdraw from the case because of alleged "bias" in favor of the Vietnamese.

The Vietnamese filed the law-

suit April 16 complaining of harassment and threats of violence by Klan members and Texas fishermen seeking to reduce what has become stiff refugee competition in Texas coastal waters.

In documents filed Tuesday, lawyers for the Klan and the Texas fishermen denied threatening violence against the refugees and charged the lawsuit was filed in bad faith because the Vietnamese complaint was "speculative."

The defendants said the Vietnamese can fish in peace when the season opens May 15.

"There are no immediate or past threatening or dangerous acts which defendants have engaged in," the defendants' documents said.

"Plaintiffs are currently fishing and selling catch without any intimidation, threats or interference from defendants."

The defendants' request that the judge turn the case over to another judge made no mention of her race. Rather, lawyers focused on an occurrence in the federal building Monday.

They charged the judge sent

her law clerk to ask plaintiffs whether Louis Beam's worn white Klan robes to the depositions bothered them. The said the judge did not inform defendants of the inquiry and said showed bias.

The Vietnamese, who also requested special protection from the U.S. attorney general and the FBI, complained in the lawsuit the defendants threatened the refugees with violent expulsion from the coast.

The lawsuit cited a Feb. 14 rally in Ta Fe, Texas, at which Klan leader Beam and Seafood Marketing Association leader Gene Fisher denounced the Vietnamese, demanding they leave the coast and burn their boats.

The Vietnamese also said several of their boats had been burned in yet unsolved cases of arson.

The defendants admitted the Feb. 14 rally. They said boat-burning was not intended to intimidate anyone and the boat was burned for religious purposes.

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