

SPY + SURVIVAL BRIEFING

LIFESAVING STRATEGIES FROM FORMER CIA AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

THE RICH HISTORY OF THE STILETTO KNIFE

Why It is Perfect for Your Everyday Carry Gear

by Jason Hanson

Former CIA Officer

During the Vietnam War, top-secret U.S. forces carried out unconventional warfare operations to counter the guerilla tactics they were facing from the enemy. One particular unit, established on January 24th, 1964, was called the Studies and Observations Group, also referred to as SOG. This unit conducted reconnaissance missions in South Vietnam, North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. The unit's main purpose was to capture enemy prisoners, rescue downed pilots, and conduct rescue operations to free prisoners of war.

"One of the main priorities of the SOG was carrying out reconnaissance missions..."



SOG was a highly classified, unconventional task force created by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The unit would eventually consist of personnel from the United States Army Special Forces, the United States Navy SEALs, the United States Air Force, the Central Intelligence Agency and

the United States Marine Corps.

The SOG recon teams were usually made up of four to six natives led by two or three Americans. The teams operated deep behind enemy lines, searching out and attacking North Vietnamese truck plants, ammunition dumps, storage sites, truck convoys, command centers and base camps where enemy units rested between battles. One of the main priorities of the SOG was carrying out reconnaissance missions along the enemy's Ho Chi Minh Trail network in Laos, Cambodia and even into North Vietnam.

North Vietnam insisted it had no troops in Laos or Cambodia, leading

the United States to also deny that SOG operations were underway in those countries. Initially, the SOG teams would sneak into Laos and Cambodia to photograph enemy movement, plant listening devices in the area and get back alive with as much intelligence as possible.

Due to the highly classified nature of the SOG, these teams employed ruthless unconventional warfare tactics without mercy toward the enemy. The U.S. members of the team were well equipped with technology and air support, while the local tribesmen were able to educate the U.S. soldiers regarding the guerilla tactics of their enemy.

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SOG teams were outfitted with Asian-made uniforms that lacked any insignia or even a label. In addition, teams were required to go "sterile," meaning they didn't carry ID, dog tags, uniforms or even weapons that came from the U.S. One of the SOG's most effective weapons were unmarked stiletto knives that were designed and manufactured in Japan to avoid any connection to the U.S. With the unconventional tactics being employed by U.S. soldiers, the knives they carried played a major role in their success. The SOG teams often operated in close quarters to enemy bases, meaning the ability to quietly dispatch enemy combatants with their knife was crucial to keeping the team safe.

As many people know, the stiletto is a dagger-like knife that has a narrow, razor sharp blade with a point shaped like a needle. Since the blade is so narrow, the stiletto easily penetrates into flesh, despite the fact that the blade is usually only 5 or 6 inches long. Plus, the design of the knife makes it easy to leverage or twist the knife once it has penetrated flesh, causing more damage to your threat. In other words, the knife is designed to inflict severe trauma to the enemy so you can quickly kill them.

Just as important, the size of the stiletto makes it easily concealable due to its compact design. Historically, the stiletto has been used as a stabbing weapon for hundreds of years because of its simple design. During the Middle Ages, knights

often carried stilettos because the stiletto's narrow blade would easily fit through the gaps in heavy armor. On the other hand, the stiletto is not as well suited for slashing or cutting. It's not the ideal knife for peeling a potato or carving wood. The knife is best used in self-defense situations where you may be forced to fight back by stabbing an attacker.

"Since the blade is so narrow, the stiletto easily penetrates into flesh..."

Nowadays, many stilettos have a switchblade design and are popular concealable self-defense weapons.

But, when buying a stiletto knife, you have to be careful to ensure the knife is legal to carry in your state, especially if it's a switchblade design. However, they are great knives and I want to share with you a few stiletto knives you can check out if you are in the market for a self-defense knife.

Benchmade Infidel Knife. The Benchmade Infidel has an iconic stiletto design with a fixed blade providing the strength and durability of a fixed blade knife. The blade is 4.5 in. long and 3.5 mm thick with a plain doubled edged blade. Overall, the knife is about 9 in. and weighs about 5 oz. The Infidel doesn't have a glass breaker or a clip, but does come with a boltaron sheath that is MOLLE compatible. This knife is a high quality tactical knife that sells for about \$200 new. You can also get an "out the front" design that is more like a folding knife and it sells for around \$400.

Boker Plus V-42. The Boker Plus is a fixed blade stiletto with a double-edged, carbon steel blade that is

coated in black. The handle is designed to withstand abuse and made out of compressed leather. The knife comes with a nice leather sheath. In addition, it features a thumb rest for a secure grip and thick leather padding under the handle. The steel is SK-5 high carbon steel, which resists abrasions while maintaining a superior edge. The blade's length is 7 in., and the overall length of the knife is 12 in. The Boker Plus sells for around \$100 and is designed after the original Devil's Brigade stiletto that was produced in the middle of 1942 for U.S. forces.

Cold Steel Ti-Lite Knife. The Ti-Lite knife looks like switchblades of the 1950s, but is not a true switchblade since it doesn't open at the push of a button. Essentially, it's a folding knife and is legal to carry in many places. Of course, check your local laws to make sure the 4 in. blade doesn't make it illegal. The Ti-Lite features a sharp, bead-blasted, American CTS Alloy blade and CNC milled 7075 aluminum handles. The stainless-steel spring locks are tested to hold over one hundred and thirty pounds. The blade itself opens very quickly by pressing the thumb stud as you pull the handle out of your pocket. Overall, the knife is about 8.5 in. long, with a 4 in. blade and weighs about 5 oz. The Cold Steel Ti-Lite has different models that sell from \$50 to \$100.

There is no question that stiletto knives fulfill a very unique function and are suitable self-defense weapons that would go perfectly as a backup with a concealed carry handgun and our military has been trusting them for years.

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435-572-4432

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A DIET FOR A DISEASE-FREE LIFE?

How Some People Live Into Triple Digits

by Dr. Omar Hamada
Special Operations Physician

I've been a practicing physician/surgeon for a long time — somewhere around 20 years not counting residency. As physicians, we are taught to manage chronic conditions over the long-term. Those conditions include things like high blood pressure, diabetes, kidney disease, pain, heart disease, depression, obesity, cancer, etc.

Probably 10 years ago, I began to get frustrated with the fact that I was simply managing disease medically instead of curing it like I could with surgery. The problem medically is that you can't just fix or cut every medical disease out like you can with a surgical disease. So, I began to look at ways to cure medical disease instead of just managing it. I didn't want to help people increase their lifespan without increasing their healthspan. Healthspan is what matters, not simply lifespan. In other words, what good is it if you live to 90, but are ill for half your life? Why should most Americans have to take a handful of pills to manage disease from age 50 on?

I began to realize that we have a choice. We can waste and rot away for decades or we can stay healthy up until the day before we die like many do in other parts of the world. I learned that a full 50% of our health was directly dependent

on the choices we make every day — primarily what we put in our mouths. Another 20% of our health is dependent on our environment — toxins, air, water. Twenty percent of our health is dependent on our genetics. Yes! Only 20% and probably 20-25% of that is modifiable. In other words, we can turn some genes on and off like a light switch based on what we eat and the environment we provide them — even cancer genes. I was shocked to learn that only 10% of our health is dependent on assistance we get from physicians and surgeons. So, a full 70 - 75% of our health is dependent on the choices we make with regard to what we put in our mouths, where we live, how we sleep and exercise and the attitudes we allow ourselves to live with.

In 2008, journalist Dan Buettner noticed that there were 5 areas of the world where people lived into their triple digits without chronic disease and set off to study them and determine what it was about those areas that allowed those inhabitants to live such remarkable disease-free lives. The 5 areas are the Italian island of Sardinia, Okinawa, Japan, Costa Rica's Nicoya Peninsula, the Greek island Ikaria, and Loma Linda, CA. Buettner found that the people who lived

there shared three common characteristics — a vegetable-based diet, an active lifestyle, and the socialization of the elderly.

It's long been proven that a vegetable-based diet is the healthiest, most energy producing diet around. The most comprehensive nutritional study ever, the China Study was published in 2005 and supports Buettner's findings nutritionally — that the consumption of a diet of primarily animal prod-

ucts significantly raises the risk of cancer and chronic cardio and cerebrovascular diseases. Dr. Michael Greger's book, "How Not to Die", and Dr. David Serban-Schrieber's "Anti-Cancer" both support the same philosophy.

Not surprisingly, there is a movement in the professional athletic, Olympic, and Special Operations community to move towards a primarily vegetable-based diet. They have seen significant increases in performance enhancements, strength and endurance. In fact, already a full third of the NFL Tennessee Titans are now vegetarian and have found their athletic abilities enhanced. There is a great documentary coming out in September called "Game Changers" — I'd wholeheartedly encourage you to see it. I saw a preview and got to talk to the directors a couple of weeks ago at the Special Operations Medical Association's Scientific Assembly in Charlotte. Many of our Special Forces and SEALs are now eating a primarily vegetable-based diet and it may be something that you wish to consider too.

"In fact, already a full third of the NFL Tennessee Titans are now vegetarian..."



HOW TO STOP MULTIPLE ATTACKERS

The 3 Ways to Defeat These Threats

by Matt Numrich

Head Instructor of Spy Black Belt

Gang attacks, where two or three people attack one person simultaneously, are not only normal out on the street, but are a strategy that cowards use in order to raise the probability of their success. This is why it's critical to know how to deal with multiple people trying to harm you.

The first step when defending yourself against multiple attackers is to grab an equalizer. A what, you ask? This is how I define an equalizer to my students: Anything you can pick up to throw at your opponents and/or strike them with. Why is this the first step? Because when dealing with more than one attacker you are already at a disadvantage regardless of how tough you think you are. Picking up a tire iron, fist full of gravel, a bottle, stick, or chair will, at the very least, make the attackers think twice, if not turn them off to attacking you.

The second step is to “zone” around the aggressors (stack them in a line) where you'll put one person in front of the other by constantly moving around. This gives you an opportunity for a short burst of time to take action on just one opponent. The worst thing to do is get caught in the middle of two (or more) people. Leave those situations to be played out on the big screen and treat getting in the middle as a cardinal sin. After you zone properly, I would encourage you to use quick and brutal strikes to the face and throat and incorporate the final step, which is to use continuous footwork to always keep that “one on one stack”.

Understand that the second person in line will not wait his turn. Therefore, make your strikes direct and to the point, while continuously zoning to keep one person blocking the other. This is the reason I believe tools such as elbows, jabs and even head butts work so well here.

But because mass attack scenarios have so many different variables, I get many questions from people when teaching about this subject. For instance, one of the questions is, “should I attack first or wait for them to come to me?” After you pick up an equalizer, strike first. Waiting for two or more opponents to close the gap will only put you in a worse position. Another question is, “who do I zone around first? The bigger



guy, smaller, stronger, loud mouth?” None of the above. Zone around the closer one first. It is easier and helps you move through the proper game plan faster, rather than chase after your opponent of choice.

Also, many people want to know what happens if one of the people threatening them pulls out a weapon? My advice is to then zone around the one who has a weapon and take care of the “more dangerous priority” first. If only one person has a club, zone around (move closer to) that person first. If one has a knife and the other a stick, zone around the knife guy first. My rationalization for this (backed up by hours upon hours of training experience with non-compliant training partners) is that I never want to lose site of the person with the more dangerous weapon.

There is no doubt that fleeing a mass attack situation is the intelligent first choice. However, many times we don't have that luxury. Simply ignoring these scenarios only feeds our weaknesses. But using the three steps of Equalizer, Zone and Footwork will increase your chances of survival, which is our main goal.



SAVINT YOUR MONTHLY SAVINGS INTELLIGENCE

This month, you can grab a free copy of *The Escape Bag Blueprint: 37 Items You Must Have to Survive a Crisis*. This book reveals the guns, knives, water filters, fire starters, etc. that you must have to survive an emergency situation. To grab your complimentary copy of this book, visit www.FreeEscapeBook.com today.

WHY CHINA IS A DANGEROUS “KID IN A CANDY STORE”

How China is Violating Espionage Norms

by Michael D.

*Former Clandestine Officer, CIA,
DIA, NSA*

There are many flavors and varieties of spooks. Virtually every sovereign nation, and even global non-state organizations, have some form of intelligence-gathering apparatus. Some nations use the same state organizations that collect intelligence from foreign entities to surveil and censor their own citizens. Others separate the activities into separate organizations. During my career, I have had the distinct honor of working with several foreign intelligence organizations in coordinated efforts to protect Western interests. I have also had the heavy and dangerous burden of one-on-one “conflicts” with agents of hostile nations.

“The Enemy of my Enemy is My Friend.” Except in the world of international espionage where virtually everyone is your enemy. As a US Foreign Intelligence Collections Officer, I worked closely with all of our “intelligence allies” (they are all US allies, but not all US allies are intelligence allies). I have had the chance to personally evaluate and rank the intelligence operations, activities and agents of not just our intelligence allies, but of our enemy states as well.

Here is what I can tell you that is absolutely verifiable: The world ranking of an intelligence agency means squat when the rubber meets the road. Just like in business, it’s the individual who makes things happen, not some mysterious brick and mortar building or non-descript executive working for their next promotion in some capital city. So, while a particular organization has a reputation, resources, organization, networks, interstate cooperation agreements, etc., it comes down to



the man or woman they send out to steal secrets, kidnap hostiles or conduct sabotage that determines their true ranking.

So, what are the most powerful and effective intelligence gathering (and operations) organizations in the world — based on real criteria, not just analysis of budget expenditures? With the exception of our own espionage agencies, this list is dynamic. On any given day, any given op, any given mission or target, these can slide up, down, or even off of the scale entirely.

Here they are based on my decades of espionage: America (CIA, NSA, SCS, F9, Q Group, and a few others, top the list). Israel (Mossad) UK (MI 6-Secret Intelligence Service (SIS)) and GCHQ (General Communications Headquarters). Germany (BND — Foreign Intelligence Service). Russia (Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR — formerly KGB) and their military’s Main Intelligence Directorate).

Yes, there are plenty more and they can move on and off of this list. But, most of those are prone to crests and troughs. I have significant personal experience with all of

the organizations listed above and despite what you may read or see on TV or find on the internet, there are certain rules that we all live by. Not because we are nice, friendly and want an honest match, but because certain actions or activities could/ would lead to armed conflict or grave international damage. For instance, I was working a hard target in Europe. I was brought in after an Embassy Based Officer was brought back home. The host nation (the country where the Embassy is located) had an overzealous agent who disregarded age-old boundaries. In an effort to get everyone out of the home so that he could place bugs, steal items and get photographs, the host nation agent blackmailed the US Officer’s nanny.

The nanny was told that unless she cooperated, the host nation agent was going to have her whole family thrown into jail and punished. He made her put a few drops of a chemical into the baby’s bottle. He told her it would just give the baby an upset stomach and perhaps a little short-term sickness. She loved the baby like it was her own, but she had little choice. With deep regret and apprehension, she obeyed. The compound injected into the

baby's bottle caused the infant to almost immediately go in respiratory distress. The infant rapidly grew more ill and had to be rushed to the hospital where lifesaving methods were required.

The toxin used by the host nation agent just happened to cause an extremely volatile reaction in the infant. It took weeks to sort through what had happened. Finally, the nanny came forward and told her story. Using back channels and indirect communications, the entire story and evidence was provided to the host nation. The host nation replied that they would make amends and promised that it was not a sanctioned activity and one that would not occur again. A few days later, we received a newspaper clipping with the photograph of a dead man with an article that read something like this: *"Man dies at hands of unknown culprits and his devastated family has moved to unknown location."*

Here is the underlying issue: Once a nation starts attacking family members, spouses, children, etc, it becomes open season on everyone's family. Even the families of high-ranking government officials. So, it is strictly out of a sense of self-preservation that rules of engagement like these are adhered to by all intelligence organizations and officers. That was the case until the last several years. Now we have a "kid in the candy store" named China. China has developed its intelligence gathering and operations activities (and agents/officers) to a level where they are an existential threat to all Western nations. But, an extremely grave and immediate threat to America.

China has accelerated and broadened its state efforts to spy on every aspect of America and virtually every American (who's listening when you tell Alexa, SIRI, Echo, or Google Assistant that you want the prices of iPhones and/or Android phones or the best HD 4K TV).

When we think about sophisticated foreign intelligence collection activities and the world governments that sponsor such programs, now we have to include China's MSS (Ministry of State Security). China's economy and society are struggling to survive. China lacks America's strengths in entrepreneurialism, creative thought, innovation, free market competition, and, frankly, our God-given blessings as a free nation. They also lack traditional boundaries observed by other international espionage organizations.

Chinese agents are actively trying to do more than spy on America, they are bent on breaking us. They have advanced their skills in cyber warfare and are using every venue of surveillance available in the US. I have knowledge that they have implanted firmware in phones, tablets, laptops, radios, TVs and most every other device they manufacture and sell to America. I promise you that the firmware they put in your device is not to benefit you, it's to harm you and spy on you and bring America to its knees.

Every time you purchase an electronic device from China, you are importing their espionage and sabotage schemes right into your home, vehicle or office. What's more, every time you purchase an electronic device from China, you are helping to fund their next round of cyber attacks against America's infrastructure, health system, emergency services, schools, power grid, and clean water systems. If you think I am exaggerating or crying wolf, pick up your copy of Sun Tzu and thumb through it. China is like a kid in a candy store. Unchecked, they will take everything they want with no regard for long term damages, risks or whom they hurt to get it. What's worse is that this kid has aircraft carriers, nuclear weapons and has infiltrated every nook of America while it lays in wait to bite us in our collective butt.

Why You Need the Exotac ripSPOOL

The ripSPOOL, made by Exotac, is a product that provides an easy way of keeping duct tape, braided line, a needle and a few other critical items with you at all times. The ripSPOOL tube is made of lightweight aluminum and measures 3" tall, 1" diameter and weighs approximately 6oz. The little tube is packed tight with 50" of duct tape, which can come in pretty handy during a camping trip when you need to make a repair or stop a small water leak.

In addition, the tube includes 60" of heavy-duty 30lb test braided line that is wrapped around the cap of the tube. The braided line can be used to sew a ripped tent or even a damaged boot or any number of survival uses. The sail needle is perfect for field sewing or repair and the way the cap is designed it can be used as a needle holder so you won't stab your hand with the needle while concentrating on making a repair to your survival gear. Finally, the 550lb fire cord can be used to secure items and the inner strands of the cord can be used as kindling to start a fire. Plus, there is enough room in the tube for a couple of safety pins or fishing hooks that are not included with the ripSPOOL.

When sealed shut, the ripSPOOL is completely waterproof and can easily be thrown in a bug out bag, glove box, backpack or with your camping gear since it takes up a minimal amount of space. Most likely, you already carry most of these items in a bug out bag or small first aid kit, but the fact is you probably can't beat the size and weight of the ripSPOOL when it comes to packing so many crucial items into such a small tube. The ripSPOOL is made in the U.S. and comes in four different colors.

AMERICAN GOLD EAGLES

Start Stocking Up On These Valuable Coins

by Forest Hamilton

Universal Coin & Bullion

Last month, I promised to bring you highlights of our recommendations from the major types of coins we like most for their survival benefits, exceptional beauty, profit potential and historical importance. So, for my first recommendation, I want to bring your attention to a series that is more modern, more well-known and becoming exponentially more valuable as time goes by. I'm talking about the American Gold Eagle, authorized by the 1985 Gold Bullion Act. The coins were first minted in 1986 in denominations of \$5, \$10, \$25 and \$50, with a gold content of 1/10, 1/4, 1/2 and 1 full Troy ounce.

The American Gold Eagle was a truly significant notch in Reagan's presidential belt. When he petitioned congress to begin striking these beautiful coins, he opened a golden door that had been closed for over half a century. You see, as a country, we went 53 years without striking any legal tender gold. Franklin D. Roosevelt signed his Executive Order in 1933, recalling private citizens' gold in an attempt to ease the effects of the Great Depression and make the paper dollar the primary means of trade. To further his cause, all U.S. gold production was stopped and Americans were not allowed to own more than a few ounces of gold for ornamental or industrial purposes. That is, unless those gold coins were deemed numismatic. This single act by the POTUS ignited a generation of collectors and investors and inspired the great hunt for gold coins that

"The American Gold Eagle was a truly significant notch in Reagan's presidential belt."

were beautiful, historically significant, and full of profit potential. This golden hunt has been passed from generation to generation and is alive and well as we head toward 2020.

For basic survival and preparation purposes, the \$50 and \$5 American Eagles are ideal. The \$5 (1/10oz) Gold Eagle is small and easy to trade, while the big \$50 (1oz) is a better way to concentrate larger amounts of wealth at a low margin above the metal value. For more advanced investment purposes, we have also chosen a total of 18 American Gold Eagles, 9 each of the low mintage and low population \$10 and \$25 (1/4 and 1/2 ounce) coins. All of the American Gold Eagles included have original mintages

under 85,000 and MS 69 populations under 6,000 coins. Out of the 18 coins, the worst coin in the group has increased in value over 200% since 2005, which equates to a simple interest average of over 14% per year for the past 14-year period. With gold breaking through \$1400 per ounce and uncertainty building between Iran and the U.S. as we hurtle towards a drama-filled election, now is the time to see if Gold American Eagles make sense for you.

[Publisher's Note: For questions about buying gold and silver coins you can contact Forest Hamilton directly at foresthilton@universalcoin.com or call 800-822-4653. Please know, if you purchase any coins from Forest, we don't receive any compensation from him. We simply know he's one of the good guys in the business that can be trusted.]



"TUA SPONTE SUPERSTES"

Do You Have the Winning Mindset?

by EJ Snyder

*Former Army Ranger and
Extreme Survivalist*

When you think of a survival situation, I bet the first thought that crosses your mind, and most of the worlds for that matter, is that survival is mostly a physical endurance event. In my opinion, that is very much the opposite of what is true. Survival is more of a 90% mental and 10% physical event. I believe that one's will to survive can be the only skill you may need in certain survival situations. Does this mean I am saying that survival skills aren't important? No! I am saying that skills are nice and they make life better and easier in a crisis situation, but if you do not have the will to endure, to continue on, and to live, chances are you may not make it.

One who possesses an iron will is surely full of grit, determination, drive and usually doesn't take "No" for an answer. To me, that's a winning formula. One who stays optimistic of their chances and keeps a positive attitude towards their situation, even under extreme adversity, will go a long way. We have seen documented cases and heard stories of will in action. When a sizeable earthquake struck a community in India, buildings were leveled to the

ground. Rescuers searched through many piles of debris looking for survivors. Days and even weeks would go by to the point that it would seem hopeless that anyone could still be alive.

Yet, even after several weeks, a faint cry was heard and rescuers were able to pull a small two-year-old child from the grips of death. Miracle? Maybe, I say this is a prime example of will and a testimony to the human spirit. The child had no survival skills, but deep down inside the child had the instinct to endure and live.

In my own life, I remember a distinct time I had to have the right mindset and call on my will many times. It was while attending Ranger School in 1988 and that's the main reason I earned my cupped Black and Gold Ranger Tab. Early morning hand to hand combat drills in the freezing rain, long marches with 100-pound packs on one meal a day and the constant stress and pressure to succeed on only 2 hours of crappy sleep. Failure would mean

defeat, and I would not surrender myself to a loser's mindset. My mindset to succeed and survive got me through not only the 1991 Gulf War but also another 15 months in OIF,



undergoing the daily stressors of combat and intense missions. My will has played a huge part in my success and I have applied it in my life ever since.

Yes, the physical is a good part of making it out of a survival situation. But what good is it if you do not have the will behind it to keep pushing you? It is will that keeps you moving forward to find water or other resources. It is will that when your shelter fails, you choose to find a way to improve it instead of succumbing to it. It is will that keeps you going when the going gets tough. It is will that will get you through the dark days of isolation, failures, bad weather, and illness. Will is something that I have relied on all my life and everything I do in it. When I have applied it to emergency situations that I have endured, I never fret. I know I always be okay. Will gives me the feeling of being a gladiator in survival. Will gives me the confidence that no matter what is thrown at me by God, Mother Nature, or man, I will endure it. Will is what makes me tick. I am very proud of my iron will as it has saved my keister more than once in my life. Thus, my survival motto, "**Tua Sponte Superstes!**" which means, "Survive by your own will!"

