

# SPY + SURVIVAL BRIEFING

LIFESAVING STRATEGIES FROM FORMER CIA AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

## HOW THIEVES HAVE HONED THEIR BRUTAL TACTICS POST-LOCKDOWN

### The Vicious New Crime Wave Sweeping The Country

By Jason Hanson  
Former CIA Officer

Last year, the U.S. recorded its highest increase in homicide rates in modern history. Between 2019 and 2020, the U.S. murder rate rose 30%. "It is the largest increase in 100 years," said Robert Anderson, chief of the mortality statistics branch at NCHS. But it's not only murder rates that are skyrocketing. The rise in homicide rates is parallel to an overall increase in violent crime.

While working for the CIA I made a lot of contacts around the world, including a friend who works for the LAPD. We recently talked about a scary crime surge in L.A. However, like other crimes, these types of



violent crimes are sweeping the country, not just the West Coast.

As you may have heard, there is a flood of robberies where criminals follow victims out of high-end establishments such as a fancy restaurant. Sometimes groups of more than a dozen will wait for people to leave these places. In some of these crimes up to 30 people have attacked a single person.

In one case, a man left an expensive restaurant and was attacked while walking to his car. The man was eating in West Hollywood. As he walked to his Mercedes he was attacked by a group of 12 suspects. In this instance, the victim was shot multiple times and robbed. He died before help arrived.

The criminals usually arrive in separate vehicles and converge on their target. It is highly coordinated and displays a growing level of sophistication in criminals. Victims with expensive clothing, jewelry, or cars are the most at risk.

The thugs often send people into the stores or restaurants to scout for victims. They use hand signals or cell phones to alert the waiting group. Some victims survive but are traumatized by the incident and aren't much help to the police. You see, when you are attacked by that many people it can be hard to identify your attackers. This has happened over 300 times in L.A., but restaurants and stores want to keep it off the news since it's bad for business.

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Some crews also follow people home and attack them in their driveway or garage. There is more time involved in these types of robberies. The criminals don't know how long they will need to follow their victim. Plus, there is a chance they get noticed while following or are seen by a neighbor. So, it's easier for criminals to attack before victims get to their cars.

So, what can you do to protect yourself? Criminals like to find easy victims, such as someone walking alone. Even if there is a large group of criminals they likely don't want to fight five people. There is too much risk. So, if you go to dinner or shopping with a group of friends, walk to your cars together. Park next to each other or get in one car and drive each person to their car. The more of you the better.

Before you get near your car, stop and examine it from a distance. Look for objects or people next to or under your car. Scan the cars that are parked nearby. Are there five guys smashed into a little car? Does anything look out of place?

Also, in parking garages, people can hide behind pillars. Look around the pillars as you get close. If you get close to your car and notice someone watching you, keep going, or turn around and go back where you came from.

Also, make sure you don't walk around looking like a million dollars. Wearing a Rolex or your wife having diamonds all over her might not be the best idea. I am certainly a capitalist and believe you can buy whatever you want, but be careful flaunting it these days.

Finally, change your route. When you leave a store or restaurant you usually go straight to your car. But consider walking around and waiting a few minutes before going to your car. Be sure to look around to see if anyone is waiting for you.

For instance, if you are walking around with a group, stop at another store or establishment. See if anyone else in the area follows you from store to store. It's similar to performing a quick surveillance detection route when leaving a restaurant or store.

Don't forget to have something on you for self-defense. My first choice would be a gun. I almost always carry a Sig Sauer P365 in my front pocket. The reason I love pocket carry is that I can put my hand on my gun while it's in my pocket if anything doesn't seem right. This means I can walk down the streets looking like some average Joe with his hand in his pocket, but I can draw lighting fast if something goes down. If you do choose to pocket carry, make sure that when you draw your gun, the holster stays in your pocket and doesn't come out with it. I have tried numerous holsters over the years that claimed they worked for pocket carry, but would always come out when I drew the gun. These days, I use a holster made by a company called Aholster. They have a hook on their kydex holster that ensures it remains in my pocket.

Fortunately, the only time I have ever had to draw my gun was when I was with the CIA. But with violent crime on the rise, all of us need to be more aware, vigilant, and prepared.

## Hazard 4 Pillbox Backpack

The Hazard 4 Pillbox is no ordinary backpack. It has a thermoformed shell and padding to protect its contents. The Pillbox is popular among photographers since it protects its contents so well. The inside of the backpack comes with internal soft lining and movable padded dividers in various sizes to adjust it to your fit. Along with the internal lining and dividers, the pack features a hydration hanger.

The backpack is MOLLE compatible so you can add more gear to the outside, and it has external double grommets for attaching bungee cords, carabiners, lights, and other items. It also has a removable waist belt system. On the back of the pack, it has padded and ergonomic shoulder straps with attachment points, quick-release buckles, and a hydration hose holder.

The hardshell exterior has an uncrushable design. It's made from 1000D Cordura and is water repellent coated. It comes in three different colors: black, tan, and grey. Another advantage of the backpack is that since it's a hard case there are no flapping pieces. If you are looking for a backpack that will protect your electronics or guns, then the Pillbox might be worth checking out.

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# BEWARE, THE RECENT “PRECIOUS METALS” LIE COULD COST YOU

## Are Home Storage Precious Metals IRAs Even Legal?

By Forest Hamilton  
*Universal Coin & Bullion*

Even with the incredibly consistent performance of precious metals IRAs, the number one reason that folks choose not to invest is because they don't like a third-party depository holding their coins. Sadly, many have been duped into storing their precious metal IRAs in their home safes, which is a recipe for disaster.

You see, for years, false advertising in the form of television, radio and internet promotions have suggested that buyers could store assets of gold and silver bullion coins in their own homes or safety deposit boxes as part of an IRA account. The advertisements often misinterpret IRS guidance that allows for two-step transactions, claiming that an investor could use a “checkbook LLC” to circumvent enforcement of tax laws meant to prevent an IRA owner from direct possession of IRA assets.

But this is simply not true, and can land you in trouble. The Internal Revenue Code Section 408(a)(2) is clear on the topic and lays out restrictions on having “unfettered access” to funds in an IRA. The issue has also been taken up by ICTA, the Industry Council on Tangible Assets (now known as the National Coin and Bullion Association (NCBA)), using research from Mike Fuljenz, our company president, and our legal counsel to further provide a warning that those choosing to participate in home storage for their gold and/or silver IRAs may be unknowingly wading into serious trouble.

In his quest to educate the masses, Mike Fuljenz consulted with Texas

Attorney General Ken Paxton to prepare a consumer alert regarding gold and silver home storage IRAs, stating that consumers should stick with reputable independent IRA custodians and, “Be wary of Home Storage IRA Plans, as these have not been thoroughly tested with the U.S. Treasury or the IRS.”

Later, in response to inquiries, the IRS clarified its views on “home storage” and the use of an LLC set up as self-managed by the IRA owner to purchase and hold investments in gold and silver coins, warning that IRA owners cannot do indirectly what they cannot do directly.

A recent court case has found the warnings to be spot-on. In the court case, Andrew McNulty et al. vs. Commissioner of Internal Revenue, Judge Robert Goeke ruled that the physical storage of \$411,000 in gold and silver American Eagle Coins in a safe at home constituted “unfettered access” of the investment and would thus be considered a taxable distribution from the IRA in the amount of \$411,000 and imposed penalties of more than \$50,000.

Donna McNulty argued unsuccessfully that she had opened a separate bank account in the name of an LLC, documented the purchase of coins and labeled the coins as property of her IRA-owned LLC when depositing them into her home safe.

Judge Goeke came down hard on the McNultys' reliance on their LLC provider's advertisements instead of competent professional advice, calling home-storage IRAs a “questionable internet scheme,” according to the Wall Street Journal.

No one should be shocked by the decision. The NCBA has long warned against the practice, including publishing a white paper on the subject in 2018, “The Prohibition on Home Storage of Bullion in an IRA.” In that paper, the NCBA explains in detail how this two-step process — setting up an LLC to “hold” the gold and silver investments, which are then stored at home or in a safety deposit box — is a violation of Section 408 of the Internal Revenue Code and even used the exact same circumstances occurring in the McNulty tax court decision as a hypothetical case.

I strongly advise you to contact your accountant and your attorney if you have set up a home storage precious metals IRA. Then, if I can help in any way, call me about setting up an IRS-approved precious metals IRA that meets all of the requirements and guidelines set forth in the Internal Revenue Code. Failure to follow approved guidelines could result in a tax liability of up to 37 percent, not counting any penalties assessed by the IRS. Precious metals IRAs are a safe way to protect and grow your nest egg, if done the right way.

**[Publisher's Note:** For questions about buying gold and silver coins you can contact Forest Hamilton directly at [foresthilton@universalcoin.com](mailto: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.]

# BLINDING “BIG BROTHER’S” ALL-SEEING EYE

## How To Make 3 Equal 8 and Other Easy Espionage Tricks

By Michael D.

*Former Clandestine Officer, CIA,  
DIA, NSA*

I was chasing a BMW driven by a KGB Agent through an area of McLean, VA. The chase started after I saw him leaving an area of Scott’s Run Nature Preserve along the Potomac River. We had suspected that the Soviets had an active dead drop in that area but we were not exactly sure where it might be.



Visual observation is a key component in target acquisition and identification. So, we watched and waited. But why me and not the FBI? To be frank, it takes an experienced spy to spot an experienced spy. To non-spies, everyone can look like a secret agent in the act of nefarious conduct. We call that ghosting. It results from the way you look at someone. The suspicion in your eyes and your facial expressions along with your body posture, convey a threat to the observed, who then instinctively begins to behave, move, and change their demeanor in a way that adds to your suspicions, and the cycle escalates.

It was very pleasant weather and there were lots of people milling around that part of the nature preserve that day. Individuals, couples, and families were all just enjoying the area. So, I might not have noticed him if he had not reacted the way he did when I looked at him.

When I simply glanced at him, he had a very obvious “guilt reaction” that triggered my suspicions. My spider senses began to tingle and moments later he broke into a full sprint and jumped in his car. I was fifty yards behind him and still had to cover the distance to get into my vehicle to try and catch him. I sprinted to the car and sped after him. He made no

bones about wanting to get far away very quickly. To me, this meant he had something to deposit or something he’d just recovered. It was either very important or very incriminating. Probably something for his dead drop, brush pass or whatever other material conveyance scheme he employed.

I was having difficulty getting close enough for a good look at his vehicle or plate number. He got away but I thought I had his plates. I called in his plate number and description, but it came back as unissued. I had apparently misread his plates but I was not sure what I had gotten wrong. Later that day, I discovered my mistake. Heading home, I noticed how dirty my windshield was. As I leaned forward to duplicate the position I was in when trying to see his plates, it occurred to me that the windshield was dirty enough to have caused me to possibly misread them.

A “3” may have looked like an “8” at a glance. The Agency security services ran combinations of the plate and within a few hours they had his Last Known Address (LKA), name (a cover name) and his employer (also fake). At least now we had something to start working on, but my error in accurately identifying his license plates delayed our work and slowed

down our ability to catch him.

Today, we have to worry about our own government and big tech monitoring us. There are a few simple, easy things that you can do to reduce Big Brother’s efforts to watch you. Overseas, one of the things we did to buy a little time was to apply mud or black electrical tape to our vehicle’s tags. When you park, you remove the mud or the tape and your tags are clean.

Of course, this is illegal here in the United States, where cameras at intersections are the norm. But I’ve examined intersection camera footage and little things like having the visor down, sitting as far back from the windshield as possible, having windshield washer fluid pumping and wipers going full-blast definitely impede facial recognition. Add sunglasses and a Covid mask and it would be very hard to make a positive ID of anyone with an intersection camera.

Sometimes, it’s enough to slow down the opposition. Face it, they can fake any identification data they want to, but the more you make them work, the less effective they are and the slower they move.

So, if you can make them think the “3” is an “8” and buy yourself some time to stay ahead, you win the day.

# OWN THE NIGHT IN THE COMING WAR ON FREEDOM

## The Most Difficult, But Most Crucial Gear I Ever Learned to Use

By Mr. X

*Former Intelligence Operative*

We easily spend a thousand times more effort training for an operation than on the actual mission. Every professional and dedicated amateur knows how vital it is to train, rehearse, prepare, practice, and experiment before the real deal.

Most of the individual tasks and skills that can be mastered independently can be overlaid and interlaced with complementary skills and techniques to create new and more powerful blended capabilities.

Learning to sneak into a room and effectively search it is a highly developed skill. The knowledge that anything valuable enough to conceal was hidden by a trained



**SAVINT**

**YOUR MONTHLY  
SAVINGS INTELLIGENCE**

This month, you'll want to grab our Spy Blade XL, which recently came back in stock. The Spy Blade is also at a new low price. I have one of these in every bug out bag I own. The last time I used it was when camping to help with getting kindling and moving some logs around the fire. Check out the Spy Blade and the new training video at [www.FightingSpyBlade.com](http://www.FightingSpyBlade.com).

professional, added a dimension of complexity and nuance. Add to that the critical factor that you can leave zero indications that the room was entered and searched, and now you can begin to feel the extreme sense of intentionality and focus of purpose.

Next comes learning how to search a room exclusively using night vision gear. Becoming proficient with night vision gear while performing any activity is a challenge. There are so many preexisting neuro-optical gateways that must be retrained, and in some cases tricked, in order for your visual perceptions to be interpreted correctly and acted upon.

I remember my first experience using night vision while training for an upcoming operation. Despite the sincere warnings by my seniors, I was overconfident. I had a very maddening experience trying to force my expectations onto reality and then being confused and frustrated at the poor results of my training runs. It was not working at all like I thought it would.

My depth perception was totally useless, everything was monocular-green, things that should have been dull instead shined, and some things were so bright that I could not make out any context. I announced that I would prefer to use a flashlight, but was shot down hard and fast.

I eventually mastered both monocular and binocular night vision. But it did not end there. I learned how to defeat an enemy who also had night vision, and how to protect my night vision advantage from efforts to defeat it. Then I moved on to thermal vision.



I trained on how to defeat the enemy's thermal vision, and how to prevent them from defeating my optics advantage. And yes, then I had to learn how to blend night vision and thermal vision and be ready to defend against all optical countermeasures.

Now, if you've been paying attention, you already know that war (of one kind or another) is coming. Fifty years ago, the guy with a good flashlight had the advantage. Today, even dime-store criminals have some form of night vision gear.

We have been blessed that as a nation we have been able to rely on our armed forces and local law enforcement to protect us from evildoers who have technology and even rudimentary training on how to effectively use that technology. Evildoers who would deprive us of our necessities for living and quite possibly our lives. The odds that you own flashlights for the express purpose of burgling in the dark are very unlikely. You have flashlights to explore and



Bushnell products these will feel familiar. These binoculars operate off 4 AA batteries.

**Yukon Tracker 3x42 Night Vision Binoculars:**

The dual infrared system works best in open areas. The distance and quality of view changes significantly in forest areas, which is common with most night vision. These binoculars are battery-powered and use one CR123 battery. But, you will need to carry spare batteries because they don't last long. Multi-coated lenses and lens caps protect your field of view while not in use. The rubberized body is lightweight, with a no-slip coating.

**Nightfox 100V Widescreen Digital Night Vision Infrared Binocular:**

The Nightfox is affordably priced and is an option for the people who are on a budget when it comes to night vision.

These are not as durable as others on this list, but they feature an 18-month warranty plan. They offer up to 6 hours of run time

on a single battery charge. You will need 8 AA batteries to get the Nightfox up and running. They feature a viewing range of

up to 110 yards at night, with a 2x digital zoom button, for 6x magnification total. While not the most expensive option, they are a good product for the price.

In a survival situation you want every advantage you can get. And in these crazy times, you may be forced to bug out under the light of the moon. Or maybe you'll choose to take a stand and own the night. Either way, having quality, affordable night vision will help.

protect your environments, not to usurp another's freedom. However, without night vision, and learning how to use it, you are freely giving the advantages to those you know are on their way to harm you.

Perhaps you have chosen to not own firearms. While I think every responsible citizen should own and learn to become proficient with a firearm because they have both defensive as well as lethal offensive capabilities. But if you choose not to own a firearm, that rationale should not carry over into not purchasing, practicing, and being comfortable with using night vision gear as a defensive tool.

And you should not stop there. You already know that in addition to owning and being able to effectively use night vision gear you must be prepared to defeat anyone who comes after you with their own night vision tools. But go one step farther. Try to get ahead of your predators. Have, and learn how to employ, interlaced thermal and night vision optics. Why?

Because the worst of the bad guys come out at night and you need all the advantages you can get in the war for your freedoms.

Now, with all I just shared, if you want to get started with night vision at an affordable price using simple binoculars, you may wish to check out these options. (This is a good way to dip your toe into night vision without needing a ton of training and without breaking the bank.)

**Bushnell 260500 Nightvision 2x40:** Bushnell has a quality reputation when it comes to optics. These binoculars are rugged and water-resistant. They are powered by infrared and provide an incredible view in the dark. These are actually a monocular lens that projects onto two screens in the eyepieces. So, they are not actually binoculars, rather they're infrared night vision. This is a very durable product and if you use other

**"The distance and quality of view changes significantly in forest areas..."**

# THIS COULD END THE PANDEMIC BY SPRING

## The Vaccine Versus Natural Immunity — Which Is Best?

By Dr. Omar Hamada  
*Special Operations Physician*

Misinformation abounds. In fact, the “truth” seems to change on a daily basis and seems to be based on simple opinion and sometimes quite radical conspiracy. There are certainly things that we still don’t know about this “novel” coronavirus, yet the powers that be routinely act with such overwhelming certainty while much of what they say and believe is based on irrational opinion instead of actual scientific fact. Many of their opinions are, in fact, the fear-based opinions of bureaucrats and legislators and not clinically active physicians and scientists.

So, let’s cut through the bull and lay out what we do know at this moment. Coronaviruses have traditionally infected the upper respiratory tract. They’re responsible for approximately one-third of the common cold with no significant symptomatic differences from the primary virus responsible for colds (adenovirus).

Though they have been around for millennia, we’ve only been aware of coronaviruses for about 50 years. Coronaviruses are named for their crown appearance under electron microscopy. They have a genome made up of positive-sense single-stranded RNA, and a larger genome than any other RNA virus. They also have twenty genes that encode twenty specific glycoproteins.

Sixteen are responsible for their transmission and reproductive functions, and four are responsible for their structure. The four structural genes encode specific glycoproteins that make up their “body”: the spike protein, the membrane protein, the envelope protein, and the nucleocapsid protein.

Before 2019, the “wild-type” coronavirus mutated into at least two dangerous viruses. The 2002 variant, classified as SARS-CoV, spread to 26 countries, and killed approximately 9% of the over 8,000 people it infected and was contained in 4 months.

In 2013, MERS spread to 27 countries with a 34% fatality rate. Both viral mutations are thought to have originated in bats. Then, SARS-CoV-2 hit in late 2019 out of the viral laboratories in Wuhan, China where gain-of-function studies, as approved by Dr. Fauci, were being conducted on coronaviruses.

These studies were partially funded by our own NIH in conjunction with the Chinese government.

SARS-CoV-2 quickly spread and as of this date nearly every country has been affected, hundreds of millions have been infected (40% of whom were asymptomatic), and the fatality rate remains approximately 2%.

As the virus mutates, different variants begin to circulate. Some are variants of concern (VOCs) like Delta and Omicron. Though Delta resulted in more serious disease across a wider demographic, it seems to be winding down as Omicron rapidly takes over. Omicron, with its nearly three-dozen mutations seems to be more transmissible and more infectious, but less virulent resulting in less severe disease.

In fact, if these characteristics of Omicron hold, it could actually lead to the end of the pandemic. That’s because as more get infected, with less severe disease, it will establish broad and robust natural immunity far surpassing immunized immunity.

With President Trump’s rapid rollout of the SARS-CoV-2 vaccination efforts, the hope was that we’d end up with a vaccine that effectively prevented infection, transmission, and disease. Though we didn’t get that, we do seem to have “leaky” vaccines that reduce transmission and disease severity, but with much less effectiveness against the Omicron variant.

**"With more of your system fighting the virus, you get a full out immune system response."**

Vaccine science is complex. Many attempts have been made in the past to find an effective coronavirus vaccine.

For now, the best we seem to have is the RNA “vaccine” that encodes the spike protein of the wild-type virus. As mutations continue and as variants emerge (some pressured by host resistance from natural immunity, vaccination, and medications), the current vaccine may lose efficacy, but as we’re potentially seeing with Omicron, the virus may also begin to die out.

Now, the reason natural immunity is more robust and longer lasting than immunized immunity is that a natural infection engages the entire immune system including cellular immunity and memory functions against multiple antigens, rather than the vaccine-induced antibody response against a singular antigen.

With more of your system fighting the virus, you get a full out immune system response. Our hope in the medical community is that with the latest variant this pandemic will die out by Spring. Till then, stay safe, be smart and keep healthy.

# PRE-AND-POST SHOOTING SELF DEFENSE

## Four Moves You Must Know to Survive a Gun Fight

By Matt Numrich  
*Head Instructor Of Spy Black Belt*

If you carry a firearm, you need to have “pre-and-post” shooting self-defense options, because violent, life or death situations don’t always start with a perfect draw of your gun from the holster.

So, the goal is to have self-defense options available before pulling the trigger in case you’re surprised, rushed or crowded by an attacker and can’t immediately draw your gun. Or, if you pull your gun and fire but need to follow up with strikes because a violent criminal is right on top of you and you need to create distance because you can’t get a clean shot.



The following two moves are ones you need in your self-defense arsenal for times when you are trying to create space for a shot or to draw your gun. They’re easy to do under extreme stress because they’re gross motor function moves and they’re devastatingly effective.

First is the stomp kick. This is perfect when one or both of your hands are occupied with a handgun or long gun or blocking an oncoming attack. This move is done using your rear foot. Focus on picking up the knee and then delivering a “pushing” kick against the center mass or torso of the assailant. When connecting with the torso you can send a man flying back several feet, or delivered to the kneecap you can easily break a man’s leg. So, anytime you need extra distance or want to better identify the assailant, this is a great move.

Next is the hammer-fist strike. This is done with the bottom or “meatier” part of your fist. The great thing about this move is that it is very versatile and you can easily strike using a downward or side angle. Targets include the brachial area or face.

The challenge with these moves is that few ever practice them while trying to draw or with a gun in hand. Getting in reps with a non-functioning practice weapon is paramount. Even when you train using an inert weapon make sure you never muzzle yourself with the barrel.

Too many times the assumption is that when using your firearm to shoot an attacker the altercation will be done. We rarely account for missed shots or if the shot is not effective in stopping the attack and the assailant closes the gap on you. Furthermore, if there is more than one attacker, what happens if we’re successful in neutralizing one but

a second attacks and we don’t have time to shoot them?

In this case, we will assume that the attacker closed the gap because our shots either missed or didn’t immediately neutralize them. Therefore, I want to share with you more “close quarter” tools you can utilize. The first move is an elbow strike. A proper elbow strike can do serious damage to an opponent and is a perfect tool if someone crowds your space making it difficult for you to back up and put them in your gun sites.

When performing this move, it is best to bend your elbow, raise it at a 45-degree angle and strike down at a diagonal angle. Variations can be used as well, but it is important to use the tip of the elbow where the bone is the hardest.

Another great close quarter move is a knee strike. This is specifically important if you are wrestling for the control of your weapon. Quite simply, you want to fire your knee up at a 45-degree angle into the thigh, abdomen or groin. Follow up as needed. This can end the fight all by itself. And the best part is, these moves work in tandem. If the attacker tries to block the incoming knee, he’s wide open for an elbow to the temple.

I would encourage you to invest in a plastic or rubber training gun and practice these moves before and after your draw your gun. If you use a training partner versus a martial arts dummy punching bag, the barrel will be crossing your training partner several times during these moves, so please do not use a real firearm.

Having these moves in your arsenal could make a life-or-death difference in a violent confrontation. Add them to your training and reap the benefits in safety and confidence.