

SPY + SURVIVAL BRIEFING

LIFESAVING STRATEGIES FROM FORMER CIA AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

AN OLD ENEMY RISES FROM THE ASHES

Identifying The Growing Terrorist Threat Within Our Borders

By Jason Hanson

Former CIA Officer

In 2022, there were over 100 security incidents at U.S. power stations — and these are just the ones that the public knows about. In early 2023, there was an attack against the Mega Solar Array facility, located northeast of Las Vegas. The Mega Solar Array power station is owned by American Electric Power, one of the country's biggest electric companies. The station has over 300,000 solar panels on 640 acres and produces enough power to supply about 27,000 average sized U.S. homes.

MGM resorts is the sole user of electricity generated at the power station. In Las Vegas, MGM has over 65 million square feet of property including 13 resorts and more than 35,000 hotel rooms on the Las Vegas strip.



Here's what happened: Around 11 a.m., employees at the solar plant reported that a man drove his vehicle through a fence. He then set the vehicle on fire. The attack resulted in power from the facility being completely shut down.

A man named Mohammed M. was arrested a few days later at a campground in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area and charged with committing an act of terrorism. This was a minor "probing event" to see how security reacted and it certainly won't be the last attack. After all, "probing" attacks always precede "the big one."

Recently, the head of U.S. Central Command warned Congress that within the next six months terror

groups such as ISIS could have the ability to strike the US and this could include bringing down our grid.

"They can do an external operation against U.S. or Western interests abroad in under six months with little to no warning," said Army Gen. Michael Kurilla.

Terrorist activities in the Middle East have increased since the U.S. withdrew forces, and it's more challenging for the U.S. to conduct counter-terror operations after withdrawing. With the increased threat of terror attacks in the U.S., it's likely only a matter of time before the next one happens.

Since the U.S. withdrew from Afghanistan, they have only conducted one military strike against terrorists.

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This has allowed terror groups such as ISIS-K to gain momentum in carrying out attacks. The group has attacked the Afghan foreign ministry, the Pakistani embassy, and a hotel that catered to foreign visitors. Without American boots on the ground intervening, groups like ISIS-K will slowly grow and expand their operations.

Another way terrorists will carry out their attacks is by lone actors who don't draw attention. Lone actors are motivated by their specific beliefs and personal grievances. They operate on their own and there are few warning signs for law enforcement to catch.

In the case of the attack in Las Vegas, the lone terrorist was not some mastermind. He drove a car through a fence and set it on fire. But these types of small attacks can affect thousands of Americans who depend on power stations. Since they can get such a huge return with such small actions, lone actors will likely continue to be a serious threat since they are more difficult to stop.

In 2022, U.S. Customs and Border Patrol stopped at least 98 people from entering the U.S. who were on the terror watch list. These are just the people that were caught and

many more criminals and foreign spies made it through.

Terrorists know the easiest way to enter the U.S. is through the southern border. In 2022, law enforcement encountered 2.2 million people at the southern border. That's more than four times the number of people who arrived in 2020.

The southern border is one of our country's biggest security risks and until lawmakers get serious about securing the border it will be an easy way for terrorists to get into the U.S.

Bottom line, with the U.S. military conducting very few missions in the Middle East to disrupt terror groups, the terrorists are looking for ways to bring the fight to the U.S.

That's why it's more important than ever to be prepared for long-term power outages, food supply issues, and other emergencies. We're facing threats on all sides, and especially from within our borders. Those who are prepared will survive in the coming chaos but I fear that far too many Americans still don't take this seriously enough. Thankfully, I know you're not one of them and I'm grateful for that.

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SnagMag

One of my favorite guns to carry is my Springfield 1911, but the drawback to carrying a 1911 is the limited amount of ammo the gun holds. This is why you should carry spare magazines when you carry a 1911, or pretty much any gun for that matter.

One product that makes carrying gun magazines a bit easier is called the SnagMag. The SnagMag is made from a molded thermoplastic design with a pocket clip. It weighs hardly anything, so it won't be bothersome or bulky.

The magazine slides into the SnagMag and you put it in your pocket. The clip on the SnagMag attaches to your pocket in a way similar to a pocketknife or tactical pen. The SnagMag will keep your magazine in place with the right orientation to quickly grab it. So, during an emergency you would be able to draw the magazine and insert it into your weapon and the SnagMag will stay clipped to your pocket.

The SnagMag is molded to fit specific gun magazines, so you will need to make sure you buy the right one for the type of gun you own. It costs between \$20 to \$35 depending on the specific one you purchase.

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BANK FAILURES

How To Protect Your Wealth

By Forest Hamilton
Universal Coin & Bullion

Last month, we had several banks fail. But the truth is, this crisis has been steadily bubbling under the surface for years and finally just started boiling over. For instance, Silicon Valley Bank, the first of the big dominos to fall, had been on the Federal Reserve's radar for quite some time.

In fact, for years leading up to the failure, the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco reviewed SVB and found significant points of weakness. SVB was warned many times and was cited six times for "matters requiring immediate attention."

The Fed even met with SVB senior leadership, determining they were "out of step with reality" and using bad models to project how things would go in the future.

These warnings seemed to fall on deaf ears, as SVB was forced to go into a full supervisory review by July of 2022. Restrictions followed, which stopped the bank from growing through acquisitions. As the calendar rolled into 2023, the Fed placed SVB in a Horizontal Review in order to dig deeper into their risk management processes.



Unfortunately, all of these reviews, warnings, citations, and meetings failed to save SVB, and there was a run on the bank, causing the bank to fail – just as the Fed had warned.

According to the FDIC website, Silicon Valley Bank is the first United States bank to fail since 2020 and the second largest U.S. bank to fail in history, but it was just the start of the crisis. Signature Bank, a real estate and crypto-friendly New York bank with over 40 locations was closed and taken over by the FDIC after spooked depositors withdrew over \$10 Billion dollars from their accounts. This means that 2 of the 3 largest U.S. banks to ever fail did so in less than 48 hours.

The White House and the Fed held emergency meetings to come up with a plan to stop the bleeding and prevent widespread panic. President Biden announced that all deposits, both insured and uninsured, in both SVB and Signature would be returned to the customers.

It was a March Miracle! And the best part? The billions of dollars bailing the uninsured investors out (like Oprah Winfrey's reported \$500+ Million loss at SVB) would not be "directly" paid by taxpayers.

Unfortunately for Biden and the banking world, Americans weren't buying it. As the stock market opened the next day, bank stocks crashed. After nearly 50 banks opened up with 10-60% losses, trading was stopped within minutes to pause the bloodbath.

But the damage was already done. People's

faith in banks was shaken. My phone was ringing off the hook with people wanting to move huge amounts from cash, stocks and bonds into gold and silver.

But the fallout impacted banks around the world, and the following weekend, Credit Suisse got caught up in the SVB fallout and was taken over by UBS in a deal that was quickly jumbled together by the Swiss government to ease fears before the Asian markets opened.

According to a study done by Social Science Research Network, nearly 200 banks are now at risk and Fed chair Janet Yellen has already stated that the Fed will not continue to insure uninsured depositors.

This virtually guarantees people will continue to pull money from banks and look for safer havens. While it would be truly wonderful if the government could come up with a plan to save us without costing taxpayers, I would rather take some intelligent action for myself and my clients.

While I don't know if gold and silver will continue their current rise for as long and as high as many experts predict, I am confident that adding a good amount of gold and silver to your portfolio is a smart diversification for the uncertain times we are in since there will most likely be many more bank failures this year.

[Publisher's Note: For questions about buying gold and silver coins you can contact Forest Hamilton directly at foresthilton@universalcoin.com or call 409-926-7001. 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.]

SAFELY PREPARING FOR SPRINGTIME ACTIVITIES

The Sun's Out, But So Are Dangerous Animals And Criminals

By EJ Snyder

Former Army Ranger and Extreme Survivalist

As the weather gets nicer in many parts of the country, you may have the itch to get outside. It is a normal human urge, after being cooped up inside for so long. But, like you, many animals and sadly, some criminals, will be on the prowl too.

That means, anytime you leave your home, you need to be prepared. So, here are some survival nuggets to remember and you can tailor them to your specific scenario.

First, keep a checklist of items you plan to carry, or pack, based on your activity. Have a backpack loaded with items like a raincoat, hat, sunglasses, water, snack, first aid and survival kit, knife, flashlight, EDC items (like mace, taser, etc.), and, if it's legal, a firearm. Make sure your cell phone is charged-up and carry a battery recharge pack in case you are gone longer than expected.

Additionally, check your weather report, and be sure to wear appropriate clothing. Then, let someone know where you are going, for how long, and if anyone else is with you. Finally, get your situational awareness (SA) up, as it will help you stay safe.

When you arrive at your destination, lock up your vehicle. Make one last inspection so that you don't forget anything.

If at a park, check the info board for maps and warnings about the area and wildlife. Grab a map if they have one and get your protection items ready, whether that's a gun, knife, tactical pen or large flashlight.

While walking, stay alert for stray animals. If you encounter any wildlife, avoid it and move around it or turn around in the opposite direction. Do not engage unless you have no choice but to protect yourself, then take any needed action.

Same goes for individuals acting odd or suspicious. It is best to avoid a person when you aren't sure of their intentions. Try to move towards a more public area that will deter a potential criminal encounter.

Be sure to scan the area in front of you, and now and again, take a look behind you. Look for signs of animal activity in the area like scat. For your safety, don't wear headphones while you walk. You want to hear if an animal is alerting you of their presence. Or the rush of footsteps coming towards you from an assailant.

If you see anyone out along the trail acting odd, step off the trail and find a spot to hide quietly as they pass by. If you have to pass by them, keep your eyes on them at all times and openly display your defense items in a non-threatening manner. (You can do this with a tactical pen or flashlight. Obviously, you would not brandish a gun.)

When you're leaving, stay alert. Look around and see if you are alone or if other people are milling about. Have your keys out and any defensive items in hand. If you must use the park restroom, do it with caution.

Approach your vehicle carefully. Is there a suspicious vehicle next to it? Check over your vehicle to make sure it has not been tampered with in any way. Check the back seat to ensure no one has gotten inside your vehicle. If clear, enter your vehicle quickly and lock the doors as soon as you are inside.

Drive a bit slower at dusk or in the dark, as animals always move about at those times. If there is an individual trying to flag you down, use caution. Criminals will use ploys to get you out of your vehicle. Remember, it could be someone actually in trouble. Use your best judgment, be observant, and trust your instincts here.

Keep doors locked and only roll down the window just enough to hear them. Openly display defense items. Do not get out of your vehicle — especially if you are alone. I recommend only offering help in the form of a cell call. Better safe than sorry.

I want you to get outside and enjoy it, but be prepared for any wildlife, loose pet, or troublemaker that you may encounter. I realize these are simple tips, but it's the basics like these that kept me alive in the military.



WHEN TRAINING MEETS THE REALITIES OF COMBAT

Life Lessons From Playing Cowboys And Indians

By Michael D.

*Former Clandestine Officer, CIA,
DIA, NSA*

It was nothing like what I expected. I had trained and prepared and was sure I was going to excel at the task of combat reconnaissance. I had been looking forward to my first real-life contact with the enemy and I was cold-steel ready. I had heard about the “fog of war,” but thought it was an “old wives’ tale” and knew I was prepared for anything.

I had a certain kind of faith in my gear, my fellow crew members, the airframe itself, and all of our trained and rehearsed responses to any threats. I had taken comfort in the notion that I was invincible because I was trained and prepared to be so.

When the warning lights flashed, indicating an enemy radar had locked on our mission aircraft, I was chomping at the bit to test our collective skills against the Russian fighter. As we executed our maneuvers and performed our well-planned tactics, I was expecting a quick and clean getaway.

But I was wrong. The next set of lights flashed, and the crew comms blared, announcing that the enemy ground control and the Russian-piloted interceptor fighter had not only detected us and locked on with ranging radar, but their missile guidance systems were now active and locked on us.

It would only be seconds, maybe a minute at most, before that heat-seeking missile acquired a positive target lock. Then, the pilot would fire that missile and we would have about 25 seconds for final thoughts.

"The Russian pilot did not activate his missile target lock-on immediately."



It sure was not going the way I thought it would.

I grew up playing cowboys and Indians with my friends in the neighborhood. We also played army and had wild shoot-outs with sticks as guns and threw snowballs as grenades. I think our moms must have fed us Wheaties with testosterone sprinkles.

We played hard and rough and came home with bloody noses, skinned knees, and torn pants. Almost every day was an outdoor adventure where we learned life lessons. As I grew more mature, I became more interested in

academics than pugilism. I joined the military primarily because my family was poor and I was interested in career opportunities and access to education. I soon learned that while all the branches offered training, the USAF offered me my best chance at moving out of the projects and into a goal-driven life.

I tested well and was selected to become a linguist. After attending the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA and graduating as Honor Graduate, Vietnamese, I went on to

USAF Spy School at Goodfellow Air Force Base and was trained for airborne reconnaissance missions.

Next, I went to a series of special survival schools including parachute school, the prestigious SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape), and the follow-on schools of interrogation and resistance, and water survival. I spent two full years preparing to be an airborne reconnaissance operator.

When I arrived at my first overseas assignment, I was very anxious to fly my first real-world combat mission and test my personal mettle against the powers of our enemies. However, I had never stopped to seriously consider the potentiality of not surviving. Of course, the thought had crossed my mind briefly, but as anyone who has ever had to plan and prepare for life-threatening encounters knows, you cannot allow your mind to consider defeat.

Just like in martial arts and life, it's your mind, mental attitude, and perseverance that wins challenges, not simply your guns, muscles, or tanks.

On that particular mission, the Russian pilot did not activate his missile target lock-on immediately. That



gave us the precious extra few seconds to deploy comprehensive countermeasures and break radar lock. It allowed us to get away and go home to our families that particular day.

At the post-mission debrief, we discussed what we call a “very close encounter” and wondered why we had not been shot down. Our Russian linguists on board that mission offered the most plausible and heart-warming theory. The lead Russian language tactical operator on board our reconnaissance platform explained that he could hear reluctance and concern in the voice of the Russian pilot leading the two-aircraft interceptor mission sent to shoot us down.

He heard pauses and guttural sounds like the pilot was hesitant to take the final step to lock on the missile’s target function and fire the missile. He heard the pilot asking the GCI (Ground Control Intercept) commander to repeat his orders.

He said the pilot must have asked at least three times for them to confirm the orders to shoot down the American Spy plane. But what he said next made the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. He said that while he was listening to this exchange

"At the post-mission debrief, we discussed what we call a 'very close encounter'".

between the reluctant Russian fighter pilot and the remote voice of the guy on the ground calling for him to blow us out of the sky, he felt like the pilot knew we were listening and was giving us a chance to get out of there before he had no choice but to fire his missiles. Honestly, only that pilot will ever know what was going through his mind at that moment and why all 24 of us lived to go home that day.

But today, things have changed. The level of personal animosity among nations and among individuals of each nation has grown by several levels of magnitude. There are fewer mercies available and fewer men with vision and compassion.

Leaders of the world’s nations seem to be anxious to go to war. They are like the ground controller who is hundreds of miles away from the actual fight, looking at a radar blip but not seeing the men in the crosshairs.

It is always the guys in the ivory towers that send men and women whom they have never met to fight battles that they themselves have caused. Even worse, now we find that our own neighbors have divided into cults and cliques.

I worry less about a Russian pilot than I do our own corrupt leadership. I am far more concerned about the “mostly peaceful protests,” Critical Race Theory, Environmental and Social Governance, worship of Climate Change and vaccinations, and the precipitous decline in our moral standards as a nation and as individuals.

I often wonder: If I felt prepared for combat and then learned that I was not as ready as I thought I was, how am I going to react when soon, all of this comes collapsing down around our ears?

I learned that I had prepared physically and mentally for combat, but not spiritually — I had overlooked the eternal aspects of my actions and mortality. I had taken scant time or effort to think about the meaning of things. I learned a great lesson that day, and I will not let that happen to me again. I am placing my greatest preparation for this next, final war, on spiritual preparation first, then mental, physical, and the rest. I hope you will consider doing the same.



SAVINT **YOUR MONTHLY** **SAVINGS INTELLIGENCE**

This month, you can get our newest guide called Black Market Survival. This guide teaches you the tips, tricks and hacks to getting the goods and gear you need to survive during a crisis. Full details about this unique guide can be found at www.BlackMarketSurvival.com.

WHAT IS PHYSICAL FITNESS, REALLY?

The 8 Areas Of Physical Fitness

By Dr. Omar Hamada

Special Operations Physician

Most people equate physical fitness to cardiovascular health. So, they think themselves fit if they have a good level of endurance in an activity like running, biking, hiking, walking or swimming. However, that alone is not fitness.

Some think it's musculoskeletal strength. They spend extraordinary amounts of time in the gym pumping iron, getting lean, and "going heavy." But that's not fitness either.

About 20 years ago, a couple in California realized some of this and started talking about "functional fitness." They created what came to be known as "CrossFit."

It took those of us in the military by storm and quickly became all the rage as we went to their website every morning to see the "Workout of the Day" (or WOD). CrossFit added the strength, coordination, endurance, and plyometrics pieces to what we thought of as fitness at the time. But that didn't fully cover physical fitness either.

Being truly physically fit encompasses what I call the "8 areas of Physical Fitness." They are endurance, strength, plyometrics and speed, agility and coordination, flexibility and myofascial release, balance and proprioception, nutrition, rest and recovery. Some of these are fairly self-explanatory, but let's cover them briefly to make sure you and I are on the same page.

First, endurance, or one's ability to maintain constant activity at a set pace against a set (or even variable) resistance. It's primarily a function of our efficiency and capacity of oxygen delivery and utilization

(aerobic activity), efficiency of mitochondrial function in the absence of oxygen (anaerobic activity), and our lactic acid metabolism. We improve this in various ways including distance work, breath holds, hydration, and increasing resistance.

Second, strength, or our ability to move a certain weight a certain distance, is a function of actin and myosin numbers and connections, muscle fiber type, bone density and strength, tendon length and placement on the bone (genetic), and leverage as quantified by moment arm length (a physics issue). Free weights can't maximize strength through the entire range of motion as you can only lift what you can at your weakest position. Variable resistance technologies like high quality bands can maximize force generation throughout the entire movement while decreasing risk of injury.

Plyometrics uses bursts of speed coupled with force of movement under tension to build power. Examples of plyometric movements are box jumps, lunges, burpees, and clap-pushups.

We tend to lose agility and coordination as we age, so it's important to do all we can to maintain or improve both in our physical fitness regimens. Agility and coordination are defined as sudden changes of direction and speed in smooth and controlled ways. Use rapidly alternating movements like running cones, low hurdles, ladders, etc. to improve these.

Fifth is flexibility and myofascial release. Maintaining flexibility helps reduce chance of injury, maintains

health, and improved enduring strength, power, and speed.

There are many programs out there today that assist with improving your flexibility — from hyperbolic stretching to physical therapy. The best practice is to maintain an aggressive stretching regimen that slowly pushes past comfort as you mobilize joints, muscles, and tendons. Regular use of foam rollers to break up adhesions and stretch out muscles is a good practice.

Balance and proprioception are easy for some and difficult for others.

"It's primarily a function of our efficiency and capacity of oxygen delivery."

They are functions of peripheral, spinal cord, and central reflex tracts that enable us to know where various parts of our bodies are in space at any given time without visual input, as well as a function of our flexibility, freedom of movement, and speed. These can be improved on for most of us with the use of things like balance boards, vibration therapy, martial arts, dance, and even balance beams.

The last two we've previously discussed in this newsletter — nutrition (eating healthy), and rest and recovery (getting good sleep).

Of course, to be truly fit we should also include emotional and spiritual fitness, as well as intellectual fitness. Without all three areas — heart, head, and body, we really can't say we are truly fit. The next 30 days, try to incorporate little parts of each of the 8 areas of optimal physical fitness into your daily routine if you're able to.

THE TWO FUNDAMENTAL LAYERS OF SELF-DEFENSE

6 Tips To Keep You Safer And Faster, Starting Today

By Matt Numrich

Head Instructor Of Spy Black Belt

As a self-defense instructor, I'm always encouraging people to take more responsibility for their own safety. The best strategy to quickly boost your own safety is to use both proactive and reactive measures for yourself and family. To that end, this month, I've outlined six measures which are easy to do and can be rapidly implemented in most peoples' lives.

First, let's discuss proactive measures. The number one proactive measure is creating the habit of being situationally aware. Criminals love stalking those who are off in their own little world. So, look around and pay more attention as you go through your day. Walk with a purpose. Don't get tied up while talking on your cell phone or take rarely traveled routes. Keep your head up and look at people as you pass them. Criminals want to get into your personal space to assault you. By taking that away from them, you fail their "target test."

Next, home and vehicle alarms are a good layer for added protection. So, add, update, or retrain yourself on

your systems. Have you tried your car's panic button out recently? Test it to ensure it works. Do the same thing with your home alarm and make sure the panic button on your keypad or the fob in your master bedroom works as it's supposed to.

You should also consider the small handheld personal alarms that you carry on your keychain, especially if you are out and about on your own.

Once again, an attacker's most hated thing is attention, and activating an ear-piercing alarm when you're confronted is exactly what they don't want.

Being proactive while traveling anywhere requires you to travel smart. Travel as light as possible. The less you have, the less you have to keep an eye on, and the less attention you'll draw.

Next, note your emergency exits when in new environments and always plan out routes to your points of interests. This is another level of "being aware" as noted above.

Now, for reactive measures. These are things you want to have in place during or after an attack and the time to shore them up is now.

Build a small arsenal of "close quarter" combative movements, both hand-to-hand, and with your everyday carry weapons. Remember, you're not training to be a "competition cage fighter." Your goal is to learn three to six quick moves to attack any assailant's weak spots. These

can include a punch to the throat, elbow to the face or kick in the groin.

Next, add some spice to your life. Pepper spray is an effective and practical tool that can give you an edge in a dangerous situation. Some guys

think pepper spray is more of a "female" self-defense tool. Try telling that to the 6'4" State Police Officer who carries it every day.

But even when people do buy it, they rarely (if ever) train with it. Solely buying pepper spray at the local drug store is not enough. Instead, take the time to find the best sprayer for you, learn how to use it, and make sure you do some test sprays (outdoors.)

The last proactive measure I'll leave you with is to get in shape. Being aware, fighting back, screaming for help, running, escaping, etc., all take energy. I'm not talking about anything crazy like running marathons or pumping iron six days a week. However, basic physical fitness can go a long way toward helping you survive an attack.

The self-defense moves I mentioned earlier will definitely work better coming from a more flexible, stronger, and fit person. Plus, you can't write off the mental and emotional benefits of working out, which can be priceless in a real-life altercation. Do what you can, work around any injuries you have, and try and be the best version of "you" possible. Every little bit helps.

The bottom line is, a big goal of self-defense and personal protection is to create layers of protection. Using these quick and easy points to educate yourself and family is a great start, so you can be prepared when it comes to both proactive and reactive measures.

