

# SPY + SURVIVAL BRIEFING

LIFESAVING STRATEGIES FROM FORMER CIA AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

## THE UNDECLARED CYBER WAR RAGING AGAINST PUTIN

### "Heroic Hackers" Maul Russia With A Myriad Of Attacks

By Jason Hanson

*Former CIA Officer*

Most cyber hackers carry out crimes for their own gain, but there are a number of hackers targeting Russia that have become heroes to many. Around the time of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the hacker group Anonymous declared a cyberwar against Russia. The group claimed responsibility for hacking the Russian government. They also hacked news websites and leaked data from the federal agency that censors media.

According to one cyber security firm, *"Anonymous has proven to be a very capable group that has penetrated*



### WHAT'S INSIDE

- 3** What Makes The U.S. Dollar So Special?
- 4** One Of The Most Versatile Survival Tools You Can Own
- 5** "Dark Work" Lessons For Today's America
- 7** How To Look, Move, And Feel Younger At Any Age
- 8** A Less-Lethal Weapon You Need In Your EDC Gear

*some high-value targets, records, and databases in the Russian Federation."*

No one in Russia is safe from these attacks. Hackers have targeted the government, businesses, and individuals. Hackers have accessed the financial information of oligarchs, stolen government emails, and defaced Russian websites.

The data stolen by hackers is pretty darn impressive. Not only is the amount of data massive, but the secrecy of the data is as well. Some of the data contained the names of

Russian intelligence officers and soldiers. Furthermore, this isn't just one hacker group going after Russia. Many different groups of hackers from all over the world are focused on Russia.

It appears the Ukrainian government is not involved in these cyberattacks, but the country has endorsed attacks that weaken Russia. According to the Ukrainian government, nearly 200,000 hackers showed interest in joining the fight against Russia. They joined Ukraine's "volunteer cyber army."

The hackers aren't working for any foreign government either, rather, they are targeting Russia on their own. The fact is, Russia is losing the cyberwar.

It's important to know what's happening right now, in case any of these tactics are turned on the U.S. and its citizens. The number one method of cyberattacks against Russia has been DDoS attacks or Distributed Denial of Service attacks. These types of cyberattacks have been knocking Russian websites offline. The way it works is that hackers flood websites with traffic and make them inaccessible.

The targets have included online payment services, aviation companies, and food delivery services. In the first three months of 2022, Russia was hit with record levels of attacks.

**"Another way hackers are causing disruption is by erasing massive amounts of data."**

Another method of attack on Russia has been ransomware. In many cases, hackers have been searching for weaknesses in Russian computer systems. Once they find a weak point, they use this to access a larger network. In one instance, a hacker sent emails that pretended to be from a financial institution. The emails warned people about sanctions that would shut down Visa and Mastercard.

The email was a ransomware attack. Once the victim clicked on it, there was a malicious backdoor file. This allowed the hacker into the computer system. Next, the hacker sends the victims a ransom note

outlining what they must pay if they want their data back.

Another way hackers are causing disruption is by erasing massive amounts of data. In one case, hackers erased hundreds of computer folders. They also renamed some files to "putin\_stop\_this\_war."

The amount of data being hacked is unprecedented. When WikiLeaks first launched, it took 10 years for them to publish ten million documents. In the two months since Russia's invasion, over 6 million documents have been published.

While hackers might not have the skills to take Russia completely offline, the stolen data will embarrass and influence those whose information is stolen. Some hackers have published the personal information of Russian

soldiers who have been accused of war crimes. One hacker told the media, *"I cannot shoot anything, but I can fight with a keyboard and mouse."*

One of the most important things you can do to be ultra-safe from cyberattacks is to backup everything. I backup important files daily. I backup to the cloud and I also backup to a physical hard drive that I keep in a fireproof safe. Of course, I also use antivirus software and have all my websites encrypted so that I hopefully don't ever have to rely on the backups. But you never know.

## Blackhawk Custom Moldable Holster

Having a good holster is clearly invaluable. One such holster is the TecGrip FormLok from the Blackhawk company. The holster is designed to mold to and retain your firearm. The unique thing about the TecGrip is that it allows the user to thermoform the plastic core of the holster around their firearm to achieve the perfect fit for retention.

The process is similar to molding a mouthguard for sports. Heat the holster and mold it. The outer layer of the holster is made with grip material that clings to the body or fabric. The next layer is a high-density closed-cell foam material that provides padding for comfort.

The middle layer is made of a material called Memory-Lok. This is a thermoformable plastic that allows the user to heat up and mold the holster around their handgun. The liner of the holster is made of friction-resistant polyester for long service life and to reduce wear on the firearm and also makes for a smooth draw.

The holster is not designed for pistols with weapon-mounted lights, but there is room for a small laser attached to the gun. So, if you are looking for a nylon holster with good retention, the TecGrip is worth a try.

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Spy & Survival Briefing is published monthly by Spy Briefing LLC, 124 S. Main Street #4090, Cedar City, UT 84720. [www.SpyBriefing.com](http://www.SpyBriefing.com).

Spy Briefing President: Jason Hanson; Managing Editor: Robert Conroy; Graphic Design: Mena Sugg



# WHAT MAKES THE U.S. DOLLAR SO SPECIAL?

## Bizarre Facts About That Cash In Your Wallet

By Forest Hamilton  
*Universal Coin & Bullion*

I was in a store once when a detective was explaining to the clerk that a group of counterfeiters had rolled into town and conned around 17 establishments out of tens of thousands of dollars in merchandise before finally getting caught. They “washed” or “bleached” genuine \$1 bills using a chemical solution and then printed \$20 or \$100 onto the blank paper. This technique is able to fool the merchants because the counterfeit detection pen shows that the bills are printed on “good paper.”

Take a moment to think about the dollar bills that are in your wallet or your purse right now. How much do you really know about them? Here are a few fun facts about the Almighty Dollar.

Your “paper” money is not made of paper. “Currency Paper” is composed of 75% cotton and 25% linen.



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

This month, you can get the #1 survival water filter that I use to make sure my family always has clean water in a crisis. Just go to [www.SurvFilter.com](http://www.SurvFilter.com) and you'll see some crazy videos of me using this filter in some very nasty conditions.

Blue and red synthetic fibers of various lengths are evenly distributed throughout the bill. The average life of a dollar bill is only around 18 months. Around 97% of all paper money contains traces of cocaine.

At \$490 per pound, one-million-dollar bills equal 2,040.8 pounds. If you had \$1 billion and spent \$1 per second, it would take over 100 years to spend it all.

Almost half of the notes printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing are \$1 notes. The Latin above the pyramid, *Annuit Coeptis*, means, “God has favored our undertaking.” The Latin below the pyramid, *Novus Ordo Seclorum*, means “a new order for the ages.” At the base of the pyramid, you will find “1776” in roman numerals.

There is an owl in upper left-hand corner of the “1” encased in the “shield,” while a spider is hidden in the front right-hand corner. The number 13 figures prominently on the \$1 bill. The number of digits in 1776 (4) and its roman numeral equivalent MDCCLXXVI (9) add up to 13, there are 13 stars above the eagle, 13 steps on the pyramid, 13 letters in *Annuit Coeptis* and *E Pluribus Unum*, 13 vertical bars on the shield, the top of the shield has 13 horizontal stripes, 13 leaves on the olive branch, and 13 arrows and 13 hats.

The origin of calling a dollar a “buck” is said to come from the frontier days when the value of property was estimated in buckskins. One buckskin equaled around one dollar in goods. During the Civil War, approximately 1 out of every 3 dollars in circulation was a fake. The term greenbacks come from the Demand Note dollars created by Abraham Lincoln in the

late 1800s to finance the Civil War. The backs of the bills were printed in black and green.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury first issued paper U.S. currency in 1862 to make up for the shortage of coins and to finance the Civil War. There was a shortage of coins because people started hoarding them. The uncertainty caused by the war had made the value of items fluctuate drastically. Because coins were made of gold and silver they held their value and people wanted to hang onto them rather than buy items that might lose their value.

The Federal Reserve Bank injected \$6.4 trillion into the economy between March 2020 and the end of 2021 — a 42% increase in the money supply in only 22 months. “Quite simply, too much money was created by the Federal Reserve Bank, mostly in 2020, and it is turning, inevitably, into inflation,” said AFBF Chief Economist Roger Cryan.

As the dollar weakens, allowing you to purchase less goods each year, there is a solution. Gold has been as close to inflation proof as I have been able to find. An ounce of gold today will buy around the same amount of goods and services today that it would at just about any point in history. If there is anything I can do to help you with finding the right type of gold to purchase, please let me know.

**[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 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.]

# ONE OF THE MOST VERSATILE SURVIVAL TOOLS YOU CAN OWN

## The Military And Bushmen All Carry It

By EJ Snyder

*Former Army Ranger and Extreme Survivalist*

When I was in the Army, there were many times during maneuvers and in combat that we were sent into a battle position and quickly needed to build a defensive position. It was a major task and needed to be right because our lives depended on it.

The work was always better with the right tools and the axe made our work easier. I used it for all kinds of tasks, from felling trees for construction of the position to hammering stakes and chopping poles. It also helped us clear the trail of fallen trees and debris. It was such a useful tool that I've carried one with me ever since — whether on my pack, in my truck, or at my camp.

A bushcraft axe gives you a ton of versatility all in one simple tool and there are plenty of options to choose from. Part survival tool and part wood splitting and chopping tool, a bushcraft axe can cover skills like felling trees, chopping logs, cutting apart game and even hammering tent stakes into hard ground. Survival tasks like chop-

ping through ice and creating kindling are also possible with one of these axes. To assist you in finding just the right bushcraft axe for your needs, I'll discuss several types to aid you in your search.

The bushcraft hatchet is a smaller, more compact axe that's designed to be held and used with just one hand. It's a perfectly portable option with a handle that typically measures between 9 and 14 inches in length and an axe head that weighs between 1 and 1.5 pounds. This level of hatchet also includes the tomahawk, which was mainly designed for fighting but does have a dual axe/knife purpose for survival tasks.

You shouldn't rely on a bushcraft hatchet for any chopping or cutting jobs that require you to slice through wood that's 2 inches or more in thickness. It's a better choice for smaller, one-handed jobs that don't require a ton of force or effort.

On the other hand, the small bushcraft axe is a step up from a hatchet, as it's both longer and heavier and can be used with one or both hands. Small axes tend to have handles between 18 and 20 inches long and a head that weighs between 1.5 and 2 pounds. A small bushcraft axe is one of the most versatile options available, as it's still easy enough to carry anywhere while able to handle the widest variety of tasks. You can cut items up to 4 inches thick with one of these. It's even possible to take down medium-sized trees.

The bushcraft felling axe is the biggest kind you'll find for bushcraft use. These axes are significantly longer and heavier and they're designed to take down big or even massive trees. Made just for felling, these axes tend to have handles between 24 and 30 inches long with a

head that weighs between 2 and 4 pounds in total. A felling axe isn't the most travel-ready option, but it's the best choice if you need to take down trees. These are great for anyone who's working on their own outdoor property or headed into thickly wooded areas.

When you're considering different bushcraft axes, two features stand out: The handle and the blade. These determine how heavy it is, how easy it is to wield and how powerful your axe is for various jobs.

To determine which axe has just the right handle, pick one that measures between 18 and 28 inches long. These are the most comfortable handle lengths for bushcraft and they offer the best balance of comfort and ease of use. You'll also want to think about the material the handle is made of. Wood is the best choice for bushcrafting. American hickory and ash are popular, durable choices because they can easily absorb the shock of your swings and impacts.

When it comes to the axe blade, you'll want one that's medium in thickness and crafted out of forged steel. Bushcraft axe blades come in all kinds of different steel varieties and formulations. Don't forget to consider the weight. A blade weighing 3 pounds or less is best, as heavier blades can be too difficult to carry with you.

An axe is a vital survival, bushcraft and bugout tool. Use these simple tips to get the right one for your needs and add it to your kit today. If you want to check out some companies that make these axes, look at Hults Bruk Aneby, Council Tool, Husqvarna, Gerber, Gransfors Bruk and Cold Steel.





# "DARK WORK" LESSONS FOR TODAY'S AMERICA

## It's Time To Repair The Cracks In Our Walls

By Michael D.

*Former Clandestine Officer, CIA,  
DIA, NSA*

Monty and I were on a two-man mission in a third-world country doing "dark work" (surreptitious entry or breaking in, theft of secret documents, and placing electronic bugging devices). The country was poor, and we knew it was unlikely that we'd be able to buy or obtain much of anything in the way of materials, tools, electronics, or other backup supplies should we encounter a problem — and we always encountered problems.

We cannot carry duplicates, replacements, spares or equivalents for all the gear we have to use and install, so we trim down our operations package to only the items that are absolutely necessary to conduct the operation. Then, we augment the best we can with local materials.

All that is required is for us to use secret communications from our stateside planning facility to contact the local on the ground and have him pre-scout out places that sell (and have in stock) items that we will need. He does the leg work and reports back to us on what is available and what is not and where and how we can get it.

Because we can have zero contact with any US Citizen, especially anyone associated with the embassy or other American entity that is possibly already under surveillance, the local on the ground does not buy the items, he simply alerts us to where we can get them, what is available, the cost, and the quantity available.

**"We needed a Polaroid camera, small electric multimeter, a stud finder..."**



While all these simple contraptions are available in virtually the smallest American town, available online with 2-day shipping, and can even be picked up at yard sales on weekends, the vast majority of people around the world will never even see some of these items, let alone be able to buy them.

On this mission, we needed a lock pick set to get into a secure door inside a well-guarded building. We had a solid plan including a guard bribed by the local man on the ground to be away at a long lunch just before we arrived, a very good cover story, and the right disguises to get us into the building. But without the lock pick set, we would have failed.

For every mission, we each pick out an "ops bag" (operations bag) that works for our assumed identity, our personal preferences, and the mission requirements. We do

have a special unit in the intelligence community that makes ops bags for us if we need special compartments, armaments, bulletproofing, fire resistance, extreme weight carry/distribution, or other singular needs. But, if we get caught with anything that special, no matter how good our cover story, disguise, and escape plan may be, it will be difficult to walk or talk our way out of a situation.

So, with all of that in mind, we select a bag for the mission that will blend in — hence the 'Gray man' effect that everyone talks about. Now, for this op, besides needing a quality lock pick set and Leatherman, we needed a Polaroid camera, small electric multimeter, a stud finder, and our special electronics devices that we needed to plant.

You see, one of the first things we do when we break-in is to start taking Polaroids of everything. We want to make sure everything is replaced back exactly as it was before we broke in.



The local source on the ground had given us the address of a small merchandise store just blocks from our target that had multimeters we could buy. He even included a picture of the old building. I remember how the faded red paint looked like light pink powder and how the big cracks ran along the concrete wall. It looked like it was ready to collapse. But knowing they had multimeters we could buy meant one less item we had to pack and transport.

Our plan was to use our Leatherman to remove the outlet cover and outlet and then use the multimeter to test the power supply and make sure that we wired everything correctly.

But the merchandise shop was closed the day we got there. So, we waited until the next day to conduct the op. On the second day, the shop was still closed and we waited some more. In fact, we were on stand-down for four days until we decided to perform the op without the right gear.

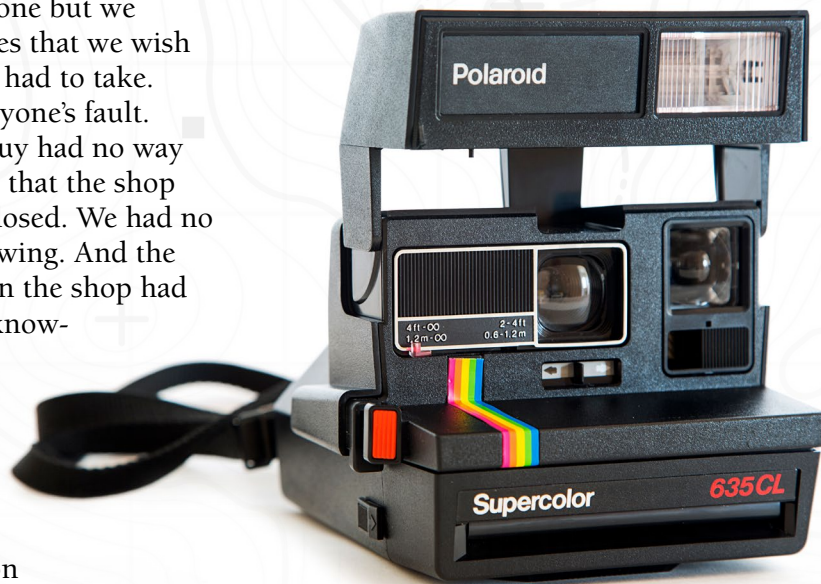
**"Our local guy had no way of knowing that the shop would be closed."**

We got it done but we took chances that we wish we had not had to take. It wasn't anyone's fault. Our local guy had no way of knowing that the shop would be closed. We had no way of knowing. And the guy who ran the shop had no way of knowing that we really needed to buy some stuff from him so we could spy on his country.

Now, until two years ago, I thought we would never see a day in

America where shops, stores, restaurants, and other places were just closed and did not re-open. I live in the mountains and the nearest anything

to me is over a thirty-minute drive down the mountain. That is a small community with a Hardees, Burger King, Popeyes, Subway,



Dollar General, a few gas stations, a small bank, and sundry other businesses. For the past nine months, the Hardees, Burger King, and Subway have been closed. They cannot hire help. The Dollar General opens late and closes early because of staff shortages. The local feed store has cut its hours and is closed on weekends — a drastic shortage of employees.

As I look around and consider everything that is going on, I recognize that we are slowly moving down to the level of a third-world country. We are facing similar challenges as the under-developed nations around the world: shortages of food on the shelves, shortages of workers, and prices rising faster than income. Crime is rising and optimism is falling. There are big cracks in our walls (no border pun intended, but it does apply), and our house is starting to fall in.

The difference is that we have the power to change our situation and the right to exercise our powers. It's time we communicate our disapproval to our hired help. Fire them all. It's time to repair the cracks in our society and repaint with a fresh, bright coat of Red, White, and Blue.



# HOW TO LOOK, MOVE, AND FEEL YOUNGER AT ANY AGE

## A Simple Daily Habit To “Lengthen” Your Life And Health

By Dr. Omar Hamada  
*Special Operations Physician*

I used to stretch a lot in my youth. In fact, I took great pride in my ability to easily do the splits three ways and touch my toes to the wall behind my head. Martial arts taught me the importance of flexibility and the benefits of being limber.

Once, I was out dancing with friends and in trying to impress the girls in the days after the movie “Footloose,” I jumped up and landed on the ground in full splits — and split my pants. I can still hear the howls of laughter.

Part of flexibility is genetic and another part youth and ego, but most of it comes from the daily ritual of stretching. Like with anything else, habits lead to success.

As we age, most of us relegate ourselves to the loss of muscle mass, flexibility, endurance, strength, speed, balance, and proprioception. Proprioception basically means rapidly knowing where different parts of your body are in space as you move, without looking at them. Though there is a slow loss of function with aging, we can fight it and slow it down.

The biggest way to fight it is to stay regularly and aggressively active. Part of that is to renew a daily habit of stretching. While the thoughts around stretching are usually to prevent injury, there are many other benefits to stretching that I’d like to share with you in the hope of encouraging you to add this to your daily routine.

Stretching helps increase circulation by stimulating blood flow to the muscles being stretched. Increased blood flow supplies

muscles with oxygen and nutrients and carries waste materials away. Healthy muscles perform better, longer, stronger and with less risk of injury.

Stretching increases flexibility and will loosen and lengthen muscles and tendons thereby increasing your effective range of motion allowing you more pain-free and injury-free movement.

Stretching decreases injury risk. When you stretch and lengthen and loosen muscles and tendons, it allows you to move more freely during exercise as well as throughout your normal daily activities. It reduces the chance of injury as you strengthen and increase your range of motion allowing you to more actively flex and extend rapidly without spraining. We’ve all heard of a bicep tendon rupturing during a lift or an Achilles tendon rupture during a jump. Regular stretching helps prevent these types of injuries.

Stretching helps reduce pain associated with poor posture, ageing, and arthritis, as well as relieving tension and soreness in the muscles and joints.

Stretching also increases mobility. As we age, we slowly lose mobility in tasks such as walking, bending, and reaching. We get stiffer and slower. Stretching keeps us flexible and helps maintain a more youthful feel, ability, and appearance.

Stretching lowers stress levels. Enhanced circulation from stretching means more healthy blood to the brain, which makes it easier to stay focused and remain mentally calm. Second, increased flexibility helps

relieve tension in our body to help us feel more relaxed.

Slow methodical stretching initially stimulates the “golgi bodies” in the tendons that slowly allow the muscles to relax through a feedback loop in the spinal cord. A more rapid “hyperbolic” dynamic stretching overrides this a bit and initially causes a sudden muscular contraction

as a protective effect. However, used properly by slowly increasing the speed and range of dynamic stretching, one can achieve great benefit, teaching the muscles to respond and release more quickly than a slow methodical stretch will.

There are many ways to stretch and many types of stretches: passive, active, static, dynamic, isometric, ballistic, and PNF (proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation) stretches.

If interested, you can do a deep dive on these and determine which will benefit you most for the goals you would like to accomplish. You may even combine several of them.

For starters, I’d suggest a simple passive stretch where you use another part of your body to hold a stretch. For example, in a seated position, using your hands underneath your knees to hold a stretch of your hamstrings.

If you implement the daily habit of stretching, over a relatively short time, you’ll find better posture, more flexibility, improved strength, less fear of injury, and a more youthful feel and look.

**“As we age, most of us relegate ourselves to the loss of muscle mass, flexibility...”**



# A LESS-LETHAL WEAPON YOU NEED IN YOUR EDC GEAR

## Simple Combo Helps Attackers "See The Light"

By Matt Numrich  
*Head Instructor Of Spy Black Belt*

I want to share with you a "blunt" or impact style weapon. This specific weapon is an important one, with a special feature and benefit. It's the self-defense flashlight.

I'm putting a flashlight in this category because it can be used as a striking tool or, for the smaller flashlights, it can be used as what is known in some martial arts as a "palm stick."

A palm stick is a short stick which you can easily hold in your hand but there is usually one to three inches of the object sticking out of one or both sides. These blunt extensions can be used to strike very vulnerable areas of the body. And just like striking with a smaller object like a tactical pen, there are targets that are susceptible and easily attacked with this weapon.

on. Two of my favorite targets are the fist and face.

Let me explain, as one is a defensive target, while the other is more of an offensive target. First, defensively, when someone throws a punch at you, they are actually giving you a target to hit. You can

use the protruding part of the flashlight to smack your attacker's fist, forearm and even bicep area in order to give them a shot of pain.

**"Training this target can be done by having a partner wear a motorcycle or off-road helmet."**

To train this, have a partner put on a pair of boxing gloves and as they start out punching towards you slowly, you keep your hands up, with the hand holding the flashlight in front. When the punch comes in, strike in a downward fashion to hit the target on the arm.



Offensively, you can use the same protruding part of the stick to strike the opponent's face. This causes all the energy of your strike to be concentrated on the tip of the flashlight that hits your attacker's vital areas (such as their eyes, jaw and even throat area). You can even combine these two kinds of strikes as you defensively strike someone's hand that is coming in for a punch and then follow up with strikes to the face.

Training this target can be done by having a partner wear a motorcycle or off-road helmet, so you can strike it to get more of a realistic feeling. If this is not possible, I would suggest at least getting the practice of striking a heavy bag you may have or can find at your local gym.

Once again, the flashlight is an important less-lethal weapon, not just because it can be used for both attack and defense, but because you can carry it virtually anywhere, and it can provide light — either to help you see or to blind a potential attacker.

You should always have a flashlight in your everyday carry kit and with these two simple strikes — offensive and defensive — you can also use your light as a reliable self-defense tool.

