

The Appalachian Messenger



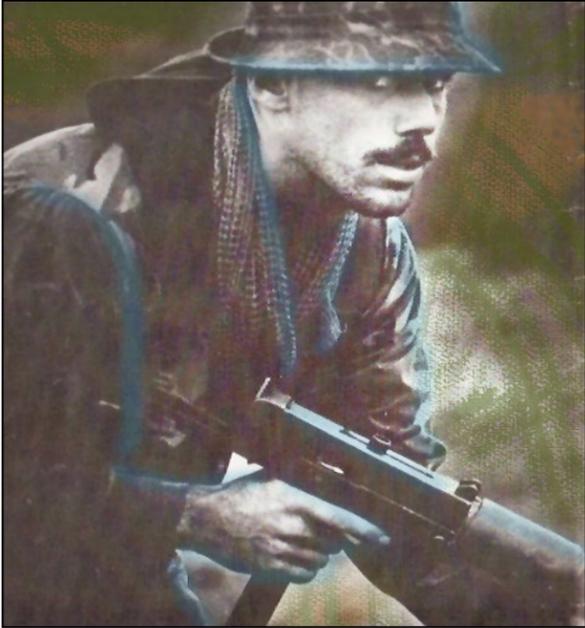
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March 4, 2016

INTERVIEW: Former SEAL Matt Bracken Talks SHTF and a Dirty Civil War

By SAM CULPER, *Intelligence Editor*



MATTHEW BRACKEN is a former Navy SEAL (BUD/S Class 105), a Constitutionalist, and a self-described “freedomista”. This interview was first published in the Fall 2014 *Forward Observer Magazine*.

You might think that the most courageous thing Matt Bracken’s ever done is taking a SEAL team to Beirut, Lebanon in 1983, the same year of the Marine Barracks bombings... but you’d be wrong. Bracken is standing up as a bulwark for Liberty in the face of growing danger to those who speak out against the regime.

FO: What are some of the threats that pro-Liberty Americans will see in the next few years, and what can we expect? More lawfare? Actual conflict? A fight for the Republic?

MB: All Americans face the risk of chaos, anarchy and starvation resulting from the collapse of our electrical grid. Electricity has become our oxygen, necessary to sustain our civilization, and I see at least a dozen ways it could be disrupted with catastrophic results. To the extent that pro-liberty Americans are also “preppers,” they will be better prepared to face the dire consequences.

Absolutely I see “lawfare” by our rogue federal agencies against patriots continually ramping up. With no consequences resulting from scandals such as Fast and Furious and the targeting of patriots by the IRS, Team Tyranny feels emboldened and will only make life harder for those who defy them.

As far as an actual fight for the republic, it could happen, for example, after a hypothetical future Waco incident. In that case, I could envision federal agents being lured into ambushes and so on. The ambushes could be false flag operations or actual attacks by frustrated Americans, but the result could be a shooting war, with patriots being “disappeared” on one side of the ledger, and federal agents and officials being assassinated on the other. This would probably turn into a “dirty civil war” similar to what happened in Northern Ireland or Argentina in the 1970s, but obviously on a far more vast scale.

You mention that there are at least a dozen ways that our electrical grid could be disrupted. What do you see as the most likely causes for grid-down?

Anything from a solar flare to a cyber-war with a national entity could take down the grid. In the event of a civil war, there will be a strong urban vs. rural dynamic, and one way that rural participants will strike at their urban antagonists will be to strike at the grid carrying power to the cities. The Metcalf power station incidents in California last year seem to have been a dry run or proof of concept drill. A dozen teams of riflemen could put our grid at danger with a coordinated attack.

Groups from the former Sendero Luminoso in Peru to the Sinaloa Cartel in Mexico to Al Qaeda in Yemen have attacked major power grids. In America, we have allowed electricity to become our oxygen, and it’s naive to expect that in any type of future war, (civil, international, or terrorist), antagonists will not attempt to cut off that oxygen and kill their enemies en masse. Our power grid is our exposed jugular vein.

What are the best ways Patriots can protect themselves during this time? How long might a “dirty civil war” last?

If [Social Network Analysis] is used to target patriots—and it will be—then there is not much anyone can do for self-

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“Law” As A Jedi Mind Trick

By Paul Rosenberg



About half the time it is used, possibly more, the word “law” is nothing more than a Jedi mind trick. There is nothing noble, righteous, or even ‘conservative’ about it. It’s a way for you to be abused via ignorance and inertia.

We’ve all seen this trick in action, of course. It’s very common. And, sadly, more or less all of us have fallen (or rather, were pushed) into it at some point. That complicates things because people generally don’t like to admit their errors.

Nearly all of us have been taught, repetitively, to “respect the law,” and because of those teachings, nearly all of us have decided certain things must be right, simply because they were “the law.”

We decided this, not because we understood the benefits that would follow certain actions, but because of the aforementioned ignorance and inertia.

It’s important to be clear on this: To uncritically, reflexively obey is not respect... it is to hold “the law” above reason... above reality. That, in simple terms, is worship.

Saying, “Everyone else did it too,” makes this no better.

It is also common for obedience to follow intimidation: Obey, or else... armed men will hurt you; teacher will shame you; the other kids will laugh at you; important people will criticize you in public. Please note all of these are primitive, degrading reasons. But they were thrust upon us as small, coerced children, and they very often stuck.

The really damaging part, however, comes *after* you obey reflexively or fearfully: when you leap to justify your past actions. Not many of us enjoy admitting our errors, but if we want to become honest, conscious adults, that is precisely what we need to do.

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The Quagmire to End All Quagmires

By ROBERT GORE, *Financial Editor*



There are few good reasons to go to war, but the US faces the danger of being dragged into World War III for the worst of reasons. It will be fighting in a region in which it has no overriding interest, picking a side in a sectarian battle far older than the US, and allied with Machiavellian, despotic regimes who have no regard for its interests. Even proponents of the war cannot specify what a “victory” would look like. They nourish a vague hope that the two primary antagonists will somehow be vanquished and a government cut to the specifications of the US will be imposed by force and magically accepted by its subjects. Such a miracle would require a huge military commitment, trillions of dollars, and years, if not decades, of sustained effort. That miracle would require another miracle: after the last fifteen years of counterproductive and costly warfare in the Middle East, US politicians and the public nevertheless supporting the engagement for its lengthy duration.

Syria is a witches’ brew of conflicting internal and external forces. The US has been at odds with its leadership since Hafez al-Assad, father of the current leader, Bashar al-Assad, seized power in 1970. He aligned Syria with the Soviet Union and launched a war against Israel in 1973. He was a standard issue Middle Eastern autocrat in the Saddam Hussein, Muammar Gaddafi mold and his son has followed in his footsteps. The Assads’ Alawite Shiite Muslim sect, though a minority amidst a Sunni majority, controls the government and the leadership has fingers in all the worthwhile commercial and industrial pies. It has been religiously tolerant and politically intolerant.

The Obama administration saw an opportunity to change the Syrian regime under cover of the Arab Spring movement in 2011. Initially peaceful demonstrations against Bashar al-Assad soon turned violent as the government cracked down on demonstrators. Within a year, the military attacked resistance strongholds and Syria was engulfed in civil war. The main opposition came from an alliance of Sunni groups, mostly al Qaeda and its offshoots, including ISIS. The Obama administration pursued a confused policy that it advertised as aiding moderate Syrian rebels, who were supposedly opposed to both the Assad government and Islamic extremist groups. In truth, most of the ostensible moderates had ties to the latter. The few that didn’t either joined the extremists when confronted or fled, leaving their US-supplied weaponry and provisions behind.

None of this is news to either Obama or Congress. Nor is it a state secret that the Sunni extremists have received funding, supplies, and other aid from Sunni states—and US allies—Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, and Turkey (See “With Friends Like These...” and “Who Needs Enemies?” on Straight Line Logic).

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“Law” As A Jedi Mind Trick*(Continued from page 1)***“But, but...”**

Yes, yes, I know the same automated slogans:

*Without the law, all would be chaos and death!
Outside of law is tyranny!
We are a nation of laws, not of men!
Only law separates us from savages!*

Please take a couple of deep breaths and continue.

There’s Law, and Then There’s Law

In the modern West, there are two different kinds of law. Unfortunately they are usually rolled up together and placed under a single tag. That’s a major part of this problem.

If the early days of Western civilization, law was simply the process of determining what was just. Law was considered good if it were reasonable, fair, and had stood the test of time. And that’s all.

Historian Fritz Kern, in his “Kingship and Law in the Middle Ages”, explains it this way:

“For us law needs only one attribute in order to give it validity; it must, directly or indirectly, be sanctioned by the State. But in the Middle Ages, different attributes altogether were essential; medieval law must be “old” law and must be “good” law.... If law were not old and good law, it was not law at all, even though it were formally enacted by the State”.

Law, in the old days, was developed locally, and judges were simply trusted men who reasoned well. The form we in the English-speaking world know best was the common law of England, and it was precisely this type of law. In fact, the historical record shows early English kings having to adopt customary law:

The 1164 Clarendon Constitution cites a “record and recognition of a certain portion of the customs and liberties and rights of... ancestors.”

Article 39 of the Magna Carta (1215) reads, “No free man shall be taken or imprisoned or dispossessed, or outlawed... except by the legal judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.”

Now, before I explain how we got from law based on reason and experience to where we are now, there is one thing that is necessary to understand:

Until recent times, law was *not* legislation.

I know this is contrary to what you’ve understood, but it’s true all the same. Legislation is primarily a modern invention. Law in the old days was not made by politicians or even by princes. Law was, as we said above, the process of determining what was just. The common law was created and updated by judges, *not by legislators*.

To buttress this point, consider that when philosopher Jeremy Bentham died in 1832, he was revered as “the founder of modern legislation.”

I won’t belabor this point, but consider these two statements, please:

Legislation displaces law that is based upon reason and experience.

Legislation is the edict of politicians, and nothing more.

Under legislation, reason and experience are not required. Politicians – whom nearly all of us hold in low regard – *create this new law* and can change it on a whim.

So...Let me ask some pointed questions:

Is it sensible to worship the words of people we also condemn?

And if we hold words above critical thought, are we not holding them above reality? Is that not a kind of worship or idolatry?

Idolatry is precisely what we do when we hold politician-created “law” above reason. (Whatever you hold above reality is your god.)

Yes, I know, we did this because we were trained to do it and because we were intimidated into it. But we’re adults now; we should be ready to face our errors and correct them.

The law of reason and experience always stands, of course, simply because it *is* reasonable and useful.

An uncritical respect for legislation, on the other hand, is a mind trick and differs little from that of a *Star Wars* Jedi. It requires us to bypass our minds and sacrifice our will to inertia and fear.

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INTERVIEW: Former SEAL Matt Bracken Talks SHTF and a Dirty Civil War*(Continued from page 1)*

protection, other than move to an area where Federal Law Enforcement Agents (FLEA) are afraid to operate, if such places will even exist. Nobody will be able to live a normal life if there is the constant risk of a Soviet KGB- style arrest by plain-clothed teams of anonymous agents. My goal is to remind [law enforcement officers] and especially the FLEAs to think very hard about following orders facilitating secret arrests. The blow-back against all of them and their collaborator for employing Gestapo tactics against Americans will be incredibly ferocious.

Once patriots begin to disappear, Rule 308 will be used against any identifiable FLEA targets, and the dirty civil war will turn into a nightmare that could last for years. There is no way to predict which side would win, or what America might look like at the end. But once a war of secret arrests and assassinations begins, it will be very hard to stop.

My goal with much of my writing is to warn all potential sides that a dirty civil war must be avoided if at all possible. The only thing worse than a dirty civil war would be America turning into a Soviet-style totalitarian dictatorship. Uncounted millions of scoped deer rifles tell me that turning American into a dictatorship would be almost impossible, and I hope that the FLEAs who might study this Q&A also give my short story “What I Saw at The Coup” and my essay “Dear Mr. Security Agent” a very close reading. The shape of the next few years will depend largely on the honor and integrity of our LEOs and FLEAs, and how strongly or weakly they adhere to their oaths to defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

What’s your take on the current militarization of the police? Are these police MRAPs just a useful way to repurpose military vehicles or something worse? What roles do you see the police taking in any Constitutional crisis?

Federal LEAs are attempting to co-opt local law enforcement agencies, turning them into their “grunts” for perimeter security around federal actions and other duties where sufficient armed manpower is required. There are simply not enough federal agents to conduct all of the raids they might envision conducting, and also at the same time provide all-around security for the federal agents from potentially enraged local citizens.

[Mine Resistant Ambush Proof vehicles], latest generation night vision and comms gear and so on are the “gifts” that the feds are bestowing upon local LEAs in order to make them dependent upon federal largess and beholden to federal masters. In the near term this strategy might be effective, but in the event that an actual dirty civil war is ignited, the loyalty of local LE to their FLEA masters cannot be assured. At the least, some constitutionally-minded local LEOs will warn patriots of planned raids and arrests, resulting in FLEAs being ambushed on the way to their targets, or at their targets.

Look to Mexico today to see what an American dirty civil war will look like. It will be impossible to tell the genuine “on duty” LEOs from “off duty” LEOs in so-called death squads, from criminals posing as LEOs. This would obviously be an extremely dangerous environment for freedomistas, as we see today in Mexico.

Your Civil War 2 Cube (right) has been immensely popular. We see Suburbia is kind of trapped between Rural and Urban. What do you think the suburban spaces will look like during conflict?

Not all suburbs are alike, obviously. A suburb located between Asheville, NC and the mountains is not the same as a suburb located between megacities in the DC-Boston corridor. In general, I agree with the hypothesis of the book “A Failure of Civility.” A well-located suburban subdivision offers enough manpower to mount a guard force, as well as containing a useful collection of skills from doctors to electricians. During the Dark Ages the walled city or town was the best model for success. Farmers did not live in distant, lonely farm houses; it was simply too dangerous to be that isolated.

What’s your message to those who have no bug-out plan out of urban or suburban areas? What advice can you offer about sheltering in place?

Stocking up on food and water might be critical for surviving a short catastrophe or power outage, so it is something that is well worth doing. If the power stays out for months or longer, “bugging in” won’t work. If the environment is too dangerous to permit safe travel, then all of the food that is consumed must be generated within your own zip code. How many American zip codes generate enough food, right now, to ensure the survival of their inhabitants? What if those food sources are without electricity, fuel, or needed chemicals during the growing season? In any case, if the power goes out, the food will stop moving. Starvation will begin in just a few weeks, while it will take months or years to start new agricultural projects at the local level.

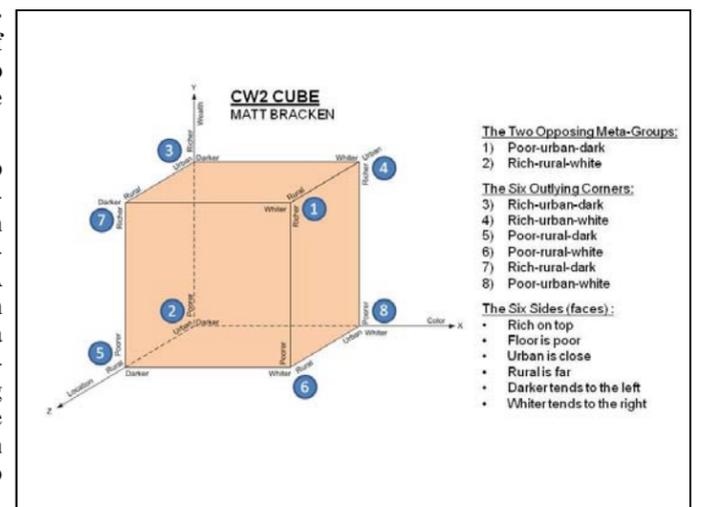
If you must shelter in place in suburbia, I’d recommend following the advice in “A Failure of Civility”. Attempt to interest your neighbors in preparing for various scenarios. No single house in suburbia can become a successful fortress. Suburbs must be defended at their gates, with a quick reaction force ready to respond. Former military buddies in your neighborhood might become the nucleus of the nascent defense force. I cannot recommend the book “A Failure of Civility” highly enough.

Fast-forward: we have a domestic conflict over a Constitutional issue. What happens to the military? What’s your opinion on how they align themselves with the regime or with Freedom Forces?

I cling to the hope that most of the military will not be willing to perform raids upon American homes. However, they will be capable of following most general orders and they will be effective at cordoning towns and cutting off travel options, which can be just as deadly if the cordon means that local inhabitants can neither leave nor bring in food supplies. A pandemic resulting in city-wide quarantines is one easy to imagine scenario. Soldiers don’t need to shoot you to kill you. They can pin you in place until you starve to death. Ask the Ukrainians. For actual raids and assaults upon American citizens, the military and FLEAs will develop units made up of individuals selected for their loyalty to the federal government, and their willingness (or even eagerness) to shoot “enemies of the people.” Social Network Analysis will not only be useful for finding and targeting “enemies of the state,” it will also be extremely useful for locating the sociopathic killers among the wider military, LE, and prison populations (gang members).

These willing killers can then be brought together into very dangerous “hunter-killer teams” to do the dirty “wet work” required by Team Tyranny. In the event of a grid collapse, most members of the military and LE will desert at the first opportunity, in order to take care of their own families. In the event of an economic collapse, they will also desert if they are not paid, or if they are paid in meaningless scrip with no purchasing power.

Many members of the special operations community hear the call to defend Liberty at home. If conflict is inevitable, where do these former leaders fit in?

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The Quagmire to End All Quagmires

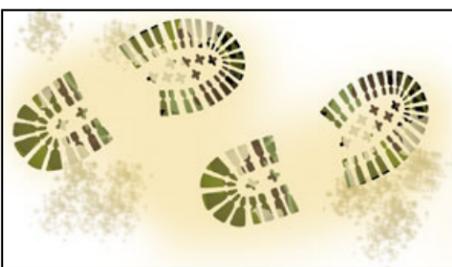
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The US government wants to install a compliant regime in Syria, just as it wanted to install such regimes in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya. Those efforts failed, stifled by the Sunni-Shiite schism, guerrilla warfare and terrorism, blowback, Middle Eastern intrigue, and the US government's ignorance, hypocrisy, and duplicity. Although it has done virtually nothing to stop ISIS, it still pretends that its main goal in Syria is the eradication of Islamic extremism rather than Bashar Assad's government.

With his move into Syria and a remarkable speech at the United Nations, Vladimir Putin revealed the US government's mendacity (LINK Putin's speech) for all to see, except for the US public, where the mainstream media coverage ignored his speech in favor of the usual government propaganda. (Some questions were asked about the efficacy of US efforts to defeat ISIS after the San Bernardino shootings last December, but they quickly faded.) At the invitation of Assad, Russia joined with the Shiites—the Syrian government, Iraq, Iran, and Hezbollah—and Syrian and Iraqi Kurds. The Assad alliance treats all those opposed to Assad as terrorist enemies. The tide has turned and the alliance has regained territory. It is on the verge of recapturing Aleppo, Syria's second largest city.

Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States are alarmed that the Islamic extremists they have funded and supported, and the US and its Western allies, have failed to depose Assad. If the Assad alliance cuts the rebels' supply line from Turkey and takes Aleppo, it will not only solidify Assad's hold on western Syria, but also solidify the influence of archenemy Shiite Iran in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. It is a make or break moment for the rebellion. The Sunni nations, especially NATO member Turkey, would dearly love to have their fight become Europe and the United States' fight, too. If they can ensnare the Western nations, then Syria inevitably becomes the launchpad for World War III.

This next world war's Archduke Ferdinand moment may come if Saudi Arabia, currently hosting a military exercise in its northern region called "Northern Thunder" involving at least 12 other nations, 350,000 soldiers, 20,000 tanks, 2,450 warplanes and 460 helicopters, leads that force into western Iraq en route to Syria. Or the trigger may come if Turkey, either in conjunction with Saudi Arabia or on its own, invades Syria from the north. With 600,000 troops, Turkey's has the second largest armed forces in NATO. In addition to its loathing of the Shiites and Iran, Turkey fears Kurd nationalism. The Kurds, who have been the most effective fighting force against ISIS in both Iraq and Syria, have long desired their own state. Kurdish separatists are also a vociferous presence in Turkey. The US government has embraced the Kurds in Iraq and Syria, but like the Turkish government, labels the Turkish Kurds as terrorists. Turkey would probably concentrate on subduing the Kurds before it went after Assad.



The US public is blissfully unaware either that the world is a hair's breadth away from World War III or that their government has had an outsize role in creating that risk. The US may be dragged in by Turkey's president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, a corrupt, megalomaniac autocrat, or the corrupt, repressive House of Saud. The US will be in direct conflict with Russia and Iran, and lurking in the background, perhaps China. Neither the US's so-called friends nor its foes care one whit about the best interests of the US and will in fact work against them. The blowback created will dwarf current levels of terrorism and refugee flows. The US's degeneration into a police state will gain new momentum. Other than its deluded wish that both Assad and the Islamic extremists somehow disappear, the US government will have no clear idea of what would constitute victory, and consequently, no ability to attain it. And this war could go nuclear.

It will be the quagmire to end all quagmires, supported by the same coalition of mental and moral midgets who have backed every disastrous US military foray since Afghanistan. It's questionable how long the US will retain the support of Europe. Its refugee flood will turn into a deluge as the war spreads from Syria outward to the rest of the Middle East, central Asia, northern Africa, and quite possibly to Europe itself. Nor is it a sure thing that financial markets will fund this war at today's rock-bottom interest rates. The conflict will add more trillions to the US government's current \$19 trillion debt, and with a depression looming, the government's ability to pay will be called into question. There would be no political support for a another protracted, expensive, and bloody military commitment in the Middle East if the American people were explicitly told that just such a commitment is under consideration, especially if they were also told that it could lead to World War III. A populace fooled into war is unlikely to back it for any length of time.

In Syria, the US will either fold or go all in. On past form, it will choose the latter and rue it ever after. Few Americans, inside or outside the government, realize either that those are the choices or that the stakes are so high. Sadly, such realizations may come only when their sons and daughters are drafted, or as the image of a mushroom cloud fills the screens of their mobile devices.

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I believe that the Constitution will remain our most important defensive bulwark. The Constitution will be our most effective litmus test for separating the oath takers from the traitorous oath breakers. Former military and LE leaders should take every opportunity to remind their active duty brothers of their sworn oath to defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. They should also politely remind them that Team Liberty will have a very long memory when it comes to dealing with traitors. There will be no statute of limitations for traitors, and justice might eventually be dealt out under the well-known Rule 308. Loyalty to the Constitution must be a constant theme, both among friends and on social media. No active member of the military or LE will be permitted to plead ignorance when it comes to upholding the Constitution. We must remind them of that fact as often as possible, until it is ringing in their ears.

What are a few things outside of physically and mentally preparing that Patriots can do to help the fight for Liberty right now?

Unless one's personal strategy is to remain a "gray man," or in effect an unknown "stay behind agent," patriots should be loud voices for liberty both in person and in social media. Don't cower in fear of Team Tyranny. Social Network Analysis means that they already know who you are, where you live, and what your views are. Take every opportunity to stand up for freedom and liberty, and make the Constitution your byword. Take every opportunity to remind active military and LE that we expect them to uphold their sworn oaths to defend the Constitution, and that we are paying very careful attention to the oath breakers among them. The boys and girls down in the fusion centers must be made to understand very clearly that they will be held accountable for their actions, and that "I was just following orders" will not be an acceptable excuse for acting against the Constitution as the minions of Team Tyranny.

You're a big proponent of hitting the water to escape civil unrest. Why do you prefer that to a rural retreat or a mountain location?

Rural retreats, once located, are too easy to besiege with sniper tactics and other means. FLEAs actually prefer it when patriots move to remote locations: it makes them easy to isolate and eventually they can wind up in a Waco or Ruby Ridge situation.

On the other hand, all of the oceans are connected. A forty-foot sailboat can carry enough food and water to last its crew for months. A sailboat can leave port and wait out a pandemic or social disorder while spending weeks or even months at sea before returning, or a sailboat can voyage non-stop to another country or even to another continent where conditions might be better. Obviously, sailing is not a viable option for everybody. It requires some physical stamina and agility, and a resistance to motion sickness.

What are the most likely threats you'll face while bugging out on a boat? What are your expectations?

Once at sea and more than 50 or 100 miles from land,

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Planting By Moon Phases

Many long-time farmers plan sowing their crops according to the size of the Moon.



- Plant flowers and vegetables that **bear crops above ground** during the light, or waxing, of the Moon: from the day the Moon is new to the day it is full.

- Plant flowering bulbs and vegetables that **bear crops below ground** during the dark, or waning, of the Moon: that is from the day after it is full to the day before it is new again.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Mar 7—The Well Armed Woman, Georgia Mountain Chapter, Hayesville, NC. 5:30 p.m. A women's group dedicated to educating, equipping and empowering women gun owners. Meeting at Shooter's Exchange, 3280 NC Hwy 69, Suite 10, Hayesville, NC. For more information please contact Carrie Brekke at practicalpistoltraining@gmail.com.

Mar 8—Cherokee NC ARES Formal Meeting, Murphy, NC, 7 pm. Our regularly scheduled second Tuesday meeting at the Robert Penland Senior Center, 69 Alpine Street (behind the courthouse) in downtown Murphy.

Mar 8—DAV Monthly Meeting, Blairsville, GA, 7 pm – 8 pm. The Disabled American Veterans meet on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7pm in the Veterans Center. Held at the Veterans Building, 78 Old Blue Ridge Hwy. Blairsville. For more information please contact Mike Ruback at 954-249-2707.

Mar 10—The Well Armed Woman, Murphy Chapter, Murphy, NC, 6 p.m. A women's group dedicated to educating, equipping and empowering women gun owners. Meeting at Christian Martial Arts Center, 56 Valley River Ave, downtown Murphy.

Mar 12—Western Carolina Amateur Radio Group Brunch, Murphy, NC, 10:00 am. This group meets on the second Saturday of each month at Main Street USA restaurant located on Hiwassee Street in downtown Murphy.

Apr 2—Defensive Pistol II, Murphy, NC. A continuation of the Defensive Pistol series. Learn to shoot from different positions; the use of cover and concealment and more advanced shooting while moving scenarios. Class limited to 8 participants. \$45. To be held at The Practical Pistol Range. To register call 706-896-6075 or e-mail practicalpistoltraining@gmail.com.

Apr 16—Introduction to Tactical Weapons, Murphy, NC. This answers the question: "what is the best weapon for personal defense?" Students will supply their personal concealed handgun and ammo. First part of the class is an introduction to the AR, AK and Tactical Shotgun (supplied) which will include a live fire exercise with each. Second part of the class, participants will use each weapon in a scenario to learn the benefits and limitation of each. Ammunition supplied for the rifles & tactical shotgun. \$75 (fee includes approximately \$25 of ammunition). Limited to 6 participants.

Apr 29 - May 1—Heritage Life Skills, Waynesville, NC. This 5th Annual Life Skills event features classes & demonstrations featuring bee keeping, and more. Featuring speakers Dr. William Forstchen, Rick Austin and Survivor Jane, Dr. Bones & Nurse Amy and Charley Hogwood. For information call 828-456-5310 and visit www.carolinareadiness.com.

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the ocean becomes a very low threat environment. Oceans are so vast that the odds of randomly crossing the path of another vessel are astronomically small. Post SHTF, few will be out wasting precious fuel motoring around the oceans looking for random prey. Pirates (including those wearing uniforms with numbers on their bows) always congregate near ports and will transit mainly along coasts. Near land, a speedboat can obviously overtake a sailboat. Getting clear of the coasts and gaining the anonymity of the open ocean is always the first priority during dangerous times.

In the event that a motor vessel with superior armaments does spot a sailboat and determine to attack it, the sailboat is going to be in a very tough situation. However, this "worst case" (and very unlikely) ocean scenario is no worse than being besieged on land in a remote rural retreat. The other big risk comes in port, when corrupt officials might decide to take your boat under color of law. But being able to cross oceans means having the flexibility to leave a dangerous or corrupt nation and sail directly to a safer place. Or leave a very dangerous state in America, and sail directly to another one. For example, during a SHTF scenario, a sailboat could easily transit directly from New York to Texas, while that same trip might be impossible by road.

A 40-foot sailboat could leave Florida, gain the safety of the open ocean, and next make port weeks later in Iceland or Argentina. Imagine how far a 40 foot RV, loaded with supplies, would make it on the interstates after the SHTF. Not very far, with road blockages, check points, and ambushes around every curve. A sailboat over the horizon on the open ocean has effectively disappeared from the grid matrix. It can also reappear at the moment and the location of its choosing.

In your book, Domestic Enemies: The Reconquista, you write about a concerted effort by enemies to re-conquer the American Southwest. Although it's "fictional", your writing tends to foretell non-fictional events. Where are we right now in the Reconquista conflict and what happens next?

The Southwest is now in a death spiral as far as liberty, freedom and prosperity go. Several generations of anti-American and pro-Aztlan radicals have graduated from universities across the Southwest, and today they are judges, federal attorneys, district attorneys, FLEAs, mayors and police chiefs. This allows them to take leftist "lawfare" to a much higher and very dangerous level. Witness the Reese case in Deming, New Mexico: it is a model for future abuses of official power. Ideologically motivated federal attorneys are able to cherry pick judges who are fellow travelers, with the outcomes of selected cases preordained. This corruption of official power will get worse and worse, until patriots either flee the Southwest, surrender, or retaliate in anger, leading to a "dirty civil war."

The anti-American cabal largely running the Southwest today is fully committed to open borders and amnesty citizenship for illegal aliens. We are well past the demographic tipping points. The Southwest will become more and more like Mexico: extremely dangerous and totally corrupt. As I mentioned above, soon we will see assassinations and ambushes by shadowy groups that might be made up of cartel killers, or "off-duty" policemen, or federal agents, or a very dirty combination of them. Study the Reese case very carefully: it shows the future. Corrupt police shielded drug cartel smuggling routes in Luna County, New Mexico. Corrupt police were blackmailed by ideologically corrupt ATF and FBI agents into providing libelous testimony in order to railroad the Reese family. The false and fabricated case was put forward by corrupt leftist federal attorneys to corrupt leftist judges. Leftist reporters in the media turned a blind eye to the ideological corruption. Justice is effectively dead in New Mexico. What is waiting around the corner ahead of us is a fatally corrupt Southwest that is indistinguishable from the worst of Mexico. There is no turning back from that outcome that I can see.

In our previous issue, we took a look at Balkanization and secession. Where do you see America in another 10 or 20 years? What do the political structures and geographic boundaries look like?

There are many potential outcomes, one being a post-apocalyptic landscape resembling my short story "Alas, Brave New Babylon." Unfortunately, I see almost every scenario resulting in attacks against the power grid, and the consequences will be hard to imagine if our electricity is cut for even a few weeks. If we somehow manage to avoid a grid-down scenario, I think that America will follow in the footsteps of the Soviet Union in terms of possessing a decrepit nuclear deterrent, with a collapsed economy that will not support superpower-level military operations either abroad or at home. If the troops cannot be paid in a currency of value, they will not follow orders. We may eventually devolve into "Argentina with nukes."

Something like the scenario in my novel "Foreign Enemies and Traitors" is possible: a regional breakup, with Washington, DC only in full control of a rump USA, mainly in the Northeast. The Southwest will resemble Mexico: corrupt to the marrow and far too dangerous for anyone to live a normal life. The Northwest and the South might do better, depending on how the collapse and breakup proceeds. On paper, the United States might still have 50 states, but I don't think that Washington, DC will be able to dictate terms to all of them. Federal taxes will not be collected, and the remaining federal forces will mainly be situated around Washington, DC and the Northeast corridor, to protect the nominal national leadership.

But if at some point the power grid is taken down, our cities will explode, and all bets are off. If people don't have time to read my long novels, I wish that they would read "Alas, Brave New Babylon," "What I Saw at the Coup," and the other short works on the Bracken Anthology. Links to the individual essays and stories are located on my website, (enemiesforeignanddomestic.com), gratis. I hope this Q&A encourages people to read them. These are extremely dangerous times. Forewarned is forearmed.