

Making Life Safer

Part 1

by

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Recently I have been working with a friend who operates a security consulting business in Africa and the Middle East. His company is well known for its security services. Among his clients are the governments of Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, and Dubai. Having lived many years in the Middle East, I am well aware of the plethora of issues he faces and processes for mitigating these issues.

While we are not as bad off as the countries in these regions, we are definitely heading toward the same illegal activities, crime and terrorist actions. Actions of the current administration have exacerbated these events to the point where each of us need to start thinking about our personal safety along with that of our family and communities.

Whether you are pro or anti-firearms, everyone needs to understand that people have always protected themselves with the current weapons technology of the times. At first people protected themselves using rocks and clubs. As civilization advanced spears, bows and arrows and swords were developed. Catapults and other “war machines” were invented as far back as the 4th century BC and were used during medieval times in Europe and the Far East.

With the invention of gun power during the 12th century warfare quickly moved away from bows and arrows toward using explosives and firearms to confront the “enemy.” Governments around the world are researching and developing personal weapons far in advance to today’s firearms.

When deprived of their weapons, usually by edict and confiscations, people always found other ways to protect themselves, their families and communities. Often times these alternative weapons start out simple but quickly become more deadly than the weapons that were prohibited. For example, in many countries where firearms are prohibited, knives and knife fighting techniques have evolved to the point where mass killings exceeding those in the US have taken place.

Regardless of your stance on firearms, you need to determine how you will protect yourself and loved ones. You cannot count on law enforcement. They will never arrive in time to prevent someone intent on harming you. Even if the police are across the street, they will not arrive in time. The only deterrent you have is whatever weapon you have at hand, and whatever obstacles are in place to slow an attacking force down.

The record for the fastest person on earth is 27.78 mph (815 yards/second), or 2.4 times slower than the slowest bullet which travels at a little more than 335 yards/second. In a 100 yard dash, a good time is between 16-13 seconds.

The average width of residential streets is 50 feet. Although local building codes vary, the average setback for homes within city limits is 30 feet and 65 feet for urban and rural areas. This means that the average distance between homes across the street is between 110 feet (37 yd) to 180 feet. (60 yd). So can a law enforcement officer make it to your home in time stop an intruder from shooting you, even if they are “prepped” to dash across the street? The answer is definitely not! So what do you do?

Like many Americans, you may want to go out and purchase a firearm. With the riots and attacks on people this past year that was exactly what many people did. However, buying a firearm will not necessarily protect you. You have to train in using it. But just going to a firing range is not enough. You need to train under stress and for different situations in your home. Most law enforcement agencies require annual firearms qualification, yet even when meeting the qualifications, most officers miss their targets when they are under stress. Why, because they don’t train under stress!

But what if you don’t own a firearm or for some reason it fails? In such situations you may opt to use a knife or a “weapon of opportunity.” However, like firearms, you need to train in how to defend yourself with such weapons. Likewise, your training needs to be ongoing and “realistic.”

You are the only person you can rely on to protect yourself, your family, and your community. So what are you going to do? What action are you going to take? Whatever is your decision, you have taken action. If you decide not to mow the grass, weeds will invade.

This is part one of a four part series on making your life safer. Part 2 will discuss creating obstacles that attackers will need to overcome if they decide to attack you.