

AMERICAN SURVIVOR

Survival Information for the Prepared Citizen

September/October 2014

\$3.00 PER ISSUE



Published by: Live Free, USA, www.americansurvivor.org, e-mail: lfinow@aol.com, or write: Live Free, P.O. Box 3295, Munster, IN 46321

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THE POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THE SELF-RELIANCE MOVEMENT

By James C. Jones, President of Live Free USA

I am often asked why Live Free is not involved more in political activities. After all, "Live Free" implies a political imperative and philosophy far more than a name with Prepper or Survival in it. My first answer is that there are plenty of great conservative political organizations out there fighting for gun rights and other issues and we often find ourselves working with such organizations to help their members achieve greater functional independence. Our activities are often mutually beneficial and supportive. **Live Free's mission is to advocate, promote, educate and support individual and family preparedness and self-reliance.** That is an important and unique mission. Getting involved in political action would simply drift us off message and off mission. Paradoxically, my second answer is that **Live Free's mission is more politically affective than any voting, demonstrating or petitioning activities could be.** Politics is simply a *reflection* of conflicting changes within a society. **Lasting political changes can only be affected if the underlying**

social, economic and philosophical changes are already in place. No amount of force coercion or intimidation can resist a revolution in the minds and values of the people.



The American Revolution was over well before the first shots were fired at Concord Massachusetts. The British reaction was just a bloody formality. If one looks at the social, geographic and economic realities of that time it is obvious that America was not a colony and Americans were not subjects. Americans had changed their attitudes, alliances, living methods and values. They had already found ways to sidestep regulations avoid taxes and generally deny British authority and power. **Even if Britain had won the war, they would have been**

unable to govern these people. All of the speeches and documents and battles were simply reflections of a deeper revolution that had already taken place in the way Americans thought and acted in life. My point here is that “politics” does not change life, but life changes politics and Live Free is all about changing life.

For the past two centuries technology and other factors have constantly favored centralization and regulation. Virtually everything we do is monitored, regulated, taxed, taxed again, administrated and controlled. All of this is in the name of justice, convenience, safety, and order. Some of your chains are self-applied. Your purchases are monitored because you *chose* to use a credit card. You are tracked 24/7 because you *chose* to carry a cell phone. You put too much information on the internet. But many of your chains are applied through various agencies of the state. There are things you cannot purchase and places you cannot go. Taxes are used to control your lifestyle and habits. The concept of government health care has resulted in state control of your body and what you do with it and what you eat and drink. The state desperately tries to control the Internet to regulate information as it does with radio, TV and the press. **Most importantly, your sources of “life critical assets” such as water; food, medical care, emergency help, personal protection, fuel and shelter are all exclusively controlled by various agencies and special interests.** I am not implying that this situation is part of a conspiracy to enslave you or that those in charge are inherently evil. I am saying that in the past centuries we have become more and more centralized, regulated and dependent and that makes us less and less free and more and more compliant and vulnerable. As the economy begins to crumble and the impact of fuel prices and environmental instability take effect two things begin to happen. First: people begin to see how utterly

dependent and helpless they are. Slowly they move from denial to a decision to seek more self-reliance, preparedness and self-sustainable living. In turn this makes them less amenable to taxes and regulations that interfere with their independence. Ah, there’s the politics! The second thing that happens is that those who have profited from the peoples taxes and used regulatory power for their own gains desperately step up their efforts. Now the chains of dependency start to be pulled in and felt by families. “Oh no you don’t!” they cry when you make your own energy, grow your own food, trade and barter, start a non-traditional business, protect your own life, use off the grid medical services or just collect your own water. **Doing such things is the very essence of revolution. Such acts take revenue and regulatory power right out of their hands. Ah, there’s the politics!** Just like the revolutionaries of 1776 we have started living differently and changing our values.

The average (but obsolete) family today has two full time jobs, buys almost everything it needs from others, is dependent on prepackaged foods and “fast foods” made by others and carries a significant amount of debt. All of the wages they make are taxed and all of the wages of those who make everything they buy are taxed. Almost everything they touch or need is regulated and taxed. Their real tax burden is probably closer to 75%. Over 200-years of voting demonstrating and petitioning has failed to stop this shift from the people to the state. The Americans of 1776 would be appalled! **The new American (self-reliant, sustainable living, pepper, survivalist, homesteader) having shifted towards “alternative” and “independent” living is having far more political effects than any legislation or election. The internet has facilitated a whole new economic system and has accelerated the building of self-reliant networks and the provision of**

alternative technologies far faster than government can react or manage. While technology of the 20-th Century facilitated centralization and big government, new technology is highly inclined to support self-reliance, independent networks and non-controllable systems. True, the advent of governmental intrusion on privacy, drones, cameras and other technologies are a serious threat. But these threats are a desperate (if well meant) attempt to maintain the old ways. They cannot succeed IF more and more people FEEL independent and self-reliant. The phrase “I don’t need you and what I do is none of your business” changes everything. **It has been proven over and over again that when the people change no amount of regulation, taxation or force can stop them.**

Live Free is about changing people and helping people change. These changes are already happening through new technology, the homestead movement, the self-reliance movement, and the preparedness movement right now. **Live Free is about supporting and facilitating and unifying any aspect of life that liberates responsible citizens.** Right now, legislative and regulatory resistance to these changes is moderate and subliminal, but when self-reliance and sustainable living becomes more prevalent we can expect severe and maybe even violent reaction from those whose wealth and power depend on centralization and control. Certainly Live Free USA may be drawn into a variety of “political” struggles, but they must be won in advance by what we do now for the people and families of America. We win the political battles not by talk and petition but by advocating and educating for change in values. **What and who controls life is the only real political issue that counts.** Controlling one’s own means and choices in life is the definition of freedom. Self-reliance, self-preparedness, sustainable living is all

aspects of self-liberation. So Live Free and its mission is practical politics in action.

Economic Survival

By J. G. Franklin

Being able to survive and thrive in the “normal” false economy is essential to being ready to survive and thrive in a crumbling or collapsing future economy. Economic “collapse” has been predicted by various “experts” for over 50-years and while there have been some serious “recessions” and very real and steady decline a true “collapse” may be decades away. I know folks who put all their money (literally) on the bet that an economic collapse or other form of catastrophe would happen soon. While their “disaster preparedness” improved, their economic situation deteriorated until they were in an everyday disaster situation. **The survival mindset and strategies can and should be applied to everyday life including your family, economics and job situations.** The same rules and priorities apply and the same errors and misjudgments will get you into serious trouble.

We all know that paper money is essentially worthless, but as long as the society believes in it has value as a means to improve your security and survivability therefore you should seek to gather it and use it effectively. I have watched folks tout gold and silver alternatives for decades and yet I have seen no one get rich this way. **Gold and silver are functionally as useless as paper in a true economic meltdown.** I have studied historic situations in Europe during sieges and economic collapses. Gold, silver and diamonds were usable as trade for good for a very short time after paper lost its value, but once shortages developed only hard goods were valuable. A gold watch or a diamond ring would not get you a turnip or a roll of TP. Today’s economic survival involves

the same issues as and disaster survival situation. There are the same three kinds of people in the game.

Economic Predators are constantly seeking to rob you and control you just as they would in a disaster, but they use different methods. Then they set economic traps baited with false expectations and useless goods. They whittle away at your funds with taxes, interest charges, rents, and gimmicks. They need to get you in debt and keep you in debt. Over the years they will take hundreds of thousands of dollars from you for nothing in return. Yes you have to pay taxes and other charges, but you must get out from under their control no matter what hardship it costs now.

Economic Victims are the working poor and those now firmly stuck in the welfare systems. The objective of the predators is to drive more and more people into these classes where they are dependent on the state and/or various street cartels to survive. As they become more and more dependent on these predatory groups for their life critical needs (shelter, food, water, medical aid, protection, etc.) they completely lose any pretense of individuality or freedom.

Economic Survivors are people who have ignored the traps and focused on economic independence and the key survival priorities. They may do with less and appear poorer, but they have no debts and have secured their sources of shelter, food and other essentials above all else.

Here are a few basic rules for economic survival and for building economic security. These are the foundations for building up your preparedness capabilities and moving

towards greater self-reliance as the system fails.

Budget, budget, budget. It amazes me how people who have made \$25 to \$30 per-hour for 20-30 years live from paycheck to paycheck. Budgeting is the first key to economic survival. Without it you relinquish control to predators and you're your own whims. **You have to budget just like disaster survival.** Shelter, food, utilities, medical needs must be covered before even considering other priorities. After these are covered you can consider reserves in the form of hard (survival) goods, education and real estate. Saving and investing are still okay as long as you don't put all your eggs in one basket. Wise investments can vastly improve your survival potential as you apply the gains to building your independence.

Avoid using credit cards period! There are some places where there use cannot be avoided such as car rentals or online purchase, but every day (groceries, gas, clothing, etc.) purchases should be made with cash. Yes ignore all those "points" traps. Take your budgeted money for each expense and use it with care. When it's gone it's gone. Credit cards tempt you to spend beyond the budget, that's their trap.

Ignore society's values and your own ego and vanity. You don't need the "latest" things! You do not need to have what your neighbors or friends have! They are probably "victims" in debt. An older car that is paid for is much better than a newer one that you are paying interest on.

Do without or with less early in life, instead of buying newer, better and bigger on credit. Buy what you really can

afford and save for better later. Live about 10-20% beneath your means.

Avoid frivolous and non-essential expense. The lottery is just voluntary taxation run by predators. Drugs are traps run by other predators. Cigarettes are the tools of both kinds of predators. We all have a few hobbies or things we enjoy, but those must be prioritized with funds after all essential bills and some savings are dealt with. As time goes on you will do better and better as your victim friends descend into dept.

The job comes first. Survival is never easy. If you are out of work your family and survival situation deteriorates. Any job is better than no job... Yes, you may have to put up with idiots and BS and dirty work until you can find a better job, but keep whatever job you have and do it well. That's survival! Acting on ego or temper usually leads to bad survival situations.

Make yourself a valuable survival asset. You can be worth more than gold or survival supplies if you have skills and experience. Take any opportunity to get education and experience. Be constantly looking for opportunities to advance your career, but be alert for scams and frauds.

Get on the collection side of the equation. I hate paying other people interest. It's just wasted money. Save and buy rather than buy and pay. I saved for my first car and then saved until I could buy a newer one etc. etc. until I could buy new ones for cash*. I bought an old building on contract with the owner. The tenants paid off the building and all the expense until I sold it at a substantial profit. Not owing money early allowed me to save and invest instead. Real estate has value even in a totally collapsed economy. You can provide shelter, a

base for survival business and food production. If there is no collapse it's home and probably a profit.

Getting out of debt and staying out of debt is the most important survival act anyone can perform. Avoiding wasted funds on bad habits such as the lottery, drugs, cigarettes and junk goods is a revolutionary form of self-liberation. Knowing the difference between the "wants" that are established by the society and media and the "needs" that have true value in survival takes you from victim to survivor.



Risk vs Rewards in Economic Survival

I would be remiss if I didn't admit that a conservative, low-risk survival oriented financial strategy has a downside. While it increases security through tough times and disasters it also means living with less and passing up some *potentially* profitable opportunities and investments. An occasional small loan or debt may be justified for education or for solid tangible goods, but you have to ask yourself "if this fails, can I survive and recover without loss of my foundation assets?" This process is called risk benefit analysis.

Conclusions

While "prepping" may apply to disaster survival true "survivalism" is a way of approaching every aspect of life. The rules of survival apply to family life, carriers, economics, and life styles. Your priorities always put life essentials ahead of societal and culturally promoted values. Application of

survival principles to personal economic planning greatly improves your chances of surviving and even thriving through any level of economic decline or collapse. Simply put: the better off you are financially during “normal” times the better off you can be materially when things get tough.

**In one case my used car broke down so I did without a car until I had cash for the next one. Doing without is a key element in all survival situations.*

OLD FALLOUT SHELTERS

Reminiscences of the 50s and 60s.

Ah, the good old days of duck and cover

A friend of mine recently sent me some photos and an article about some folks who found a fully stocked “50s” fallout shelter in their backyard. This was long before terms like “Prepper” or “Survivalist” were in use. I was in high school in the 50s and hardly able to feed myself. I had no real home, much less a fallout shelter. The south end of Chicago had the biggest concentration of steel mills, grain elevators, rail center and oil refineries in the US. The Russians probably had about ten nukes targeted on the place anyway. The best I could hope for was to get out on foot before the SHTF. Back then we had one “potential” disaster scenario to be “prepare” for. This was still the main concern when Live Free USA was first organized. We provide classes in outdoor survival and got more and more involved in “Civil Defense” issues. Backs then our enemies were clearly defined and the potential scenario was pretty basic. BOOM! Survival was a good shelter for the few who could afford it and improvised shelter or evacuation for the vast majority. Most people simply chose to ignore the danger and hope it wouldn’t happen. Those were the “good old days!” Back then the climate was stable. The weather could get rough, but not consistently destructive. The economy was

stable and jobs were available for all. Fuel was cheap and plentifully. A family could pay all their bills and payoff their house on one income without much debt. Gangs were mostly harmless punks that grew out of it. Most folks trusted the government. No one but you knew who you called on the phone, what you bought or where you went. You didn’t need a permit to buy, own or carry a firearm and no one was shooting kids on the streets. No one back then knew what the word “terrorism” meant. So in those days having a well-stocked “bomb shelter” pretty much covered you risks.

While the risk of a nuclear war still remains we are faced with a much more complex and immediate matrix of disasters today. Unlike the “potential” disasters of the 50s the disasters that we face now are “actual” and happening, and unavoidable. A collapsing economy, extreme weather, terrorism, international crime cartels, dwindling supplies of petroleum and natural gas, and incompetent (I am being kind here) governments are grinding down our security and living standards and putting our lives and freedoms in jeopardy.

Here are a few photos of what was found in this well preserved 1950s survival (time-capsule) shelter



The bubble steel door entrance to the shelter. Too bad a couple of steel doors can’t protect us from today’s hazards. Note the hose being used to pump the 5-feet of water out of the flooded shelter.



Well chosen, off the shelf food items survived 50-years in Army steel ammunition cans in a flooded shelter. Those seals were really good. Note the price on the candy. That says a lot about inflation. There was not near as much specialized survival food and equipment in those days as we have today.



More items found in the shelter. Toilet paper, water, and radiation survey meters were also found in the shelter. Note the Wisconsin hunting regulations. Maybe this was part of their escape plan? No guns were found in the shelter. No doubt, they kept them in the house

Whoever these folks were, they did a pretty good job of preparing for what might have happened. Today we have to cope with what is happening and be more and more adapted to what will happen to our children and us

BASIC SEVEN SURVIVAL REQUIREMENTS

#1: WILL TO SURVIVE; IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY MADE THE DECISION TO DO WHAT IT TAKES TO SURVIVE YOU ARE ALREADY DOOMED.

#2: SELF DEFENSE: AN UNDEFENDED PERSON CAN BE KILLED IN 3 SECONDS.

Everyone should be armed in some way. At least, never go anywhere without a knife. Under threat conditions carry pepper spray or a handgun. Have a firearm and ammunition safely stored in your home.

#3: AIR: YOU CAN LIVE 3 MINUTES WITHOUT AIR.

Smoke, biological, chemical or nuclear contamination must be considered. In many cases N95 rated dust/mist masks kept in your pocket, vehicle or survival pack will be much more useful than a big gas mask at home. New gas masks cost from \$150.00 to \$400.00 each. If you purchase a gas mask follow the instructions and practice fit testing it before you need it.

#4: SHELTER & WARMTH: YOU CAN LIVE THREE HOURS WITHOUT SHELTER AND WARMTH IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT.

Shelter may be a tent, a storm shelter, a fallout shelter, shade, a sleeping bag or just temporary "cover" from flying projectiles. If you are breathing, everything else can wait. As they say "seek shelter immediately". Shelter must keep you dry and out of the cold wind, out of the hot sun, sealed from chemical, biological and nuclear contamination, protected from flying and falling debris. In most cases you will not have time to go to a shelter you must carry it or use what is nearby. Think!

#5: WATER: YOU CAN LIVE THREE DAYS WITHOUT WATER.

Store at least 1 gallon, 2 quarts for drinking, 2 quarts for cleaning and bathing. We normally use about 140 gallons per person per day for cooking, washing, drinking, and bathing. Store water in clean,

opaque, food grade, tap water does not usually need treatment but you can add 12 drops of 2% tincture of iodine per gallon or 4-8 drops of household bleach for long term storage

#6: FOOD: YOU CAN LIVE THREE WEEKS WITHOUT FOOD AT REST IN MILD WEATHER. The FDA recommends 2000 calories per day but healthy people can survive for a long time on a lot less. You should try to maintain a 2000-calorie stock per-person for as long as you anticipate a homebound emergency. You may have to compromise on a lower calorie intake per-day for evacuations where you have to carry your food. Store canned-goods at home (they already have water in them). Keep dried beans, pasta, rice, instant potatoes, powdered milk, and oatmeal. Stock up on canned meats. For evacuation kits buy dehydrated camp meals, dried trail mixes and jerky. You will need a camp stove and sufficient fuel for cooking this kind of food.

#7 SANITATION: OFTEN OVER-LOOKED, KILLS THOUSANDS IN A DISASTER. You must have bleach for disinfecting bodily waste, purifying water and decontaminating clothing and equipment as needed. You also need to have hand soap and laundry soap, toilet paper, towels and washcloths for sponge baths and decontamination. Insect spray and insect repellents are important also. Chemical toilets or a 5-gallon pail with a heavy plastic bag for home.

Survival Thinking

Clausewitz the great military strategist stated that “war comprises two interrelated and inseparable factors: the means at your disposal and the strength of your will to fight”. At its most basic level, survival is a war between you and those conditions and forces that threaten you. The means at your

disposal are your physical condition, your skills and knowledge and your equipment and supplies. The means are important and most survival classes focus on them, but without the will to use them, the means are worthless.

Survival is: Skills + Equipment & Supplies x by Will-Power

In Home Freeze Dryer

At a recent preparedness expo I observed a demonstration of an “in home” freeze drying machine. Up until now, freeze-drying has been the one food preservation option not available to most preppers. We can dehydrate, smoke, pickle, cure and can, but we have to pay a high price for freeze-dried foods. Freeze-dried survival foods are by far the lightest weight and longest lasting of all survival food supplies, but are also the costliest. A dollar’s worth of beef stew can cost from \$6.00 to \$8.00 in a freeze-dried package. Purchasing a six-month or one-year food stock of freeze-dried is a considerable investment.

The Harvestright™ freeze-drying machine is about the size of a very large microwave. The machine freezes the foods down to around 40 below zero and then vacuums away all of the moisture content. Finally the food is vacuum-sealed in oxygen and moisture proof packages. **The manufacturer claims that 97% of the nutritional value of the food is preserved with a shelf life of over 25-years.**

At this point the machine sells for a hefty \$4,000.00. You would save about \$5.00 to \$6.00 per freeze-dried meal so you would need to do about 600 to 800 meals to pay off the machine. This may not be cost effective for a person or family, but could be a good business investment or cooperative purchase for a survival/preparedness group. Cost may come down some, but the need for the refrigeration, dehydration and vacuum

systems will probably sustain prices well above \$1,000.00 for years to come.

For more information go to: Harvestright.com or call 1-800-923=4673.



Side view of the Harvestright™ freeze-drying machine. Not the complex compressor, vacuum and refrigeration equipment at the rear,



Salesman demonstrates the food trays. Note the heavy rubber seal around the opening.

Salt Powered Battery Charger

A recent addition to my “survival gadgets” collection is a battery charger powered by saltwater. There is nothing really new about generating electrical energy by adding salt to water. This is a common science lab project. But, a purpose-built device to charge batteries using this technique *is* new. The G-MAG® will charge 6 rechargeable, “AA” batteries in about 2-hours using just two teaspoons full of salt in water. The device then needs to be flushed out for the next use. The G-MAG unit alone costs \$14.95 from the Cheaper Than Dirt catalogue. A complete kit that includes 6 rechargeable “AA” batteries and a selection of adapters for recharging cell phones, etc. cost \$45.00.



I have a variety of ways to recharge batteries, including solar, crank and fire (stove) methods that are cheap, easy and practical. Under survival conditions salt could be a high-value commodity for other uses so I have to classify the G-MAG as a gadget, but it does provide a fourth option for charging batteries.

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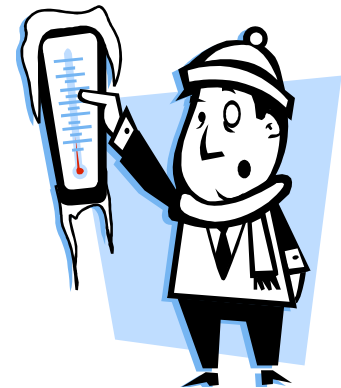
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