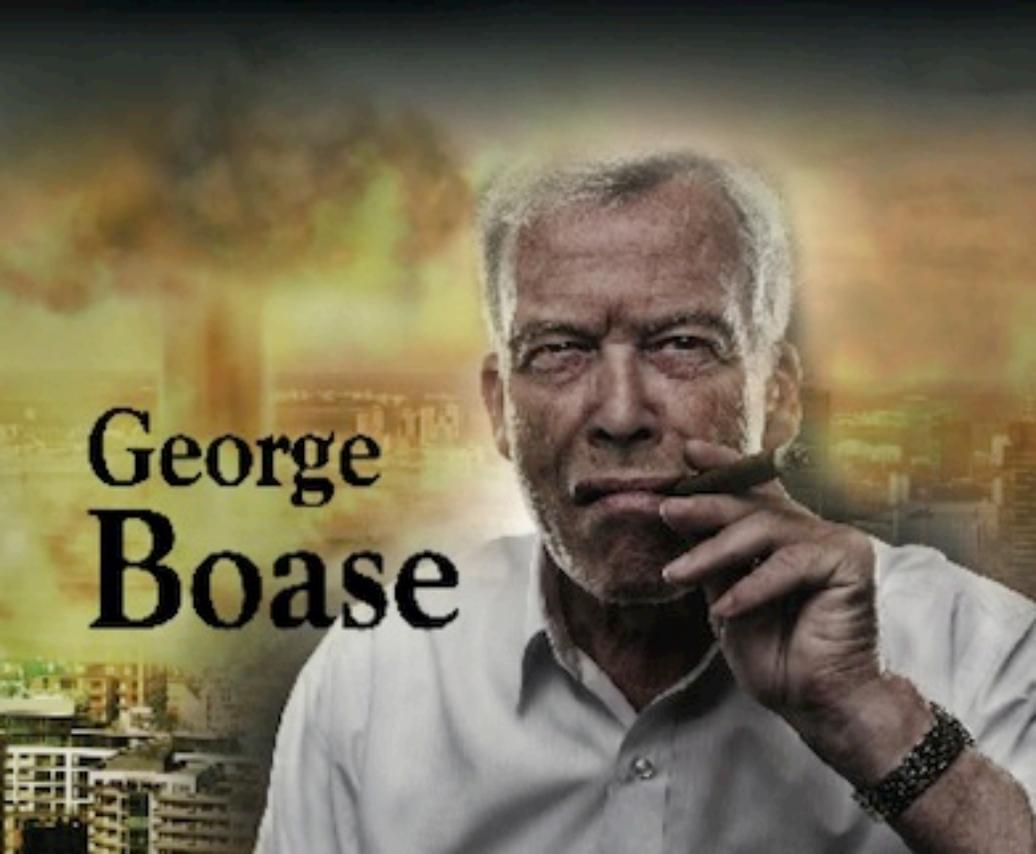




**THE PREPPER  
WITH THE  
MOST TOYS  
WINS!** The Grand Prize  
is Freedom



George  
**Boase**



*Departing from the usual gloom of the doom boom, "The Prepper With the Most Toys Wins" presents the positive nature of prepping, making life better today and secure tomorrow. With a lifestyle change, and use of renewable, sustainable and repeatable technology, survival doesn't necessarily mean sacrifice. Prepping means we take back our freedom and throw the monkey off our backs to become independent as our ancestors once were, but with advanced security and comforts. The ever-increasing angst of life today has shaped a growing portion of society we call preppers. With good intention, preppers too often prepare for the Hollywood "Mad Max" version of disaster. The actuality should be more like Gilligan's Island. As probable as finding ourselves missing phones, lights and motorcars, it's almost as certain bloodthirsty mutant gangs won't chase us across a wasteland. Too many are preparing shelters they hope they never have to live*

*in, storing food they hope they never have to eat and stockpiling weapons and equipment they pray they never have to use. This is not how preparing for doom should be. Preparation for tomorrow should result in a better life today. A prepper is not someone suffering from paranoia. A prepper is one who clearly sees the difficulties people face on a daily basis. Rather than sit around and complain, they take affirmative action. They prepare! Preparing for survival is breaking away from the herd mentality. Prepping is a lifestyle change that results in a freedom few people enjoy today. We spend most of our day providing the basic needs for life. We obsess over health and security. We worry about the electric grid, the food supply and, most often, financial security. We worry about things we really have no control over. We are many slaves to the few masters. The prepper with the most toys wins! The grand prize is freedom. Preppers regain control to be their own master as our ancestors were long ago.*

# **The Prepper With the Most Toys Wins!**

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# **The Prepper with the Most Toys Wins!**

Prepping - It's Not Just for Doomsday

George Edwin Boase



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## **What Can Possibly Go Wrong?**

Motivation for your personal level of prepping depends on what you anticipate will go wrong. With a near endless list of disasters we assume will happen, I'm sure Murphy's Law will eventually provide us with calamity we never dreamt of.

### **Economic Collapse**

To see into the economic future doesn't require psychic ability. All you need is a history lesson. As Sir Winston Churchill said, "The farther back you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see." Predicting economic collapse is historical knowledge, not prognostication.

I begin here for one simple reason. Economic collapse is one of two most likely disasters you should be prepared for. As a preamble to this topic, this is about prepping, not politics. The purpose is to present an honest and non-political scenario, not to place blame.

### **It Has Happened, It Will Happen**

Most of us live one week at a time, one paycheck to another. The average family has over \$225,000 in debts and less than \$500 saved to deal with emergencies. According to an April 2014 Gallup poll<sup>2</sup>, 14% would experience "significant financial hardship" within a week. Another 29% said they could last a month with 26% able to last four months. Only 17% felt they could ride out a year.

On January 1, 1991, residents of diminutive Rhode Island woke with the usual New Years Eve hangover, and

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financial collapse<sup>3</sup>. The first official act of the newly inaugurated governor, Bruce Sundlun, was to close 45 credit unions, banks, loan & investment companies without warning. A single embezzler, Joe Mollicone, started the snowball that caused the disintegration of RISDIC, the company insuring deposits in Rhode Island<sup>4</sup>.

The entire state and surrounding area went into instant economic failure. With over \$1 billion in assets frozen in closed banks, businesses couldn't make payrolls, order supplies or pay bills. Depositors were left with the cash on hand before New Year's Eve. People with high paying jobs and hundreds of thousands in a bank found themselves in line for free food. Homes ended up in foreclosure and business failures hit an elevated 68% increase.

Depositors seldom read the fine print. The law holds the FDIC liable for no more than 10% of the funds deposited in each account up to \$100,000. An insured bank account can still lose 90% or more if the depository fails. Ten years after the collapse, thousands in Rhode Island received only a fraction of their money on deposit in failed financial institutions.

In the post-depression years it became common practice and a sign of wisdom to not trust banks. To this day there are people who would entrust their life savings to a mattress rather than an established bank. Banks are not as secure as we are led to believe. The primary function of deposit insurance provided by the FDIC is to provide a false sense of security.

### **The Great Depression and the Not So Great Recovery**

The U.S. is on a downward spiral and no one has a hand on the brakes. Our normalcy bias tells us everything is going to work out, because it always has in the past. In September

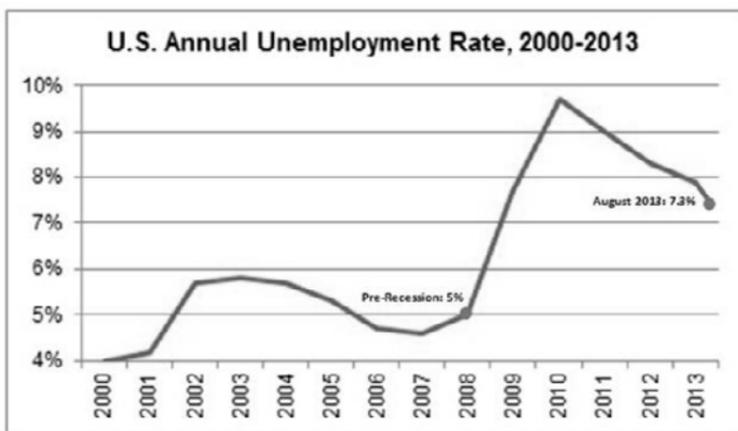
## *Prepping - It's Not Just for Doomsday*

1929 the Chairman of General Motors was hailed as a visionary after publishing an article. He claimed everyone could be wealthy in the United States through the stock market. A month later the market crashed the wealth of the world.

The economy is in worse shape now and the previous depression lasted nearly 10 years. As it was in 1929, the U.S. is in a state of total denial. We're being told we're in recovery, not a recession, much less a depression. The statistics and circumstances are shockingly similar to October of 1929.

In the 30s, unemployment numbers were calculated in a much different way. Those numbers were inflated; the method used today understates the rate.

If we calculated today's unemployment using the same factors, instead of between 7.5% and 8.5% unemployment would be between 23% and 28%. At the height of the depression in 1933 unemployment peaked at 24.9%<sup>5</sup>.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

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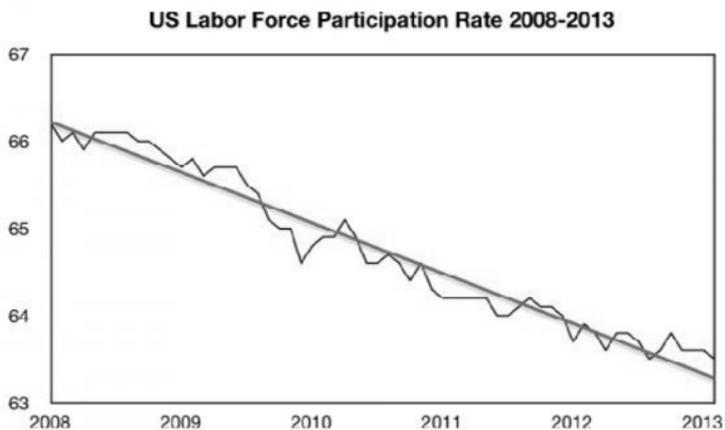
To realistically analyze employment figures we must also consider those who are under-employed at lower pay levels and less than a 40-hour week. Part time jobs and declining pay rates caused general strikes and riots in the 30s. Current statistics indicate 7 of 8 new jobs created are part time.

The historically high numbers receiving payments through unemployment insurance and other government programs is no doubt the only reason we're not already seeing more civil response. In the 30s riots broke out all over the country.

Harder to fix a number to are people who have given up looking for work. We don't even count them in the unemployment stats. At best estimate we're at least double the number over the depression decade.

On the other end of forgotten participation are the new people looking for work, and not finding it. The population is growing faster than new jobs leaving a whole other part of the population out of work and not accounted for in the jobless figures.

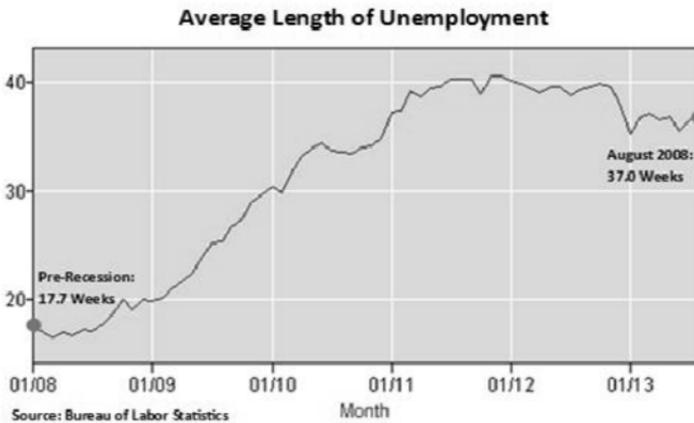
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Source: [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)

Another item, which remains uncouncted in the tally, is the length of time between finding employment. We're currently at a length twice that of 1930.

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**Long-Term  
Unemployed  
(27 Weeks or  
Longer)**

August 2008:  
1.76 million

August 2013:  
4.30 million

**Discouraged  
Workers  
(Gave Up  
Looking)**

January 2008:  
467,000

August 2013:  
866,000

**Involuntary  
Part-Time  
Workers**

August 2008:  
5.85 million

August 2013:  
7.91 million

The number of people receiving some type of government assistance verifies this dire situation. Government assistance in various degrees is currently going to over 47%<sup>6</sup> and rising.

There are two economic groups whose status is never a product of the economy, those in desperate poverty and the extreme wealthy. It may be human nature for the wealthy to blame the poor, and the poor to feel downtrodden by the wealthy. Neither is correct. The middle class, the person

depending on a paycheck to survive, is always hit first, hardest and longest. They are the fulcrums of every economy, and the nation depends on them for its very life.

Fifty-eight-percent of government assistance goes to the middle class 60% of the population. The 20% with the lowest income receives 32% of all government benefits. The lower 51% of the population pay no federal taxes at all. The top 20% earns 52% of the income, and pays 67.2% of all taxes. If you blame the entitlement problem on the poor, you're pointing a finger at the wrong people. If you think the wealthy are shirking their duty, you're equally guilty.

At the beginning of the great depression, we had no entitlement programs. After FDR's election in 1932 we had the "New Deal." The CCC, Civilian Conservation Corp was the most popular program in the New Deal. Young men (17 – 25) were enlisted at \$30 per month for 6 months to work at various projects on federal land. One requirement was to send \$25 per month back to their families in the cities to stimulate the economy there. Over 3 million men came through the CCC program by the time it ended.

The Public Works Act, PWA, was another New Deal program considered to be successful. A great many structures, dams and bridges still in use today came from this program. It continued until 1941 when the war effort provided jobs and created a manpower shortage.

The sole program to survive long past the New Deal is the Social Security Act. In the original form, benefits were paid by the worker and returned after retirement. Of course, today, Social Security is one of the main causes for our national debt. People are living longer and receiving more in benefits than paid in. The problem with SSI is it's a Ponzi scheme<sup>7</sup> at the end of a pyramid.

## **The Unsinkable Ship of State**

On June 30, 1930, the national outstanding debt was a little over \$16 billion<sup>8</sup>. The government had 0 unfunded liabilities. That number was considered outrageous at the time. The national debt today, including unfunded liabilities stands at approximately \$70 Trillion. If you're counting on taxing the wealthy, you must have failed kindergarten math. All the wealthy in the world could contribute 100% of their income, and it would still come up short.

An unfunded liability<sup>9</sup> is the amount of future payment obligations that exceed the present value of funds to pay them. These are often ignored when calculating the national debt. Where the money will come from is anyone's guess.

The great ship of state is headed for the iceberg, while the captain and crew call for ice cubes and drinks all around. Sooner or later, there's too much ice and too little ship to stay afloat.

## **A False Sense of Security**

The government is able to pay debts because our currency is the world standard. The U.S. is the only nation able to print funny money to pay our debt. As long as we keep this status, we're good. Should that golden goose fly the coop, we'll be forced to actually pay our debt from real income.

There are two programs keeping the economy seemingly in check. The first is QE or Quantitative Easing; the second is extended unemployment and assistance benefits.

In a stagnant economy, QE is an unconventional policy intended as a stimulus. In real life, when the banks and financial institutions hold the money without injecting it into

the economy it backfires causing the value of the dollar to plunge. When short-term interest rates drop to near zero, this policy falls apart. The next step in QE when rates approach zero is to purchase long-term assets to lower interest rates further out on the yield curve.

It may seem cruel to those unfortunate workers and families without jobs to terminate unemployment and welfare benefits. Not setting limits transfers the hardship from the few to the many. Employers initially pay unemployment benefits when they hire and maintain a worker. When you extend those past the amount covered by that insurance, much like QE you're pumping money into a system without value behind it.

In 2009 we saw a -10% GDP. The only previous time it hit double digits was in 1943. Something has to give. If we fix the problem with cutbacks to spending or at the expense of entitlements, we can look to the riots in Greece from 2010 – 2012. Spain, whose economy is nearly identical to ours in unemployment and budget deficit, has also seen massive civil unrest when austerity programs were announced. Neither country can print money to pay the bills.

In a recent session, the house tried to pass the Farm Bill<sup>10</sup> with an insignificant 3% reduction in funding for the SNAP food assistance program. The outrage was so great the bill passed to the senate without the reduction. At this point we don't have the willingness to fix the economy.

If we stay the current path and do nothing to correct the problem, the economy will collapse causing massive civil unrest. That's the rock. If we correct the problem by ending the current policies of QE and entitlements, you can again count on civil unrest. That's the hard place. The near certainty

of economic collapse and the ensuing civil problems places this scenario at number one for reason to be a prepper.

### **Electric Grid Failure**

"Distributed Energy" is a new phrase being discussed among the inner circles. The motivation behind distributed energy is to create a national power system made out of millions of smaller grids instead of the 5,800 interconnected and interdependent grids we have today.

Few people remember the Internet was created for military communication. The "Internet" does not actually exist. It is not a single entity it's more of a concept. In the early days of computer development the military was looking for an indestructible system of communication. The answer to this was to create a protocol where of millions of independent computers connected to each other.

As the military and government established with computer communications and the Internet, the future of our civilization may very well depend on creating millions of renewable source power grids. If we accomplish a distributed energy system, no power on earth can shut us down.

The deadliest aspect of a widespread grid failure is the unpredictable nature. It will happen in the blink of an eye and create instant panic and chaos. There will be no warning. The blackout will not be televised.

We've all experienced small short-term power outages. Storms, power lines down, technical and mechanical failures have left us all in the dark at one time or another. At any time of the day, someone somewhere is without power. They are inconvenient, but not usually life threatening because the power is restored within hours or perhaps a day.

### **The Domino Effect**

If you need empirical evidence of how fast things can go wrong, we can find the proof on cruise ships. A cruise ship is a micro community of approximately 5,000 people. We've all seen what happens aboard when the power fails. The citizens of these communities were instantly plunged into hellish chaos with no place to go and no help within easy reach.

Within 24 hours of grid failure, people will be trapped in elevators and subways. Traffic seizes in gridlock. Communication stops as batteries and backups fail. You'll lose lights, water, access to money in banks, refrigeration / AC or heating and food suppliers will be inundated. Travel will become nearly impossible and gas stations will close immediately.

During the 1977 New York City blackout, fires, looting and riots began within two hours. Police were immediately overwhelmed and traffic came to an instant halt. The speed in which civilization broke down was shocking to even the most seasoned New Yorkers.

Water and sanitation will reach critical levels after 48 hours. Flooding begins in areas normally kept dry with pumps. Perishable items are gone from stores and homes without refrigerators. Expect widespread looting in heavily populated areas. Law Enforcement will be pressed to the limit. Hospitals will be over run. Fatalities will begin. A total of 13 people died in the 2003 Northeast blackout.

Retail and the manufacturing industry have combined to form the very model of efficiency. Warehousing goods costs money, a lot of money. One of the biggest changes in how retailers operate is to forgo huge inventories. The current business model is to operate on a very close 3-day supply of

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goods on hand. It's a supply as needed system, which is great as long as everything works.

In 72 short hours, all goods and services will cease. Stores will run out of all usable items since they only stock a three-day supply. Without outside assistance, casualties will begin in cascading amounts. Estimates are 50% of the population has less than three days' supply of food and necessary goods at home. A more serious shortage will be prescription medicines. Pharmacies seldom stock more than a 10-day supply.

Seldom discussed are the "Independent Pharmaceutical Sales Persons" more commonly known as a pusher. Street dealers seldom keep more than a couple of hours of supply on hand. I'll leave it to your imagination what will happen within hours with millions of addicts suddenly in withdrawal.

### **Coronal Mass Ejection**

In 1859 the power grid was primitive with the only transmission lines vulnerable to EMP (Electro Magnetic Pulse) belonging to telegraph. From August 28<sup>th</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup> the Carrington Super Flare, largest recorded solar flare, destroyed telegraph lines, started fires and shocked operators from the USA to Europe.<sup>11</sup>

Should the same magnitude event happen today, the damage would be catastrophic, cause well over \$3 trillion in damage and destroy the power grid for years. The disaster will not be a local event; most of the world will be affected. There will be no place to hide, and no nation able to help another. Rebuilding would not be measured in years; it would be decades.

Nature runs in cycles and solar activity is no different. Ice core samples have proven such events occur at least once

in 500 years. Events of 1/5<sup>th</sup> the size of the Carrington Event happen several times each century. In 1921 and 1960 solar activity disrupted radio communications. In March of 1989 geomagnetic storms knocked out power across large sections of Quebec.

While we can't know when it will occur, we can be certain it will happen again. The warning will come with a little over 17 hours notice. There will not be enough time to make any but the most basic preparations.

### **The Grid Infrastructure**

Since 1984, utility companies have been required to report power outages. There have been 11 outages of over 4,000 megawatt. Major outages have tripled in recent years. In 2007 we had 76 such failures and in 2011 it went to 307.

In August 2003, seven states in the northeast US and parts of Canada suffered the worst grid failure in North American history. Over 55 million people were affected. Some cities were without power for four days.

The system has improved since 2003, but the general opinion of world experts is we're far from a stable condition. In a report called "Failure to Act" in 2011, The American Society of Civil Engineers gave the U.S. power system a D+ rating and warned that some of the equipment being used today dates back to the 80s, the 1880s.

The national grid consists of 5,800 major power plants with 450,000 miles of aging transmission line. Over 70% of the transmission lines and transformers are over 25 years old and 60% of the circuit breakers are over 30 years old.

In spite of improvements to the system, Arizona, California and Mexico's Baja took a major hit in 2011. The

rest of the world has experienced worse grid failures<sup>12</sup> with the granddaddy of all belonging to Brazil in 1999. In September 2013, Venezuela suffered a failure that left 70% of the country in the dark.

### **Cyber Attack**

If squads of squirrels chewing through power couplings don't kill the grid, a 15 year old under achiever with a computer and mommy issues might succeed. The threat of a cyber attack is real, and occurring daily.

Subsequent to leaving her post as secretary of Department of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano stated, "Our country will, at some point, face a major cyber event that will have a serious effect on our lives, our economy and the everyday functioning of our society," she said. "While we have built systems, protections and a framework to identify attacks and intrusions, share information with the private sector and across government, and develop plans and capabilities to mitigate the damage, more must be done, and quickly."

Congressman Ed Markey and Henry Waxman released a report in 2012. They surveyed dozens of utility companies and found the systems were under daily and constant attack. One utility claimed to be the target of around 10,000-attempted cyber attacks each month. As recently as August of 2013 one such attack was successful in knocking power out to over 10,000 customers for a full weekend.

Curt Hebert, former chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission stated, "If the nation fails at electricity, we're going to fail miserably at everything else."

The National Academy of Sciences noted in a 2012 report that a major concern are hard to replace items such as

custom made transformers which are not made in the United States. Most are manufactured in China. Terrorists could cripple the nation by damaging a few of these. Similar to how retailers operate on a "just in time" basis, we don't stockpile replacement parts. Replacing them could take months and by that time we'd be in a state of total dysfunction.

The odds for you to experience power outages or grid failure is 100%. A tree branch in Ohio touching a power line caused the 2003 blackout initially. A technical fault and human error completed the route to disaster. The same chain of events can still bring the system down. The only variable is how long and how widespread. Due to the common nature of the event, being prepared for even a minor short-term disruption of power is not being paranoid, it's being smart.

### **The Tenth Crusade, Nuclear War & Terrorist**

To reinforce a previous statement, this is not about politics. It's about preparing for disaster. We are at war, and given the nature of the enemy, probably will be for decades to come.

Historians say the war between Christians and Muslims began in 1096 with the First Crusade and ended with the Ninth Crusade in 1272 AD. It might be accurate to call contemporary conflicts around the world between Islam and Christians to be the Tenth Crusade. Mankind has seen almost 1,000 years of destruction with no end in sight.

Most of us breathed a huge sigh of relief when the cold war ended. Anyone who grew up in the 50s & 60s remembers the hysteria of that era. Rather than being ridiculed by the media, survivalists were encouraged. It was an effort to give us a false sense of security. An underground bomb shelter

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was standard for public buildings and many homes and children practiced "duck and cover" drills at school.

The only thing duck and cover accomplished is putting your head between your knees make it easier to kiss your butt goodbye. Prepping in those early days was actually silly, but at least we tried. We believed survival was possible even in an all-out nuclear exchange.

In 1950, two nations had nuclear capability, the USA and USSR. The only reason we survived the cold war was M.A.D. or Mutually Assured Destruction. That works fine for two countries with stable borders at odds. Today's conflicts are caused by ideals instead of geopolitical borders. M.A.D. will not prevent the use of nuclear weapons.

There are at least nine countries today with nuclear weapons<sup>13</sup>, and several more in the process of developing nukes. Most of those countries don't like us very much. We're closer to nuclear holocaust now, than we ever imagined in the 60s.

The very nature of war is far different. Centuries ago, a man stood with sword in hand and looked into the enemies' eyes. It was bloody, brutal and fearsome. War was the survival of the fittest taken to the limit.

Star Trek fans will remember a prophetic first season episode 23 written by Robert Hamner called "A Taste of Armageddon." Two planets waged war by computer for over 500 years. War had lost the horror of personal involvement.

We're near that status now. We have "pilots" who sit at a console in Kansas and bomb a building in Afghanistan via a remote controlled drone. ICBMs can launch from Omaha and strike a target on the other side of the world. A ship at sea can

send a cruise missile through the doorway of a building 1,000 miles away. Killing has become sanitized.

A nuclear detonation or war does not necessarily mean the total annihilation of people and infrastructure. Dubbed the "e-bomb," a nuclear detonation 300 miles above the USA would cause a national blackout in 1/500<sup>th</sup> of a second.

The Graham Commission studied the problem and stated, "The United States has seen the rapid growth in its dependence on electronics, telecommunications, and information technology. This technology has infused itself into the nation's critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR). These include the energy sector, banking and finance, petroleum and natural gas, transportation, food services, water, emergency services, and space systems.

"These technological innovations have brought great benefits, but also make the United States—and its component states and localities—vulnerable to an EMP attack."

Cars and transportation will roll to a stop instantly. Aircraft in flight will fall from the sky. Overhead phone and power lines will melt, shallow buried cables will fry. Satellites will go off-line stopping everything from television to cell phones. The Internet will cease but no one will notice because there will be no computers left to use it. Any item computer controlled – basically everything - will become a paperweight<sup>14</sup>.

There are no effective means to determine how likely an attack of this nature is. The only thing we know for sure is at least nine countries have tested EMP generating devices and we're not friendly with any of them. N. Korea and Iran have been testing missiles launched from ships. Both countries have declared a willingness to use them against the USA.

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The most chilling statement by the Graham Commission is, "Many Americans have experienced the burdens of a short blackout. But the U.S. could not survive as a unified civil nation with the long-term loss of the electrical grid."

Our once lofty position as King of the Nuclear Mountain no longer matters. We're more like the hideously over muscled body builder who can barely move. The huge arsenal of weapons, which kept us safe under M.A.D., is now a burden. We're nearly defenseless against such attacks and completely unprepared as a nation. Huge stockpiles of weapons are no longer needed. All it takes is a single bomb to destroy civilization across a continent.

### **The Zombie Apocalypse**

Before you declare this to be just plain silly, hear me out. I won't suggest brain-sucking reanimated corpses are going to hunt you down. Embedded in every good horror movie plot lies a basis of believable fact, stretched a bit by poetic license and aimed at our darkest fears.

In the original George Romero "Night of the Living Dead," the reanimation was caused by radiation from a satellite returning from Venus. In 1968 we were headlong into the space race, and scared to death of radiation.

We have legitimate reasons to be frightened of radiation. Since 1945, we've done a terrible job of keeping the atomic genie in the bottle. We let him out to grant our wishes of incredible power in war and peace alike. Now we're finding there's an evil side to that genie and he refuses to go peacefully back into the bottle.

To be fair, there have been thousands of nuclear reactors in operation since 1945 without incident. They have a safety record unmatched in the power generation industry. It may

surprise you to know more workers have died at coal-fired plants in industrial accidents than from radiation accidents. The problem is, when a nuke goes bad, it goes REALLY bad.

Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima lead the notable list of nuclear accidents. One Russian publication, "Chernobyl," concluded there were 985,000 premature cancer deaths worldwide between 1986 and 2004 as a result of contamination. There are no accurate estimates on Fukushima yet. The reactors are still emitting and spreading radiation across the pacific all the way to the west coast of the USA. Sounds like a Godzilla movie script in the works.

In total, 27 accidents have resulted in fatalities since 1945<sup>15</sup>. They may not cause the dead to get up and walk again, but the results can be just as deadly as any invasion of brain eating zombies.

The most widely used scenario for the Zombie Apocalypse is disease. A pandemic disease is definitely to be feared, and an excellent reason to prepare.

The most current virulent disease fear is HIV or Aids. The CDC estimates over 31 million people will die in India, 18 million in China and the death toll in Africa could reach 100 million by the year 2025.

The ease with which we travel around the world is the reason for concern for a global pandemic. Infection can now spread faster than we can detect it. Disease once traveled between villages on a slow moving ox cart. Now it travels at near the speed of sound across oceans and continents. We should consider ourselves fortunate it hasn't already happened.

## **Shelter Is the First Requirement for Survival**

Man's first duty since the day he walked upright and left the ponds and trees has been to find suitable shelter from the weather and predators. Caves worked pretty well at first, but rock walls are hard to hang pictures on. Just think, we evolved from painting animals on cave walls, to Elvis on velvet and poker playing dogs. Isn't evolution wonderful?

Caves are actually a decent survival shelter. The temperature is stable and they're underground with a defendable entrance. The problem is you won't find many for sale in the Sunday real estate section. If you thought squirrels in the attic a problem, try dealing with bats.

### **The Modern Cave**

At the height of the cold war, approximately 200,000 fallout shelters were installed. An estimated 4 million preppers could easily dwarf that number. The real last-man-on-earth survivalist will head for underground bunkers, the modern cave. The modern cave is perhaps the most secure facility you can build. They can be hardened against everything from marauders to asteroid impacts<sup>16</sup>.

Prefab bunkers today are not your father's cold war bomb shelters<sup>17</sup>. If you're expecting TEOTWAWKI (the end of the world as we know it) this is what you need to be safe and secure in the ultimate shelter.

1. Protection from force 10 earthquakes in succession.
2. Ability to withstand 450 mph winds.

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3. Gamma and neutron attenuation from 100-megaton airburst 20 miles from ground zero.
4. Protection from solar flares with 1 million volt EMP
5. Must be submersible for 100 hours of flooding.
6. Able to withstand extreme fires of 1,250 degrees for 10 days.
7. Magnetic pole shift.
8. Filtered against biological, chemical or radiological weapons.
9. Defendable against forced entry and armed assaults.
10. Able to withstand 12' of snow and 10' of rain.
11. Resist damage from 500 lb hailstones or flying debris at 100 mph.
12. Sealed against overpressure blast of 45psi.

In addition, the shelter needs independent sources of water, fuel, electricity, HVAC, food and supplies. All critical systems should be redundant with two back-up systems.

You may not take pleasure in the idea of experiencing doomsday alone, or you're just not a DIY kind of person. Less than \$40K per person buys you a place amid an entire community<sup>18</sup> 100' underground. They range in size from 2,000 – 5,000 residents with every convenience you have above ground including miles of roads, stores, churches, medical centers and farms. You get everything except a blue sky. Perfect for the too busy prepper; all you do is arrive. Everything else is taken care of and ready for you.

A novel idea is RV parking with electric/water hook ups. Drive into the underground RV park through blast-proof doors, hookup and your home. Other developments offer a single bunk with common areas. If you want to go first class, luxury suites are available. The variety is as endless as your imagination and bank account.

This type of survival depends on a three-day notice. The underground cities are strategically located within a single days travel from anywhere in the continental US. In the case of an asteroid strike, Planet X, super storm, pole shift, pandemic or killer solar flare you might get some advance warning. For just about anything else you're going to be floating up that famous creek sans an oar.

The first logistical casualty of disaster is always transportation. As an example, look at coastal areas evacuated in advance of a hurricane. NOAA prediction can usually provide plenty of notice. Most fatalities occur simply because people ignore these warnings or wait too long to take action. Well-marked evacuation routes turn into instant parking lots.

If the power grid has failed, and it will, what's in your tank is how far you'll go. The average range of the family car on a single tank of gas is far less than 400 miles. A person living on the east coast trying to get to an underground city in Kansas or Indiana will not make it. As good as the shelter cities are, this is a serious drawback.

### **The Family Shelter**

A closer more modest approach is a safe room or a shelter beneath your existing house. Common practice in the 60s was to harden an existing basement. Storm shelters are common in areas prone to severe storms or tornados and easy to reinforce against other disasters.

Preparing a whole house to be defendable is nearly impossible unless your walls are 4' thick with blast doors and bulletproof windows. Creating a hidden safe room or turning a basement into a shelter is far more practical in both cost and effectiveness.

## *The Prepper with the Most Toys Wins!*

The cold war and previous generations of preppers laid out the plans for survival bunkers<sup>19</sup>. Civilian and government agencies spent fortunes and countless energy planning a war, which so far has not happened. All we need is to adapt modern technology to these plans.

The National Civil Defense Program (NCDP) faded quietly away in the 70s, replaced with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The purpose of the National Civil Defense Program was preparation and survival. Their attitude was most people would survive just about any disaster and go on to rebuild.

FEMA takes an opposite attitude that nothing can be done to protect our population in advance of an unknown threat. Where NCDP concentrated on prevention and preparation, FEMA responds to the aftermath.

Switzerland and Israel stand in stark contrast to most countries. They require and subsidize the cost of N.B.C (Nuclear, Biological and Chemical) safe rooms and heavily regulate construction. Our government suggests we tape plastic over windows and doors and wait for official instructions. Pretty much just another "Duck and Cover" move designed around a false sense of security.

FEMA does offer the most basic planning services and information. According to FEMA, less than 40% of the population is prepared for any kind of disaster. I believe that may be too generous. Preppers are estimated to be 4 million strong, but that's a little over 1% of the total population. At the very least, the entire population would do well to at least follow the FEMA disaster preparedness guidelines. As insipid as they are, FEMA guidelines are better than nothing.

A shelter should of course protect the occupants as a first function. In the middle of all the gloom and doom, I propose another equally important function for a survival shelter. It should be fun. As the old aphorism goes, "When you're up to your armpits in alligators, it's hard to remember you're there to drain the swamp."

The best places to survive are remote locations. Hunting and fishing cabins are one idea. Your odds for survival rise dramatically simply by removing yourself from highly populated areas. WMDs aren't effective unless used in high-population centers. Removing your family from large cities improves the odds against WMD attack and chances are you won't deal with looters either.

Hide your shelter underneath a micro cabin<sup>20</sup>. It makes no sense to spend all that money for a shelter you expect you'll never need for an event you hope will never happen. Make prepping an exciting and relaxing part of your life. If all you expect from life after disaster is murder, mayhem, carnage, starvation and disease, why bother trying to survive at all?

The same vibe goes for a hardened safe room in a basement. There are no rules to dictate the room can't be used for multiple purposes. With thickened and reinforced walls, safe rooms are nearly soundproof. They make an excellent room for kids to play as loud as they want or a teenager to crank up the music until their ears bleed. Need a man cave? Get the gang over to watch the big game and keep out of the spouse's hair.

### **Flight Not Fight, Alternative Bug Out Vehicles**

Who will admit they've never thought about owning an RV or a sailing yacht? Well, here's your excuse! Both make

## *The Prepper with the Most Toys Wins!*

exceptional survival homes. Faced with a fight or flight situation, either can avoid conflict simply by moving. The best way to win a fight is to not fight at all.

RVs are limited by the supply of fuel, but keeping the tank topped off should get you away from trouble so long as you don't wait too long. RVs are everything you want for survival in self-contained package<sup>21</sup>. You have sleeping quarters, a kitchen, living room, water, sanitation and power, all the comforts of home. Best yet, you don't need the sky to fall to enjoy using it.

A current trend in RVs is the "expedition" vehicle. They vary from the standard RV in that they have extended range, built on a heavier chassis and 4-wheel drive. They're intended to take you safely far away from civilization in comfort and style. The Unicat Translogic RV<sup>22</sup> is advertised as a survivalist shelter and designed with disaster in mind as well as recreational travel off road.

A sailing yacht is by its very nature a near to perfect survival home. An offshore yacht is designed around survival, independent from outside support. You have mobility, shelter and an abundance of food and water. The most modest of all yachts have the ability to remain independent for months at a time in comfort. A bit more preparation extends that time.

Reid Stowe<sup>23</sup> spent over 1,000 days at sea and holds the current record. Lynn and Larry Pardee are a famous sailing couple that have gone around the world five times in a 29' sailboat he built without an engine. How independent or how long you can remain away from trouble is up to your level of commitment and preparation. Operating a yacht does require a certain level of knowledge, experience and skill.

If the full extent of your sailing experience is having watched all of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" movies, don't count yourself out. A yacht at dock still provides a total package for survival. Simply anchoring in a safe harbor gives you added security you won't find on land. Think of a yacht as a personal castle with an incredibly huge moat.

Preparing a safe shelter is undoubtedly the most intense and costly part of preparing for disaster. It's also one of the most important preparations. Many devoted preppers spend fortunes for underground shelters specifically designed for survival, and only survival. I'm not saying they're wrong for doing so. There's a better solution for the average person or family.

My best advice is to avoid over building. Don't spend a fortune on something you hope to never use. As everyone knows, "practice makes perfect." One of the problems with a purpose-built shelter is the lack of practice in using it. If it's not a shelter you would use on a daily or recreational basis, diving into a hole in the ground when crisis hits will be a foreign experience. You might discover, too late, there are problems you didn't foresee.

A survival shelter should be something you and your family enjoy all the time. It can be as simple as a special room in the basement, or as exotic as a tree house in the forest. You might choose a ready-made shelter in the form of an RV or a boat, either of which you can enjoy no matter what happens. Practice living off the grid on a regular basis, and it won't seem so strange or difficult when you need to. Build it to enjoy now, survive in it if you must later.



*Departing from the usual gloom of the doom boom, "The Prepper With the Most Toys Wins" presents the positive nature of prepping, making life better today and secure tomorrow. With a lifestyle change, and use of renewable, sustainable and repeatable technology, survival doesn't necessarily mean sacrifice. Prepping means we take back our freedom and throw the monkey off our backs to become independent as our ancestors once were, but with advanced security and comforts. The ever-increasing angst of life today has shaped a growing portion of society we call preppers. With good intention, preppers too often prepare for the Hollywood "Mad Max" version of disaster. The actuality should be more like Gilligan's Island. As probable as finding ourselves missing phones, lights and motorcars, it's almost as certain bloodthirsty mutant gangs won't chase us across a wasteland. Too many are preparing shelters they hope they never have to live*

*in, storing food they hope they never have to eat and stockpiling weapons and equipment they pray they never have to use. This is not how preparing for doom should be. Preparation for tomorrow should result in a better life today. A prepper is not someone suffering from paranoia. A prepper is one who clearly sees the difficulties people face on a daily basis. Rather than sit around and complain, they take affirmative action. They prepare! Preparing for survival is breaking away from the herd mentality. Prepping is a lifestyle change that results in a freedom few people enjoy today. We spend most of our day providing the basic needs for life. We obsess over health and security. We worry about the electric grid, the food supply and, most often, financial security. We worry about things we really have no control over. We are many slaves to the few masters. The prepper with the most toys wins! The grand prize is freedom. Preppers regain control to be their own master as our ancestors were long ago.*

# **The Prepper With the Most Toys Wins!**

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