

# Timely reminders and general thoughts

February 08, 2023

Hello again and welcome to the first post of 2023.

Let me first wish everyone a Happy New Year - rather belated, but sincere. Let's hope it is a better one than 2022, 21 and 20.

As I write this article, just over a week into the month of February, there has been so much in the news - and here I mean the mainstream media that the unawake rely on for their information - to give people a nudge into being prepared and becoming preppers. A lot of what's being reported on is fact, but there is a lot of speculation and what can only be described as "fear porn" too.



It helps the governments of the world and the powers that be in general to keep the global population fearful. The theory being that if we are scared and relying on THEM to protect us, we will give up certain rights and freedoms that we have had for centuries, in exchange for perceived safety.

We are constantly being bombarded with news about the Ukraine war - which is nearing its one year anniversary (24th Feb). There is much speculation that the Russians will use the anniversary date to launch a huge offensive against Nato/US backed Ukraine. Much of this is just Fear Porn and something that we as individuals can do nothing about. The military industrial complex wants the war to continue and to escalate as it is making them a lot of money. With some of the missile systems costing a million dollars per missile to buy, there is a definite incentive for them to keep the war going for as long as possible, without it tipping over into global nuclear war. It is also giving them real time and real-life conditions to try out new weapons in the field.



Blackrock, a company with extraordinary wealth, has its fingers in multiple pies and will get richer the longer the war goes on. It will also benefit after the war ends as it has won the contract to

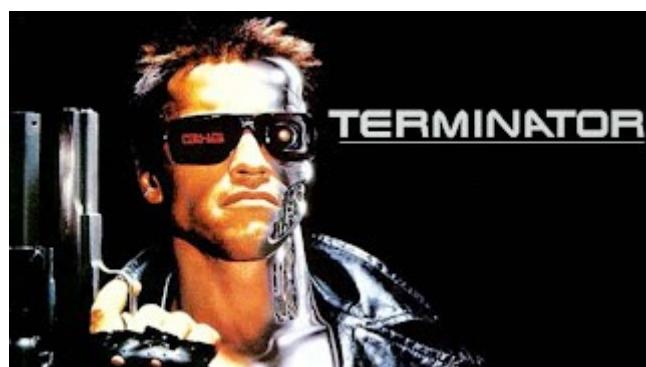
help to rebuild infrastructure in Ukraine after the war ends (assuming that the Russians are defeated).

Then we have the news about the multiple massive earthquakes in Turkey - affecting Turkey and Syria. I don't have the article in front of me for reference but believe that there have now been 3 quakes that registered over 7 on the Richter scale (and lots of smaller ones) that have brought down multiple high-rise buildings. Current count is around 6,000 deaths but the final toll is expected to be in the tens of thousands. This is truly horrific and for those of us living in regions where earthquakes are common it's a stark reminder of what could happen to us. The most pressing needs for those injured or displaced by the quakes are access to clean water, food, shelter and medical assistance.

Israel and Iran have also been having a few minor skirmishes. Drone attacks and sabotage have been used by both sides, and with Israel being a nuclear power and Iran on the brink of becoming one, it does not look good for lasting peace in the middle east. Israel tends to do the dirty work for their USA handlers from time to time so it's difficult to know if the attacks on Iran are US sanctioned or not.

North Korea are also upping the chances of a nuclear event occurring with their recent tests of long range missiles capable of carrying nuclear payloads to the west coast of the USA and further. The tension between North and South Korea continues to grow, stoked in part by the USA.

Then we have the sabre rattling by China over their One China principle which threatens the autonomy of Taiwan. Of course, the mighty USA have thrown their hat into the ring and said that if China attempts to invade Taiwan, they will come in on Taiwan's side. This may sound very noble and benevolent of the USA, but the reality is that it's all about money and protecting the USA's financial interests in the region. Taiwan manufactures the bulk of the world's computer chips and so is a valuable prize for any of the superpowers to control. Chips are in everything these days, from computers to cars and trucks, to smart appliances, phones....and if the elite's get their way, chips will soon be implanted into the brains of humans - supposedly for our benefit and convenience, but there will also be a control factor. I sometimes wonder if, when the powers that be read Orwell's 1984, or watched James Cameron's Terminator movies they thought "WOW what a great idea" and looked upon them as textbooks for the future. What could possibly go wrong?



On that note, it is predicted that before the decade is out, AI will have taken over at least 20% of jobs currently being done by people and that Robot Police - that's armed Robot Police by the way - will be patrolling the streets of numerous cities around the world. The Los Angeles police department has already approved robots for their police force and San Francisco have approved the use of armed robots to be used against civilians.

You have probably noticed how much the police forces around the world have become militarized over the last decade. Swat teams and armoured vehicles are becoming the norm rather than the exception. Couple that with the disarming of civilians along with new "hate speech" laws to silence free speech, and a dystopian future is closer than we may realize. Or am I just adding to the fear porn?

Many countries are now looking at bringing in a digital currency to "run alongside cash" (for a limited time - until it becomes the only currency). Most countries will have at least trialed it by the end of this year....some are further along the track than others and are in the process of full implementation. This will mean that every transaction can be tracked. They (whoever has control of the digital currency system) will have the data on what you buy, where you buy it, whether your purchases are in line with climate change policy etc. Spend too much on items that push up your carbon credit score and your account could become restricted or even frozen (as Trudeau did in Canada for those involved in, or supporting financially, the trucker convoy).

There is lots to scare the general public there, and lots to remind us of the importance of being prepared - or as prepared as we can be, depending on the circumstances. If you live next to a nuclear missile silo and a nuclear war between superpowers breaks out, you're probably not going to survive regardless of how many sacks of rice and beans you have stored away. But for other events like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, extreme weather, anything that can cause civil unrest, the collapse of the monetary system, the collapse of the power grid (through nuclear EMP, solar flare or hackers), or even just redundancy or job loss - being prepared by covering your and your loved ones needs - working through the various pillars of prepping - can give you a certain amount of security and confidence that you will get through and not only survive, but thrive too.



So remember to put away drinking **water** (and save rainwater - have a way to purify/filter/boil the rainwater), build up a mid to long term prepper pantry of canned, dried and (if you can afford it) freeze dried **food**. Back this up by growing your own fruit and veg and saving seed from one year for the next year's crops and, if you have the space, raise your own meat. Have the skills and equipment to repair your home and/or have plans in place for a secondary **shelter** - for emergencies - such as a caravan/camper, or tent, or at the very least some tarpaulins and ropes. Next comes **fire** and light and the ability to make a fire and keep it going. This could be a camp fire, or a bbq, or gas stove. If you go the way of an outdoor or indoor log fire remember to stock up on wood. If you're going the way of gas stoves - stock up on gas canisters - but be aware that if the event that has happened is a long or permanent one, your stocks of gas are going to run out sooner or later, so have a plan B in mind. You also need the means to create a spark to get the fire going. Again, matches or lighters will eventually run out, so have alternative means of creating fire such as ferro rods, a flint and steel, a magnifying glass, etc. **Light** can be from the fire in the most basic conditions - or you can use candles, oil lamps, gas lamps, battery operated torches and lanterns, (rechargeable batteries and a means to charge them would be better than non-rechargeable batteries), solar powered torches, lanterns and light systems. **Medication and first aid** - if you depend on prescription meds for keeping you alive, at the very least talk to your doctor about giving you an extra month's prescription to see you through an emergency. (Some doctors are more open to this than others). Alternatively, talk with a qualified naturopath or herbalist to discuss natural alternatives for your prescription drugs. If you live in Hawke's Bay, make use of the free services of naturopaths at Cornucopia on Heretaunga Street East,

Hastings. They are open 6 days a week. Sometimes there are no alternatives, but often there are. Some herbal alternatives you may even be able to grow and process yourself in your own back yard (see my article on growing your own medicine, in a post I wrote last year). At the very least build your own first aid kit with plasters, bandages, gauze, tweezers, pins, ointments, eye wash, and over the counter meds for pain, allergies, diarrhea, constipation etc. Masks, gloves and sanitizer would also be useful. In a SHTF situation you are the emergency medical carer.



**Security** is the next thing to consider. This is the security of your home, your property, your person and your family. How secure are your doors and windows? Do those locks need to be replaced or reinforced by bolts or other means? Do you have a secure fence line and lockable gate? Would security lights and/or cameras be something that you could afford to install? Do you and your family know how to defend yourselves? A basic self defence course could be a good idea. Also employ situational awareness when you are out and about. Avoid the shadows when walking. Walk facing the oncoming traffic so no one in a vehicle can sneak up behind you - electric vehicles are particularly dangerous for this as they are more or less silent. Can you legally carry something to protect yourself with? Here in New Zealand carrying a firearm or blade legally is all but impossible, but a walking stick, umbrella or a bag with something heavy inside it could be used to fend off a would-be attacker. You could also carry a whistle or high-pitched alarm that you can set off if you are threatened, in order to draw attention and hopefully assistance from a member of the public. Of course, during a SHTF event when there is no law on the streets - protect yourself in any way you deem necessary. See my previous post on home and personal security for more details.



**Communication** is another topic to consider when planning your preparedness. Most of us have cell phones these days. Some may even still have a home based physical phone line, although here in NZ they are being phased out - which in my opinion is very short sighted of the phone companies. The question is that during a prolonged power grid down event, when the cell phone towers stop working and the internet is down, how do we keep in touch? The best, but a rather expensive way would be by using ham radio. For this you need a licence and specialized

(expensive) equipment. Bargains can be had if you look in the right place at the right time though, so don't rule this out. With a ham radio you can contact people both locally and right around the world. It's an amazing piece of kit if you can get it. Other options could be VHF radios - like the ones on most seagoing vessels - or UHF/CB radios - like the truckers and 4 wheel drive off roaders use.



These radios are for the most part line of sight only and operate over a limited range. Generally, the more powerful the radio, the longer the distance it will transmit and receive over. A 5 watt handheld walkie talkie will cover more distance than a 2 watt or 0.5 watt one. A 5 watt CB in a car with a long aerial will transmit over a larger distance than a handheld one with a short aerial. A home base station of the same wattage will give the most coverage as the antenna is usually mounted on the roof of the home, thus giving more height and extending the line of sight. There are lots of videos on YouTube about comms in SHTF, so please take a look at those before spending money on radios. You can also buy scanners or shortwave/medium wave/long wave radios that only receive (don't transmit) in order to receive information as to what is going on in your region and further afield. A battery powered or wind-up radio is a better option than one that plugs in to the electrical system. The most reliable and most secure form of communication is and always has been word of mouth - speaking face to face with someone. **Alternative power sources** is the next item. Without access to the power grid, how do we keep our various appliances running? The most powerful means of generating our own electricity is by using a petrol or diesel generator. A mid range generator of this type will power most of the items needed to run your home - BUT it is thirsty for fuel and therefore not cheap to run AND is very noisy. So, in a SHTF situation, if you are not wanting to draw attention to the fact that you have your own power, this may not be the best option for you. If you want a quiet way of providing power, the combination of solar panels and batteries may be the best idea. However, if you are planning to run everything off solar including your heating and cooking equipment you are going to need a lot of panels and a lot of battery storage which will put the price of a solar power system out of reach for most of us. If you can do without most of the appliances that we take for granted these days, and just keep the freezer and lights going and also charge up small items such as radios, perhaps a solar panel and power bank set up costing around \$1500 dollars NZ would be sufficient? This will buy you for example a 200 watt portable solar panel and a 1000 watt power station. There are also wind turbines and water turbines - if you have a nearby stream or waterfall to take advantage of - that could be used as a means of providing power. Otherwise, to get right back to basics there are ways of powering up your batteries by using hand or leg power to generate electricity - again YouTube can give you many examples of how to generate your own electricity. The alternative is to do without power all together. After years of having the convenience of electricity at the flick of a switch, it may take some time to become accustomed

to life without it - but it is the way that our grandparents or great grandparents lived so it's not impossible to do. **Transport** is another thing to consider. If fuel becomes expensive how about a 50cc moped to get around on instead of a car? Or if petrol and diesel are no longer available to the public, is there a form of public transport that will get you where you want to go? How about an older diesel vehicle that will run on cooking oil or homemade biofuel? If not, what other alternatives do you have?



If you have an engineering or mechanical background, you could make a wood gasifier to run your vehicle off. This was done as recently as WW2 when petrol was rationed. Check out wood gasifiers on YouTube. If you have a full house solar set up - would it make sense to have an electric car or at the very least an electric bicycle? Too expensive? What about an ordinary bicycle? Do you have the space to keep a horse to use as your primary means of transport - either riding it or pulling a cart (do you have the knowledge required to both look after a horse and ride one)? How about a team of dogs to pull a trolley on wheels?



At the very least it could be an idea to invest in a small hand cart to make carrying things from A to B less of a physical burden. There are gardening carts available at hardware stores that would fit the bill. **Finance/money** is the last thing I will cover here. First a disclaimer - I am not in any way telling you what to do with your own finances. I am NOT a financial expert at all. Do your own research and figure out what's best for you. I'm just giving examples of what other preppers are doing to be ready financially. First off, the age-old prepper standby - gold, silver and precious metals. These are to be used more as a long-term store of wealth for when things start to

stabilize, than something to be traded for other things during a SHTF event. But small amounts of silver for instance could be used to buy food, ammunition etc. Bitcoin or other on-line digital currency - all well and good until the internet goes down or the powers that be decide that you are not allowed access to it. Assuming debit and credit cards don't work in a crisis, for a short time at least, cash will be king so make sure you have at least a month's worth on hand in small denominations. You don't want to be handing over a \$50 note for a \$5 item. Barter is always an option, as long as you have something that the other guy wants. A way to virtually guarantee this is to stock up on certain items that you can be almost guaranteed that people will want in times of crisis, stress and shortage. Everyone needs to eat, so food items, particularly items with a long storage life would be a good investment. Some preppers would say however that you should never trade food (or weapons/ammunition) because sooner or later you will need it yourself. Useful things to store for trade are items that people are addicted to. I don't want to get into legal issues around drugs or pornography or anything unsavory, so will leave that to your imagination. But other things such as tobacco products, alcohol of all kinds, chocolate/sugar/sweet treats, coffee, some medications - are all things that people crave and would perhaps be willing to trade things that you find valuable in order to get their fix. Other things that can be bartered are skills - for example I will dig you a veggie garden and plant some seeds if you will knit me a sweater/fix my car/provide me with fresh meat or fish etc. There are some communities and towns that have set up their own tradeable currencies or time-banks. Take a look online. Put "examples of local currencies" or "examples of time banks" into your search engine to find out more.



These are the main prepper pillars to have covered. There are other things that you may want to consider also, depending on where you live, your own particular circumstances and your own personal ethics that I am not going into here. I will however mention one thing, and that is community and the benefits of having like-minded people around you. If you can get your neighbours onside about being prepared, you have an ally for when SHTF. Get more neighbours involved and you have the potential of having your own mutual assistance group or prepper group to share physical, emotional and spiritual support in a crisis. It would be far easier to repel a group of looters with a mutual assistance group (M.A.G.) consisting of several households than it would be to drive them off single-handedly. Also, the more households you involve, the more the chances are that at least one person holds a firearms licence - that can be a great equalizer during times of crisis.

What am I doing to prepare you ask? Funny you should ask that, because in my next post I will tell you just that. I will cover all the steps I have mentioned above and how I am personally preparing for each one.

But for now. Stay safe, keep your head on a swivel, be prepared but do not panic. Being prepared means you have a kind of insurance policy against future events. But it is an insurance policy that you can keep drawing on without suffering increased premiums.

Just a reminder that there are about 70 PDF files on all aspects of prepping that can be downloaded for free at [HB Prepper – Free downloadable preparedness resources](http://HB Prepper – Free downloadable preparedness resources)

*Prepare for the worst, but hope for the best.*