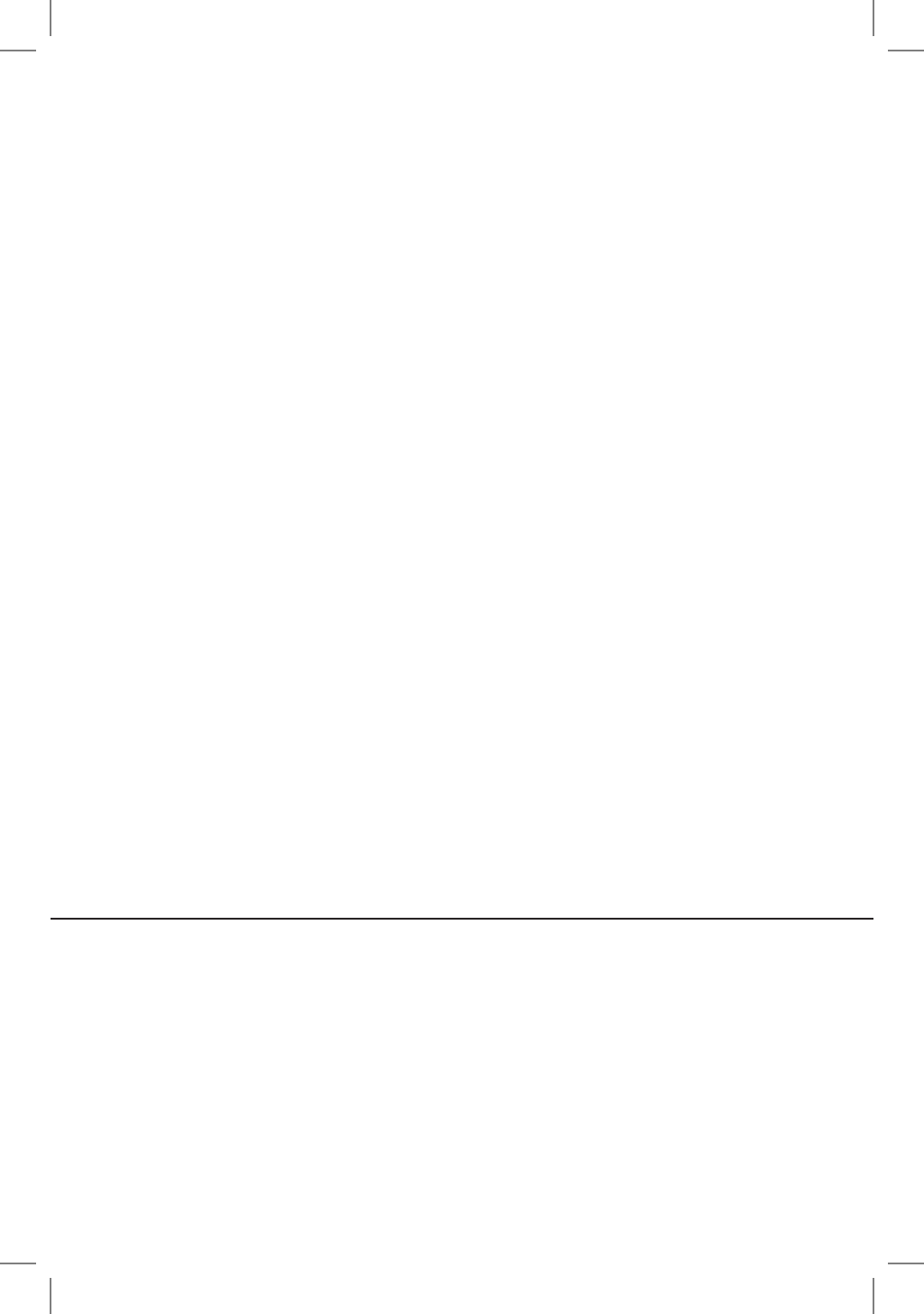


HOW TO DISAPPEAR IN AMERICA



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IN AMERICA*

SETH PRICE

The Leopard Press



As if with a twist of the kaleidoscope all would become clear, splinters join, new scapes hove into view.

I'm like a person who makes things. You do it one after another, unending. It goes on for such a long time: *something new, and something else, and something something*. Here come a lot of different varieties of strategies and arrangements, all interesting, all interlocking, *mutatis mutandis*. Such a lot of things!

After a while, there arises a question similar to this one: might it be possible that a person of, say, forty has seen just about all that has been and will be? Well, catch yourself. That would be an argument against progress. Let's skip that argument. This is where we are! The bottom line is in fact *use*. You're a person who uses things. Use demonstrates an attitude, and attitude is all. Period. 'Nuff said.

At some point in the past, all production was for use, rather than for gain (unless use is a kind of gain). But even if we

acknowledge that use was the foundation of Christian morality, justice and conventional social mores have since given rise to principles so general and agreeable as to be acceptable to everyone. In other words, whatever concepts you signal through your making of things, you end up sanctifying the current state of affairs. Anyone who gazes upon your products might well wonder: *“Must I consult some picture or trinket to learn that power corrupts, desires are commodified, control is paramount, subjectivity is administered?”*

Try to imagine so, for the sake of fiction. And ask yourself: for this sort of idea, would you discard all your friends, your family, your way of life? As in, put paid to some cumbersome item of crap. Some things that might have been dogging you lately. Nothing too heavy, at least not psychically. Your car, for instance. A good one to start on. Total destruction of automobiles can be accomplished easily enough, just by adding long-grain rice to the car’s radiator fluid. If you’ve been a housewife for decades, you may not know that much about cars, so here’s what you look for:

* Pop the hood of the car. There will be a lever somewhere above the feet of the driver’s side of the car or, in older models, a lever is provided under the leading edge of the hood. Some hoods will stay open on their own whereas others have a rod mounted in the engine compartment that’s used to hold the hood up. This lever may well be inscribed with words to the effect of: “Hood release.”

* Remove the radiator filler cap if the engine is cold. (Opening the cap with the engine hot can get you badly burned. The fluid can start to boil once the pressure

is relieved and spray all over you. The fluid will be quite painful resulting in first and second-degree burns. It's not likely to be disfiguring but if you accidentally burn yourself, you can very well go ahead with your plan to escape however your mind might be focused entirely upon the pain and not upon escape. With the engine cold you don't have to worry about getting burned.)

The cap can be found easily enough. Look for a cap with a small lever on it. Some radiator caps don't have levers, I'll add, but they'll be a standard size and shape. The cap will be mounted either in the center of the radiator or, usually, to the right. There will often be a notice on it saying something like "Pressure Test to 13-18 Pounds" – at least in the United States they do. The cap is removed by lifting up the small lever on the top of the cap and turning counter-clockwise. If there's no lever, press down and turn counter-clockwise. It often only takes about a half turn before you can pull up the cap and remove it.

* Add as much long-grain rice as possible. The insides of the radiator will greatly affect the amount of rice you can add. If it looks like you must, pour in some rice and use your fingers to move the rice around inside the radiator. Then add more. Try to add as much rice as possible since what you're aiming for is a horribly clogged radiator and badly damaged engine. As you're adding rice, fluid will slop out. Don't worry about all that for now.

* Replace the cap. You'll have to lift the small lever on the cap (if there is one) then set the cap in place, turn clockwise until it stops turning, and then release the cap's

lever, pushing it down if it doesn't automatically go down. Close the hood.

* Depending upon the amount of rice you added and the fluid level of the radiator before you began, you may have a pool of radiator fluid on the ground which, since it's usually a bright green, can be seen. Someone could see that pool, pop the hood, notice spilled grains of rice, and know that they've been "processed." They're not likely to run the engine with rice in the radiator – something you want them to do so that they'll destroy their engine by warping the head. So get a hose and wash the evidence away before any opposition can see it.

* Add dirt and sand to the engine's crankcase. Open the hood and find the cap which covers the oil filler tube and remove the cap. (The location of the oil cap is far too different on cars to describe where to locate it.) You may find a notice which indicates the oil filler cap. Such a notice might say something like "Use only SAE 30" or "Use only SAE 10-40." Add as much sand and gravel as possible. This will rest in the valve cover until the engine is started. As the engine is run, some parts of it will not get oil – oil which is used for both lubrication as well as cooling. Worse still: ground-down particulates will work its way around the entire engine eventually ruining it until it just stops.

* The traditional way to destroy a car quickly has become somewhat difficult now that most cars have locking gas caps. Still, if you have access to the car's keys, get yourself a funnel and add a pound of sugar to the car's gas tank. The sugar will disperse in solution and caramelize in the

guts of the engine when it's burned with the air/fuel mixture. That'll kill the car for sure and will do the job quickly. Note that adding too much sugar could simply clog the fuel outlet line which, while it damages the car and requires extensive repair to clear, won't kill the car out totally – that's your objective, remember, since you're working to limit the resources of your opposition.

NOTE added July, 2005: Sugar in the gasoline tank does not work well and it's something of an urban legend. The suggestion is covered in a number of classic books such as Edward Abbey's "The Monkeywrench Gang" however actual experimentation proves that sugar added to a gas tank doesn't do enough damage.

It has been suggested that other substances added to a gas tank might cause serious damage, such as pancake syrup and other sweeteners however there is no good scientific data available anywhere that I'm aware of that provides any evidence that such substances work.

In the end, perhaps the best way to destroy a vehicle that might be used to come after you is to drape a blanket over the vehicle, dump a gallon of gasoline on it, and throw on a burning object from a relatively safe distance.

Alternatively experimentation with putting clothes soaked in gasoline in a pile under vehicles and then setting the clothes on fire has met with success in the United States so that's an option. There's that. It exists for you.

But take care: Gasoline don't burn; the fumes mixed

with oxygen in the air is what burns. After gasoline soaked cloth is set in a location, fumes will build and if you strike a match anywhere within the volume of asperated fuel, it will go BANG! And you don't want to be inside that volume when it ignites. Also take care: Arson should be a last resort because it's considered to be a violent and dangerous crime. Ask yourself whether your life is in danger or whether your child's life is in danger and whether burning the vehicle is what's absolutely required to safeguard your life or the life of your children. If the answer is No, just don't do it.

* Then destroy all photographs you have access to. This includes family volumes of photographs that family members have. Your family members may or may not be supportive and hand over (to the opposition) all of their photographs of you depending upon your situation. Your family could be forced to support your opposition through threat of law or through physical violence. If you destroy all photographs of you, they can't be shown around gas stations and quick food stops.

If at all possible, your opposition should be reduced to passing out artist renditions of you. Even if you have police mug shots on file or have a drivers license photograph on file, it's still a good idea to limit the availability of photographs. Make the opposition use old photographs rather than up-to-date photographs if you can.

Another thing:

* If you are employed, make arrangements in advance. First off, stop looking at this stuff at work. Network

administrators have on going logs for where their users visit when they are supposed to be working. Go to a public library, or if you have a laptop, do it from a wifi location. Don't do it at home, because it is information that can be used against you. Don't do it at work. Do it from a public place.

* Begin to express your dislike for your employment, and if possible, have the quiet conversation with your boss about being a part of the next layoff. It comes with a severance check. In some cases, you can prearrange to have your 401k liquidated, giving you additional funds. If you don't have a job to disappear from, there are fewer leads for your pursuers.

* Carry as little cash as possible, but find safe places to hide cash. Scatter it around so that in the even one cash cache cash is found, you have others.

* Change hair color and cut as soon as possible. If you are a man, grow or shave your mustache as soon as possible. Mustaches are readily spotted, but beards, not so much.

* If you are going to squat, get a Boy Scout Handbook. The information contained is invaluable, including simple first aid and how to get spotted when you need to be. Also how to build a shelter, and how to survive in the wilderness.

* If you are going to squat in the desert, the landscape is food and water. Learn what plants are edible. Realize that they will be a shock to your system and expect what

is to be expected from a radical dietary shift.

* Properly skinning your poached meat will protect it from flies. Learn how to properly skin animals. Properly tanning the hide of your poach will give you clothing and additional shelter. Learn how. Properly “jerking” your poach will prevent it from spoiling giving you food sources for a long time.

* The US National Park Service has scores of back-country hiking areas. Take your survival skills on a “test run”. When you are ready to “drop off the grid”, you will know what to expect.

* Drop your car off at a border crossing. Preferably on the other side of the border. The additional headache of working with international agencies causes your pursuers to waste additional time negotiating jurisdiction. And the Mexican side of the border is where you want your center of operations to be. Traipsying back across the border during normal “rush” is an easy way to blend.

Consider using cameras at transportation facilities to your advantage. Buy your \$500 beater and park it the day before. Drive your own car to the airport, bus station, trainstation, etc. Go into restroom and change your clothes, cutting and destroying as previously mentioned.

If you can't cut your hair, at least shave and acquire a new wig. You should have also destroyed your bag that you carried in. Go out the door and get into your beater car and drive away. Dump that car as quickly as possible and acquire

a 3rd. Sell it to a car lot and it, in effect, disappears.

* Put paper napkins around any glass, can or bottle that you drink from. Open push doors with the back of your hand. Wipe the counter tops of restrooms with a clean paper towel before you walk out and toss the papertowel into another trash can. Get in these habits before you leave.

* Wear a hat... everywhere. Ha ha ha. Yes indeed. Hat's hide the face from cameras. Most cameras are higher than your head. Spend a lot of time looking at the counter. Or your shoes.

* Find nomadic jobs. They don't have insurance, but the people are communal and will help when they can. Renaissance faires, traveling Carnivals, Migrant farm workers are all nomadic.

Also look for natural disasters. There is a lot of work to be done, and there is also meals and shelter. I am not saying that you should defraud the government and take relief funds, but if you were a dishonest sort, you may be able to.

* Many small towns don't have daylabor programs, but if you are reasonably well groomed, you can get day labor by knocking on doors and asking the people of the house if they have some outside chores you can do in exchange for lunch. If they are friendly sorts, you may be able to work for them a couple of days, but don't press your luck. If there isn't, move on quickly.

* Like others said, shed the baggage. No one wants

to hear your sob story and how everyone is out to get you. You left and aren't ready to be found yet. That's all that you need to tell them.

* Be prepared for a spiritual awakening. Be prepared to have a new appreciation for people and less appreciation for material things. Be prepared to learn how wonderful and cruel the human being can be. Learn to drop your grudges. Any heavy emotional baggage takes physical energy to contain and release. You are going to be tired and hungry and just won't have the energy to maintain it.

* If you decide to carry a gun, realize that you may be breaking laws of the state that you are in. Realize also that it can be taken away from you and used against you.

Know that guns and jewelry are quick pawns for quick money. If your pursuers know that you have a firearm and they have the serial number, they will track you down. If they don't have that serial number, then a pawnbroker may not release your stuff for 90-120 days. Pawn and get out of town. Don't use the same pawn shop, preferably don't use the same town. If you can get away with it, don't use the same name, address or phone number, either.

* If you're thinking of hiding from a moral responsibility – such as child support – I want you to stop reading this right now and shoot yourself. This isn't for you. If you're thinking about committing a crime and then trying to get away with it, don't be an idiot: you will get caught – it's just a matter of when – and nothing on this page can possibly help you.

If you're thinking of running from an abusive ex-husband or ex-boyfriend who wishes to do you harm, I wish you the very best and hope that some of this is helpful though most of it, I'm afraid, is probably unworkable, silly suggestions that won't help you one bit, no not at all.

* If you're thinking about taking your children with, DONT! Bring yourself and your children to a shelter in another State but for no reason should you ever drag your children around with you while on the run or while hiding. They don't deserve the Abuse and you're being selfish if you try to. If you need help caring for your children but need to run from a dangerous spouse, ex-spouse, girl/boy friend, or ex-girl/boy friend, dial 1-800-4ACHILD and ask about what your options are for your safety and the safety of your child or children. Call before you leave if possible but most certainly call someone if you and your children must flee.

Also: The number of the National Domestic Violence Hotline is 1-800-799-7233.

The authorities will be highly motivated into tracking you down if you bring your kids with you as well. Think about what's best for those you leave behind and, as difficult as it will be leave them behind! Think of the children.

* While there are many shelters for women, finding a shelter for yourself and your children if you are a man is going to be difficult. References provided toward the end of the essay should be helpful in this regard yet understand that if you're a man fleeing spousal abuse, America just doesn't care too much about you. A man still has many op-

tions, however, yet, in America, there are fewer than for a woman.

Women who make allegations of child abuse against their husbands, ex-husbands, or ex-boyfriends are likely to be considered truthful in American society in far greater percentages than such claims made by men against their female counterparts. A man who must take himself and his children away from an abusive female is likely to be accused of child abuse and American society is likely to believe the allegations.

Because of this, whether you're a man or a woman, protect yourself from such allegations by documenting abuses before you flee to a shelter with your children. Once at the shelter, make sure that a service worker at the shelter is given a copy of (or a chance to review) your documentation. It's greatly unfortunate that you will have to face legal needs when you're trying to escape from a criminally abusive person but legalities is something you must be prepared to face before you make your break. The fact that you took yourself to a children's shelter or a battered-woman's shelter goes a long way toward establishing your innocence in allegations likely to surface later.

Women are assigned priority status when it comes to such things. If you are a man fleeing an abusive woman, understand that whatever you tell the authorities (or organizations which provide assistance) will be greeted with undue skepticism. Check the references at the end of this essay for organizations which specifically assist men.

If you've entered the United States illegally to start a new life, (or are planning to) you must contend with immigration officials which have historically been under-staffed, poorly-managed, and staffed by incompetent (though often voraciously brutal) thugs – high school dropouts – who only want to carry a gun but couldn't make it in the police force. Unlike police officers, immigration officials didn't get into their line of work to help people; they got into their line of work to keep you out of the country and to track you down and throw you out if you do get in. Their desire is to subject you to their control, feeding their power trips, making themselves feel manly. Unlike police officers, they aren't out to help society, they're out to inflict misery upon the hapless and the down-trodden.

I mention this because you must understand who your opposition is. Illegal immigrants face the exact same problems that those who wish to become anonymous in America face. The house wife who's been beaten into the hospital too many times faces the same problems which illegal "wet backs" face. The opposition, however – those detailed to finding the house wife – are quite different than those trying to find a cop killer. Know who'll be out looking for you when you do the do.

The resources of your opposition will dictate greatly your behavior and decisions. Determine whether you should stay in the same State or whether you should leave the country entirely. If at all possible, plan your escape as much in advance as possible and work to limit your opposition's resources. This mean that you clean-out bank accounts if you can and you destroy all vehicles the opposition has easy ac-

cess to so that they may not be used to track you down. (And they can't be sold to finance private investigators to look for you.) You destroy said vehicles in a safe and non-violent way, by the way; you don't want to hurt anyone and thus strengthen the resolve of the authorities.

* Then discard all your worldly possessions except cash. Most importantly destroy and discard all of your credit cards! The instant you use a credit card or an ATM bank card while on the run is the instant the authorities or private investigators know where you are. Before you run you should empty all bank accounts anyway. Gas debit cards can also be used to find you. Telephone calling cards can be used to find you. In fact, any magnetic card with your name or the name of someone you know can and will be used to find your general area. Destroy them all. If the FBI, DEA, BATE, CIA, or any number of other agencies are involved in searching for you, they can pinpoint your location within minutes of you using a magnetic card.

Don't even think about hanging onto a credit card or other type of magnetic card for an emergency. You might think about maxing-out your cards then converting what you purchase to quick cash... but don't take cards with you! What you don't have can't tempt you to give your location away. When you're cold and hungry you will be tempted to use any cards you keep so destroy them before that happens.

Do not use your home, work or cell-phone, and do not use your calling card. You should develop your plan at least six months beforehand. In the meantime have all of your ser-

vices, cable, electric, phone bills forwarded to any GPO in the country. Call those companies every month and find your balances and pay them. Make sure all the bills go to different states. Have a little fun: one month have them send it to Oshkosh the next to Bogota, New Jersey. Let them know they have the wrong Social Security number on file and have them change it. Next month give them your cousin Chemicawa's phone number in Balderdash in case they need to reach you. The key here is to load your account with so much information you are creating misinformation.

Go online and get yourself a Jfax account. For \$9.99 per month you can get a phone number in any state or almost any country from Jfax. When someone calls your Jfax number, which will have your personalized recording on it, the message will be forwarded to your email address and you will be able to retrieve that message from anywhere in the world. Make sure the email address you give is a Yahoo or Hotmail address. Pay for your Jfax account for at least one year. This way there will be no transactions on your credit card in the coming months. Some skip-tracer trying to identify your number will only be able to get an email address from Jfax. What's also great about Jfax is you can fax directly from the Internet if you need to. Do not do any of your searching from your home or work computer. Go to an Internet café and do all of your research there.

Go by yourself to a pre-paid cell-phone and never give anybody the number. Make sure you can dial an international number with your cell-phone. If not, buy a pre-paid calling card then throw it away when it expires, do not reload it. With the pre-paid cell-phone get a phone number that has

an area code in another state. When you order your pre-pay cell-phone pay cash and give them a different name. Never call anybody with that phone, the number might show up on his or her caller ID. Start calling where you're looking to escape to from your pre-paid cell number or calling card. Dump that phone every month, yes, the actual phone, and get yourself a new one. Get a new cell-phone with a different number and a different area code from the original phone. By doing this no one will be able to track where you have called. Remember if you make one call from your home, work or cousin's house that is all I need to locate you. Get yourself a locker and leave all your tools in the locker, never bring them home or to work. If you accidentally toss them in the trash, then someone who is searching your trash will find them. When you are ready to escape you can empty your locker and destroy all information that could leave a trail straight to you.

Go online and get a mailbox from Mailbox Etc. Open up a corporation online in that state. Have all mail go to the above address. Make that address your service of process and your registered agent. When you have all your corporate information. Take a trip to that state. When you go to the bank, you will sit down and open an account. The person opening the account will call Telecheck which is a service bank used to search whether or not you have any overdrafts left over from other banks. They will run your name and there will be a record of you in any state that you've open an account in. So any skip-tracer with half a brain will find that account and locate your mailbox at Mailbox Etc. Give the person you open the account with your Mailbox Etc. address. Do not give them a valid phone number or one of

your pre-paid numbers. Like the song says 867-5309 its one number you can't forget and it's a great conversation piece with the banker. Tell them the number won't be in service till next week.

Then contact Idealogic in Canada and have them open a Canadian corporation for you. Give Idealogic all your information from the above chosen state. Once you receive all your Canadian information open an account with BMO, which they should do via-mail or possibly online; if not, a visit to Montreal is always great. Once you have all of the necessary papers have Idealogic, BMO and your bank in the chosen state forward everything to your Mailbox Etc. address. When all is said and done have all of your mail from the Mailbox Etc. shipped to you, and when all papers are in hand from the Mailbox Etc. forward them to New York, then from New York to Chicago, then on to Atlanta, create a big loop. Do all your banking online, the bank will be happy not to mail you your bank statements. Remember always access your accounts from an Internet café.

You can then transfer money from the US to Canada and then from Canada to your chosen offshore haven. Belize is a good place - they do not adhere to MLAT (mutual legal assistance treaty). Never use your ATM from your US account; never use your ATM from your Canadian account. Use your Canadian and U.S. accounts as buffers for your chosen offshore haven.

Pay for your ticket in cash at the airport. Don't use your frequent flier account. Cancel all membership. Do not transfer any of your magazine subscriptions. If you are receiving any

type of direct deposit from the government, such as retirement money, do it through the account you opened. Don't get a library card in your new location, do not get cable service under your name. Do everything through the name of your foreign corporation. Make sure your foreign corporation has no similarities to your name or anything from your past.

Calling family and friends is a touchy issue, depending on your personal situation. Awkward! With technology today you just don't know when you call someone from, say, Costa Rica, whether or not your number shows up on their caller ID. If it does and they happen to call you back, someone will be able to track your location. All your effort and hard work will be thrown out the window. So if you need to get in touch, get yourself another pre-paid cell-phone from a different place and call those you need to speak to through your cell-phone. Dump the phone every so often.

* A missing person's report is generally not something that can be filed until some 24 hours after the person has gone missing – in most States of the Union. Additionally it usually requires a family member or some other unique “qualified” individual to file a missing person's report.

Because of this, spouses who are attempting to vanish might consider getting themselves ready to do so ahead of time, ducking out and running as soon as their spouse leaves for work. The 24 hour rule may start with the time you were last seen, or your State might not have such a rule.

Some States don't apply the 24 hour rule if there is any

indication that foul play was involved, or if there is any indication that you might be suicidal or harbor violent intentions of your own.

Yeah but on the other hand, if you have a history of domestic difficulties and you suddenly go missing, suspicion may come down on your spouse and if it's considered that your spouse might have done you in, the authorities may set aside any 24 hour rule for that reason as well.

Point being: You may or may not be afforded 24 hours before any law enforcement offer or agency feels the need to look for you. If you're a minor, of course, the 24 hour rule is probably not going to apply, even if you have a history of running away from home.

Always over-estimate the resolve of those seeking to get you, yet keep your estimations reasonable. Greatly over-estimating your opposition can cause you to behave in predictable, patterned ways, however. It is the predictability of your actions based upon your opposition's controlled stimulus which can get you.

If your opposition are police authorities, rest assured that they have decades of experience to back them up whereas to them, you're nothing more than another faceless fugitive on the run. To them you're no one special; it's not usually personal (unless you've killed a cop in which case they will get you – and I hope you'll have an “accident” on the way to the police station.) To you, however, being hunted down is quite personal. They know how you will feel and will use that against you.

This is very important if you build a new family: Your wife or husband should be told who you really are before you get married. Since you're working to become a respectable, productive member of society, your prospective spouse should know your past before you get married!

Finding out your real name isn't Michael Johnson after five years of marriage won't help your wife maintain support for you when the cops come to haul you away. Letting her know you're on the run and for why you're on the run before hand means that you'll have support if they ever do find you.

* Purchase clothes you normally wouldn't consider wearing and put them on in a place where you won't be observed. Cut your old clothes into pieces and flush them down the toilet – you don't want your old clothes to be found. (O. J. Simpson probably discarded the shoes and clothes he wore when he probably murdered two people by depositing them into an airport trash can. Don't rely on blind luck to save you like he probably did: Destroy your old clothes and flush them!)

* Abandon your car. Don't bother driving your car into a lake or an ocean. They can be seen from helicopters or, at minimum, fresh tracks left in the mud surrounding lakes can be spotted from the air easier than by people from the ground. Since you're giving up an asset, make giving it up work for you.

Abandoning your car in a place where you feel confi-

dent it will be stripped and sold by thieves is a good idea yet you're left with having to walk out of a probably dangerous neighborhood.

Leave the pink slip of the car in the glove box to make it easier for thieves to chop and sell your abandoned car. Leave a door unlocked so they don't have to break a window. You want the car to be taken in mass rather than picked apart on the street where a cop will spot it so it's best that you leave the key in the ignition while you're at it. Before you walk away from your car, leave the engine running, in fact, so that a thief will feel more comfortable stealing it. You could make it look like you're just running into a store to buy something quickly.

* Don't use a taxi service any time you're fleeing. Taxi drivers and their dispatcher will take records of everyone picked up and dropped off and often taxi drivers will be able to recall your description to match you to your destination. If you look like you're running from something, their memory of you will be even sharper.

* Purchase another car. In America one can slap down \$300.00 and buy a pile of junk with no questions asked and no identification needed. If the seller has the pink slip and a key, you buy it if it's cheap and doesn't have anything a cop might consider stopping you for a safety violation.

Make sure that the back license plate has a current registration and that the exhaust doesn't visibly smoke. Make sure the turn indicators are working and that you have headlights. Make sure the windshield has no cracks. Broken or

missing break lights are often used as an excuse by police officers to pull over suspicious cars so make sure that the break lights are working.

Don't do something stupid and buy a stolen car! That is a one way ticket to a cruise with bruise. If there's no pink slip and no ignition key, don't buy it. Match the VID number on the pink slip to the VID number on the metal plate usually mounted on the dash board under the windshield wipers. Match the license plate number. If one or both don't match, don't buy the car: the license plate could be stolen or the car could be stolen or both.

Don't borrow a friend's car. Don't even think about borrowing a family member's car. There are cameras situated along America's highways and, while I don't know their resolving capabilities, I think it's likely that the make and model of cars streaming past them can be made. Even if they can't resolve your car, a borrowed car is a known avenue of your escape so avoid it.

You might consider a street motorcycle, in fact, since they're as mobile as one can get without using a horse. Motorcycles, however, draw more police attention to them if they look chopped and fast. Your personal appearance on a motorcycle can help deduct from any suspicion that is a normal part of riding a motorcycle in America. A suit and tie might be a good idea: "Mr. Business Man" or "Ms. Business Woman" clothes and appearance might help.

* Don't fill up your newly-acquired car with any of your personal belongings. If you get stopped by a cop or

a cop drives by you, you don't want it to look like you're packed up to the ceiling with all your worldly possessions. You need to discard everything you own and don't let it show that you're doing anything other than commuting to or from work. Even if the cop doesn't stop you, if word gets around that you've gone missing, the cop is more likely to remember a stuffed car than all the countless cars simply commuting. They'll match your profile against your description and may recall the general – if not the exact – type of car you may be driving. If you want to escape notice of the cops, you need to blend in.

Cops work off of profiles: They are trained to spot the unusual as well as how to spot individuals fitting a variety of profiles. Someone on the run fits several profiles. You want to “fall out of the net” and slip through the typical police profiles.

A cup of coffee on the dashboard in front of a guy or gal wearing work clothes arouses no suspicions. You're on your way to work. Neat.

Don't studiously avoid catching a cop's eye, by the way. Lean back in your seat, left arm on the window sill, right hand on the steering wheel at the 6:00 O'Clock position. Take a sip of your coffee, water, or Diet Coke every now and then, and try to act like you're a mindless commuter getting from point A to point B with the rest of the lemmings.

You're not frightened that you'll get stopped. You're not anxious of what will happen when your wife or boyfriend discovers you've left. You'll need to adopt a carefree

attitude and outward composure. If you're an illegal alien, you should be thinking about joining the work force and becoming a productive member of your new society, not thinking about the friends and family you might have left behind. Cops, immigration, and everyday people can smell your anxiety and fear so you'll want to focus on the positive aspects of why you're on the run.

* Don't run from the cops in a car or motorcycle! You might say, good one, sherlock. But: If you're in a car or on a motorcycle, pull over, stop, turn the engine off, and show your hands. If you like, get out and run. (More on bailing out of cars and running later.) The worse thing you can do is try to run with your car. Not only will you kill someone, the police will be very motivated to do what it takes to stop you before you do kill someone. In America that includes pulling along side you and popping you with Mr. Shotgun. If you're driving 120 through the streets of Los Angeles, you become a fatal threat and will be handled with fatal force. Don't think that you and your car can get away! You can't. These days nobody can. Believe it. You can't outrun radio or helicopters and the police aren't just going to go away. Spike strips will puncture your tires and slow you down even more. (Eventually there will be devices deployed which will destroy an engine's ignition system, operated through a remote-control radio link.) These days nobody gets away and you are a dangerous fool to try it in America. Believe it.

* Don't tell anyone where you're planning to go or what you're planning to do. For as long as possible, don't ask friends for help or shelter – most of all never ask family members! Don't telephone anyone to say “good bye.” Don't

have any contact with friends or family! Police authorities will monitor their residential lines and private investigators can easily tap loop-start residential lines with not much more than two pieces of equipment costing all of \$200.00 each.

* Leave town. Don't go to any place you've talked about or stated a desire to visit. Don't run to any place predictable. Don't hide in a city or town you've ever been to or contains known family members. Don't do something obviously stupid like running to Las Vegas or Hollywood. If you're taking children out of an abusive family, leave town and go immediately to a shelter in another State – preferably a State which has laws which help to protect battered men or women from their ex-spouses or live-ins. (References provided toward the end of this essay.)

* It's best to avoid going to McDonnald's or other fast food places if you have a habit of doing so. When spotted in a city the authorities will divide and eliminate sections of the city. If you like certain fast food places and they know this, they will keep an eye out for you in those areas. These places also have been installing cameras which watch over the counter and the eating areas – cameras you can't see and cameras you can see. This is also true of many drive-through areas as well though the camera angle is usually covered up by a one-way concave mirrored surface.

Keep from depositing traces of yourself. Every place you go, you inadvertently leave pieces of yourself. Every article of clothing, every door knob, every carpet, every telephone, every toilet seat you use will contain pieces of you. Your skin is flaking off all the time. You need to decide whether there is

a risk of authorities or private investigators looking for you tracking you through your blood type or DNA (which can be worked-up by using pieces of your hair.) After you weigh the risks, take the precautions you deem are needed.

* Wear a hat indoors. Wearing a hat in a hotel room won't remove the probability of you leaving hair follicles in the room yet it will reduce the number of such particles making finding evidence difficult. Cutting your hair until it's real short will also help. And that's what you want to do: Limit the amount of physical evidence which can be used to track you.

* Use "toilet seat protectors" – so-called "Ass Gaskets" – where they are provided to reduce the possibility of leaving skin, sweat, or other body fluids on the seat. These substances can be swabbed into glass vials and be used to identify you. Paper seat covers will either eliminate this problem else reduce it greatly.

* NEVER lick an envelope or a stamp for obvious reasons! If it is known you're in a particular city your general location can be inferred by the physical location of your correspondence in a stack collected by the postal authority. You shouldn't mail anyone anything unless it's done so anonymously (wear gloves when handling paper) yet if you feel the need, remember that if you lick something and it leaves your control, you may as well take out an advertisement in the newspapers broadcasting your general location.

* Don't leave blood, semen, or menstrual discharge behind you as you run. If you happen to spill your blood

on something, there's not a damn thing you can do to get it cleaned-up so you may as well not expend the effort to try. Even if you were to clean it up entirely and then wash everything down with gasoline, there are substances which can spot minute traces of blood and technologies which can type extremely minute traces. Even burning the building down to the ground is pointless: Spill your blood and you've left a clue you can't retract at any cost. Don't even try as you make it worse by spending time trying.

* Wipe every surface in your hotel before you leave. For good measure, wipe every surface in any bathroom you may use along the road. Keep in mind that you need to use soap and water when you wipe away your fingerprints and skin tissue otherwise you'll only leave a bunch of smudges which can be reconstructed using contemporary computer imaging technologies.

Toss your wiping materials down the toilet. (If you're on an airplane, don't toss anything down the toilet as it goes to a holding tank which can be raked for evidence later. Carry-out your wiping papers with you inside your shirt under an armpit and flush them in a normal toilet when you can. (Note: Visible bulges under your shirt will be considered by flight attending employees to be indicating the real possibility that you're smuggling drugs. If you must hide a lot of wipe materials, you should distribute them among your body to eliminate bulges, otherwise you may be escorted to a little white room and made to strip. When they find you're hiding damp paper towels, you'll have some explaining to do.)

Be sure to wipe everything including things you didn't touch! Scientifically-controlled testing shows that people touch objects without realizing it or being able to recall having touched them. The only way to be absolutely certain you remove finger prints from everything you touch is to clean everything within reach.

By the way: Rubbing alcohol is pretty good at getting up the natural oils which comprise the majority of your fingerprints so perhaps before you run you should acquire a bottle and keep it with you.

Before you leave your hotel room, hang the "please make-up this room as soon as possible" sign on the door handle, taking care not to leave your prints on the sign. You want the room vacuumed, cleaned, and touched by hotel employees as soon as possible.

"Don't wear gloves where you can be seen yet do wear gloves when you won't be seen."

* Don't eat in restaurants. Your drinking glasses and eating utensils will contain pieces of you. Fast-food places without cameras are okay provided you be sure to take the food with you and can flush paper down a toilet. If you eat at a fast-food place and discard of your trash in the trash bin, you're leaving a trail behind you. (It's a difficult trail to follow, granted, yet still a trail.)

Don't forget that most fast-food places and mini-markets these days will videotape you. Even the smallest stores usually run continual videotape of everyone who enters, leaves,

and stands in the check-out line.

Don't look for the cameras; notice where they are not and then focus on that spot. Turning your head up to look at a camera changes the shadow and contrast attributes of the video shots of you drastically so, as you enter a shop, keep your face down and look at spots where you off-handedly know cameras are not mounted. (In fact, practice becoming aware of where visible cameras are. Lately cameras are becoming invisible so eventually you'll never know where they are. You can learn where cameras are usually located, however. Learning the location of cameras you can see will tell you a lot about the possible locations of cameras you won't see.)

Contemporary computer imaging software can take multiple video shots of you from different camera angles and combine them in extraordinary ways. Poor quality video shots of differing contrasts, brightness, and angles can be processed on a computer to yield good quality photographs of you. Your job is to limit the number and attributes of raw video shots taken of you. This is a damn difficult thing to do, of course.

Running is the easiest part. Hiding is a bit harder. Staying hidden is the difficult part. The difficulties are determined by the resolve and resources of those hunting you. If the government wants to find you, they will unless you are willing to sacrifice everything.

* If you run to the hills, satellites can see you and identify the type and color of the automobile you're driving.

If you've hidden yourself in a cabin, your thermal signature will be seen from satellites. Even if you drive to a road and abandon your vehicle and walk to a cabin 30 miles away, a body heat source in a cabin in the desert or in the woods with no corresponding automobile heat source can signal where you are. It's suspicious.

Satellites can bounce LASER light off of your windows and, by measuring the minute distance differences between a vibrating window and the satellite, reconstruct your speech – from orbit! I don't know how much this process costs yet it was demonstrated for PBS some years ago so it may not be all that expensive. The quality of the audio is poor but it can be understood.

Incidentally: Some of the higher technology law enforcement agencies (FBI, CIA, lately BATF) employ "adaptive mirrors" for some of their optical law enforcement efforts. A signal is bounced off of an object, and the signal contains marking information and timing information. The return bounce tells the computer system a great deal of information about the atmospheric conditions, temperatures of the air and surfaces, and a host of other attributes about the environment (such as humidity.)

The computer system evaluates conditions and then adapts mirrored surfaces to remove distortion, providing amazingly clean audio surveillance from orbit upon unsuspecting suspects. As you can imagine, it's expensive and law enforcement doesn't apply the technology to every fugitive. It's used against law breakers only in extreme cases. The technology is usually applied in intelligence gathering mis-

sions for NATO-aligned countries.

If a satellite must be re-missioned or maneuvered, obviously the cost goes up – but then if they do that, they’ve launched a man hunt against you which you probably won’t escape anyway. Cloud cover won’t help. Smog won’t help. Tree coverage will help a little but don’t rely on it.

* The eyes track motion. If there are helicopters looking for you, it is always best to hide in a bush or up in a tree rather than running it out on foot. Your body heat will probably give you away any way. If you have a helicopter looking for you, bury yourself in mud and leaves and you stand a chance of not being detected by your body heat. A river, lake, or stream can mask your body heat, of course, yet those would be obvious places to look for you.

I might add that helicopter pilots are trained to follow the driver of automobiles when they bail out and leave any other occupants of the car that bail out to the ground officers. If you’re driving a car and bail out (which is the safe, smart move rather than trying to make a run for it with the car) with a helicopter watching over you, climb over to the rear right hand seat and bail out from there, never from the driver’s seat. If they don’t know you’re alone, they may mistakenly wait for the driver. It might even help to kick open the driver’s door before climbing out the back door. If you do that, though, you could be identified as the driver by your clothes so consider the problem.

If you’re walking or running through hills or wooded areas, the eyes of your opposition will track your motion. If

you're motionless, picking you out of the visual clutter will be difficult. Even dogs have trouble picking up a stationary object.

* Speaking of dogs, I've yet to see a human capable of outrunning a healthy dog. You can confuse them by running around objects a few times and – always traditional – running downstream a swiftly moving stream of water.

Running upstream should be avoided. Your scent will be carried downstream and you wish to go with it otherwise you leave a long tail behind you.

Dogs will go for your feet or hands when you're running then for your hands when you're down. They're trained not to go for the throat (though I've heard that some police trained dogs will if given specific instructions to.) Since they are trained not to bark until they are close to you, you will probably not hear the dog getting closer.

Dogs usually work with one officer. Putting more than one dog on an individual's trail is very rarely done. The officer usually holds onto the dog's leash yet that slows the dog down considerably. Dogs that have had their voices removed are rarely released for long-distance track downs.

If a police dog confronts you with an officer, give up. If the police dog has been sent on ahead, kill the dog. You should sacrifice a bit of flesh to do this effectively: Offer your "dumb" hand to the dog and let it take it. (First wrap your arm in a shirt if you can.) Use the knife in your "smart" hand and try to drive it through the dog's braincase.

This will work provided the dog hasn't seen your knife. They know what they look like and what they're used for. Anything in your hand, in fact, even if it's a jacket or a pair of socks will be treated with much suspicion by the dog and the dog will be trained to go after the hand with the object in it.

Dogs are trained to expect their targets to scream and yell such amusing phrases as "Argh! Get him off me! Get him off me!" That makes the dog immune to the emotional pleas of its victims. They're trained to ignore all commands except those of its master and in some cases they are trained to understand commands given in different languages.

Trying to get both hands around the dog's neck is probably a mistake since doing so will be next to impossible. If you can get your hands around the neck and you don't have a knife, lift the dog off the ground and shake it until its neck snaps. You can try to squeeze the dog's windpipe closed yet that takes strength and time. It's best to break the neck. You've been on the run and will probably lack the strength needed to strangle the dog.

There was a discussion several years ago about police dogs' bodies being used to offer clues as to the general location of the criminal they had been tracking. If possible, hike the dog's body along with you and dispose of it later. If you use a knife, leave it in the dog as the blade can and will be used to identify you if you're caught with it.

There is the possibility that in the future people may be identifiable by their purchasing habits. Granted, the point-

of-sale data collected by computers would need to be immense, yet eventually pattern-recognition software may some day be able to provide authorities with perhaps 100 of the best possible “hits” on people matching your known buying habits. When – if ever – that becomes a reality, you can be sure you won’t know about it until it’s shown on cable television. By that time, the technology will have been in use for years and you may end up on a list of possible matching a purchase profile.

So alter your buying habits. You need to discard as many predictable patterns as possible. One of the most common mistakes is maintaining old habits. If you’re a smoker, stop. If you don’t smoke, start. If you enjoy hot and spicy foods, stop purchasing those items and change to mild foods. If you frequent bars, stop. This may seem an unusual step but patterns are predictable. Break them.

* When running from ground forces, it is expected that you’ll:

They will expect you to: Run directly away from the opposition. You’ll want to put as much distance between yourself and your opposition as possible. That may be a bad decision since escape could be to your left or your right. You don’t want to be driven into a trap by running directly away from the ground forces. If they can see you, running directly away could be leading you into a trap – they have radios and you probably don’t. They have helicopters. If they can’t see you, take an unexpected tangent to their pursuit. It won’t put as much distance between you at first but if they walk past you at a distance, you win for a while.

They will expect you to: Seek the high ground. There is the idea that if one puts a mountain between you and your pursers, you're home free. From the top of a mountain or high hills you can better see possible avenues of escape. Your opposition will expect you to climb. Ravines and passes are going to be easier, allowing you to move faster though perhaps not as far away from the opposition as you would like. Going around a mountain could take more time than going over – you decide how you want to do it. If you go over the top, you stand a chance of being seen and you also have more of a helicopter treat.

They will expect you to: Go to ground (or “hole up.”) If you're hurt or just tired, hungry, and desperate, you will probably want to go to ground. It is expected that as your pursers get closer to you, you'll find a hole to climb into, a tree to climb, or something equally disastrous. In the cities, the criminals are often found under a bush, in a tree, under a car, in someone's shed on a roof. At some point it's expected that you'll stop running and try to hide. With today's technology, that's a bad idea. Keep going until you're unable to. You can catch up on your sleep when they catch you or when they put a few rounds into your back.

They will expect you to: Take the easiest route to escape capture. You may want to do things which are totally unexpected by doing things the hard way. If you're tramping through the forest along a trail walking at high speed, making good time toward freedom, you may want to toss that away, break from the trail, climb the ridge if there is one, and crash through the bush for ten miles. They'll expect you to walk in the shade if it's a hot day and along water

ways if it's a hot day. Decide whether taking the easy way and being predictable is acceptable.

They will expect you to: Doubled back on yourself. If you can work your way around a hill free from the eyes of your opposition, and double back on yourself, you have increased the chances of escape. Your opposition will be looking for signs that you've double backed on yourself. You're leaving a scent trail for every dog in the area to follow so that should be of some consideration when you double back. You need to try to create a break in your trail at the point you change direction. This could mean walking backwards a bit, climbing a tree, working your way through the branches to other trees, climbing down, and then working your way back the way you came. Even if you don't suspect that you're being trailed, it is probably a good idea to break your trail from time to time if you can. You could start being followed hours later, after all.

They will expect you to: Work your way to your right. You might be tempted not to keep an eye on landmarks and set yourself goals to acquire in the distance. If you're worried about and focused upon getting away, your natural behavior will be to circle to your right if you're right handed, to the left if you're left handed. If it's at night, pick out the North Star and set your course by it rather than rely upon your internal direction sense to travel.

It's getting harder and harder to hide in America. There used to be a loose defacto "underground" of "freedom loving" people – hippies, if you will – who would provide aid, shelter, and comfort to those on the run from Authority

(or The Establishment, The Man, The Fuzz, The P. I. G., “Them”).)

These days, however, in our increasingly paranoid and dangerous society, offering assistance to strangers is a bad idea: It gets people killed. One must rely upon professional organizations which assist people who need to hide from abusive people. Professional organizations, however, will want you to have a virtuous reason for running and hiding and will want to help you by reporting you to the authorities if they feel they should. None that I know of assist you if you’re running from a law enforcement agency. (Note: Foreign agents operating in America might be willing to assist you yet that falls outside the scope of this commentary. Arrive at the embassy of your choice and make your offers and perhaps they’ll grant you provisional security from police authorities.)

The hippies have given way to another class of citizen. These are the so-called “skin heads,” punk rockers, and New Age nuts. While many are social misfits, most interact with “regular society” in their off-hours and rock-out at night or on the week ends.

The anti-establishment and socially disassociated populace has always existed and has always been an asset to those on the run. Your job is to find them if you need them. Be honest with such people since they know the score and will shine you on if you’re a lying jerk.

* Motorcycle Hangouts.

Buy people drinks, talk politics, express your viewpoints,

and get to know the people in motorcycle hangouts.

Express an honest interest in learning how to ride safely. Find out what it's like to drop everything and ride to feel free.

Eventually, let a few you think you can trust know that you're looking for a place to hang out "out of the way" for a couple of days. Don't press the issue and don't ask outright for shelter. Ask around about where a good spot to sleep is out in the hills where the cops won't find you. Someone may offer you a tent in his backyard.

Ask where a good place is to find something to eat or get day labor. Someone may offer you a fiver or yard work.

Honestly make friends with some of the people. Your best bet is not to lead people on and take advantage of them but to actually befriend people who can help you hide and then – hopefully – start a new life with a new identity.

Motorcycle riders have reputations they must defend and domination games they must play. If you're on the run or need a place to hide, understand that you are Beta Male among Alpha Males. Understand that these are usually good people worthy of your friendship who can and will help you. Understand that you must fit into their society of Alpha and Beta males and accept their domination games. Many gangs are only minor criminals with codes of honor and ethics, existing only to drink, fuck, and ride with their buddies – bikers who have regular jobs during the week and hang out and ride when they can. Not all motorcycle gangs

are druggie murderers and thieves. These days in America, bikers like that are few in number.

* Punk Rock or New Age dance studios.

This group of people tend to be younger than the motorcycle crowd. Your best bet for assistance will be among the younger kids but, being young, they'll probably be living with their parents and have no resources to help you with. They probably know where you can sleep safely, however, and will know who might have jobs available.

With punkers it will be okay to let it be known outright that you're looking to find a place to hide from the cops for awhile. The punkers with the proper punk attitude will "know someone who might know someone" who can help you find a place to cool off for awhile – or maybe find a meal or two.

* Gay bars.

Gay bars are a good place to go if you're needing a meal or a safe place to spend a couple of nights. Of course it helps if you're good-looking yet most people at gay and straight bars are looking for companionship first and hoping for sex second. It doesn't matter if you're gay or straight: What people want is companionship and interesting people to talk with first and foremost. If you're interesting or have interesting stories to tell, finding someone in a gay bar can be mutually beneficial to the both of you.

When it comes down to it, it doesn't pay to be shy... let

someone take you home with them. Get a bath, a meal, and a place to sleep for awhile. Don't over stay your welcome, however. Offer to leave from time to time and when asked to do so, do so. Return to the same bar later and make yourself known.

* Homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and churches.

Most moderate or large cities will have shelters and soup kitchens operated by either the State government or religious organizations. Questions are usually never asked though such places usually like to make sure you're not holding dope or weapons before they'll let you stay. If possible, try to see if there's any work in the kitchen or dorms you could do to repay their kindness. Such people who exhibit a willingness to work will be afforded assistance finding a paying job – which is something you'll want to do since you're trying to build a new life.

The idea is to run and hide only as long as you have to and then start rebuilding. Homeless shelters, job placement services, and day labor can give you hope and help while you're struggling to make your new life. You're using a computer so I assume that you have food and shelter now and possibly employment. Save up your money before you run and you'll give yourself a chance.

If you're in a city or town, you stand a better chance of feeding yourself and keeping yourself from freezing to death. There are often shelters run by Christian, Muslim, or Jewish organizations which will feed you and put you up. It may be dangerous to do so simply because such places are usu-

ally – nearly always – in dangerous neighborhoods. If you're wearing the wrong color face, you have to compare the possibility of violence and abuse against hunger. If you look like you're on the run, you could be victimized in the city. Those who would victimize you know you won't go to the cops. You're on your own in an area where punks band together out of boredom.

Finding work is your best bet. You're using a computer right now so it is assumed that you have a job (or are married without a paying job) and as such have some marketable skills. Even without marketable skills, you can find employment if you're willing to work hard.

Suppose you're a wife looking to leave an abusive husband. Suppose you're a teen-ager looking to leave an abusive mother or father. How would you feed and house yourself when you run and hide? If you're young, you can expect to be raped (boy or girl) drugged, and horribly abused when living on American streets so you must consider that fact and go for a children's shelter instead.

Hopefully you've managed to save aside some cash but that won't last long. There are jobs that you can do:

* Day Labor: Normally day labor is back-breaking, hot and sweaty work and is given to men. Women can get day labor cleaning – houses, hotels, dishes... it's hard work but it is out there. You may be paid cash for day labor and no one will ask you questions. If you have a skill (such as sewing, tree trimming, or painting) your pay will be higher than if you're just moving dirt or laying down bricks.

Without other expenses, day labor should be enough to feed yourself and maybe save some cash aside against the day you find a serious job and rent an apartment with friends.

By the way: Most day labor consists of men who speak Spanish with only a few words of English (at least this is the case in the United States.) Most will be Mexican workers with families to support. Nearly all will be extremely hard working individuals who know that when the day is over and they get their pay, tomorrow the work bosses will be out picking up day laborers again and they'll pick faces they recognize as hard workers. Competition for work is heavy so joining a group of day laborers could be difficult. No one asks questions, any way, which you would find embarrassing.

If you attempt to perform day labor by hanging out with other day labor crew, if you're wearing a white face you stand a better chance of being looked over carefully by police and private individuals than if you're wearing a brown face.

* Most cities will have job placement services run by governmental workers. They'll want a home address and identification so be ready with a real residential address even though it may not be your real one (because you may not have one.) When asked for identification, state that you've been on the street "for a long, long time" and, if they would help, you would like to get a State identification card and a Social Security number and "start living like a normal human being." Since you might want to be difficult to contact, you should be the one to check with governmental job placement services every day to see if they have something for you. The address of local shelters will often work for con-

tact addresses for you.

It is a crime to defraud your State or Federal government so you must be clear on this: Your intention is to build yourself a better life. A Social Security card issued to you under a false identity **MUST** be considered by you to be absolutely honest and real. That Social Security number is issued to someone you have wholly become. You will pay taxes to that account and you will file income reports with that account number. That's you now, not a fake. Because you're paying your taxes and working at an honest living, if your real identity is found out, people will maybe be reasonable about the fact that you've been working hard to be a productive, tax-paying member of society. (Of course if you're a wanted criminal, trying to "fly right" by paying your fair share of the tax burden won't cut you much slack in front of a judge.)

NOTE: Food coupons could be issued to you if you qualify though you may need a valid mailing address. Check with your local social services office to find out whether this could help you.

* If you're clean and neat, you could get minimum wage at a fast-food place and be allotted a lower price for your meals. Cut your hair short – but not too short, regardless of whether you're a man or a woman. Remove facial hair if you've got it. Look neat and clean. Consider shaving your arms if you're a man – seriously. Women usually do in the United States and it's perfectly acceptable for men to do likewise. Lacking skills, you must work to make yourself look more acceptable, better capable of filling a fast-food job than the rest standing behind you also wanting that job.

This might not be a good job for you since you'll be working with the public and you may not want your face to be seen so much. (And don't forget that nearly all fast-food places have cameras these days watching everything that goes on.)

* Restaurants, like fast-food places, are another place to check out. Even though kitchens have automatic dish washers these days (there are regulations about water temperature) someone still must load the washers, sort the dishes, and move them about. Someone also has to keep the floors clean. Working a restaurants is hard work and low-pay but, like fast-food places, one's meals will be discounted in cost or provided by the establishment as part of one's wages. These places are often trade-unionized so you might have trouble with being forced to join the union. If at all possible, don't. (Some States have a "Right To Work" law which makes enforced payment to union organizations (that is to say, to organized crime) illegal. Check to see if the State you're working in has a "Right To Work" law.) Every dollar you don't have to pay out of pocket translates to food and freedom. Unions are a fraud and don't provide anything you can use.

* If you can type, data entry is a job that's very much in demand. It's long hours and low pay but it'll keep you from starving to death. Data entry (and card keypunch operating) often require taking numbers and text off of printed forms and, for nine or ten hours a day, typing them into a computer. That work often gets printed to paper and then audited line-by-line against the form data to make sure there were no mistakes. This is mentally challenging work better

suiting for women than for men, I will add, and employers know this. They usually hire women for data entry and card keypunch.

* Telephone solicitation. You don't need too many skills to dial a telephone number and read from a script when your "victim" answers. The script that you would work off of will lead toward getting information from the person you reach. The information is usually typed into a database. The required abilities here are wearing a headset, working a desktop telephone display set, and keying in information into a form on a screen as you read from a script and get information. These places can be either boiler-plate sweat shops or nicely air-conditioned buildings, either selling crap nobody needs else selling goods and services some will find useful. Your pay will be determined by either the number of hours you put in or the number of calls you make or the number of subscriptions (or units of merchandise) you sell.

* You could get a job in a warehouse or distribution center. Men usually can find work in either a warehouse or a distribution center yet women stand a better chance of getting work in a distribution center. The reason is because in a distribution center, clothes, food, books, video tapes, shoes et al. are shipped by the manufacturer to the distribution center which sorts them for shipment to the stores. This type of work is usually given to women.

The sorting and counting of shirts and socks, moving items from bins to bins according to written orders, starts out being an unskilled job. As an employee of a distribu-

tion center (or a warehouse) has been with the company for some time, they are given more responsibility which often require working with computers and using the telephone to correct problems with customers and suppliers. Eventually warehouse management skills are acquired and such skills are in demand. Learning to work with customers to solve problems with filling orders and billing is a very good skill to cultivate.

* I don't know anything about dock working and I suspect that dock workers are trade unionized. If you lack marketable skills, you might check into dock work.

* I also don't know anything about clothing manufacturing factories. If you can sew or operate a sewing machine, cut from patterns, and work looms, you might consider this. I hear that the pay is often less than minimum wage and that illegal labor is often employed. Raids are not infrequent, either.

* Farm work, picking nuts, oranges, vegetables, grapes and such can be found in parts of Central and Northern California however once again there is a glut of available illegal Mexican labor out there that you would be competing with.

No job, little to no money, and you're hungry? No brainer.

There is often food stored in people's garages in rural areas where the population density is lower than the major cities and there's few homeless people on the streets. Freezers containing food are common. Gardens containing vegetables in

the back yard is common. Theft should be considered a last resort however since the object is to rebuild a new, normal life, not a criminal one. It should be a last resort because there are other ways to get food.

If you're out in the desert or the woods, either running or holed up somewhere, you should face up to the fact that you're going to lose weight. The idea that with a rifle and a box of ammunition and a book of matches you can survive for a long period of time is wishful thinking. There are a lot of "survivalists" in the United States who, like their self-professed "militia" intellectual colleagues honestly believe they could survive in the woods if they had to.

That's nonsense. There was a time when it was possible but those days are long over. Biodiversity in the major Westernized societies has been decimated, often with pollution and introduced pests. Disease among the plants and animals you would eat must be taken into consideration. The deer you eat, the fish you eat, and the rabbits you eat will sustain you only for so long (if not make you violently ill) and then your body is going to need other foodstuffs. You can delay the eventuality of malnutrition with multi-vitamins but eventually you'll need to forage wider and wider for fruits, nuts, and vegetables – not to mention fresh water which is often in very short supply. (Camp grounds, don't forget.)

If it was easy or reasonably possible to survive in the woods, everyone who hates their jobs would be doing it. Don't kid yourself: If you're on the run, you must remain in contact with human habitation and either work for or steal food or get food from a shelter in the city. If you're holed up some

where (in a tent in the hills overlooking a city, perhaps) stock up on canned goods if you can. Don't rely on what you can pick up from the land. You run the risk of drawing attention to yourself as you visit the city (assuming you've got a hide out in the woods or desert) but you should consider adopting the risk since the alternative – malnutrition – is worse.

I mention this because the idea is to hide until you can rebuild your life and start living a normal life. If you eat nothing but fish for three months, malnutrition is going to reduce your chances of getting a job or having enough energy for working day labor – or having the energy to run again if your hiding place is discovered. Keep yourself as healthy as possible by taking the risks needed to obtain processed foods.

Farms are a good place to find food but they're also a good place to run into dogs and farmers on horseback with rifles who also have access to telephones to report you. Orange groves, walnut trees, strawberry patches et al. often run along highways and they could be raided successfully and safely every now and then. You could work on a farm as "stoop labor" picking lettuce, oranges, grapes, and nuts in many States of the United States.

Road blocks, police check points, sobriety checks, immigration check points, agricultural check points: You may be stopped and searched, your identification examined, and possibly compromised in America for these reasons while traveling on America's highways. Even if "they" don't have the check point up specifically looking for you, accidental

catches happen frequently. (Ask any Highway Patrol Officer stopping a vehicle for a broken tail light. The California HP has the largest felony arrest record of any police agency anywhere in the world.)

If there's a road block up looking specifically for you, you'll probably not have much of a chance anyway and you probably deserve to get caught. Usually, however, a road block is up looking for someone else or, as is common during holidays, sobriety checks can get you examined by the police. You'll want to avoid that.

* Try not to travel during the holidays. Police are out in force due to drunk drivers and – though it's considered unconstitutional – pulling vehicles over and conducting searches without probable cause is more common during the holidays than outside of the holidays.

You might consider using public transportation since bus and taxi drivers are not usually pulled over and, for no reason, checked. They're usually waved past most check points though such vehicles draw extra focus at police check points. (Note: Some States have made unconstitutional laws which allows their police officers to stop and search public transportation without probable cause. This latest unconstitutional series of laws is part of the government's insane "war on drugs" nonsense.)

* Try to stay out of areas which have only one or a few roads leading in and out of it. Such places as you would probably consider your best place to lay low would be camping grounds and areas surrounding lakes. Such places are

most often accessed by only one winding road which is very easy for the authorities to block and sift for you. Also, camp grounds provide sources of food and water – which should be acquired, of course, at night.

In remote areas such as forests, your opposition will be setting up a command post some where in your suspected location from which foot searches for you will radiate. Such command centers usually are selected for the availability of electricity, radios, telephones, and sanitation facilities. If you know the area you're in, you can bet that the command post is a fire station, ranger station, or perhaps a camp ground or gas station.

The road blocks will be in communication via radio with the command post and, since they're probably line-of-site radios, expect road blocks to be within five or ten miles of the command post. That'll be a guess and there's no guarantee that everyone in the effort is talking to each other but it's a good bet they'll want to. You have to decide what the most probable size of the parameter around you is and make a guess as to where road blocks might be.

Don't forget that radio doesn't have to be line-of-sight if the authorities are utilizing radio repeaters

You need to abandon your vehicle before you come into eye contact with your opposition. If they see you and you try to turn around and get away, there's no point: you're just risking the lives of innocent people and you should stop your engine and show your hands else you should bail and run on foot. But if you hear on the radio that there's police

activity in your area and you suspect a road block, taking off on foot might be your best bet. Your car is a lot easier to spot than just yourself – and you can dig in somewhere and walk over nearly everything whereas you can't drive a car in most places.

Listen to traffic reports! You may be informed by your local news traffic reports that there is “police activity” in an area. That activity could be in your honor. Your's!!!

One idea that seems to have some success is to drive down the road and abandoning the car thereafter you walk back the way you came for several miles before taking a tangent. They'll be expecting you to either continue working your way in the direction you were driving or they expect you to take off on a tangent from where you left the car. When they find your car it becomes the center of operations and a new perimeter will be set up around it.

Another idea someone suggested was if someone must abandon one's car, to let the air out of one tire before doubling back on foot. This will make the authorities suspect that you've had a flat and abandoned your car unintentionally. Unintentionally abandoning the car might mean that you didn't twig to the road block and bailed. That would mean that you left the car and headed for the nearest telephone to call for help. The nearest residence or town then becomes one of the center of operations and the road block further down the road becomes another center of operations. It would be considered that you had a flat, headed down the road for assistance, and then saw the road block and either turned around or headed into the hills on a

tangent. By making the opposition think your plans were thwarted by a hardware failure, you force them to behave in ways you want them to and kind of gets even for what they're making you do.

* Freeway sifting. It happens on rare occasions yet it's becoming more and more popular: Police will try to sift you on the freeways of America if you're suspected to be in a general location.

This is currently done two different ways.

* The first is manpower intensive yet has some successful results. Police officers are stationed along freeway overpasses if they're looking for a particular make and model of a car. A circle is set up on a map and every overpass along the freeways and intersections in an operations grid is staffed with cops with radios.

If such an operation sees the suspect make and model car pass under a bridge, mobile officers from outlying stations are redirected to intercept the car. It's rare for cops on bridges to leave their stations unless the wanted scumbag is confirmed so they'll use a number of roving police cars on outlying picket to chase down suspect vehicles, leaving the net in place.

There's really no defense for this operation other than to bail and run on foot. You've probably bought it, though. On California freeways you'll not have much of a chance. In places like New Jersey, you may have a chance if there's no helicopter watching you due to the high popula-

tion density along freeways. California freeways tend to have trees and bush growing along side but the areas are wide open to visual eye contact from one bridge to the next. If there's no trees and bushes, the highways in California tend to have high walls walling in the freeway.

* Forced exits. More often than the above method, police will put up cones and construction vehicles to close all lanes of a freeway, making all cars take an exit, a surface road, and then an on-ramp. The idea is to make the person they're looking for think that an accident or emergency road maintenance is being worked rather than a man hunt.

As cars approach the exit, police cars by the dozen will be observing everyone in line. More police will be watching for several miles down the freeway for anyone bailing at previous exists (depending upon the length of freeway traffic backup.) Police will be watching for anyone pulling to the break-down lane and trying to avoid them.

Like the other method, there's really no defense for this other than to try to bail and run. It's probably hopeless, though.

As previously mentioned, however, traffic stops and check points are going to be the biggest problem. They can happen at random without any notice. Agricultural check points – such as one can find on highway 15 between Las Vegas and Southern California and the one on Interstate 5 near Grapevine – are stationary and usually run 24 hours a day. The officers don't have authority among themselves to arrest or detain you if your picture has been circulated among

them. The most they can do is request that you pull over and stop and, failing to do so, they press a button and the police cruisers on station at the facility will hunt you down and stop you.

There's really nothing you can do about stationary check points except either avoid them entirely or comply with the check point's attendant and smile your way through and just hope your face isn't in their book.

Roving check points and random sampling is something you have no control over. You may try to fall out of the set of profiles that cops are trained to look for to reduce the chances of getting randomly stopped and searched. Profiles cops learn to focus on are different from city to city, town to town, but you can bet that most of the profiles consists of:

* Drug dealers or buyers. Drug dealers have a range of profiles they match. Drug buyers – being from all walks of life – have a much broader spectrum of profiles they match. Traveling in known drug trafficking areas is a bad idea. It gets worse if you're traveling slowly. You may have no choice if you're looking to purchase false identification papers in such areas, of course, but drug profiles are well ingrained in today's American police force. The druggie profiles are something cops "feel" and they're usually right. If you're on the run and you're in a drug dealing area, you may just smell suspicious and could get pulled over and asked what you're doing in the area.

* Prostitution Johns. You may find yourself driving along a street that's heavy with prostitution. Though you'll

probably not draw attention just for driving down the street, the density of cops along such streets will be higher than elsewhere so you'll want to avoid the area. Like with druggie areas, since you're on the run you may just give the cop a gut feeling something's wrong with you and get yourself pulled over. Such areas gives officers a courtroom-friendly excuse for pulling you over and searching you.

* So-called "gang banger." You don't want to drive a car that's had its suspension fucked up, it's identification stickers removed (such as the Toyota logos the manufacturers put on) and mud on its license plates. You don't want to be driving a car that's missing its license plates. There shouldn't be a lot of clothing in the back seat which such a profile often contains since such people often change their clothes after a drive-by shooting or other crimes.

* Cruiser. In many cities there is a major street which has become a defacto cruising scene for High School or college kids. It's usually a street that has restaurants or bars and coffee shops that are open until midnight or so. Cruising or joy riding is getting "cracked down upon" in most cities and you could be stopped if you match the profile of a cruiser.

A cruiser will be driving at night in a clean car that's either a fairly new car, a restored classic, or any kind of car with a bunch of kids stuffed into it. If you're driving a clean 1972 Ford Pinto with the windows rolled down at 11:00 p.m. down Sunset Blvd. in Southern California, cops in the area will register your car the first time they see it. The second time they see you driving the street will convince them you're cruising and they may decide to pull you over. Even

though you're minding your own business, you may want to avoid streets where cruising takes place if you're driving something that matches the profile.

The idea is to travel along America's highways without drawing attention to yourself and ending up getting pulled out of a check point queue or getting stopped by a cop. You should think about what kind of car and what kind of "look and feel" cops are likely to pull over and work to defeat the expected image. Get a couple of books and put them on your dash board. Something from Ann Rand and Albert Einstein, maybe, or something containing intellectual material. Criminals don't read - they're stupid: That's why they're criminals. You want to look like you're Mr. or Ms. Citizen going about your lawful business and not a wanted fugitive or a missing house wife who's husband wants you back to further abuse you.

Where there's water, life is possible. True, it may be very difficult and very hard to live, depending, but anyone who's driven, hiked, or camped in the American South West will have noticed that cities and ranches crop up where there's surface water or where there's been a well dug.

Within the state of California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, and Colorado, there are deserts, mesas, mountains, and forests where normally people never or rarely visit; not-so-secret places where there's water, access to a road within a day's hike, and where a fairly rugged individual may hide while remaining basically healthy, marginally well fed, and reasonably sane.

In this section I'll look at two such environments, neither of which I would recommend, but one of which I'd suggest is a reasonable way to live in basic health while either on the run, hiding out from the law, old girl friends, the draft for an illegal war, putative wives and such.

The first South Western environment (the one I wouldn't recommend except for the most hearty individual) is the Mojave Desert among the volcanic rocks where there's water if you know where to find it, and where shade from the relentless Sun can be built, if you know how to build it.

South Western Mojave Desert:

- * Shade from the sun – A long-term squat takes time, some money, and effort and among the first priorities would be shade from the Sun. With desert-colored splotches of paint on tarps spread not only on the trailers but in the spaces between, a reasonable amount of shade is possible.

- * Disguise from overhead – Aircraft from area Air Force Bases all other Southern California and Western Nevada would fly over the general area, not to mention the occasional commercial aircraft, power line or natural gas company. Visibly breaking up the shade tarps would help keep aircraft from spotting the squatter's camp. Heat sources within the camp, of course, at night and possibly during the day depending on the ambient temp wouldn't be blocked from military equipment on board military aircraft.

- * Reasonable access to water – About a third to a half a day's hike to the nearest water hole, and perhaps a

half of a day's hike to a mud hole from which muddy water could be acquired. A wheeled travois, motorized two or three wheeled vehicle, or backpack could be probably used to fetch water once a month or so, probably setting out after sunset and getting back to camp before sunrise.

* Emergency transportation – Any reasonably safe effort to hide out and live in such an area would include a motorized vehicle that could be driven to a hospital in the event of a broken leg, poison, snake bite, and other emergencies.

* Minimal agriculture – A wise squatter will do some basic research and see what eatable plants would survive in the area if given shade.

Anyone contemplating setting up a camp in the Mojave Desert – or in any of the surrounding deserts – would obtain a topographical map, note where the indicated springs, stock ponds, and other water sources are, and then would evaluate where to locate shade for such a camp. Then the individual would investigate the water sources to verify that they're wet and drinkable all year around – or at least during the months the individual will be surviving in the area for.

Where exactly?

One possible wide spread area of interest would be the area between Las Vegas, Nevada, and some 30 miles West of Baker, California, North of the 15 highway – perhaps within the hills along North Cima Road. Much of the lands located there are owned by the Federal government however

ranchers subsidized by tax money run cattle which can be poached, and there's water which can be found.

South of the 15 highway is more volcanic and has less water unless you go to Soda Springs off of Zyzzyx Road where there's a ranger station and the Desert Studies center (filling up canteens there from the spring could be done without suspicions but filling up drums of water might cause people at Soda Springs to suspect you're living out in the desert.)

North of the 15 highway your topo map will show numerous springs, tanks, and stock ponds, many of which will contain water, and many of which will be dry – but will not be listed as dry on the map so you need to investigate, take notes, take GPS coordinates, and plan thoughtfully.

Also North of highway 15 is cattle subsidized by U. S. Forest Service; cattle that has overgrazed and destroyed much of the plants and displaced much of the animals that used to eck out a meger existance in these lands. Poaching is illegal, of course, and could get you strung up, drained, and jerked like deer meat if you're caught, so perhaps you could look at cows – what Edward Abbey called “slow elk” – as an emergency food source.

If you plan on poaching, you should do your homework and learn how to butcher a cow and transport batches of the animal from the place where you butchered it back to your camp, figuring out how to wrap what you can't carry to keep flies, vultures, and other animals out of your meat until you can return for the rest of it.

Still, I'd recommend not poaching in the high desert out there not only because it's illegal, not only because if you're caught by a rancher he may decide to dump your carcass into a volcanic rock crack, but most importantly because you don't want to draw attention to the fact that you're living in the general area. A rancher coming up short on his count might very well put down the shortage to "natural causes" but if you leave remains to be found and the remains show that the missing cattle was butchered and carted off, the Feds like nothing better than to mount up a nice desert posse to come look for you.

For setting up a squatters camp in the deserts North of Highway 15 and West of Baker, I might choose somewhere in the Iron Mountain range, North of the military base, and South West of the bombing range. Here's what I would do:

- * Acquire topo maps of the area, and acquire an aircraft sectional map of the area.

- * Contrive a suitable explanation on why I'm trekking all over the desert where humans rarely visit. With a digital camera, claiming that I'm creating an Internet web site to record some of the natural rock formations of the area would be a suitable explanation. The notes I take would be vague to others who might read it yet meaningful to me when I lay it all out for evaluation.

- * Note the dirt roads in the area, use a ruler to note as accurately as possible the indicated springs, stock ponds, water tanks, buildings, and towers in the area, writing down their logitude and latitude in a book of note paper. Figure

out the worst-case distance between the water source and nearby dirt roads.

* Get on the Internet and do research on the names of the springs listed in the notebook to get an idea on what might be in the area and how often humans visit it. Also to get information on the types of plants and animals that live in the area, including nearby ranches and cattle.

* Visit as many water sources as possible, hiking to them with a GPS hand-held device, topo maps, notebook, digital camera, a writing pen, matches, water (don't forget the hat!) I'd do as much of my hiking at night, stopping when the GPS indicates I'm in the general area, and then search for the water source at first day light, check the condition of the water source and then use the GPS device, topo maps, and maybe a compass to return to my car an hour or two before sunset. Take digital photographs and make written notes about the area, the water, and signs of human visits.

* Visit numerous ravines, craigs, and valleys in among the volcanic rocks of the hills and mountains in the area looking for a suitable camp site, making note of how far they are from suitable water sources. Such camp sites would have to be modifiable with tarps and covers that would provide shade and invisibility to aircraft.

* After doing as much research on the water in an area, and as much research on likely camp sites in the area, all of the accumulated information would be placed on a table and all of the salient factors would be considered for

where to place a camp:

- * Distance from dirt road where a vehicle can be parked so that supplies and camp equipment can be back-packed from the vehicle to the camp.

- * Distance and time from the likely camp sites to one or more water sources so that water can be fetched within a third of a day's hike. This would allow a water-fetching to take place comfortably within a single night. Note any hills, ravines, mountains that have to be bypassed to make it to water, considering that it will probably be done at night, and also note that the desert looks completely different at night than it does during the day.

- * Availability of rock formations that can house a camp that can have tarps cover it over.

- * After selecting a suitable camp site, I'd start moving equipment into the camp:

- * Park on the closest dirt road and hike into the new camp site with spray-painted splotchy desert colored tarps and other covering, water, matches, and bedding.

- * Set up the tarps and other covers.

- * Hike off in a circle around the camp and verify that the camp's location can not be seen by anyone who might walk around the area.

- * Spend a couple of nights and days under the tarp

to see what living there would be like, taking note of how cold and how hot it gets. If something about the camp isn't acceptable, relocate.

* After deciding that the camp is acceptable, stash some of the remaining water and bedding under the camp tarps and return to the vehicle.

* Return to the dirt road, parking the vehicle a little ways off from the previous visits with additional equipment, and back pack it to the new camp: Camp stove, fuel, lantern, frying pan, water pan, cups, wooden spoons, more water, more bedding, clothes, books, batteries, flashlights, car battery, solar cells, power inverter. Basically as much equipment as I would want for a comfortable camp would be unloaded in numerous trips, most of it done at night when it's cool. I'd bring more water with me to stash at the camp with each trip.

* After the camp is assembled, I'd get a friend to drop me off at the dirt road with my backpack and as much water as I could carry. That way the vehicle could be driven back to civilization to leave me there without any sign that someone's in the area.

* Arrange a date and general time when the friend would visit the dirt road again a month later, agreeing on a radio frequency to call on. At the same time acquire more books, canned food, perhaps, and other stuff that might have been thought of during the last month. If all is well, arrange for the friend to visit only once every 4 months or so.

* If a friend can't be found, hiding the vehicle would have to be done. Some care would need to be taken about the health of the vehicle since the desert can reach 120 degrees and some of the metal on the vehicle can get much hotter than that.

The result would be a camp that has a tarp for a cover, a tarp for a floor, possibly tarps for walls, all tight and roped up with rocks and poles, with a 12-volt lamp being driven by a car battery that's charged by a solar panel through a power inverter.

Books and a laptop computer would be provided for entertainment and perhaps the mood to write a book of my own would strike. I would expect boredom to be as big a problem as food, water, and shade so more thinking about creative ways to remain occupied would have to be done.

Very likely after a couple of weeks it would be discovered what was forgotten and what's needed to make living in the area possible. Hiking at night into Baker, California, every other month or so to draw money out of the bank, purchase canned goods, and visit the local Taco Bell would be possible however if anyone was looking for someone doing so, that points an arrow straight at them.

South Western Arizona Virgin River Gorge

A better place to hide out and set up a long-term living camp far from any human being would be within the Virgin River Gorge. During a drive from Utah to California along the 70 and then the 15 highway, one passes through the Virgin

River Gorge carved by the Virgin River. On a topo map the rough longitude and latitude coordinates would be somewhere around:

North 36 degrees 57.725

West 113 degrees 45.659

Approximately 2394 feet

The gorge itself is long and wide, consisting of a seemingly endless series of canyons, ravines, cliffs, and spires, most of which is impossible to get to on foot. Highway 15 passes right through the gorge and follows the Virgin River for some distance before the hills disappear and the desert opens up to the West toward Valley of Fire and the Moapa Piute Indian Reservation lands.

A great deal of fresh water is available in these canyons all year around though most of the waterways are muddy. Fresh, clear water is found in fairly straight runs of the Virgin River and in standing, deeper plunge pools created when the river's course changed slightly over the years.

Hiking and camping among this gorge is difficult, to understate the case. Sheer cliff walls one or two hundred feet high create box canyons and box ravines and together with sharp shards of rock and soft but loose sandy rock, the gorge's innermost secret areas are very difficult to get in and out of and getting lost is easy.

Five years ago I was visiting the Valley of Fire where far to the South along a dirt road behind the Piute fireworks and casino there's a good water spring that's rarely visited by

wheeled vehicle. Being in the general area I drove East into the Virgin River Gorge and parked some distance from the GPS coordinates offered above.

With a backpack containing food, water, matches, bedding, compass, camera, GPS unit, USGS aircraft photographs of the gorge, and other equipment I parked my vehicle along a turn out on the highway and hiked into the gorge.

After walking in for about two hours I set up camp, ate something, got out my book, and read until it got too dark to read, then I set out my sleeping bag and laid down on it (it was about 80 degrees at midnight there.)

Around an hour after dark I heard someone pounding metal on rock and I stood up thinking someone was pounding on the highway some distance away, at first, yet walking a little around my camp I placed the pounding toward the South West. After about 5 minutes of the noise it stopped and all that could be heard was the crickets and frogs some distance in the river and the far-away drone of the big rigs using engine breaking on the highway 15 decline.

In the morning I went looking for the source of the noise and I found a desert hermit living along the Virgin River in among trees, some of which he had relocated himself some years ago. The old guy had a large camp and a motorcycle. I took a GPS reading, returned to my car, and moved it to the West side of the highway, then returned to camp with the guy for the rest of the day, that night, and then left early the next morning.

This month – just a week ago – I found that the guy had left, gone to live with his daughter whose husband had died but his story is relevant to this section of this piece. Some of the relevant aspects of his squatters camp:

* Rope and pulley was used to move the motorcycle in and out of the gorge to the highway at night. The nearest town is some 10 miles or less away though the canned goods there tend to be very expensive compared to the next large city, Las Vegas.

* His daughter knew where he lived – and didn't approve. But she helped. A crushed tin can was placed under a rock behind a mile marker on the highway and inside the can the man living there was able to convey notes to his daughter back and forth. (Neither knew they could acquire 2-meter HAM radios without a license.)

* On occasion the daughter would hike in to camp with her father until she decided she got too out of shape. She would bring him books and magazines which the old guy would burn after reading, and would bring clothes or other things he asked for. She would also bring endless nagging and complaints asking him to move in with her in her apartment in Las Vegas.

* The old man shaved every day and bathed in the river every day – or more than once a day during the summer.

* The guy hated the U. S. government, taxes, and “those bastards,” whoever they were.

* His bank account had monthly Social Security deposits made of less than some \$2000 Dollars however his expenses were such that he'd been accumulating money for all the years he'd been living in the desert. His only real expense was food, gasoline, and telephone calls into Las Vegas.

* The guy was sharp – well educated, extremely bright, likeable, friendly, witty, and could tell a thousand jokes. He remembered the Great Depression, laughed at “those fools in their fancy cars with the windows rolled up” on the highway, and absolutely despised and felt pity for the people “spending their lives in their fancy cars stuck in city traffic.”

* He hadn't read any Edward Abbey but had read everything Sam Clemens had ever written. Liked Snoopy comics, disliked every other comic he could think of.

* Burnable trash was burned at night in small chunks. Trash that couldn't be burned – cans and such – were smashed flat with rocks and added to a hole dug for the purpose, a comfortable distance away from the actual camp.

* Shade was created by using existing bush and trees, and by the relocating of bush and trees which were then watered. The camp itself was a low-hung series of tarps just tall enough to stand up in with a tarp on the ground, nailed down into fairly hard sandstone, with blankets covering it.

* No lighting was used for dark nights other than small camp fires that couldn't be seen either directly or through reflected light. The guy started out with candles the first year, flashlights for a couple of years, and then decided moonlight and starlight together with the campfire was enough.

Some Other Areas:

This is a tough one.

Two other areas spring instantly to mind when it comes to long-term squatting near water. Ceder City, Utah has a muddy river going through it, bounded by a shallow canyon with a bike trail along one side and a busy highway on the other. I've found a person camping there long-term once and it looked fairly comfortable.

The other location is along the San Gabriel River above Azusa, California, along Highway 39. Camping there long term is fairly dangerous due to the large number of illegal Mexicans and the large number of gun nuts that frequent the area, shooting into the hills at night without a care in the world that somebody might be camping or living in the canyons.

In summation of this section, people on the run, in hiding, or otherwise wishing to step out of mainstream society can do so safely, in health, and without risk to one's sanity though it seems to me that to do so some contact – if not support – with others still living in society is needed.

There are secret, hidden places in America's South West among the deserts, mesas, mountains, and forests where people can hermit themselves, with or without the aid and support of others. But to do so required planning, creativity, and foresight – as well as a willingness to pack up and relocate if a site that's selected turns out to be inappropriate after awhile.

Incidentally, the U. S. Forest Service generally allows for campers to remain at a site for 14 days after which their rules dictate that the camper must leave. What constitutes leaving will depend upon the individual Ranger who discovers a camper. Some will allow that moving a mile from one's camp constitutes leaving at which time the 14 day limit begins again. Other Rangers will demand that the camper leave a particular geographical area after 14 days.

So being discovered squatting can cause problems beyond any warrants that may be pending for your arrest. Being able to show a bank account might save you from being arrested and detained as a vagrant yet I believe that how you look – your appearances – when you're discovered (if ever) would dictate what happens to you (if anything.)

That goes for what your camp looks like: If your camp looks like you've been there for a long time and looks like you intend to be there a long time, any Ranger discovering you squatting will have a different opinion on what to do with you than if your camp looked like you just got there. If discovered you could claim you've been there for three days and plan to "return back to work after my vacation is over in four days" and perhaps you'll be believed. That could keep

you out of the vagrant hatch long enough to relocate.

Then again it's anybody's question on whether you'll be asked to show identification and whether you'll be checked for wants and warrants. My experience when encountering Rangers and other authority types in the South West is that they'll make sure you have enough water, that you know where you are, that you have a hat on, and that you aren't committing suicide in stupid, irresponsible ways, they'll ask you to be careful out here and to on their way. Squatters who look like they've been camping for a long time may get run into the local police station so I'd suggest you keep your camp looking new and have a good story to tell about calling a friend to come pick you up in a few days – and make sure the name and telephone of your friend is valid even if said friend isn't aware that you're squatting.

Another important aspect: If *they* have firearms, think about getting them. If you are comfortable handling any firearms your opposition might have which you feel could be used against you, acquire them and – if they're small hand guns – deposit them in a postal box as soon as you can. The postal box on the end of any business district street is fine and it doesn't matter that it's close to your house or apartment that you're leaving.

Assuming you're a housewife with little to no experience with guns:

* Remove the firearm from its drawer, night stand, or under the bed or the closet making sure that you keep your hands and fingers away from the trigger. Nearly all fire-

arms will not discharge if you keep your fingers away from the trigger. All firearms require the weapon to be either cocked before it will discharge else one must use a fairly heavy pull on the trigger to both cock and fire the weapon. If a weapon has been cocked, it could be that even the slightest pressure – some three pounds or less – could discharge the weapon. For this reason, keep your fingers away from the trigger!

* Always be fully aware of where the barrel of the firearm is pointing. Keep it pointed in a direction which will not result in injury of yourself or anyone else in the event the gun discharges. Ground-floor apartment dwellers should point the firearm down. Other-floor apartment dwellers should point the firearm at the television, bookshelves, radiator, heater, or air conditioner – anything heavy which would stop the bullet if the firearm discharges. Most apartment complexes' walls and most residential houses' walls are too thin to stop most of the popular projectiles.

* If you know what to do, clear the weapon. If you don't know what to do or are uncomfortable clearing the weapon, don't try it.

In revolvers, there is a round cylinder which you can see has a number of tubes inside. You should also be able to see some of the bullets in the cylinder if it is loaded. On revolvers, one must usually pull a long metal pin resting under the length of the barrel before the round cylinder will swing out to the left. In some revolvers, after pulling the pin out until it stops, one must also pull back the hammer before the cylinder will swing out. With an eye toward where the bar-

rel is pointing at all time, clear the weapon by swinging the weapon's barrel up. The bullets should slide down toward the floor and into your hand. If not, having the cylinder swung open makes the weapon safe enough to transport to a postal box.

In semi-automatics, there is ammunition stored in the handle of the gun inside of a removable clip. There is usually a lever at the base of the handle which, when pressed, releases the clip. The clip may not slide out on its own in which case you must press the lever and pull the clip out using both hands. On some semi-automatics, there is no lever but there is a screw which one must turn.

Even after removing the clip from a semi-automatic or swinging the cylinder out a revolver, the weapon should not be considered safe. Check to see if there is a round chambered in the barrel. In a revolver, with the cylinder swung out, it will be easy to see if the barrel has a bullet chambered. In a semi-automatic, the way to check to make sure there's no round in the chamber is – after the clip is removed – to pull back the cocking mechanism to eject any chambered round. If there is, a bullet will be ejected to your right and behind you a few feet so don't be surprised when it does.

After clearing the weapon, you should have a gun that either has the cylinder swung open or the cocking mechanism locked open. Most semi-automatics will lock open when the last round is emptied from the gun yet many will not lock open.

* When you can, deposit the safely-emptied firearm

in a postal box. If you couldn't clear the weapon, go ahead and deposit the firearm in a postal box anyway.

Leaving the firearm in a visibly-safe state will make it easier on the postal employee who runs into the firearm when he or she empties the postal box you drop it into. I suggest routing any firearms which might be used against you to the postal service because postal employees have standing orders not to touch what may be evidence and to contact the police. (The letters and boxes taken from the postal box will also be subjected to several day's – if not weeks – delays as they are checked and the origination and destination addresses checked. Because of that, you shouldn't deposit any letters you might feel to write in the same box as they will be delayed.)

The police will keep any firearm you deposit into a postal box for a long, long time, perhaps even destroying it even though it's not been used in a crime. The fact that you are missing will mean that the firearm will not be returned to your abusive spouse or boy/girlfriend to be used against you. More: In many States the right to purchase another firearm will be either revoked or denied until the disposition of your whereabouts is ascertained. Dropping your opposition's firearms into a postal box will effectively transfer ownership to the police and de-claw your opposition greatly.

Private detective agencies don't usually operate for free. If your opposition has no financial resources to draw upon, they are limited to a great extent. If you're a criminal, they'll still use the police agencies of the country to track you down, of course, at which point it's simply a matter of time

before they find you. If you're not on the run for a criminal act, police authorities will have no reason to try to find you and, lacking private detective services, your opposition will be working alone.

If we're talking about government, the IRS, know that your opposition has unlimited resources and, depending upon how much money you owe, a broad spectrum of motivation for finding you. If we're talking about the law, you should know that you may eventually get caught regardless of what measures you take to hide yourself. It's only a question of time before they find you.

In summary, stay motivated and work to reduce both the motivation and the financial avenues of your opposition. Know who your opposition is and what they'll likely employ to find you. Work to reduce the effectiveness of what your opposition is likely to do to find you. If your opposition has weapons which could be used against you, give them to the police by using the post office.

Fright hopping isn't safe and unless you're in fairly good shape I wouldn't recommend it... And even if you are in fairly good shape, I wouldn't recommend it unless there's a very real and pressing need to get out of an area fairly quickly.

If law enforcement is after you and they know you're in an area, of course, then they'll likely have all freight trains and passenger trains monitored and scanned however there are lots of places to hide on freight trains, most of them quite dangerous.

There's a great deal of information available on the Internet about how to safely hop freight trains and you should check them out with the URL links offered below in this section. But this section will offer a fairly brief summation of what you need to do to hop freight trains as an emergency means of escape.

Endless Safety Hazards When Freight Hopping:

* Crossing rail lines inside and outside of rail yards is dangerous enough; walking through rail yards and switching yards it even worse. One of the primary reasons why vehicles and pedestrians so often get struck or run over by locomotives is because humans can't always judge accurately the speed of locomotives coming toward them. Crossing rails can be dangerous.

* Walking along the rails can be just as dangerous as crossing them – even though I and endless kids did so for many years without problem. Typically one steps off the tracks when a train approaches and moves away from the rails to allow the train to go by, then one returns to the rails or ties. But on trellis or bridges there may not be a way to leave the tracks, and if there is the sides of the rails may not be wide enough to safely allow a train to pass.

* When in a yard, cars very often use gravity to move from place to place based on remote switching. Since they're unpowered and since they can roll quietly, you need to watch out for slowly moving or quickly moving cars that you can't hear coming.

* When blocked by a train, don't climb under it to cross. Either go around, climb over, or find a way to pass between the coupled cars rather than try to roll or crawl under the cars. Though they're heavy and have enormous inertia, locomotives are designed to get things rolling quickly to break the massive moment of inertia of each car in line and things can move very quickly.

* Yard Bulls – security people paid for by the carrier – must be avoided in yards even though most will let you go if you're caught the first time trying to ride his trains. Many Bulls, however, will give you a solid beating on a bad day or simply hold you for the cops to arrest you, something you don't want. Bulls and other individuals you'll want to avoid in the yard often drive vehicles that are easy to spot, and they all have radios so that they can listen to the yard dispatchers for orders to stop or vacate an area. White vehicles are very common since they're easy to see.

* Non-locomotive equipment can move and crush parts of you. Switches – movable rails at “points” along the tracks – can move by remote command either from automated processing equipment or by the command of human operators. The track equipment detects train car wheels, not human feet so the equipment and human operators can't tell you're occupying a point before they move it and lock your foot in place.

* Yards and the areas outside of yards are frequented by hobos (a.k.a. hoebos, or hebos, or hobes) which may or may not be dangerous. Additionally criminals may prey

on tramps, bums, and hobos that ride the rails and if you don't watch what you're doing, you could be trapped and assaulted, robbed, or killed. Many hobos are mentally unstable however most will be friendly and will share what they have provided you share what you have. Among the most salient things hobos you may meet will have is information. Information about train schedules is valuable. Hopping a freight with another hobo who's experienced in also very valuable for first-time hoppers.

* Hopping freight trains is difficult and dangerous when they're moving. Typically you'll have a backpack that must also get on the train with you. There are numerous places to get on a train but the days of box cars that are safe to travel in are becoming rare. These days the cars are grain carriers, stacked trailer carriers, and other things that afford less safe places for humans than what once existed.

* Getting off a moving train is difficult and dangerous since it's rather difficult for humans to accurately judge how quickly they're moving before they jump. Having to start running before you hit the ground means you could fall, trip, roll under the wheels and make a considerable mess.

* Falling off of a perch on a car when you're asleep could be a problem unless you've found a safe, comfortable place to sleep. Since a great many locomotives average less than 20 miles an hour, the time you spend getting out of town to anywhere may be a whole day. On the other hand some freight trains will travel anywhere up to 50 or 60 miles an hour – it all depends on the gradient of the hills, the ra-

dious of curves, the number of cars vs. the accumulative rated horsepower of the locomotive engines, temporary speed restrictions, and a host of other factors.

The dangers are considerable and you would have to decide what's acceptable to you and what's too dangerous. If you can't hitch hike and need to leave an area without being seen, you may feel that the dangers of fright hopping are acceptable.

What You Should Bring When Freight Hopping:

It may be that you'll want to travel with as many worldly possessions as you can carry. This isn't a good idea.

But to safely and comfortably use freight trains, there's probably a minimum amount of things you should bring with you:

- * Wear dark clothing to make it difficult for yard Bulls and police as well as for average citizens to spot you. Your backpack or knapsack should likewise be fairly dark. Since you may be using your sleeping bag to keep warm when exposed on a moving car, your sleeping bag should also be fairly dark.

- * Your backpack or knapsack shouldn't be too heavy since you'll be throwing it around a lot. You shouldn't have any breakables in your pack since anything breakable will almost certainly break. You might practice hauling your pack around, throwing it up onto dressers to get an idea on how heavy or difficult it will be to manage.

* Additional warm clothing is a must to avoid freezing to death or spending wakeless days unable to sleep because it's so cold. Unless you can get out of the wind, layers of clothing is the only thing that'll keep you from freezing. Locos traveling 50 or 60 miles an hour can cause the wind to suck every bit of heat out of you and if you're reasonably healthy when the locomotive stops, it could be that you'll be caught simply because you couldn't get up and run away.

* Gloves, boots, hat, sunscreen. Clutching moving iron can remove a lot of skin from your hands. Being dragged along the ground as you scramble up the side of a moving car can remove a lot of toes. Sun beating down on an exposed perch for relentless hours can burn you without a hat – not to mention make you irritable, crazy, and stupid. Cover your nose, neck, ears, forehead, and whatever other parts of skin you might expose to prolonged durations of sunlight, preferably before you get on and get moving unless you can smear stuff on safely on the move.

* Maps of the area which show rail lines, an atlas, topo maps, time tables, and maybe even a hand-held GPS unit might all be good to bring with you – if you have the time to gather them. It's always best to know where the train you hopped is going though if you've hopped a train to anywhere, it's assumed you consider anyplace to be preferable to where you are. But the objective is to not get caught and to be healthy once you're safe, and knowing where you're going and how long it might take to get there are things you should try to find out.

* Water and some amount of food; whatever you

can safely and comfortably carry. You'll dehydrate when exposed to the wind faster than you will if you're not exposed. Alcohol will make you dehydrate even faster so always bring water, never alcohol. Additionally alcohol can be smelled by dogs hunting you.

* Something to read. You'll be waiting for trains, waiting for information, waiting to get into the next town, and generally spending a lot of time doing nothing. A radio will also help pass the time and could give you news you could use.

That would be probably a minimum of the stuff you would need to take when hopping a freight train. Information about where trains are going is something you can get from workers in rail yards since they'll usually assist you – everyone except the Bulls whose job it is to keep you out. Rail workers who are paid minimum wage and may not speak the language are often willing to help inform you about which direction a train is going.

The Types of Cars To Hop:

Some cars are more dangerous than others. There are lists of cars in the order of preference available all over the Internet yet for now, here's what's been suggested in a preliminary scan of such texts:

- * Open box cars
- * Rear platform of a grain hauler
- * Between the wheels of a biggyback trailer hauler
- * In the well behind cargo containers

- * Second or third level of empty car carriers
- * Empty gondolas.

There are many reasons why you should avoid parking inside of grain or gravel haulers, and avoid parking inside full cargo containers but the primary danger is that of shifting cargo. You can be buried by gravel, crushed by crates, crushed by moving cars that weren't tied down well, and get crushed by damn near everything.

But as mentioned above, open box cars are getting rare. If you're planning on hopping a freight train, find a place to hide where you won't be seen and watch a number of trains go by and see what kinds of cars there are to get a feel for what kind of transport you can expect.

From time to time I get people emailing me asking about religious organizations, International organizations, or other ways to drop out of the "Rat Race" and my response has always been that one must have large amounts of money or be willing to live in abject poverty and hunger.

But there are a few other alternatives to be considered:

- * The Peace Corps. The problem with signing on with the Peace Corps is that there are a number of requirements you must meet in order to volunteer with them and, of course, they are the Federal government and they will keep trace of you if they ship you outside of the United States.

- * If you have enough money to pay for your own

food and other needs and are willing to live in poverty, you can volunteer to work with elderly Navajos.

This type of work requires that you have your head straight and that you have your shit together. This type of work is not a vacation; it's hard and serious work of long hours and effort. It has the added benefit and attraction that volunteering to assist is a good way to drop out of the rat race, disappear from the eyes of the U. S. government, and you're kept very busy and occupied.

Volunteering to assist elderly Navajos requires that you become familiar with the social behavioral aspects of Navajo tribes and a good place to find such information may be found here.

Volunteers are asked to commit to at minimum two months, and there is a formal interview process of hopeful volunteers that one is subjected to to ensure that volunteers have their heads together, can actually do the work that's needed, and are trustworthy.

Contact these people through their web site to find out more about working with assisting in herding sheep, other farming and ranching needs, and working with the elderly. But remember: only strong-minded, responsible people are considered for such work. It's a 24 hour job that few are capable of committing to, and few are able to complete their commitments.

* Farm work or ranch work is a possibility if you can find such work where live-ins are allowed. This type of work

is usually very low pay – far below minimum wage – and you would be working with illegal immigrants, many of which may not speak English.

The industrial farms and ranches aren't what you would be looking for since they have forms, documents, and other tracking of your employment and are answerable to government agencies. Additionally the large industrial farms and ranches will usually not allow workers to live on their property.

There are, however, an increasingly rare number of family farms and ranches situated around the United States, places where families have been working the land or running ranches for generations and where people's children have moved away and the older parents are looking for live-in help.

But these positions are rare and seldom are they advertised. They are discovered through word-of-mouth from other ranchers and farmers in the area, or by postings on bulletin boards in farming or ranching communities in their civic centers or markets.

This type of work has the benefit that you can drop out of the eyes of the government and still maintain a healthy, productive, and busy life while being paid low wages but also being given a place to live. It has the draw back of not offering medical coverage or insurance of any kind such that if you're hurt or injured, medical bills will have to be paid from your chronically empty pocket.

Because family farm or ranch work means working closely with the owners or operators of the land, you can expect to be subjected to a very detailed and close examination of your physical and mental makeup, and trustworthiness is going to be the number 1 priority among any such a job.

From what I've been reading and from the emails of people who have dropped off the grid from time to time, there are ways to drop out of the rat race, and the three suggested methods described above have been shown to me to be viable.

But there are some primary aspects of one's behavior and attitude that one must meet before dropping out and disappearing into some work enclave like these:

* Say "goodbye" to money. If you're paid at all for your work, it is either through room and board, or it is through a room and a small amount of money each month from which you purchase your own food. Some months you may be paid, some months you may not be depending on how well (or not) the farm or ranch does during the course of the year.

* Be ready to get your head out of your ass, get your shit together, and start cleaning up your act if you're dropping out because you're laboring under emotional problems you're trying to divest yourself of. The Peace Corps, farms, and ranches don't want to baby sit and the owners and operators don't want to provide psychiatry services; they want volunteers or workers who can do the job competently, either with minimal instruction and supervision, or without

supervision.

* If you smoke, drink alcohol, or use illegal narcotics, stop it. Unless you're wealthy, dropping off the grid means you can't afford such things anyway – or at least store bought tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.

Discarding your old life and working toward rebuilding or renewing means scraping off some of the old baggage that brought you to the point where you're looking for a new life, and smoking, drinking alcohol, and using illegal narcotics is probably going to be part of that old life you need to toss in the trash.

Any prospective employer is going to look for any outward signs that you use illegal narcotics, even though – as may be with a family ranch or farm – the owners or operators may themselves smoke a little cannabis from time to time. A prospective employer won't like to have someone working and living on the property who uses narcotics even if the owner, operators, foreman or what have you smokes pot. That's just the way it is.

* Expect to be the “low man on the totem pole” if you look for the type of employment where you're working out of the eyes of the government. If you walk onto a family or industrial ranch or farm and ask for work, don't immediately ask about wages since it's likely that the owners or operators will want to examine you and try you out for the day to determine whether they'll give you a serious try out.

In such places where a foreman of a farm or ranch as-

signs you tasks for the day to evaluate whether you're worth giving a serious looking over, you may be given a place to sleep and something to eat, and in the morning you may be asked to hit the road or you may be asked to stick around and talk a bit.

If you're asked to stay and answer questions, you could expect to be grilled heavily with questions designed to delve into whether you're trustworthy and capable of performing the work, and whether you'll put in the required number of hours every day without slacking.

* Also such work may be seasonal with farms and ranches hiring certain months during the year. You will be competing with illegal immigrants for such seasonal work, of course, however if you're in the United States legally or are a citizen, you stand a better chance of being hired than an illegal immigrant has if the employer has had warnings by the government about hiring illegal workers.

Montana Supreme Court Justice James C. Nelson was asked to rule a case where a suspect's trash that had been discarded.

Justice Nelson:

I have signed our Opinion because we have correctly applied existing legal theory and constitutional jurisprudence to resolve this case on its facts.

I feel the pain of conflict, however. I fear that, eventually, we are all going to become collateral damage in the war on drugs, or terror-

ism, or whatever war is in vogue at the moment. I retain an abiding concern that our Declaration of Rights not be killed by friendly fire. And, in this day and age, the courts are the last, if not only, bulwark to prevent that from happening.

In truth, though, we are a throw-away society. My garbage can contains the remains of what I eat and drink. It may contain discarded credit card receipts along with yesterday's newspaper and junk mail. It might hold some personal letters, bills, receipts, vouchers, medical records, photographs and stuff that is imprinted with the multitude of assigned numbers that allow me access to the global economy and vice versa.

My garbage can contains my DNA.

As our Opinion states, what we voluntarily throw away, what we discard—i.e., what we abandon—is fair game for roving animals, scavengers, busybodies, crooks and for those seeking evidence of criminal enterprise.

Yet, as I expect with most people, when I take the day's trash (neatly packaged in opaque plastic bags) to the garbage can each night, I give little consideration to what I am throwing away and less thought, still, to what might become of my refuse. I don't necessarily envision that someone or something is going to paw through it looking for a morsel of food, a discarded treasure, a stealable part of my identity or a piece of evidence. But, I've seen that happen enough times to understand—though not graciously accept—that there is nothing sacred in whatever privacy interest I think I have retained in my trash once it leaves my control—the Fourth Amendment and Article II, Sections 10 and 11, notwithstanding.

Like it or not, I live in a society that accepts virtual strip searches at airports; surveillance cameras; “discount” cards that record my buying habits; bar codes; “cookies” and spywear on my computer; on-line access to satellite technology that can image my back yard; and microchip radio frequency identification devices already implanted in the family dog and soon to be integrated into my groceries, my credit cards, my cash and my new underwear.

I know that the notes from the visit to my doctor’s office may be transcribed in some overseas country under an out-sourcing contract by a person who couldn’t care less about my privacy. I know that there are all sorts of businesses that have records of what medications I take and why. I know that information taken from my blood sample may wind up in databases and be put to uses that the boilerplate on the sheaf of papers I sign to get medical treatment doesn’t even begin to disclose. I know that my insurance companies and employer know more about me than does my mother. I know that many aspects of my life are available on the Internet. Even a black box in my car—or event data recorder as they are called—is ready and willing to spill the beans on my driving habits, if I have an event—and I really trusted that car, too.

And, I also know that my most unwelcome and paternalistic relative, Uncle Sam, is with me from womb to tomb. Fueled by the paranoia of “ists” and “isms,” Sam has the capability of spying on everything and everybody—and no doubt is. But, as Sam says: “It’s for my own good.”

In short, I know that my personal information is recorded in databases, servers, hard drives and file cabinets all over the world. I know that these portals to the most intimate details of my life are restricted only by the degree of sophistication and goodwill or ma-

levolence of the person, institution, corporation or government that wants access to my data.

I also know that much of my life can be reconstructed from the contents of my garbage can.

I don't like living in Orwell's 1984; but I do. And, absent the next extinction event or civil libertarians taking charge of the government (the former being more likely than the latter), the best we can do is try to keep Sam and the sub-Sams on a short leash.

As our Opinion states, search and seizure jurisprudence is centered around privacy expectations and reasonableness considerations. That is true even under the extended protections afforded by Montana's Constitution, Article II, Sections 10. and 11. We have ruled within those parameters. And, as is often the case, we have had to draw a fine line in a gray area. Justice Cotter and those who have signed the Opinion worked hard at defining that line; and I am satisfied we've drawn it correctly on the facts of this case and under the conventional law of abandonment.

That said, if this Opinion is used to justify a sweep of the trash cans of a neighborhood or community; or if a trash dive for Sudafed boxes and matchbooks results in DNA or fingerprints being added to a forensic database or results in personal or business records, credit card receipts, personal correspondence or other property being archived for some future use unrelated to the case at hand, then, absent a search warrant, I may well reconsider my legal position and approach to these sorts of cases—even if I have to think outside the garbage can to get there.

I concur.

/S/ JAMES C. NELSON

Long story short: the longer you are off, the harder it is to get back on, and vice versa. The longer you are off, the less people are going to be willing to side with you. Once you drop off, realize that when you try and get back on, your friends may be gone. So may your family. And all.

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