

Citizen Self Defense League

Surviving Nuclear Attack

By Jane Eden

Why you need to prepare

Late last year Russian security forces intercepted a deal made by Balashikha criminals for Uranium 235. The uranium can be used to build weapons. The price tag for weapons grade Uranium? You can purchase enough Uranium to blow up New York for less than the cost of a new Volvo, about \$30,000 for 2 lbs. It's enough material to create mass destruction nearly anywhere at any time. Buyers are abundant and seem happy to pay.

The Russian security forces have reason to be proud of their work. But the situation becomes more common every day. With the supply of nuclear contraband and radioactive material increasing, the potential for the material to fall into the wrong hands is almost inevitable. Most stockpiles are loosely guarded, without even surveillance equipment. A significant amount of material has already been stolen and flows freely through the black market to more than 200 potential terrorist organizations around the world. In Turkey, undercover officers recently arrested smugglers selling 2.5 lbs. of non-weapon grade uranium for \$750,000. During an apartment raid in Paris last July three men were arrested when highly enriched Uranium was discovered, along with several tickets to East European countries.

There are at least 100 facilities in the former Soviet Union that house old warheads and weapons material. Most are not secure. Along the eastern coastline more than 80 nuclear subs lay abandoned with radioactive leaks. Power plants in that country may be just as vulnerable. However, Russia is not the only country having troubles containing its nuclear material. The U.S. is faced with containment issues as well.

What can we do if this material falls into the wrong hands? At this point the question may not be so much if, as when. A terrorist



This photo of Hiroshima demonstrates how a direct nuclear attack burns and melts everything in its path except thick stone.

group exploded a test nuclear weapon in the wiles of Australia two years ago. It's not unreasonable to think a terrorist group may test one in a highly populated area at some point in the future.

What to expect from a nuclear explosion

So what happens during a nuclear attack? When a nuclear weapon explodes, three killers are released: heat and light, blast, and radiation. Heat and light from the flash reach temperatures higher than the sun, and include ultra-violet, infrared and visible light rays, which will burn human skin and also set fire to flammable materials such as timber. The good news about a nuclear flash is that it only lasts a few seconds.

If you are exposed to the direct blast of a nuke, you will die. The blast comes in two forms: an initial shock wave, and then air that is sucked back into the vacuum that has been created by the blast. The initial blast will demolish buildings and the vacuum effect may bring down structures that have been weakened. There will be danger from flying glass and small objects as well as col-

lapsing buildings.

Radiation is the third killer and the most disturbing feature of nuclear weapons. It comes in two forms—radiation released by the explosion and residual radiation. In the explosion three types of radiation are released: Alpha, Beta and Gamma. As with all contaminant, shielding is the only method of survival. The danger from alpha particles comes from inhalation, since they will not penetrate the skin and can be deflected by clothing or paper. Beta particles will not usually penetrate the skin, and can be deflected by a thin metal shield. Gamma rays, however, will go right through a human being with devastating effect, but about half of them can be stopped by 10 inches of tightly packed earth or 7 inches of concrete.

How do you survive?

Your exposure and ability to survive depend on many factors; the size of the weapon, its point of detonation, the type of terrain and, most importantly, on how well you are protected.

There are three types of blasts, airburst,

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Barricade Tactics

Basic Use of Cover and Concealment

By Steve Krystek

Pop! Pop! Pop! You hear these uncomfortable sounds. What do you instinctively do? Hopefully, you move to cover. Armed professionals and citizens should condition their minds to instantaneously react in predetermined ways to specific danger cues. The sounds of gunfire, or possible gunfire, need to elicit a move-to-cover response. Making use of available cover and/or concealment establish a tactical advantage if the popping sounds turn out to be incoming rounds.

When and Why?

Use cover and/or concealment when a projectile weapon threat exists if three conditions are present:

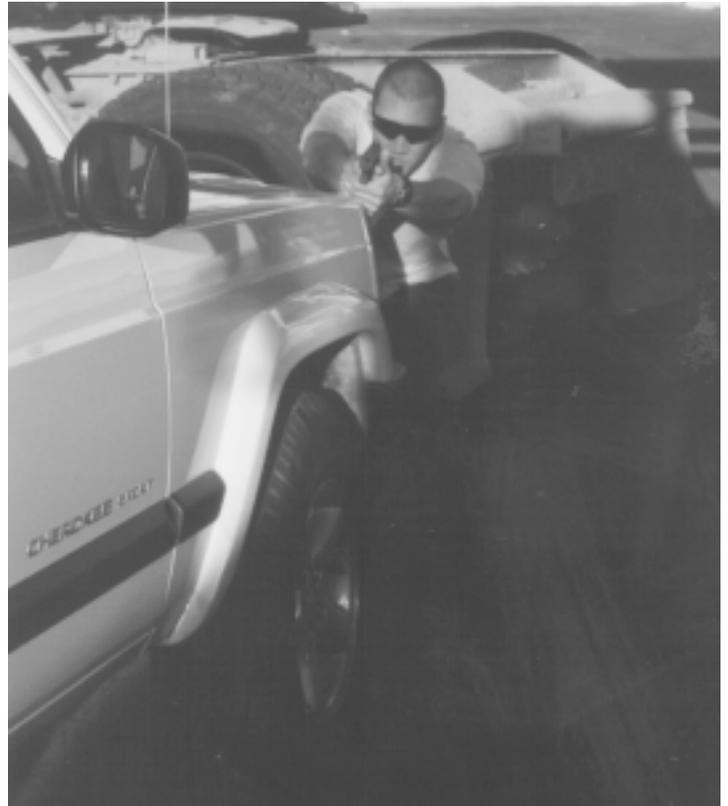
- 1) It is available, and you know where it is located.
- 2) You have time to safely utilize it.
- 3) There is an appropriate amount of distance between you and the threat.

These factors, dictated by the circumstances of the confrontation, will determine whether it is unsafe or impractical to move to cover before engaging the threat. In close-quarter combat, a counter-attack will almost always precede moving to cover, even if it is nearby. If time and distance are not on your side, address the threat first, then reposition yourself behind something ballistically protective. If possible, most combative gun handling should take place from a covered position. Tactical Reloads, Emergency Reloads, and Class III/Remedial Action malfunction clearance drills can take anywhere from 1.5 to 8-plus seconds to execute. Being exposed and defenseless for this amount of time during a gunfight should be avoided at all costs.

Identification and Selection

What is cover? Cover constitutes any object or barrier that will protect you from being shot as well as conceal your position. Some examples would include the engine block area of a vehicle, a solid brick wall, or a concrete planter. Concealment, on the other hand, only serves to hide or obscure your location. It does not provide ballistic protection.

Some examples of concealment include bushes, vehicle doors, the interior walls of most structures, and even darkness. In certain situations, concealment is better than nothing, provided you possess the element of surprise. Look for something large and solid



The engine block of a car or truck provides excellent cover because of the high density, bullet blocking potential.

when selecting any barricade position. Ideally, choose a barrier that will allow you to shoot from around one side or the other as opposed to over it. In reality, we may never know what size, shape, or medium of cover will be available when rounds begin flying in our direction. Therefore, it is critical that we learn to shoot from behind a variety of facades in all types of positions.

Keep Your Distance

Once you reach a position of cover, ensure that you keep an appropriate amount of distance from that barrier. This is a sound tactic for several reasons. First, you negate the possibility of “flagging” your weapon into an unknown area. Not only would this action notify an adversary of your presence, it could provoke a sudden close-quarter struggle and the subsequent abduction of your firearm.



Keeping appropriate distance from your cover prevents you from flagging your weapon and provides some degree of safety from ricochets.

The second reason we maintain a safe distance from a barricade is to avoid being hit by ricochets. If we are near the corner of a barricade, the corresponding vertical or horizontal plane of that barrier, if hit, may cause a round to ricochet off that plane (depending on the medium) at an extremely obtuse angle and travel its length only a few inches from the surface. By not crowding the corner of a barricade, we may give the ricocheting round a chance to travel and elevate enough so as to continue its flight past our position.

Maintaining a reactionary gap from an unknown/danger area is another reason for staying back from the barricade. If you are in close-quarters, this distance will allow you the time to react if a threat spontaneously appears. If you are outdoors with plenty of open area surrounding your barricaded position, this reactionary gap will also give you the space to move forward, thereby cutting down the angle of exposure if the adversary attempts to flank your position.

The final reason we keep our distance from a barricade has to do with following one of the most important tactical principles of personal combat: maximize your distance from a threat in order to minimize your exposure. The environment and the size of the barrier will determine the distance you can safely establish. You want to remain as far away from the barrier as practical, but not so far as to over-expose yourself. In some cases, such as indoor close-quarter environments, you may have no choice but to crowd a corner for cover or concealment. No matter what the circumstances, adapt to your surroundings and use everything to your advantage. ★

Steve Krystek previously served as the senior team leader and trainer of a military special weapons and tactics team, and later as a member of the U.S. Department of Energy's nuclear protective force. He has trained with more than 120 law enforcement agencies, military units, and civilian groups throughout the United States and overseas in close-quarter combat, tactical firearms, and special operations. Steve is currently a full-time police officer for a major metropolitan police department and Director of the Las Vegas-based Progressive F.O.R.C.E. Concepts, a personal combat training organization. For information about training opportunities in your area, call: (702) 647-1126 or visit: www.PFCtraining.com

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ground burst and subsurface bursts. Subsurface bursts are generally used only for testing. Airbursts knock out all communications and electrical equipment, but radiation fallout is not as extensive. Ground bursts, are dirty with heavy fallout and long periods of radioactivity.

If you anticipate that nuclear weapons might be used, prepare protection shelters — which should be at least a foxhole with a covering, at most a fully buried concrete chamber with walls at least 7 inches thick. In the shelter, keep all your equipment—food, water, guns, blankets soap and medical equipment etc.—together to prevent loss in the high winds. If you are caught unprepared, find an expedient shelter. Wear your individual protection equipment whenever you are outside if you anticipate a blast.

At the time of the blast, seek cover if it's less than a few meters away. You may use trash dumpsters, walls, hills, dips in the

ground, drainage ditches, culverts or any feature that will give you some protection.

If you are in the open and cover is not available, lie down on your stomach, cover your face and lay with your feet toward the blast, and stay where you are until the blast and the vacuum subside. Cover as much of your body as possible—especially your head—and seek shelter immediately.

After the explosion, keep under temporary cover until the fallout has stopped. Seek more extensive shelter as soon as possible. Once you reach a secure site, decontaminate your clothing and equipment. Eliminate any dirt you may have brought to your secure site with you. As soon as possible, remove all clothing and brush and wash it in decontaminated water and set it aside for 48 hours. Wash your entire body with special attention to hairy parts, body openings and creases. Scrub your hands and nails thoroughly. Put on uncontaminated clothes if possible.

Cover all wounds to prevent alpha and beta particles from entering. Burns caused by the fireball flash or radiation should be washed with clear water and covered. Radiation reduces resistance to infection, so simple precautions should be taken against respiratory infections.

Sealed meals will be proof against most of the contamination caused by radiation: fresh dairy products and foods with a high salt or preservative content are more prone to contamination. Water from underground wells and springs is likely to be the least contaminated. Avoid unprotected water for at least 48 hours after a detonation. Arguably, nuclear survival depends on how far the war develops. An exchange of tactical weapons may be survivable, but if strategic weapons are employed the possibility of a 'nuclear winter' caused by dust from several large explosions blocking out the sun makes survival more questionable. ★