

SURVIVAL AND THE PARANOID by Kurt Saxon (c) 1977

"One suggestion; you should have the newsletter folded the opposite way. The large title attracts the attention of the mail people and people's family. I don't want everyone to know that I'm stocking up and thinking they can come to me for help. So please have THE SURVIVOR folded backside out"...

..."I'm also wondering if it is possible to have a subscription to your publication, THE SURVIVOR, and/or back issues, sent to us in plain envelopes, First Class, if necessary. Inasmuch as we live in a very conservative community, receiving your publication in a plain envelope would prevent alarming our local postmaster!"...

The above two writers may not be clinically paranoid but they demonstrate the simple inconvenience of paranoia. Both are so afraid of their own neighbors that they will miss out on THE SURVIVOR. No big thing in itself. But what else are they missing out on just because they don't dare let their neighbors in on their preparations?

The term "paranoid" is used constantly but hardly understood. The clinical definition of paranoid is one with delusions of grandeur coupled with feelings of persecution. (A lesbian is a mannish depressive with delusions of gender-pass it on.) A paranoid believes he has gotten to the hidden truths of matters most important to him. He also believes that such knowledge makes him dangerous to those actually running things.

Believing there are enemies all around, fantasizing about plots and such, gives him a feeling of importance, of being in the know. But that feeling of importance is counteracted by the terror of the realization that one's enemies will step on him like a bug once he learns enough to be really dangerous to them.

Paranoids can't accept our social decline as a result of climatic change, surplus population, reduced resources, mental defectives and other natural influences which have been knocking out civilizations throughout history. No, paranoids see a plot behind the whole thing.

Some group, easily identifiable to the initiated and aware, is manipulating civilization. Our collapse is imminent. THEY are destroying everything THEY can't control when the time comes. Then, THEY will step in, run up THEIR flag and assume complete control. THEY will then destroy all those who anticipated THEIR fiendishness.

Of course, these Agents of Darkness have sympathizers in every neighborhood. THEY are also entrenched in the Justice Department with links to every police station and dog pound in the United States.

So the idea of surviving civilization's collapse is actually incomprehensible to the paranoid. He may play at survival but THEY will win in the end. Of course, it all depends on security.

To the paranoid, his only chance lies in secrecy. If a few hundred of the right type can survive, in spite of all the traitors

planted in their midst, good will eventually triumph.

The above doesn't fit every paranoid but too many hold to this general pattern.

When I began THE SURVIVOR, an old man wrote to me about his homemade security system, his advanced age and his ability to survive whatever adversity might strike. I thought he was such a fantastic old man I wanted to share him with others as an example of self-reliance in old age.

I printed his letter and address, thinking he would like to correspond with elders in like circumstances, or young folk needing a granddad figure. As soon as he got the issue with his letter in it he sent me a screaming note about how I'd exposed him to the world, lowered his property values and generally put him in jeopardy.

I answered saying that no one else within over a hundred miles of his town took THE SURVIVOR. If his homemade security system was offensive to a realtor or a potential buyer it could be taken out with no loss of property value. Nothing I said mattered. He was going to sue if I didn't take his address out of the Survivor.

I told him his address would be out the next printing, he had no case and he ought to get his head read. This might have calmed him down except some reader had to go and send him a letter. This started him off again and we had another go-round.

Nowadays I'd just have thrown his letters away, cancelled his subscription and forgotten him. But then I was concerned. I felt I had caused him anguish and wanted to make amends.

However, once you've gotten on the wrong side of a paranoid, there's no making amends. I'm now part of the plot.

Anyway, my point is that paranoia is not funny. It is also a serious drawback to anyone's attempts to survive or to better himself on any level of endeavor.

Paranoia is simply exaggerated and useless fear. Normally, everyone is afraid at times. Normal fear leads to normal caution. But when fear becomes obsessive caution, distrust and universal suspicion, it becomes paranoia.

For instance, say you decide to become a tightrope walker. If you are clumsy and awkward and hung over and strung out and normal, you will fear falling because of a lack of ability. If you really want to be a tightrope walker, you'll go over your shortcomings and eliminate them, thereby fitting yourself to become what you want to be.

But if you are paranoid, you will disregard any of your own short-comings. You will reason instead, that the Circus World is controlled by people who will feel threatened by any success you might achieve. Lest you become a star in their private world, they'll hire someone to shoot you off that high wire.

So the paranoid is actually a self-imagined winner, beaten before he starts. If he isn't actually mentally ill, he has an overactive imagination, putting non-existent obstacles in his own path. Instead of developing his abilities, taking his lumps and

successes as they come, he relieves himself of the challenge by stacking the deck against himself. He's really just a cop-out artist.

Usually he has MBD (see Page 57) which keeps him in a state of arrested development. He's like a child who imagines himself the hero of his fantasies but sees his parents and elders as blocks to any successes he might achieve. An adult with this problem has lofty fantasies but replaces his elders with various authority and power figures who might feel threatened by his achievements. So he doesn't really try to improve his circumstances. In his fantasies he feels little guilt about being a loser. After all, if he weren't so magnificent and superior, would the forces of International Crud be united against him?

Every paranoid, however, has sane moments the same as I do. He realizes that whatever is really keeping him back, he's far behind and he's not very happy. Maybe something got in his way during childhood which made him stop testing the system. That's the key to it all; testing the system to see what one can get away with.

All children do, and if their elders understand and don't over-punish, the child will have a good idea what he can get away with and how far to go in finding his limitations. But if a child has overly strict parents, or MBD, punishment might be so severe, or seem to be, that testing the system is not worth the effort, or it may even seem downright dangerous. So the guy reaches adulthood, either not trying anything, as an individual, or becoming such a Secret Squirrel no one will ever know what he'd doing.

This would be all right except the paranoid often tries to impose his own fears on others who share his stated goals. This can be a drag, especially in my case.

Years ago I saw books hinting at do-it-yourself mayhem. They promised a lot more than they delivered but suggested that any stronger stuff would be suppressed. Well, I'd dabbled in paranoid gutter politics for years and didn't believe such material could be suppressed. I set out to write, publish, and sell the most outrageous, potentially destructive manual ever created on this planet. If interested parties had the power to suppress knowledge, they would suppress the work you know as THE POOR MAN'S JAMES BOND.

Well, first I was talked to by the D.A.'s man and our local FBI agent. Interesting. Then I was subpoenaed to a Senate Hearing in Washington, D.C. They paid my plane fare both ways, put me up in a hotel room with TV and let me rave at a panel of bemused Senators. I had ever so much fun and got a lot of laughs.

There was not one request that I stop publishing the material; there was no threat to my person, my freedom or to my economic security.

I've sold about 40,000 copies of the work over the past five years with no interference from anyone. Yet, I still get orders for the PMJB which are wrapped in aluminum foil so Federal Agents can't read them by X-Ray. Some orders are so coded to protect the identity of the one wanting it that the book comes back marked,

"Addressee Unknown". Paranoia!

Common sense might suggest that since it's legal for me to write it, publish it and sell it, a customer can legally own it. Despite the fact that, to the best of my knowledge, no one has ever been hassled for owning the PMJB, paranoids around the country consider ordering it the last thing they will be allowed to do before being led away.

No matter. What really bugs me about paranoids is their attitude toward THE SURVIVOR. THE SURVIVOR isn't an underground publication. It isn't political; it doesn't advocate any sort of criminality or extreme social activism. Nor is it pornography. THE SURVIVOR is a family publication. Plain envelope, indeed!

Anyone really interested in Survival will have to drop all his paranoid fantasies. The ones who inspired this editorial are too afraid of their neighbors to have an effective chance at surviving.

Survivalists must examine each fear and eliminate it. There are enough real things to fear without being hung up on imaginary fears.

Every fear is an un confronted weakness. I'm no longer afraid of the calamities which face the general populace. I faced my fears and eliminated their cause.

At one time I thought my mail might be monitored. Instead of frustrating the monitors by going out of business, I called my postmaster and had a long talk about it, wherein it was explained to me how mail was monitored and why mine wasn't.

I think everyone gets flashes of paranoia where he entertains irrational fears. But rather than give in to such fears and work out elaborate habit patterns to reinforce them, one should go straight to the source and confront it.

Such an action not only eliminates a fear but makes it harder for new fears to settle in. Practice makes boldness and the Survivalist must be bold.

A guy hiding his survival preparations might as well forget it. His neighbors are more important to his chances than any survival gear. The neighbors I'm talking about are working people who are acquaintances and potential friends. I'm not suggesting one share his plans with welfare bums, winos, dopers and general trash. No. I'm talking about decent people who simply don't share our views at this time. These people will come around to our way of thinking in time.

The Survivalist's early preparations will give him status in his neighborhood as things get worse. The neighbors will listen to him in the near future if he will only give them the chance to agree with him now. But if he automatically writes them off as hostile and potential looters, that's exactly what they'll be when things get really bad.

I think some of you get survival preparations confused with having a fallout shelter. If you had a shelter and your neighbors didn't, you would be severely mobbed in the event of a nuclear war.

Your neighbor's lives would depend on getting in. But an extra supply of food, weapons and trade goods in your home would not give rise to panic. There would be nothing immediate about it.

There won't be a government message saying that everyone with a stock of survival goods will live and those without will die, period. There won't be a stampede to your place. Before things get bad enough for your neighbors to loot you, they will still have time to imitate you, although not as cheaply or with your wide selection.

But let's say you're a real Secret Squirrel and have made your home a storehouse of arms, food, etc. No one knows and finally the system collapses and your neighborhood goes through the turmoil you might expect.

Now your neighbors, who you've considered enemies, have managed to fight off some bands of looters and are setting up neighborhood defense and help organizations. Instead of being among the leadership, you are simply one who shares what they have because they think you are in need.

You're in real trouble because if your neighbors find out you've been holding out and taking help from them, they'll shoot you. If you don't take their help, they'll find out why and shoot you for holding out.

Your only real chance now is to give your neighbors the benefit of the doubt or move to an isolated farm. In any event, the more allies you have, the better your chances. But if all you see now are enemies, that's all you'll see when you need friends the most.