

Last February our newsletter included an article I wrote entitled “The Perfect Storm.” I stated in the document that I worried we were seeing signs of increased violence to come and pointed to multiple issues as contributing factors and evidence. These issues included:

- US unemployment rate
- US budget deficit
- American’s perceptions of the problems we face
- Officer Shootings
- Drug Violence
- Inequality in States
- Domestic Terrorists
- Religious Conflicts and Fears
- International Terrorism
- Middle Eastern Unrest
- Nuclear Threats

While it would be interesting to wait until February 2012 to perform a comprehensive analysis of the events 12 months later, I felt it fitting to perform a quick SITREP to see where we stood at the end of the calendar year.

### Unemployment

At the time of writing the article in February, the U.S. unemployment rate was 9.4%. The good news is that number has fallen at the time of writing this article to 8.6%. Many will argue that the number has fallen largely in part because many have simply given up looking for work.

Americans are still out of work and feeling the stress. Unless they feel some reprieve in the near future, we are all going to experience some of the effects.

### Federal Debt

In February our gross federal debt was approximately \$15.5 trillion. It is now closer to \$16.7 trillion. Many interesting developments have occurred relating to the federal deficit since the last article was written, among them are the formation and failure of the so-called “Super Committee.”

The Budget Control Act of 2011 formed the US Congress Select Committee on Deficit Reduction on 2 August 2011. It was developed as a bi-partisan group charged with figuring out where to cut at least \$1.2 trillion from the federal budget. The committee failed. The result? Partisan blame games, talks of Congress and Senate attempting to back out of the automatic cut deal, threats of Presidential veto, huge cuts to DHS, DoD and DoE (NNSA) funding.

### Officer Shootings / Violence Against Officers

In February I wrote that we had 17 cops killed in one month, 11 shot in a 24-hour period. At the time we had seen a 40% increase in the number of law enforcement officers killed by gunfire. Thankfully we did not stay at this rate. Though the pace declined, 2011 will still be known as a bad year for law enforcement officer fatalities.

At the time of writing this article, we are losing an average of a police officer every 2 days. The total officer fatalities are up 14% from 2010.

If we were fortunate enough to finish the year without another officer fatality due to a gunshot, our numbers would look as follows:

- 5% increase in gunshot deaths from 2010 - 2011
- 27% increase in gunshot deaths from 2009-2011
- 55% increase in gunshot deaths from 2008-2011

This has been a particularly troublesome year for Texas, Florida, New York and California whom have all lost 10 officers or more in the past 12 months.

### Drug Violence

In downtown Monterrey, Mexico, on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011, a sedan filled with cartel members (believed to be Los Zetas) pulled in front of a military vehicle and drew the vehicle into a chase. At a particular intersection, an IED that was concealed in a parked vehicle exploded on the military truck.

While there have been previous IED attacks in other parts of Mexico (in Juarez and Tula – in which cadavers were left in a vehicle along with an IED and reported to the authorities). And there have been previous grenade attacks in Monterrey; this was reportedly the first IED attack here.

The subsequent investigation has revealed that the “device was well constructed, command-detonated, and that Mexican officials were drawn into a carefully executed ambush.”<sup>1</sup>

In late November, a confidential informant was killed and an undercover task force agent was wounded in Houston, TX. The CI and agent from the Houston High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Force (HIDTA) were in a tractor-trailer carrying marijuana as part of an operation. Several undercover officers were tailing and surveilling the load.

Four suspects ambushed the truck, firing shoulder weapons, wounding the agent and killing the agent. A massive investigation by the DEA, Texas DPS, ATF, FBI and Houston Police is underway to determine the actors and intent. If the group knew a CI and an agent were operating the vehicle, the attack is largely unprecedented, as even the most violent cartels have avoided targeting agents and informants in the U.S.<sup>2</sup>

Prior to President Vicente Fox stealing the election in 2000, a group called Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) ran Mexico for 71 years. Voters in Mexico are tired of economic uncertainty and unchecked drug violence so look for the PRI to come back, utilizing their rising star candidate Enrique Nieto.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Dissecting a Mexican Cartel Bombing in Monterrey”, October 27, 2011, STRATFOR

<sup>2</sup> “Above the Tearline: Mexican Cartel Violence in Texas”, November 30, 2011, STRATFOR

<sup>3</sup> Economist Intelligence Unit, “The World in 2012”, pp. 115

As mentioned in February though, Mexico is not alone. Drug Violence continues in most Latin American countries. Most drug violence in Central America occurs in the region known as the “Northern Triangle” of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

The already record high murder rates in some of the countries I listed in February have increased since the February article. Below are the changes:

- Mexico - from 15 to 18 (per 100,000)
- Guatemala – from 46 to 50 (per 100,000)
- Honduras – from 67 to 77 (per 100,000)

Look for it continue and look for violence to continue to move north as various cartels in South and Central America and Mexico jockey for strategic positions. Watch for the following groups to make headline news:

- Guatemala
  - Lorenzana family
  - Mendoza family
  - Mario Ponce
  - Walther Overdick
- Mexico (and spreading)
  - Los Zetas cartel
  - Sinaloa cartel
  - Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)
  - Calle 18

### Inequality in States

Interestingly enough, most of the feedback I received from officers about the February 2011 newsletter involved the section I called Inequality in States. Many didn’t draw a correlation to how it affected them or didn’t feel that it belonged with the other headings.

In the paragraph I wrote, “As a capitalist society it is natural that there is a degree of inequality, however the ‘have not’s’ of the world typically relate issues with inequality as an argument in ‘fairness’ and we have seen many protests throughout the world (including within our own country) based upon the issues of inequality and fairness.” I stand by my words and as evidence let me point to what has happened in America since I wrote the article – the Occupy Movement.

The Occupy Movement has directly affected numerous cities in the U.S. since the first occupation of Zucotti Park on June 14<sup>th</sup>, in which four people showed up.<sup>4</sup> Now Occupy Movements around the country attract tens of thousands of protestors. Scattered violence has occurred.

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<sup>4</sup> Bloomberg Businessweek, “Who’s Behind the Mask”, October 31-November 6, 2011, pp. 67

## Middle Eastern Unrest

In the February newsletter I mentioned the unrest that was beginning to occur in the Middle-East and East Africa regions. At the time, the movements didn't have a name and we knew neither what would transpire nor how far the unrest would spread. I pointed to events breaking out in the following countries:

- Algeria
- Libya
- Saudi Arabia
- Tunisia
- Jordan
- Yemen
- Egypt

Unless you have made a concerted effort to avoid the news or ignore the regions, we all know the results. There is leadership reform in multiple Arab nations.

I cautioned folks not to be hasty in declaring a democratic success and stated I was worried about the political vacuum left behind that could be filled by Islamist groups / governments.

We are beginning to see the results. The events became known as the "Arab Spring." Unfortunately, my fear is becoming a reality in many regions, so much so that the December 10-16<sup>th</sup> cover of *The Economist* features the title "From Arab Spring to Islamist Winter."

I spoke in detail about the political and strategic impact of Egypt and how I would be watching that area closely. Here is where things stand there today:

*"The relatively mild-mannered Muslim Brotherhood, the best-organized of the Arab movements espousing an ideology that bases its message on the texts of Islam, is winning the three-stage election to Egypt's parliament by a wider margin than pundits predicted, with 46% of the seats so far. Far more frightening is the party coming in second, with 21% of the seats. The Salafists, whose name denotes a desire to emulate the Prophet Muhammad, decry alcohol, pop music and other aspects of Western lifestyle. They want to ban interest in banks, think women should cover themselves and stay at home, would segregate the sexes in public, might turn Christians, around the tenth of Egypt's 85m people, into second-class citizens and denigrate Jews, not to mention the people of Israel. Assuming that the two Islamist parties do no worse in the next two rounds this month and next, generally in more conservative areas, they will control a clear majority of seats; the only question is whether the Brothers will keep their promise not to team up and rule together."*<sup>5</sup>

I also made mention of Iran in this portion of the February newsletter. Since that time there have been multiple and major instances between Iran and the U.S. Tehran is seeking

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<sup>5</sup> *The Economist*, "Islamists, Elections, and the Arab Spring. And the Winner is...", December 10-16, 2011, pp. 14

to exploit their Arab neighbors' sense of vulnerability with the U.S. troop withdrawal. They seek to reshape the region's political and security balance.

In the past few weeks the headline stories have surrounded the cold-war era style spy games occurring between Israel, the U.S. and Iran. The latest stories are that they have captured one of our spy planes and are attempting to cyber sabotage our nuclear security systems as we did theirs. 2012 will be a year filled with numerous headlines surrounding the tensions between us.

### Nuclear Threat

The nuclear threat from state and non-state actors will continue to persist as long as the weapons themselves and materials to make them do. This issue is neither new nor extraordinary. The biggest threats facing the U.S. are from Pakistan, Iran and North Korea. And tensions between all of these countries and the U.S. have escalated since February.

Below is a small sampling of headline articles in the past 60 days from Global Security Newswire surrounding CBRNE threats:

- Oct 27 – North Korea Expanding WMD Production Capabilities
- Nov 7 – Iran on Verge of Achieving Nuke Capacity
- Nov 7 – Pakistan Dismisses Report on Lax Warhead Security
- Nov 9 – The Pentagon's Secret Plans to Secure Pakistan's Nuclear Arsenal
- Nov 16 – Danger of Trafficked Nuclear, Radiological Materials Lingers
- Nov 28 – Former FM says Pakistani Nuclear Weapons Vulnerable

Naturally, the threat of nuclear materials in the hands of non-state actors is also a very persistent threat. The recent successful penetration by Greenpeace activists of two nuclear facilities in France underscores this concern.

### Domestic and International Terrorism

The U.S. faces a persistent threat of terrorism. Like the threat posed by nuclear weapons and materials, this is neither new, novel, nor short-lived. However, I believe that we are beginning to witness a shift in strategies, tactics, techniques and procedures of terrorist organizations worldwide. The shift is that of smaller scale less elaborate attacks carried out by one or two individuals utilizing simple weapon systems. Certain terrorist leaders have called for this type of attack:

*"In a March 2010 video titled "A Call to Arms" American-born al Qaeda spokesman Adam Gadahn openly advocated a tactical approach to terrorist attacks – conducting simple attacks utilizing readily available weapons – that was first publicly advocated by AQAP leader Nasir al-Wahayshi in Sada al-Malahim and expanded upon in each issue of Inspire. Ordinarily, it is the al Qaeda core that sets the agenda in the jihadist realm, but the success of AQAP in inspiring grassroots operatives has apparently cause the core group to jump on the AQAP bandwagon and endorse al-Wahayshi's approach."*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Special Report: "Jihadism in 2010: A Persistent Grassroots Threat" January 4, 2011, STRATFOR, pp. 6

There were few operational successes by al Qaeda or other large terrorist groups in 2010 and 2011. What we did see however is an increase in attacks made by individuals around the world. These individuals have been referred to in the news as “Lone Wolves,” “Jihadists,” and “Grassroots Terrorists” among other titles. Depending on the weapon system(s) utilized, they may only be referred to as “Active Shooters” within the law enforcement circle.

According to the 2010 Report on Terrorism from the FBI, worldwide there were 11,604 attacks in 2010. The specifics break down as follows:

<b>Attack Type</b>	<b>Numbers of Incidents</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Attacks</b>
Armed Attacks	4,833	42%
Bombings	4,275	37%
Kidnapping	1,283	11%
Unknown	898	8%
Arson / Firebombing	707	6%
Assaults	444	4%
Suicide	263	2%
Other Types	192	2%

As the table above displays, armed attacks now outnumber bombings. This was not the case in recent history.

The following table displays data on effectiveness of each attack type. It is important to take into context and examine along with the frequency of use data in the other table.

<b>Attack Type</b>	<b>Number of Fatalities Caused</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Fatalities</b>	<b>Average Number of Fatalities per Attack (Lethality)</b>
Armed Attacks	6,085	46%	1.259
Bombings	6,595	50%	1.542
Kidnapping	777	6%	0.060
Unknown	926	7%	1.031
Arson / Firebombing	410	3%	0.579
Assaults	616	5%	1.387
Suicide	2,574	20%	9.787
Other Types	202	2%	1.052

The average person may believe that the vast majority of weapons utilized by terrorists are suicide bombers. These attacks grab media attention and headlines. However, statistically speaking (as the first table shows) terrorists are much more likely to employ another

weapon system before a suicide bomb. However, though suicide bombings make up only 2% of the attacks, they cause 20% of the deaths. They have a higher lethality rate than the other weapons.

### Conclusion

I did not go out on any limbs with my predictions in February. The intent was not to show how good we are at predicting future behaviors but to point out that certain events are worth paying close attention to because they will have impact on your job and your home life. Law enforcement administrators and trainers need to pay particular heed to the events of the world as they need to provide the tools to their staff in advance of need instead of being completely reactionary.

If you revisit the February newsletter and look at my concerns by topic and compare them to today's current landscape you will find that I had good reason to show concern. And the events are far from being completely unfolded. 2012 will be an extremely trying and turbulent time for the U.S., Europe, the Middle-East and East Africa and many other regions of the world.

The intended take away is the forecasts that can be drawn based on recent history and the data from recent attacks. The writing is on the wall. Our training needs to reflect the fight that one or more of our cities will face.

The U.S. has spent over \$1.5 billion in preparing for a dirty-bomb attack.<sup>7</sup> How prepared do you feel for that type of attack? Despite the massive amounts of spending, most feel very ill prepared. Who will be the primary responders for this type of event? Law enforcement will (as always) be one of if not the first disciplines on the scene but they will not be the primary responders. I do not dismiss the potential for terrorists to strike us with a CBRNE weapon. I take the threat very seriously and our history shows our concern (GTI is the only organization in the world known to have acquired a nuclear facility and converted it in to a training site for the sole purpose of training first responders).

However, we face large budgetary constraints that will grow increasingly worse for 2012. We have to be prepared for ANY attack but we had better be extra vigilant for the attacks that we face the highest probability of encountering. GTI has publicly stated for years that we must be prepared for attack perpetrated by a single individual or small party utilizing firearms and potentially explosives. The worldwide statistics are pointing to the increased utilization and the effectiveness of these attacks. Law enforcement WILL be the primary responders for this type of event.

Yesterday STRATFOR performed an analysis of the recent lone wolf attack in Belgium:

*"The effectiveness of simple attacks can be seen in recent incidents such as Maj. Hasans 2009 attack on Fort Hood in the United States. Also, in the July of this year in Norway, Anders Breivik demonstrated the deadliness of a rifle over more complex improvised explosive devices (IEDs). He was able to kill 68 people with his rifle versus 8 people with a massive vehicle-borne IED in Oslo.*

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<sup>7</sup> Global Security Newswire, "U.S. Anti-'Dirty Bomb' Effort Has Cost \$1.5B", Sept. 7, 2011

*While improvised explosive devices and suicide bombings are far more dramatic, they are not necessarily as lethal as armed assaults and they are certainly more difficult to organize. Rifles, ammunition and grenades are relatively easy-to-use weapons systems that come already assembled and ready to use. They do not require homemade assembly that makes IEDs and suicide vests prone to human error. Regardless of Amranis intentions today, tactically he reminds us that attacks don't need to be complex to kill people."*

I would add some other low-tech attacks perpetrated by terrorists and common criminals as examples of the effectiveness of these types of attacks:

- Beslan
- Mumbai
- Columbine / Virginia Tech and the dozens of other "active shooter" incidents we have seen in our school systems
- The North Hollywood Shootout
- The Texas Tower Incident
- The D.C. Sniper incidents
- Etc...

Let us not be part of a historian's account of how or where things went wrong or how evidence or cues were missed. The fight is coming. Will you be prepared?