

SHTF SCHOOL

<http://SHTFschool.com>

INTRODUCTION

OK, i wanna share with you my own experience. (be patient with my English, i am from far away)

I am from Balkan region, and as some of you may know it was hell here from 92-95, anyway, for 1 whole year i lived and survived in a city of 50 000- 60 000 residents WITHOUT: electricity, fuel,running water,real food distribution, or distribution of any goods, or any kind of organized law or government. The city was surrounded for 1 year and in that city actually it was SHTF situation.

We did not have organized army or police force, there was groups of defenders, actually anybody who had a gun, fight for his own house and his own family.

Some of us was better prepared, but most of families had food for couple of days, some of us had pistol, few owned AK-47 when all started.

Anyway, after one month or two, gangs started with their nasty job,hospital looked like butchery, police force vanished, 80 percent of hospital staff gone home.

I was lucky, my family was big in that time (15 members in one big house, 5-6

pistols, 3 Kalashnikov s) so we lived and survived, most of us.

I remember US Air force dropped MRE every 10 days (god bless USA for that) as help for surrounded city, it just was not enough. Some of houses had little gardens with some vegetables, most did not.

After three months rumors started about first deaths from starvation, deaths from low temperatures, we stripped every door , window frame from abandoned houses for heating, i burned all my own furniture for heating, lot of people died from diseases, mostly from bad water (two of my family members), we used rain water for drink, several times i ate pigeons, once i ate rat.

Money was not worth shit.

We traded things, black market worked, few examples: for 1 corned beef can you could have woman for couple of hours (sounds bad, but it was reality) i remember, most of that women were just desperate mothers, candles, lighters, antibiotics, fuel, batteries, rifle ammo and of course food, we fight like animals for that.

In situation like that lot of things change, most of people turned to monsters, it was ugly.

Strength was in the numbers, if you were alone in the house, you ve been probably robbed and killed, no matter how well armed.

Anyway, war ended, again thanks to America (and again god bless USA for that). It is not important witch side had right in that war.

It was almost 20 years ago, but believe me, for me it was just like yesterday, i remember everything, and i think i learned a lot.

Me and my family are prepared now, I am well armed, stocked and educated. It is not important what going to happen, earthquake, war, tsunami, aliens terrorists, important thing is that something gonna be.

And from my experience, you can not survive alone, strength is in the numbers,

be close with your family, prepare with them, choose your friends wisely and prepare with them too.

And at the end, this is my first post, and my English is not so good, so don't judge me too hard."

Q: How did you get around safely?

Actually city was broken in something like lot of street communities, in my street (15 or 20 houses) we organized patrols (5 armed man every night) to watch on gangs or enemies.

We traded things between people in that street, 5 miles from my street there was one street with something like organized traders, but it was too dangerous to go there, it worked only during the nighttime (during the day it was sniper alley) and you had more chance to be robbed there than to trade, i used that street only 2 times, and believe me, only when i am really need something bad.

Q: What about wood? It looked like there are many forests around your city, why did you have to burn doors and furniture?

First, thank you for your questions, i did not expect this amount of interest for my post.

I'll be glad to share lot of things with you guys because i want to learn lot of things from you.

Anyway:

My region have lot of woods and forests when you check map, but i lived in city that was surrounded by areas with mostly rock and few bushes. Enemies were also really close so we could not get to any bigger forest.

Yes we had some trees in my city, parks, fruit trees, but most of the city is

building and houses” but believe me all trees in the city is going to be burned very fast when you dont have electricity for cooking and heating. After that all what you have is furniture, doors, wooden floors... (and believe me that stuff is burning too fast).

There was almost no car use in town because: most of the roads jammed with ruins, abandoned cars, destroyed houses stuff like that, and petrol was like gold.

If i needed to go somewhere i almost always used night time, never go alone but also never go in big group (2-3 man maybe), always armed, very fast, always in shadows, trough ruins, rarely openly on the street, actually always hiding.

We did not have suburbs and farmers, in suburbs were enemy army, we were surrounded with enemy army, and inside town you did not know who is your enemy.

And yes, there were organized groups of gangs, 10-15 people, sometimes even 50, but also there were normal people like you and me, fathers, granddads, decent folks, who robed and killed, there was not too much good and bad guys, most of us was gray, ready for everything.

Q: Did you prep and what kind of skills did you need?

We use what we had, we was not prepared for that situation,we did not know for prepping.

So you can imagine in some aspects we go back in stone age, actually in most of.

We just used everything what we had, one example, i had in my propane stove big bottle, cylinder, and i did not use it for cooking or heating, it was to valuable, i manage to built (fix) that bottle with my friend so i can attach a hose on some kind of ventil (sorry my english is going down here) so i can fill those disposable lighters, (they are not disposabile if you know how to refill them) those lighters were worth a small fortune.

To make story short, somebody bring empty lighter to me and i fill that lighter with gas, usually i took one can for that or one candle or whatever he can offer me.

I hope you understand my example, my English is poor on some things.

One more example, i worked in the medic field, in time like that, my knowledge was my thing for trade.

And yes, be trained and educated, in times like that it worth a fortune if you know how to fix things, all your goods is going to be exhausted one day, but your specific knowledge can be your food.

I mean learn to fix things (shoes or people, whatever you can).

My neighbor used to know how to make some kind of oil for oil lamps (oil in glass, peace of rope) and he was not hungry, he never showed me how he made that oil i believe he used some tree behind his house and small amount of diesel.

My point is learn things, people always need somebody who knows how to fix things. It was not survival movie, it was ugly, we did what we have to do to survive.

Nobody wins, we just survived, with a lot of bad dreams.

Q: Wasn't it religious, the war?

Sorry man wrong info, that was not Christian vs Muslim war, it was civil war, with lots of switching between sides.

And sorry i am not to go in to the politics, i dont care to much for that, i am not going into religious stories, i mean i believe in God as higher power, and I am trying to live by his laws, i am not belong to any dogma, Muslim or Christian.

Q: Who was your support group?

My group was only my family, my blood (relatives like uncles, grandmother...), in my street and in my town trips i had some close friends, but my best friends was my family. I never take stranger in my close group.

Q: If you had three months to prepare today, what would you do?

If i have extra three months to prepare?

Hmmm, probably run overseas! Joke

OK, Now i am very well aware how things can go very bad in very short time so i have food, hygiene, energy etc. supply for 6 months, i live in apartment with some improved security, i have house with shelter in a village some 5 miles from my apartment, in that house also supply for 6 months, that village small community, most of them are my relatives, most of them are prepared (they learned that from war), i have four kind of fire weapons with 2000 bullets for each (sorry, can not go in details, laws are different here for rifles).

I have big garden with that house and some good knowledge about gardening and farming.

I think i have knowledge now to smell trouble, you know when everybody is saying that everything is going to be fine you somehow know that is everything going to fall apart.

I think i have strength to do everything what it takes to keep me and my family alive, because when everything is going to sh., be sure, you are going to do some bad things to save your kid. You don t want to be hero, you want to survive with your family.

One man survivor, no chance (OK it is my opinion) no matter how well armed and prepared, at the end you gonna die, i've seen that, many times. Family groups or closest friend with lot of preparing and lots of different knowledge, i believe that

is best.

Q: What items should we stockpile?

Well depends, i guess if you stock only one thing you are not going to survive, unless you want to survive like robber, then you need only gun and lot of ammo.

I believe besides ammo food hygiene and energy things (batteries etc.) you need to focus on small things for trade, pocket knives, lighters, flints.

Also LOT of alcohol, kind that can stay long, i mean stuff like whiskey and that, does not important what kind, you can have cheapest kind, it is very good thing for trade in desperate time.

Also lack of hygiene things killed a lot of people, i've seen that.

You gonna need to have some simple things, like for example lot of garbage bags, i mean a lot, many uses for that, and a LOT of duct tape, many many uses for that.

In case of weapon keep it simple, i mean now i always carry Glock 45 with me, because i like that gun, but it is not usual gun and usual caliber here, so i also have two 7,62 mm TT Russian pistols hidden, because almost everybody have that gun here and a lot ammunition.

I don t like Kalashnikov, but here there is that rifle on almost every 3rd house so...

Most of the time i collect my water from roof in 4 big barrels during the war, then cooked to disinfect, we also had river in that town , too polluted but if you can't choose...

I guess it depends how far you going to go to survive with your actions, you need to be prepared to do some ugly things.

Oh yes it changed my perspective on life, i know now that bad things can happen, and on more important thing, actually i believe it is most important: I don't anymore believe government and authority, not at all. When they really doing

their best to assure you that everything going to be fine, you can be sure that something bad is happening.

Do not just believe, research.

Q: What about the civil war...and the religious fighting? Did gold and silver help much and how did you get the alcohol and other supplies?

I believe in some point this discussion gone wrong way, and no i am not offended, everybody have right for opinion, so here is few of my opinions:

It was a civil war, yes there was a great influence of religion, but somebody mention "what did you do with people of other religion?"

Well in my family there are people with different religious beliefs so what do you mean with that?

I ll try to explain you simple; it was an attackers and defenders, lot of switching sides, civil war. War ended without winners, it ended with truce, thanks mostly to USA. It was the wrong war, wrong reasons. I did not fight for religion or ethnicity, i fought to keep my family and myself alive.

For last 15 years we have peace, we live with people who use to be our enemies, i do not to want to have war and enemy again because ethnicity or religion or any other reason.

Please do not try to generalize anything about that war, there was not good and bad side, we all suffered and we all try to live together again.

And yes every side did bad things, and every side had booth good and bad guys.

I am here for one and only reason- survival, i want to learn, and i can share some useful stuff with you.

I don t think about your religious beliefs, your ethnicity or your politic opinion.

Few words about my city before war, it was a usual Balkan town, normal life,

decent people, schools, theaters, parks, college, airport, crime rate very low, town like most of the smaller towns in USA (i think). I was a young man, just like any of you maybe.

Now very important think: i am not here to discuss about war reasons, or sides, religion or anything similar.

Thanks to the war, in my town was REAL SHTF situation, and we can discuss only about that, only that is important.

You have a lot internet pages, you can learn everything about that war, and you can choose side if you want.

OK that s it.

About survival.

I don t know about other people on this forum, but i have lot of alcohol stored now.

At the beginning of war tank grenade smashed front wall of small distillery (alcohol factory) close to my house, so we took something around 500 liters of rakia (it is something like local whiskey, i guess, it made from grape, very strong)

It was great stuff for trading, people used alcohol a lot, desperate times i think, we also use it for disinfection.

About hygiene, cups and plates, paper or plastic, you gonna need a LOT, i know, we did not have it at all.

My opinion that hygiene things is more important maybe than food, you can easily shoot pigeon, if you have grandmother she may know some eatable plants on nearest small hill (my experience) but you can not shoot hand sanitizer.

Water purifying pills, all kind of cleaning stuff, sanitizers, lot of soap, bleach, gloves, masks, all disposable, take very good care about first aid training, learn how to treat smaller cuts, burns or even gunshot wound, there is not hospital, even if you found doctor somewhere he probably do not have any meds, or you do not have stuff to pay him.

Learn how and when to use antibiotics and have it a lot.

Believe me with good knowledge and good amount of meds you are gonna be rich.

About gold and silver, yes, me personally gave all my gold for ammunition in that time, but it did not worth too much.

About pets, i did not have it, i did not notice a lot pets in that time, did somebody ate it? I don t know, probably.

About small family, hmm, not good, usually few smaller families get together in biggest house and stay together, all relatives (my case)

Small family or single man, not good for survive in town SHTF, maybe in wilderness (i don t have experience in that) Even if you stay low profile, hidden in your house with lot of food etc, sooner or later mob will come, and you have maybe have one or two guns, very hard. I agree with low profile policy, it is very important not to attract people with anything, but when they come, you need to have numbers, people and guns, best people is your family.

About moving trough the city: always night time as i mentioned, never alone, 2-3 man, very fast, never attract with anything, look like everybody else, if most folks look desperate, poor, dirty you need to look same, there is no need that everybody know you have good amount of food, ammo , clean cloths and everything else back at home. Look and act like everybody else.

When somebody attack you or your family then you need to show that you are very ready.

I never walked in big groups,in that time and that situation big group is gang.

Now, this is all my experience, it was then, i did a lot of mistakes, i am not expert, i am here just like any of you, to learn and share.

For example i don t know too much about wilderness survival, i am here to check it.

Q: What happened to those who died? Where did

people get firewood?

Well, who ever died or get killed in that period, did not get proper funeral.

Folks used every peace of free land, close to house for burial, sometimes even in the garden, 2-3 city parks turned to graveyards, after war most of them are exhumed and properly buried.

There was not noting like burning bodies or anything similar, as far as i know.

Oh one more interesting thing about fire, some people use to go few miles during the night only to find fire somewhere so they can fire peace of wood and bring it home, and start fire for cooking or heating, lighters and matches was really precious, and most of the folks did not have enough firewood do keep always fire. For most of the people it was constant search for something, fire, wood, food, ammo...

Q: Was salt valuable?

It was valuable yes, but not too much, for example coffee or cigarettes were much more worth.

Q What about cigarettes?

Hm, i had a lot of alcohol as i mentioned before, i traded almost everything without any problem, let me say it like this: consumption of alcohol was probably 10 times more than in normal time. Not to mention cleaning and disinfection.

On the other side you made a very good point, if you have money and time and you have a storage it is probably better to store cigarettes or candles and batteries for trade, or food.

I was not prepper at that time, we did not have time to prepare, few days before SHTF politicians on TV stated that everything is fine, when sky fell down we just take what you can.

Q: Tell us more about cooking and the foods you were able to prepare. Were you concerned about the smell getting around and alerting people that there was food over there?

About cooking, before the SHTF i used in my house electricity for booth, cooking and heating, so when everything started i traded some stuff for some kind of old wood stove, i put it in kitchen ad fix exhaust pipe (right word?) trough hole in wall, i use that for cooking and heating.

During the summer i cooked in my backyard (walled fence, brick, luckily)

Concerning the smell of the food, hm, i ll try to picture situation: no electricity, no running water, sewage off for months, dead bodies in ruined houses, grime and mess, believe me it was very hard to smell something nice.

It was not like in movies, it was ugly,dirty, and smelly.

Yes i had few problems because of cooking, only few, but as i sad before, enough people, properly armed and with will to defend and you can manage most of the problems with that.

Probably situation would be different in wilderness.

I ate mostly some kind of pancakes with local herbs (does not require cooking oil and too much firewood), and of course everything what i could get and trade, rice was good to eat, not too much firewood for that.

I think i had luck, only few times i ate funny things like pigeons.

I always had something to trade, i guess that saved me, and guns of course.

Q: 1. Why would the night be safer than daytime? Outside of the obvious of being easier to hide at night, but were the gangs more out during the days? Also, why only small groups of 2-3? What happened to larger groups?

2. Why would you have to go out at night? For instance, where were you going and why?
3. How did you handle the mob situation when they came for you, or your family?
4. You mentioned trading for bullets, etc. How much shooting were you doing during that time and how much ammo did you have, or would like to have had?
5. How were you able to determine who was an enemy and who wasn't? How did you manage to get out there trade with people and when/where?
6. What fortifications did you do to your home and what kind of guard, or protections did you have in place?
7. Finally, how did you avoid snipers? What precautions did people take against them?

First almost nobody were out during the day because of snipers, line of defense was very close, so whatever you have to do, you do it during the night, trade something, look for firewood (i can express how much this was important in town, and hard), looking for anything, check somebody, go to hear news (very very important, lot of people get killed because they go somewhere just to see what happening, or what s new) remember, no news, no radio ,no tv, nothing, rumors fed lot of people.

Already explained, you can stay home and die of hunger and cold, or even infection of some small wound or go out and risk your life, try to find - trade anything useful.

I did have situations concerning my house only, it is no need for too much details, we had more fire power, and brick wall.

Also we had something like street watch, people from my street were good organized, in case of gangs, now there were a lot shootings.

There was pretty much shooting in town, i did not have enough weapon at the

beginning, one rifle and one pistol (ww2), maybe 100 bullets, later i trade some things for more rifles and ammo, remember i gave car battery for 2 rifles.

How much ammo ?

A LOT, as more as you can.

Most of the time you are not able to determine who is enemy or friend, expect my family and few real friend, everybody else is potential enemy. When your friend must choose between his child s death and your death guess who is going to choose.

Rumors, somebody tells you that some old guy few block away have some cans and he is looking for ammo or whatever, you go there, as i say you are always looking for something. Same some people would came in my street as traders, with some goods.

There was something like trade street during the night, actually it was a big ruins of sport center, you can go over there and look for something or offer something, but it was not controlled by anyone so it was too dangerous.

It was primitive pretty much, brick wall around house, bags of sand on windows and doors, over that bags we used whatever you can, big pieces of metal, stones, inside house we put all kind of stuff on windows, only small opening left for rifle, always 5 members of family ready for fight, one always outside on street hidden.

Stone age situation

To avoid snipers, we stay home at day, it was not so much night snipers, even during the night we never walked openly on the streets if we can avoid that, always shortcuts, trough ruins, fast and quiet.

Q: What was your bathroom situation? Where did you go? Did you have anything to wipe with?

Sorry ask such personal questions, but this is something that I've wondered about in this type

of situation.

We used shovel and any piece of land close to house, sounds dirty, and it is dirty, washing with collected rainwater, sometimes go to river (most of the time that was too dangerous) Most of the time we did not have toilet paper, even if i had it, i trade it.

It was a bad situation all the time.

If i can give some advice: first to prep is a weapon and ammo, then everything else, i mean everything, depends how much money and space you have, if you forget something no problem there is always somebody ready for trade, but if you forget guns and ammo then you may not be able to get to trading places.

I do not see big family or group of really(i mean really) good friends as more mouth to feed, i see them as more guns and strength, it is in people nature to adapt.

And keep it simple and use common sense, in the first period weak people vanished, other fight.

Go with small thing, lighters, candles, flints. It is great idea to have fuel generator(electrical generating unit?) but i think is better idea to have 1000 bic lighters. Fuel generator is great, but in shtf scenario in town it is going to attract whole army, 1000 bic lighters don t take too much space, cheap, you can always trade it for something.

Real SHTF scenario demands completely change of normal mindset, hard to explain, i ll try through examples.

Q: How easy/hard was it to get weapons AFTER the SHTF and what could you trade for weapon and ammunition

(I remember you saying a car battery for a rifle) and where would I go to find the people who trade in weapons?

Hm, you're right, after the war every house here had a weapon from war, and yes police did some actions to take illegal weapon from population, depends from man to man i guess, lot of people find ways to hide their weapon somewhere, just in case.

I also have legal weapon (license), and authority here have some thing they call it "temporary collecting", it is says something like : in a case of unusual event (riots, unrest, etc) government have right to temporary collect all legal weapon, so i keep always in mind that, and i acted like some people.

You know some people have legal weapon for everyday carry(i have glock 45 and taurus 38) but some people with legal weapon also have illegal weapon hidden somewhere just in case SHTF and "temporary collecting".

It is not hard to get weapon in SHTF if you have good stuff for trade, but other thing is important, first days of SHTF is worst in terms of chaos and panic, maybe you not gonna have time to get gun. And to be unarmed in chaos panic and riots is bad.

In my case man needed car battery for radio i think, and he had some extra rifles, so we trade.

Q: What about medical care for people who were shot or became injured?

Wounds was mostly gunshot wounds of course, without specialists and everything else, if wounded manage to find doctor somewhere he had like 30% chances to live, again it is not movie, mostly they died, lot of died even from minor cuts infections, i had antibiotics maybe for 3-4 treatment. Of course for my family only.

Simple things killed people, diarrhea can kill you in a few days without meds and re hydration, (fluid therapy, IV) especially small kids. Lot of fungal skin diseases, and food poisoning, we could not do too much. Basically we treated diseases mostly with local herbs, and if you had wound, put rakia on it and try to find

antibiotics somewhere.

So i was good at fixing wounds in term of emergency help, but longer procedure-bad prognosis.

What i learned? Hygiene again, and a lot of meds, especially antibiotics. You need to learn to treat lot of stuff, go online, finish some training, EMT maybe, first aid etc.

In SHTF things are different, learn how to open IV, when to use certain drug, or antibiotics.

Get your self ANA TE (anti tetanus) shot injections , snake poison kit, adrenaline kit (allergic reactions, different kinds) thick removal kit, (thick related illness can kill you, learn how to remove thick)...

Get in your prepper storage some reanimation kit (simple one) like small oxygen cylinder, BVM mask etc. It is not really hard to learn to use all of these.

OK let s clear something, of course you can not use anything of this in real world unless you are certified and trained for that (EMT, nurse, physician).

But in SHTF nobody ask you for license, just learn and have in your storage big part for medical things.

So to answer question how did i help and treat, most of the time very poor,i help some with resources that i have, i took food or something else for exchange, i was badly prepared for that, now i am what do i need to have.

Q: Did your local currency/money still hold value? Were you still able to use money to purchase items from other people?

No, not really, i mean sometimes you can use foreign money if you had it to buy something, (dollars or German marks) but even in that rare occasion rate was unbelievable for examples 1 can of beans for 30-40 dollars (normal value was maybe 0,50) i guess somebody had connections with outside world, black market

you know, so he can earn lot of money. But it was very rare. Trade was main thing to get something.

Local currency crashed very fast, in few weeks or month maybe.

Q: How much space should I keep for alcohol storage? What was security like?

About alcohol first, you right but you are right in booth ways, people need alcohol more in desperate times then usual, so it is kind of gambling i guess , it is very good item for trading, i never had problems with alcohol trading and having than problems with trading other things.

Also i am thinking about something else, maybe it is better to fill my storage with something less space consuming but still interesting for trade, like batteries, antibiotics etc.

Thing is i had all that alcohol for free, i did not buy it. I don t know about this.

In most of the situations people attack me because they think they are stronger, they did not know for sure what i really had.

About ammunition trade, it depends how much ammo you are going to have, sometimes i trade ammo for food, and in few weeks again food for ammo, but i never never do trade at my home, and never bigger amounts, very few people knew how much of anything i had in my house.

The point is store as much of anything as you can store (space , money) later during the situation you ll see what is most popular, correction ammo and guns always gonna had 1 place for me, but who knows maybe number 2 for trading gonna be for example masks with filters.

About medical issue , i ll write in my next post what do i have now in my medical part of storage.

Defense were very primitive, again we were not prepared, we use what ever we

could, windows were broken, roofs mostly damaged from shelling, all windows were blocked with something, sand bags and rocks, every night i blocked my yard gate with junk- rubble from the street and i use old aluminum ladder to get over the wall, when i come back i called somebody from house to get me that ladders so i can move in.

Guy from my street barricaded his house completely, if he go out at night he use a hole that he made in one room that is connected with neighbor s house, and go trough his (ruined and destroyed) house out, actually he had secret entrance.

It may look weird to say but most secured houses are gone first, of course we had some very nice houses in neighborhood, with walls, dogs, alarms, steel bars on windows, alarms. And you can guess what happened, mob attacked those houses first, some were defended other not, depend how many guns and hands they have inside.

So i think security is great, but be sure that you keep it low profile, forget about alarm, if you live in town and SHTF you gonna need simple looking non interesting secured house, with lot of guns and ammunition.

Just keep it low profile and not interesting.

On my apartment door now i have steel door for security reason, but only to keep me trough first short period of chaos, then i am moving out to connect with bigger group of armed people (family and friends) in the country (i hope).

Well in my case migration did not happen because it happen very fast, other army just closed city in ring and that s it, if you ask me where was that army and how we did not seen them coming, the answer is simple, that army was an ally of army of my side and people, and one day we woke up and figured they are enemy now and they are closing all ways out. Politics . It is true, one more side of civil war.

But i heard from others parts of country, and my friends who stayed in villages in the other parts in state, that they have much better situations, countryside had land, corn, wheat, fruit trees, farms etc they had enough food, it was bad, but much better than in city.

I know one thing if we had some way out from the town, we would use it, we did

not have it.

Q: What was the situation with banks and stores?

About banks, loans, credit cards. Complete monetary system died for about one year, so nothing works.

It is complex question in many ways, i ll try it to answer it in some future posts, need much more time and much much more space to describe it. Even now almost 20 years later folks are at European court suing banks, because they dont want to admit their savings in banks, lot of different things happened in that period , they changed money, i mean monetary name, they changed it 2-3 times , hyperinflation occurs, lost of paper trails about savings, loans ... i remember some people use that situation to get rich, they still rich.:)

So i ll try to describe that in separate post.

There was a lot problems with proving people s property after everything, for example: my father had nice apartment and because war he must leave it, after war ended he was at court for about 4 years proving that apartment was his, reasons for that were different, because politics in that time, but also he did not have enough paper work to prove that apartment was his (he did not took papers from apartment when he fled, he had more important things to care).

On the other side during the worst period, people just moved in empty house, and that s it.

I mention rural areas in other post. As far as i remember it was better there.

In that period there is not running vehicle, actually i remember tank at the front line, and Lada Niva (check it on web) with cut of doors and roof and installed machine gun (i think it was an old m53) and those two only moved when they fired(they keep it hidden behind ruined houses).

For let me call it “civilian population” there was no moving with vehicles, streets were mostly under rubble and unusable and fuel was too expensive.

Not to draw attention was a big thing, about clothing, there use to be some sort of town defense, it was not like real military, mostly mixed civilian clothes with part of uniforms, different weapon, so no rules.

But as soon as go in to that things and try to talk about two armies, their strength, war crimes, politics i am not gonna like it any more, because people gonna start to choose sides, and i think it is not important for us here.

As i said before there was not organized army, but we all been like soldiers, we had to, most of us carry weapon and try to protect from enemy army and robbers.

Inside the town you did not want to look fancy because somebody shoot you and took your good stuff, you did not want to have fancy rifle, because probably you not gonna find ammo in that caliber and also you are drawing attention.

So let s me try to put it this way: if SHTF tomorrow, i will try to look like most of the people outside, scared, desperate, confused and i ll scream maybe, no fancy looking stuff, i ll not go out in fancy new uniform and yell "I am here, you are finished now looters and robbers" I ll stay low profile, heavily armed and well prepared waiting to see my options, even if i have to go out with all my gear to do things i ll go in night, with best friend or brother. Maybe sounds ridiculous, but from my experience it works, be very well prepared, but let nobody outside your house know or see that.

No matter how good is your house security, how good is your weapon, if people see that they have good reason to rob you they probably rob you in town SHTF, it is only matter of time and number of guns. Don t ever give them reason to be interesting for robbing. Stay uninteresting. Now this is my opinion, maybe is not working in different situation.

About robbing grocery store and gas stations, it happened very very fast, as soon as shooting started all valuable things was emptied, there was some effort of authority to keep it together but everything fall apart in first weeks.

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