

Podcast #207 Transcription: **Looter Defense Lessons From The Puerto Rico Collapse**

Jeff: Hey there, everyone. It is Jeff from Modern Combat & Survival. Welcome to podcast episode number 207.

Now, as you recall, in September of 2017, hurricane Maria obliterated Puerto Rico's already feeble infrastructure. Hundreds of thousands of people were still without power at the beginning of this year, and thousands more struggle without the necessities of life months after the storm. In other words, what happened to Puerto Rico illustrates exactly the type of collapse that we need to prepare for, also.

Now, whether it's due to a devastating natural disaster, a grid down blackout, financial collapse, or any other wide scale national crisis, the lack of resources and infrastructure that our society has grown dependent on could virtually vanish overnight. And when that happens the number of various threats that you'll face greatly increases. From providing for your basic survival needs to being your own protector for you and your family as the world around you crumbles.

Now last week, we held a special live masterclass workshop for our New World Patriot Alliance members that shared the real world lessons learned from a security and disaster response contractor, Russ Adler of FASTnation.us. Now he had boots on the ground in Puerto Rico after the devastation, and his insights really showed NWPA members not only what life really looks like following collapse, but also how to thrive in this environment while everyone else around you is struggling just to stay alive.

Our workshop went for about an hour and a half, and it was filled with real usable survival planning advice. So, if you're an NWPA member, make sure that you head on over to the member's area over at newworldpatriot.org to make sure that you get that download so you can tap into all of those lessons.

But just to give you a taste of some of the training, here's an excerpt from our class where we were talking about the critical factor of self protection against crime and looters during a collapse. Now, don't worry about taking notes, because we've done all the work for you at our handy dandy one page cheat sheet that you can download for free right now, just by going over to www.mcsmagazine.com/207.

And now, here's a quick listen to the strategies that you can use to stay safe during a collapse. Check this out.

Jeff: You know, you brought something up earlier which brings us to the topic of looters and crime because when people don't have stuff, and they're desperate, they look to the people that do have stuff, and take it. And you brought up even that gangs were fighting over stolen generators. And so, if you are one of those people that has a generator,

congratulations, you might have it for a day, and then looters can come and just say, "You know what? I think this is mine now, thank you very much."

In fact, I was in Florida in October of last year. I think it was October or November. And my Uber driver was Puerto Rican. And I asked him, I said, "Hey, do you have family that's over there?" And he's like, "Yeah." I said, "So what is life like over there? What are they experiencing?" And he said one of the big things is that crime has just really risen up, and it's right out in the open because there really was no true police force that was able to keep the law and order. And he said that the fuel points where people would go to get fuel, and some of the water points also, that there were criminals that were just walking up and just taking people's fuel. And it wasn't like they were waiting for them to go down a dark alley or anything like that. It was almost like the mob coming in, and just holding people up for fuel and water, or I'm assuming other resources as well.

But I'm curious what you saw there in the way of looting and crime. And I know New Orleans you were there as well, and everyone knows a lot of what happened there, but what did you observe and what can you take from those experiences about how people can protect themselves and their family from crime and looting during a collapse like event?

Russ: Well, let's start with New Orleans, first. And you know, coming from a law enforcement background, retired law enforcement officer, I was appalled at this. But on three different occasions, I saw two of them and then part of my team that was out on a patrol saw it, another part of it is seeing law enforcement officers lower themselves to the level of crime and looting. Very, very disturbing. Now, that's not a knock on the law enforcement community. I'm just telling you, things get so dire. So bad, that even law enforcement officers can stoop to that level.

Now fast-forward into Puerto Rico. There were several fuel supply companies on the island delivering fuel. Some of them were escorted by law enforcement officers and military personnel. Mainly, the government sanction fuel runs. And then there were several private security, such as myself and my team that were running private fuel runs and stuff. And they're usually run a lot differently.

There were three different occasions where fuel trucks were hijacked. Two of them were with law enforcement escorts. And there wasn't even a shot fired. It was just a threat of force, an overwhelming opposing force rolled up, kindly asked the law enforcement officers to step aside, jumped in the truck and took it. No resistance, not a shot fired. That happened a couple of times that I'm aware of. It probably happened a lot more than what I personally know of. But these were events that happened in the area that I was operating in at the time.

Fortunately, none of my team folks had that happen to them. They were pressed a couple of times, had some soft penetrations if you will, being scoped out, but I guess they didn't like what they saw when they saw our guys escorting, and they moved on to an easier pick. Once again, I'm not denigrating, I'm not knocking law enforcement, but it's all in what the bad guys see when they go to attack these soft targets.

It's a lot easier to get a soft target than a hard target, and here's some ways that you can be prepared. The way you carry yourself, the equipment that you have, whether it's overt or covert. Now, we've talked about this in the past on your appearance and your dress. Certain times, you do not want to look like you're a tactical operator, per se. Unless you have the team to back it up. By yourself, one or two people, that could be a target for a bigger group. If you're a small unit that has the appearance of strength and professionalism, even a bigger opposing group, they're not going to want to bite off a force like that. So appearance is key.

Sometimes low profile is the best, sometimes high profile is the best. Each scenario is different, and you gotta have experienced people that can recognize that. That is the key, is having good leadership in your group. Whether it's your family, your friends, an organized group or not, is having the leadership that can recognize each scenario for what it is.

Now, let's correlate some training. I've been hammering training. You've been hammering training and preparedness. So, law enforcement guys - depending on what state or what continent or what country you're from - they're gonna go to anywhere from a two or three week training course to several months of training. Your military guys are gonna go anywhere from 6 to 8 weeks, even 12 weeks of basic training, and then you're gonna go to another 6, 8, 12 weeks of advanced training after that.

On the military side before a deployment, even your special operations guys have to check some training boxes off before they go down range. And that can be anywhere from a couple of weeks to a couple of months. Your basic infantry guys, they gotta go through usually a one to three month pre-deployment train up before they get sent down range to a combat operation. That's after they've completed 8, 10, 12, 20 weeks of basic and advanced infantry training.

So on the law enforcement side, you go through your initial basic recruit course, and then if you have a proactive agency, you might have to qualify once a year. Some agencies are proactive to the point of qualifying four times a year, or three times a year.

When we look at the average officer involved shootings across the country, the ratio of hits is around 30-40%. Let's just call it 35%. So imagine in your training scenario - I'm gonna go back to Florida, my home state - you've got to qualify by hitting the target in a certain area, in the vital area, it's a little coke bottle shape in the middle of a silhouette target. You've got to qualify within 80% hit ratio. And they only list it as pass or fail. They don't give you a numeric score. They used to, a long, long time ago, almost 30 years ago when I started. Well, yeah, it's been 30 years. They gave you a numeric score. And then some lawsuits started getting filed, so they said okay, it's just pass or fail. You either passed the standard, or you didn't.

Well, the standard's been 80% for as long as I've known it. Now, don't ask me about that other 20% where they miss, or they drop hits, or whatever. But then you take that to the road and it becomes 35%. And some of these shootings involve highly trained officers. SWAT officers. Your operator types. Your guys that shoot. So when you have that stress that's added in a life and death event, your skill sets go down.

So your average civilian, if you're not in a constitutional carry state, you have some sort of criteria if you're in a state that allows the carrying of firearms to where it's either a basic course of fire or it can be a hunter safety course, or a DD 214 from the military, or some of them don't have a standard at all. You just have to get your chief law enforcement officer in your county or your city's permission to get a permit. And then you're done.

So, being prepared for looters and criminals entails a lot more than having a bunch of guns and a bunch of ammo, because if you don't know how to use it, or if all you've done is go to the range or go to your friend's property and plink cans off the fence at 15 or 20 yards with no real interaction with a humanoid type target, or even getting off into force on force type training, you're going to fail miserably when a life and death event befalls you.