

Stay Left of Bang!

by Joe Brong

Everyone has heard the phrase “If you see something suspicious, say something”, but how many of us just look the other way, chalk it up as weird and don’t say anything? As we go about our daily public lives, we become complacent and unaware of our surroundings. There is no limit to terrorism and it can happen anywhere.

In my work experience of 7 years U.S. Army Infantry and 30 years Quality Assurance Inspector, I feel as though I have some experience speaking about situational awareness and human behavior. I’ve learned and observed people’s body language, people being deceitful and general displaced atmosphere. These noted observations are anomalies which would require attention in the presence of public gatherings.

Marine generals realized that they needed a different strategy on how soldiers entered a battlefield. The Marines developed a Combat Hunter course to increase future Marines’ understanding of human behavior, survivability, lethality and decrease enemy effectiveness. From this course came a newly published book called *Left of Bang*, written by Horne and Riley. These skill courses were

extended to law enforcement, security and the average person.

On a timeline, Bang is the act, an IED explosion, a sniper shot or a pressure cooker explosion. Right of Bang is being reactive. Bang is what we want to prevent. Being “Left of Bang” requires someone observing a pre-event indicator, a warning sign, being proactive. Marine soldiers were taught skills for keeping “Left of Bang”.

Having a proactive mindset encompasses specific skills: situational awareness, anomalies, critical thinking and decision-making; these skills proactively identify threats based on human behavior. Keyword here is being **proactive**.

On December 14, 1999, a customs agent at Port Angeles, WA noticed a man acting nervously and becoming increasingly nervous when questioned. Because of his suspicious behavior, the inspector initiated additional inspections on his vehicle, finding baggies of white powder. The Algerian born Ahmed Ressam was detained. Inspectors later found 130 lbs. of explosive material in his vehicle. The inspector averted a bombing at LAX. It was the inspector’s observations of anomalies that she allowed her to act and stop the “Millennium Bomber”.

Having a proactive mindset and knowing what to look for in human behavior can be understood from six domains: Kinetics, Biometrics, Proxemics, Geographic’s, Iconography and Atmospheric’s.

In the case of the above story, the inspector probably picked up his body language (Kinesics) first, noting that he was acting “hinky”, not fitting in the rest of the crowd. Secondly, the inspector noticed signs of nervousness, sweating, clasp-ing of hands and possibly facial expression/dilated pupils (Biometrics).

When should you act? Normally during an observation period the time to act is after noting three anomalies. Waiting longer to justify action would be too much information (overload) and time would be of essence. It’s also worthy to note that one anomaly would be sufficient and you may have to act immediately, such as when the U.S. soldiers stopped the Islamic attacker on a train in Belgium on August 22, 2015.

I only touched the surface of being aware of your surroundings and the book goes into much greater detail, but it is enlightening and gives more insights in what to look for in a public environment.

Stay left of bang, my friends!

Special Points of Interest

- ✦ Lake Los Angeles Monthly Meeting is held on the 2nd Thursdays from 7 to 8:30 pm at Stephen Sorensen Park, 16801 East Avenue P.
- ✦ Palmdale Monthly Meeting is held on 3rd Thursdays from 7 to 8:30 pm at Berean Church on 30th St. East.
- ✦ Lancaster/QH Monthly Meeting is held on the 4th Wednesdays from 7 to 8:30 pm in the YMCA Legacy Room.

**LANCASTER CERT
MONTHLY**

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We're on the Web!

www.antelopevalleycert.com

Upcoming Events for the CERT Community



CERT Meeting Dates

October 8—Lake Los Angeles
Monthly Meeting

October 15—Palmdale Monthly
Meeting

October 23—Lancaster/QH
Monthly CERT Meeting

November 12—Lake Los Ange-
les Monthly Meeting

November 19—Palmdale
Monthly Meeting

November TBD—Lancaster/QH
Monthly CERT Meeting

Training Opportunities

CERT Training

October 17, 24, 31—CERT
Basic Class

American Red Cross

For more details about these
classes, please visit the [Red
Cross Website](#). To register for
courses, please visit the [Red
Cross Saba](#) registration website.

SOS Survival Products

For more information about clas-
ses, times, locations and regis-
tration, visit [SOS Survival Prod-
ucts Training Center](#) website.

Special Interest Groups

**Amateur Radio Groups
and Nets** (Guest check-ins
always encouraged and wel-
come!)

- **Lakes and Valleys Radio
Check:** Sunday nights at 6
p.m.
- **Lake LA Ham Radio Check
(Simplex):** Monday nights at
8 p.m.
- **ARES Radio Check:** Tues-
day nights at 8 p.m.
- **AVARC Radio Check:**
Wednesday nights at 8 p.m.