



## Hoarding

A Monday Morning Musing from Mickey the Mercenary Geologist

[Contact@MercenaryGeologist.com](mailto:Contact@MercenaryGeologist.com)

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Much has been made about recent food riots in the Third World, or for those politically correct, bleeding heart liberals who would never subscribe to any of my ideas in these Musings, what are euphemistically called *economically-challenged* or *emerging countries* of the planet. The following question has come up lately in discussions over a few too many adult beverages at one of my favorite watering holes: Could this happen in the good ol' red, white, and blue USA? Might our economic system undergo such upheaval that food shortages will occur or our food transportation systems may become paralyzed?

My opinion is that while doubtful in the near term, this scenario is a distinct possibility in my lifetime. With the present Fed monetary policy of running the printing presses 24 and 7 and a misdirected executive branch fighting other countries' unwinnable civil wars for our daily oil rations: *Quien sabe?*

How secure are our basic necessities of life: food, water, and shelter? In our 21<sup>st</sup> century First World society, is petroleum-based fuel necessary for the majority to survive? Is the Road Warrior scenario a possibility, however remote?

I'm a Mercenary Geologist professionally and a hunter, fisherman, and provider in my daily life. I was raised in the hills of Missouri. My little brother Terry shot me with a BB gun when he was four and I was five. We had a single shot .410 at age seven, and a pump .22 at ten. I still own the two real guns. As kids, my brother and I hunted squirrels in the Ozarks hardwoods. We trapped rabbits (and the occasional possum, a nasty animal which we immediately relocated and freed several miles away). We shot quail in the fall, ducks in the winter, and gigged frogs in the summer. We fished whenever the old man would take us, probably starting at ages five and six. We were raised to supplement our diet with game and fish and Mom joyfully cooked it all except the frog legs which jumped around in the frying pan. She drew the line there.

I still live in a semi-rural environment, now south of Albuquerque, New Mexico. I raise cattle, have a small orchard, and abide in a 92 year old adobe abode (mud hut) with 18 inch thick walls. It is heated in the winter by wood that comes from my farm and has no cooling other than ceiling and window fans. I recycle household gray water to the cactus garden and irrigate the fields the same way it's been done since my ditch was first dug by the Spanish in 1674.

The climate is benign; it seldom gets colder than -15C in the winter nor hotter than 38C in the summer. Because of my busy business, I haven't had a garden in years but I do have a green thumb. It's an easy place to live low and slow. I will be better off than most if depression hits, especially compared to those

who live in the big city or the burbs, buy pre-packaged hormone, antibiotic, and red dye injected feedlot beef at Wal-Mart, and have never in their lives known a butcher's name.

By nature, I am a packrat; I just don't throw much away. I generate about one garbage bin of trash every three weeks when during this business' bust times, I am at my home and office for such a lengthy period. Perhaps part of my accumulative nature is because I have changed my home base just once in the last 33 years. I moved from the UNM student ghetto in 1984 and bought my South Valley ranchito. Although I am "the *goingest* person" my elderly neighbors know, I haven't gone anywhere for more than 30 or 40 days at a time in those 24 years.

Could the reason I don't discard be because I spend 250 days a year on the road where I am forced to be a minimalist? Living out of a suitcase and briefcase most of the year is second nature; even when it's a 40 day trip to a bush camp in the Sierra Madre, high Andes, or Canadian North, I add only wheeled duffel, perhaps a rucksack, and, oh yeah, I never forget a fishing rod.

I can always go to my back pasture, the mountains, the woods, or the river and kill my protein. My buddy Jeff Stuart, who graciously edits all my Musings, is fond of saying, "I have a strict diet of vegetarians; I only eat animals that eat vegetables."

I conversely, have eaten many things that eat flesh including fishes, frogs, shellfishes, squids, octopi, rattlesnakes, alligators, turtles, iguanas, and in Asia and poor Latin countries, perhaps the occasional canine, feline, or insect. I require protein so at times I just eat what is put on my plate and don't ask. Is anybody up for some *cuy* tonight? You know it's a delicacy in Peru. It certainly will behoove you if the s\*\*\* ever comes down and you are capable of providing your own protein or are willing to eat what is readily available. If your favorite show is "Bizarre Foods with Andrew Zimmern", you are better off than the urban masses. Download this video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOUnjB6SPxE>

Note that I've eaten frog sashimi but have yet to try the beating heart routine. That might be a bit much even for a Mercenary.



**Early morning coffee after a new moon night on the Rio Grande and its marshes.  
The take: 21 green frogs, four channel catfish, and one soft shell turtle.**

But what of the other components of a healthy diet, the so-called staples? Man cannot survive on *meat* alone. Although I joke that my mantra for the past 15 years has been, “Eat your protein, drink your carbs”, I still require some basic food groups other than flesh. How am I going to secure those essentials if the local *supermercado* has a panic run on *frijoles y tortillas*?

Well personally, I have gone Mormon. Like my cousins in Vernal, Utah (but unlike them because I don’t wear long underwear in the summer) and my parents before me during the Cold War of 1958, I am stockpiling basic foodstuffs. I’ll never forget the summer when I was six years old and we watched the Commie satellite Sputnik streak across the night sky of the Ozarks. Back then everybody hoarded and froze milk because of a media-fueled irrational fear of radioactive contamination from atmospheric atom bomb testing.

In 2008 I hoard beans, rice, powdered milk, whole wheat flour, corn masa, cooking oil, canned goods of all descriptions, dried fruits, nuts, and espresso grade coffee and Murchie’s tea (my only addiction is caffeine in the morn). People ask me where I store all this stuff: On top of the kitchen cabinets, underneath the pool table, in the spare bedroom, the garage, wherever it will goddam fit. I have two freezers more or less full at all times with meat, most of which I have raised, shot, caught, gigged, bartered, or traded for.

I used to go to Sam’s Club as needed, usually two-three times a year, and stock up on staples in bulk, spending about \$400. That was mainly because I hate going to the grocery store. Now I go to Sam’s once a month and spend \$500 (less buying power of the dollar) for the same stuff. I am hoarding food the same

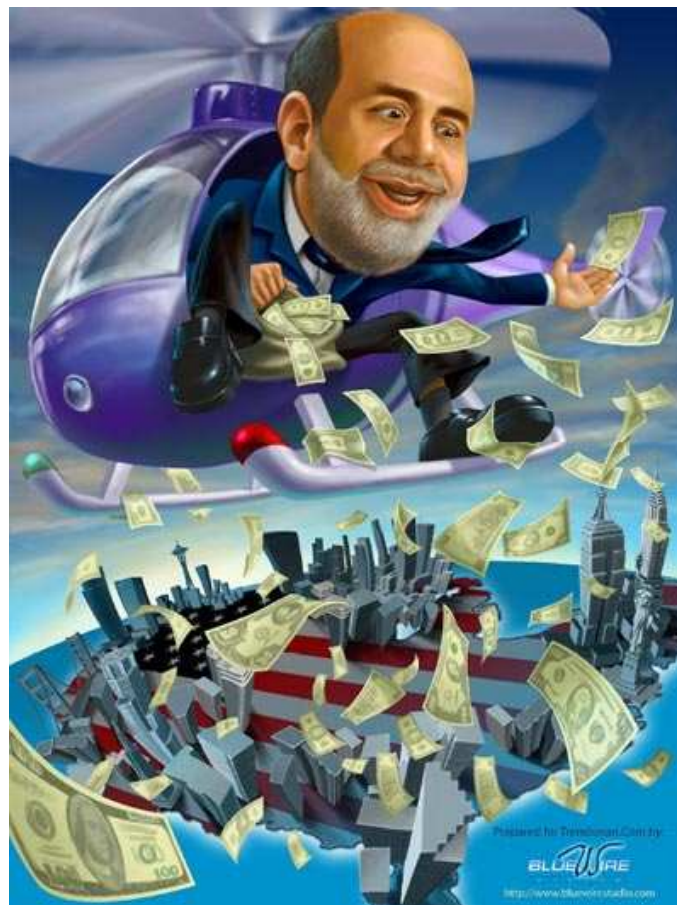


way I hoard precious metals. Why not? This stuff doesn't go bad. With the rampant inflation affecting food and fuel, what do you have to lose?

Everyday your hard earned greenback is worth less than it was yesterday. Last year, bananas were 35c/lb at my local *fruteria mexicano*; last month they were 60c; last week 63c. Today I saw bananas at 88 c/lb in the local supermarket! Last year a box of powdered milk was about \$7.50. Last week I paid \$13.50 at Sam's. What I purchase for \$500 today will cost \$600 or more in 2009.

Anyone who thinks that inflation is the government-promulgated 3-4% a year has his freaking head in the sand. Take a look at John Williams' *Shadow Government Statistics*. We ran about 12% inflation in 2007. Who knows about 2008? No doubt it will be that high or higher. With oil at ever-increasing record prices largely driven by a deflating US dollar and the ridiculous idea of using corn to make fuel for infernal combustion engines, the price of all foods that are transported must continue to escalate. Also fertilizer prices have gone thru the roof over the past few months thus exacerbating the cost of food.

So why not hoard foods that will not spoil? If you have disposable income or a bank account earning 2-3% in a money market or CD, should you not buy an overabundance of stuff that you will eventually consume regardless of the economic situation in this country? Or maybe you should just let it reside in a bank that may fail due to bad loans and will fail if the USA and the world go into a depression. With Bernanke's policy of keeping USA banks from collapsing by throwing monopoly money from the helicopter down to the ignorant masses, you are currently losing at least 10 % of annual buying power on your money in so-called "safe investments":



**It's hard to fathom that this clown and his frat-cat banking brothers drive the USA economy.  
Produced for Trendsman.com by BlueWireStudio.com**

What else should you hoard? Take a hint from the perpetrated Y2K fiasco. Unless you have a shallow ground water well as I do, buying a cistern and stocking up on drinking water or procuring a means of purifying water is a not a bad idea. I've previously talked about precious metals and how every good American should have a minimum 10% of net assets in physical gold, silver, and/or platinum. Hoard these real monetary instruments. And if you think that going to the woods is a possibility in your future, stockpiling batteries, fuel, a generator, and a little firepower is probably not a bad idea.

Now enough of this rant: I am off to the kitchen for a late night summer-time snack washed down by a bottle of brew or two:



**A Mercenary repast from the South Valley of New Mexico: Frog leg and catfish *ceviche*, *tostadas*, a Budweiser, and topped off by a shot of *Don Julio Anejo con limon* for dessert.**

Oh yeah, I'm not quite done with this lecture: You might also consider going *Third World* and developing a taste for warm beer.

Do you really think you are guaranteed to roll off the recliner, saunter to the kitchen, and pull a cold one out of your wife's new \$2000 energy efficient, smart refrigerator bought on credit with your max'ed-out Visa card at 13.99%, run on an electrical current from a smog belching, coal burning power plant on the Navajo Res 250 miles away, and sent thru a big copper wire to your brand new \$270,000 three bedroom, two and a half bath cracker box on a cul-de-sac in northwest Rio Rancho naturally landscaped in front with twelve sagebrushes, two *chollas*, eighty-eight tumbleweeds, and one scrawny juniper bush that the little lady is allergic to, and complete with party deck and sand dune for a backyard?



That subprime loan with the adjustable rate mortgage and the big balloon payment in year five is pretty friggin' scary, Dude. Little wonder you woke up at 3:30 this morning in a cold sweat with the seven-year itch....and she had a headache.

Ciao for now,

Mickey Fulp  
Mercenary Geologist



The [Mercenary Geologist Michael S. "Mickey" Fulp](#) is a Certified Professional [Geologist](#) with a B.Sc. Earth Sciences with honor from the University of Tulsa, and M.Sc. Geology from the University of New Mexico. Mickey has 30 years experience as an exploration geologist searching for economic deposits of base and precious metals, industrial minerals, uranium, coal, oil and gas, and water in North and South America, Europe, and Asia.

Mickey has worked for junior explorers, major mining companies, private companies, and investors as a consulting economic geologist for the past 22 years, specializing in geological mapping, property evaluation, and business development. In addition to Mickey's professional credentials and experience, he is high-altitude proficient, and is bilingual in English and Spanish. From 2003 to 2006, he made four outcrop ore discoveries in Peru, Nevada, Chile, and British Columbia.

Mickey is well-known throughout the mining and exploration community due to his ongoing work as an analyst, newsletter writer, and speaker.

Contact: [Contact@MercenaryGeologist.com](mailto:Contact@MercenaryGeologist.com)

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