

The Circuit

ISSUE
52

For Security And Protection Specialists

**PROTECTING
THE PRINCIPAL
IN A PANDEMIC**

COVID 19

How it Affects You

DETAINED

Arrested Overseas

AMMUNITION

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TECHNOLOGY

Problem or Solution?

By: Orlando "Andy" Wilson

JAILED ABROAD!

WHAT TO DO WHEN DETAINED OR ARRESTED OVERSEAS

I find it amusing that in the close protection and investigations industry these days everyone is trying to be the squeaky clean perfect little protectors and detectives.

This is all well and good as long as nothing goes wrong and the clients are behaving. The issue is when things go wrong and things get heated, which they do often!

This is when you need people around you that are streetwise and have a spine, not choir boys who are going to sing and cause more problems for everyone involved.

These days if you travel internationally or you are going to be working in the emerging markets, you are running the risk of being arrested for some reason. Criminals are not the only ones who can end up in handcuffs! It may come as a shock to some people, but many police forces are corrupt. And this is not just in the emerging markets.

I have experienced both police and state corruption in Western Europe and the U.S. Just because someone has a badge, it does not mean they are honest and trustworthy.

Many people, particularly those who are not well traveled, are suspicious of strangers, especially if the stranger is a foreigner. If you are seen acting suspiciously, talking about security matters and taking

pictures of venues, you could be taken for a spy or a terrorist and arrested.

In many places if the local police find out you are providing close protection or investigation services you're going to get hassled... identification, licenses and weapons permits are checked to start with. Why? Usually for no other reason than the cops are bored or jealous. And if you're providing ►



close protection services, they will mess with you in front of your client. Then the cops will drop their business cards to the client in the hope of getting some off-duty work. You can almost be assured that if they find the slightest reason to detain or arrest you, they will! And in developing, third-world countries things can be a lot worse!

A simple example I can give is when I was once traveling with a group of people through Italy in the early 1990's and we came upon a port on the Adriatic where several of the group members decided to wander off and take some photos of some Italian navy patrol boats. By the time I had located them, they had been taken on board one of the vessels and were being spoken to by the military police. They handed over their film and explained they were tourists. In this case, the police were very professional and everyone went on their way. But in some countries taking photos of anything military related can get you into a lot of trouble.

If you are ever involved in a violent confrontation and end up hurting or

killing someone, you will be arrested. If you are a foreigner, the chances will be that the local authorities will be against you to start with and they'll want to make an example of you. Especially if they find out you're a bodyguard, investigator, or security contractor.

You need to make plans for what to do in this situation. You certainly don't want to end up in a third-world prison because you took out a gun off and shot a kidnapper, who turned out to be a police officer. In many countries, even in the post-9/11 developed Western countries, the mere fact that you are a foreigner will put you in the same league as a terrorist in many people's minds. Unfortunately, it will mean nothing if you are a 100% law-abiding citizen.

If nothing else, you must also remember this: the most dangerous time will be the first few minutes of your arrest. You can expect some level of violence, even from police in first-world countries. For instance, in the US, most police officer's first response to an incident is to draw their guns. If they see any possible



threat, they shoot! So be very careful, especially when dealing with armed, nervous, and scared police.

If you're providing serious security or investigative services you must always keep a low profile, have an escape plan to a safe location, including having measures in place to get out of the country. Also, you must have protocols in place if you, your client, or team members are arrested or detained by the police, military or government agencies.

Being Arrested

Below are some basic considerations on what to do if your detained, or arrested. What you say and do depends on where you are, the situation, and the attitude of the police. Just remember in many locations the local police are not paid that well and welcome donations to their welfare funds.

- **Protocols:** You need to have a plan in place and all team members need to know it. At a basic level, everyone needs to know how to

alert other team members that they have a potential legal problem with the police. A simple coded text message to team members who are not at the arrest location alerting them there is a problem can be enough to get the ball rolling. Additional details such as the exact location of the arrest, details of the arresting police unit, a reason for the arrest can help with responding to the incident.

- **Being Arrested:** When you are being detained or arrested remain calm and try to clarify why you are being detained or arrested, if it is not clear. Be very careful! One wrong word or aggressive statement can land you in a lot more trouble than where you started off. If you are being transported to a police station or jail, try to inform other team members who are not directly involved so they know where you are.
- **Know Your Rights:** Part of your pre-planning needs to be researching the basic laws of the location you are visiting or staying in. You need to understand what your rights are if you are arrested such as: how long can you be detained for before being charged,

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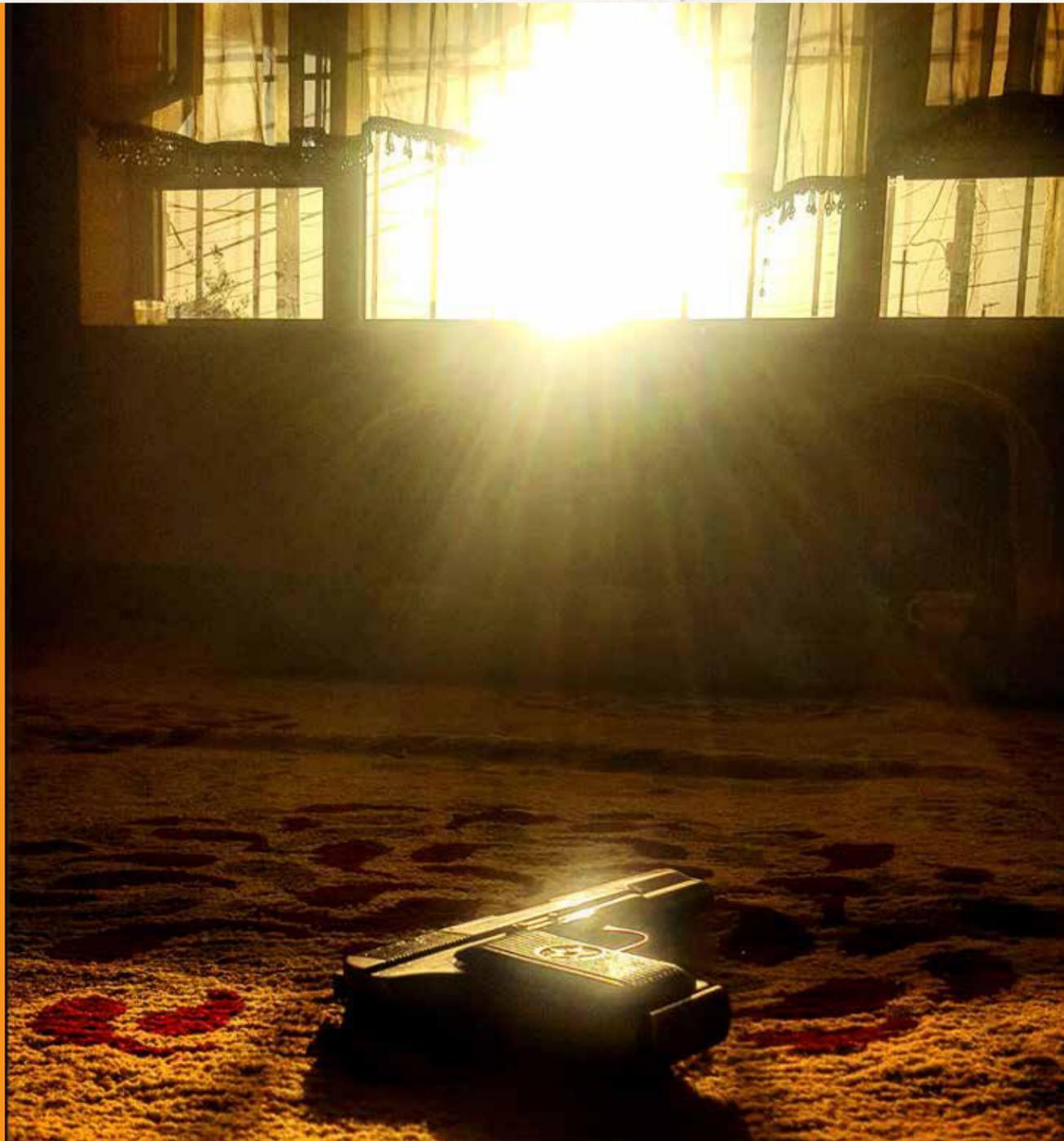
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will you have access to a lawyer, who will pay for the lawyer, will your embassy be informed, will you be allowed to make phone calls, do you have the numbers of those you need to call if you don't have access to your phone?

- **False Information:** You need to be very suspicious of any unverifiable information given to you by the police, other inmates, and even lawyers. Any unverifiable information could be false information that is being given to you to entrap you or to get you to sign a confession.

- **Documents and Translations:** Never sign documents that you do not understand! If possible, get your own trusted lawyer and translator. Lawyers and translators supplied by the local police may not be working in your favor or translating questions and documents incorrectly.
- **Being Charged:** If you are formally charged and given a court date, you will need a decent lawyer who should try to get you released on bail or house arrest as soon as possible. ▶





- **Questioned Under Duress:** You can take it for granted the police will try to intimidate you into giving false statements, signing documents, and in many places, will ignore your legal rights. All you can do in these

situations is stick to your story and wait for those you are working with to arrange for lawyers and legal support. If you are assaulted or tortured, try to keep a record of your injuries, medical attention that you required, and any

hospital visits.

- **Documentation and Evidence:** If you or your team have documentation, photos, videos, or other evidence you need to keep it secure. At the time of the arrest, do everything possible to share evidence with those not directly involved in the incident. If you have photos and videos on your smartphone and they are seized by the police, the evidence will be lost or the phones will disappear. Consider having all photos, videos, and documents on operational phones automatically synchronize and backed up to a cloud storage account that other team members and trusted associates have access to.
- **Jail:** Even in first-world countries jails are very dangerous places where one can suffer intimidation, violence, and sexual assault. Personal security and safety must be your priority and everything from hygiene to receiving proper food must be considered. This is where support from team members is essential to send you food and supplies or money to purchase food and supplies. Even though violence is common in many jails, be very careful
- if you're involved in any hostile situations! Take extra precautions to avoid inflicting any additional injuries than necessary to defend yourself against any opponents, as you could end up being charged with additional crimes. If possible, try to make friends with respected prisoners who could help you avoid potential issues with other prisoners or guards.
- **Support Groups:** Alerting political contacts, charities, and community groups can raise awareness and support. In some cases, the intervention of local or foreign political representatives can speed up cases going to court and lead to the early release of prisoners.
- **Media:** The media is a double-edged blade as it can work for you and against you. Trusted media contacts can help raise awareness of your arrest, which might prevent you from disappearing completely. But information and interviews given to unreliable media outlets can be edited and spun against you! Try to ensue that media reports that are given in your favor do not criticize the police, judges, or government of the ▶



country in which you were arrest and are detained in.

From this short article you can see what a landmine of challenges there are. Hopefully, I have made it clear that you do not want to get arrested abroad! As part of your basic planning you should have worked out plans and protocols on what to do if involved in an incident that could

lead to a team member or the client's arrest. If you listen to the advice from most embassies, they will tell you to contact and cooperate with the local police if you are involved in a confrontation. Well, my advice would be that it may make more sense and save a lot of trouble and money just to get the out of the area or country as quickly and discreetly as possible!

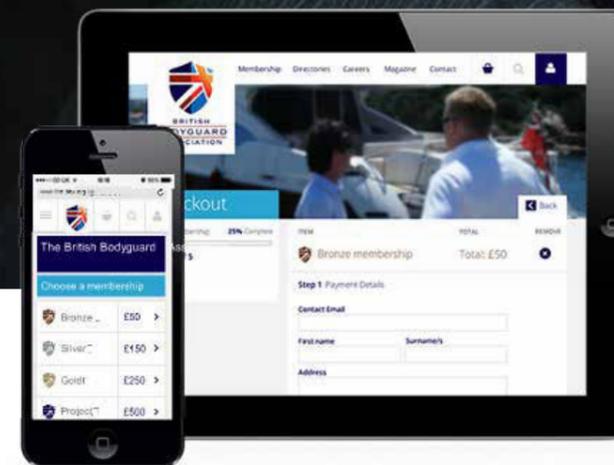
Orlando Wilson has worked in the security industry internationally for over 25 years. He has become accustomed to the types of complications that can occur, when dealing with international law enforcement agencies, organized criminal and Mafia groups. He is the chief consultant for Risks Inc. and based in Miami but spends much of his time traveling and providing a wide range of kidnapping prevention and tactical training services to private and government clients.

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