Ahern Under the Gun: “These are perilous times indeed”

By Jerry Ahern, Photos By Sharon Ahern

Back in the 1960s, there was the commonly invoked image of a guy standing around smoking a pipe, wearing a tweed sportcoat and knit tie, knowingly proclaiming, “These are perilous times…” And, the times were that, indeed. Once again, such speeches are being made, albeit most buildings are “smoke free” these days and fewer and fewer people ever seem to wear a necktie, let alone a knit one. And, when times are perilous, the thoughtful person should carefully consider a wide range of options classifiable under the category of “Stuff To Help You Stay Alive.”

I wanted to touch on a few such items in this installment of “Ahern Under the Gun.”

Police officers, God Bless them, have to wear body armor with their uniforms. The rest of us don’t; but it’s not a bad idea to have body armor available for just in case and those “special” times. If you regularly venture into seriously bad areas, whether you are armed or not, armor could save your life. If you go armed, there may be times when it’s comforting to give yourself the bullet-resistant vest option.

Laura Burgess represents a truly enviable list of clients with her public relations firm. While meeting with Laura at the 2009 SHOT Show, she asked if I was interested in body armor. Sharon and I were just putting loose ends together on a new concealed carry book and had another book about emergency preparedness we were looking to do. The body armor option sounded ideal for both applications. Laura took us over to the Protective Products International (body-armor.com) display, introduced us and set us up with a quick introduction to the Protective Products International line of body armor.

Actually, there are three lines, and subdivisions within each. The three lines are military, tactical and concealable. Protective Products International makes a lot of the armor our heroic men and women in the armed services are wearing in the course of their duties in the war on terror – or, whatever’s the current politically correct term for fighting the enemies of freedom.

Obviously, what interested me the most was concealable body armor. After the SHOT Show, following Protective Products International’s prescribed method, Sharon took my measurements and some weeks later a package arrived. Inside was Protective Products International’s “Python” armor, within a Supplex carrier. The armor, protective front and rear, came with an additional Soft Trauma Pack, the basic unit at Threat Level II. Threat Level II is designed to handle up to high speed .357 Magnum and 9mm Parabellum rounds, as well as standard velocity loads in these calibers, along with calibers such as .40 S&W, .380 ACP, etc. Threat Level II is the perfect compromise, providing the wearer with protection against the most commonly encountered handgun rounds in their most potent versions.

Rifle rounds and other, more powerful cartridges demand higher Threat Level units. For me, anyone like me, or the typical cop, better couldn’t be asked for. The carrier is comfortable, and, albeit made to measure, fully adjustable with removable straps at both shoulder and both sides of the waist. Microfiber construction in the carrier liner helps Wick away moisture. Full cleaning options for the vest are included. The front and back panels meet at the sides for superior protection. There’s an internal suspension system for the armor panels themselves and a discreet pouch at the front for the Soft trauma Pack or a powder coated metal trauma plate. Discreet, recessed zipper closures allow access into the carrier.

Men’s and women’s models of concealable body armor are available. Am I going to shoot myself to test the vest, as used to be done some years back in demonstrating one of the pioneering brands of body armor? No!

Protective Products International makes a finely tailored, carefully crafted and designed product that can save your life. If you think the personal protective vest is an option that makes sense for you, I’d encourage you to check out Protective Products International. All made in the USA, Protective Products International armor is synonymous with quality.

If you want to be prepared for emergencies and life-threatening situations, given the option, you want to be able to see what you’re doing. To exercise that option, it’s wise always to have personal illumination. I do that in two ways. On my