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PREFACE

On every front, from boarding an airplane to opening a bank account, you and your wealth are under surveillance of an intensity that would have been unimaginable only a few short years ago. Identity theft...no fly lists...e-mail surveillance... data mining...many of today's most serious threats to privacy and wealth have exploded into prominence in the first decade of the 21st century.

At the same time, havens for wealth and privacy are under attack. Money laundering laws, more aggressive tax investigations, and the war on terrorism have led to intense domestic surveillance and pressure on offshore centers such as Switzerland to end bank secrecy.

The result of these converging trends is that many of the wealth and privacy preservation strategies you've read about in the past—including earlier editions of my own books—are obsolete.

I've designed this newest edition of *The Lifeboat Strategy* to provide practical strategies against today's threats to privacy and wealth. When you've finished reading it, you'll know simple techniques to stop identity thieves in their tracks, make your wealth legally disappear from the surveillance "radar screen," and understand how to protect wealth you simply can't afford to lose. Along the way, you'll learn dozens of hands-on methods you can use everyday to avoid unnecessarily scrutiny by sue-happy lawyers, the IRS, or someone holding a grudge against you.

No book of this length and level of detail can possibly be 100% error-free. Please contact me with your corrections, suggestions, criticism, or praise.

I am writing these words in October 2007. All the suggested strategies that are contained in this book are, to the best of my knowledge, legal as of October 1, 2007.

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FOREWORD: HOW VULNERABLE ARE YOU?

1. Are you a U.S. citizen or permanent resident? ___ Yes ___ No.
2. Is a U.S. passport the only international travel document you possess? ___ Yes ___ No.
3. Have you been assigned a Social Security number? ___ Yes ___ No.
4. Do you freely disclose details of your income and financial status to others? ___ Yes ___ No.
5. Do you have accounts in your own name in U.S. bank or brokerage accounts exceeding US\$100,000 in value? ___ Yes ___ No.
6. Do you keep over US\$10,000 in any bank or securities account to which you have Internet access? ___ Yes ___ No.
7. Do you have any credit cards issued by U.S. financial institutions? ___ Yes ___ No.
8. Do you own unmortgaged U.S. real estate in your own name? ___ Yes ___ No.
9. Do you own rental real estate in your own name? ___ Yes ___ No.
10. Do you have utility service in your name? ___ Yes ___ No.
11. Do you receive mail at your residential address in your name? ___ Yes ___ No.
12. Does your driver's license list your residential address? ___ Yes ___ No.
13. Is your Social Security number printed on your driver's license or checks? ___ Yes ___ No.
14. Have you ever applied for government assistance? ___ Yes ___ No.
15. Do you receive income or benefits from any governmental entity? ___ Yes ___ No.
16. Have you ever been convicted of a crime? ___ Yes ___ No.
17. Have you ever declared bankruptcy? ___ Yes ___ No.
18. Have you ever been involved in a divorce or a lawsuit? ___ Yes ___ No.
19. Have you ever received money through a probate court? ___ Yes ___ No.
20. Do you belong to a church or any organizations that are controversial or politically unpopular? ___ Yes ___ No.
21. Are you licensed by any state (e.g., as an attorney, physician, etc.)? ___ Yes ___ No.
22. Do you operate a motor vehicle? ___ Yes ___ No.
23. Do you own an airplane, boat, or recreational vehicle? ___ Yes ___ No.
24. Do you have teen-age children living in your household? ___ Yes ___ No.
25. Do you use a personal computer with a high-speed Internet connection? ___ Yes ___ No.
26. Do you have a net worth exceeding US\$1 million? ___ Yes ___ No.
27. Have you ever invested in a "tax shelter?" ___ Yes ___ No.
28. Do you own a business as a sole proprietorship or part of a business organized as a general partnership? ___ Yes ___ No.
29. Are you a director or officer of a closely held corporation? ___ Yes ___ No.

Give yourself one point for every "yes" answer, zero points for every "no."

Your score: _____

0-7 points: Virtually unexposed. Congratulations! You have successfully shut off surveillance of your wealth and privacy.

8-13 points: Somewhat exposed. You have shut down more pathways to surveillance of your wealth and privacy than most Americans. But you can lower your profile even more.

14-19 points: Exposed. Your life is nearly an open book. You should take steps to lower your financial profile immediately.

20-29 points: Highly exposed. You need to take immediate steps to protect your wealth and privacy. You're an easy target for identity theft, lawsuits, and/or asset forfeitures.