

Currency Options After a Collapse

For those of you that have heard some of the interviews I've given, you know approximately what is coming in Part IV. And, because this Author page is only a few months old, and I am only starting to build a fan base, I don't want to give away too much if you haven't read Part's II and/or III. However, you are on this Facebook author page because you are curious as to where I am with my writing, what I am researching, what some of my thoughts are regarding the implementation of my research into my writing, etc. That being said, for those that are all caught up in the series, you know that there is an 'event' of some proportion early in Part III. Part IV continues that thread (storyline), builds upon it, and amplifies it exponentially.

As part of my research for Part IV, I find myself needing to research currency.

Most people will agree that in the event of a collapse, the readily accepted notion that paper money will be useless rings true. If that is in fact the case, then what? What will you do for currency?

First, you have to look at how you are actually defining the word 'currency'.

Can 'currency' be defined as a:

- Definition #1: Tangible commodity that contains some sort of intrinsic monetary value?
 - This could be bars and coins made from gold, silver, platinum or possibly even gems and stones
- Definition #2: Equivalent value item that can be bartered or swapped?
 - This could be items like food, water, weapons/ammo, blade weapons, clothing, seeds, canning supplies, etc.
- Definition #3: Tradeable skill or a service rendered?
 - This could be something along the lines of shoeing horses, general blacksmithing, medical or veterinary expertise, prostitution, security, carpentry, etc.

It is my belief that **ALL** of these can be valued as 'currency' after a collapse. It all really depends on what the individuals involved are willing to trade.

I recall a storyline in a JWR book I read where a couple was unable to make it to their retreat in Idaho. They were skilled in weapons, obviously. Along their journey west from Chicago, the couple came across a farmer that needed security due to bandits/marauders. As a result, the couple traded their security services to the farmer in exchange for food, room, and board. All things considered, it wasn't a bad trade given the onset of winter.

However, since I can't really address Definition #'s 2 and 3 except to provide examples of what each might entail, I'll have to expound on Definition #1. If you're considering the inclusion of gold, silver, etc then you will need to budget accordingly as none of these options are on the inexpensive side of the scale.

Before you go to the bank and start buying roll after roll of quarters, dimes, and nickels, here's what the US Mint has to say regarding the specifics for each coin they manufacture:



The following table gives specifications for The United States Mint legal tender coins presently in production for United States Mint Annual Sets.

Denomination	Cent	Nickel	Dime	Quarter Dollar	Half Dollar	Presidential \$1	Native American \$1 Coin
Composition	Copper Plated Zinc 2.5% Cu Balance Zn	Cupro-Nickel 25% Ni Balance Cu	Cupro-Nickel 8.33% Ni Balance Cu	Cupro-Nickel 8.33% Ni Balance Cu	Cupro-Nickel 8.33% Ni Balance Cu	Manganese-Brass 88.5% Cu 6% Zn 3.5% Mn 2% Ni	Manganese-Brass 88.5% Cu 6% Zn 3.5% Mn 2% Ni
Weight	2.500 g	5.000 g	2.268 g	5.670 g	11.340 g	8.1 g	8.1 g
Diameter	0.750 in. 19.05 mm	0.835 in. 21.21 mm	0.705 in. 17.91 mm	0.955 in. 24.26 mm	1.205 in. 30.61 mm	1.043 in. 26.49 mm	1.043 in. 26.49 mm
Thickness	1.52 mm	1.95 mm	1.35 mm	1.75 mm	2.15 mm	2.00mm	2.00 mm
Edge	Plain	Plain	Reeded	Reeded	Reeded	Edge-Lettering	Edge-Lettering
No. of Reeds	N/A	N/A	118	119	150	N/A	N/A

The items of most importance in the above table are the second and third rows regarding Composition and Weight. As you can see, today's modern coinage contains exactly **zero** silver. If any of these coins did, you'd see the periodic table symbol 'Ag' in the Composition row.

Today's coins are essentially knock-offs. They look the same, feel the same, have the same weight, but in terms of using a modern coin for its precious metal content, you might as well chuck 'em all in a fountain! In fact, the US Mint hasn't used a high silver content in its coinage for some time...

Now, I know I shouldn't use Wikipedia as the 'be all end all' for information, but I figured they couldn't possibly screw this up.

Common U.S. coins
[edit]

The most commonly collected junk-silver U.S. coins were minted before 1965 and include Morgan and Peace dollars; Liberty Head "Barber," Walking Liberty, Franklin and Kennedy half dollars; Liberty Head "Barber," Standing Liberty and Washington quarters; Liberty Head "Barber," Winged Liberty Head "Mercury" and Roosevelt dimes; and Jefferson "Wartime" nickels.^[4]

Dollars

- Morgan (1878–1904 & 1921) -- 90-percent silver
- Peace (1921–1928 and 1934–1935) -- 90-percent silver

Half-Dollars

- Liberty Head "Barber" (1892–1915) -- 90-percent silver
- Walking Liberty (1916–1947) -- 90-percent silver
- Franklin (1948–1963) -- 90-percent silver
- Kennedy (1964) -- 90-percent silver
- Kennedy (1965–1970) -- 40-percent silver

Quarters

- Liberty Head "Barber" (1892–1916) -- 90-percent silver
- Standing Liberty (1916–1930) -- 90-percent silver
- Washington (1932, 1934–1964) -- 90-percent silver

Dimes

- Liberty Head "Barber" (1892–1916) -- 90-percent silver
- Winged Liberty Head "Mercury" (1916–1945) -- 90-percent silver
- Roosevelt (1946–1964) -- 90-percent silver

Nickels

- Jefferson "Wartime" (1942 (partial)-1945) -- 35-percent silver

So, in a nutshell, the United States Mint changed the composition of its coins in 1965 from 90% silver and 10% copper to an all copper-nickel alloy. Dimes and quarters were 90% silver through 1964 and Kennedy half dollars were 90% silver in 1964 and then 40% silver from 1965–1970. Nickels barely made it out of WWII.

Now that sucks because that severely limits a person's ability to procure actual coinage... assuming that you are trying to procure silver. So what do you do now?

It could be several things. You could use your detective skills and visit flea markets, swaps, garage sales, and hope for the best... you might get lucky. Do yourself a favor though and don't limit yourself to coins exclusively. Many items currently in use contain silver. Here's a link to an article that explains why you shouldn't be hockin' grandma's silverware:

<http://www.star-telegram.com/news/business/article3840991.html>

You could also utilize websites. However, if you're going to go this route, you need to make sure they are reputable dealers. A simple online search revealed these four (links provided):

- JM Bullion – <http://www.jmbullion.com/>
- Provident Metals – <https://www.providentmetals.com/>
- GoldSilver LLC. – <https://goldsilver.com/>
- Apmex – <http://www.apmex.com/>

Personally, I use JM Bullion. No idea why as there was no rhyme or reason. I think it was possibly because I found the most information and the largest selection on this site... I love learning, what can I say. From this site I can peruse and procure gold and silver coins and bars as well as platinum, copper, rounds, and bags on 90% and 40% junk coins. The bags of junk coins are the very same coin outlined on the image from page 2... ya know, the pre-1965 coins.

Also, don't be so quick to dismiss non gold and silver metals. Here's where the prices were (per ounce) for each on 02/16/2016 (except copper which they price by the pound - this is why thieves steal so much of it):

- Gold: \$1206.20
- Silver: \$15.33
- Copper: \$2.05 (per lb.)
- Platinum: \$932.10
- Palladium: \$508.90

Silver is by far the most economical, but don't discount copper. It is a very good material if you're planning on making things for trade.

The only thing you need to know now is the equivalent. By that I mean, when you go looking at bars of silver, gold, platinum, palladium, or copper (as opposed to coins for example), you need to know what the actual weights of a nickel, dime, or quarter are so you can estimate/compare size and value (this information was contained in row 3 of the first image provided):

- Nickel = 5.000 g
- Dime = 2.268 g
- Quarter = 5.670 g
- Half Dollar = 11.340 g

Personally, I like silver... specifically, the 5g and 10g bars. I find that the bags of junk silver are beyond my price point. Doesn't mean I won't ever picked one up, just isn't a good idea for our family's financial plight not right now. A gold bar here or there doesn't hurt either, but they're \$40-\$50 per 1g bar... I can get a 5g bar of silver \$4.

I think I prefer silver for the simple science. It has a lower melting point and can be fashioned into far more things than gold... but gold is generally understood as the most valuable of the precious metals.... You know, short of loose diamonds...