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Official Newsletter of the International Combat
Martial Arts Federation (ICMAF) and the
Academy of Self-Defense

EDITORIAL

Remember Who Your Enemy Is – And Train In Accordance With What He Is Known To Do!

THE incredible lack of realism and absence of just plain common sense that exists in the martial arts field when it comes to PRACTICAL SELF-DEFENSE is mind-boggling. We have "hitters" ridiculously practicing jumping and spinning kicks, high area body kicks, clenched fist punching, sparring, and archaic methods of linear blocking, as well as totally irrelevant classical kata. We have "grapplers" focusing on groundwork and one-on-one competitive matches, which emphasize

"submission" and "pinning" actions, and then we have hybrids(!) — i.e. the inevitable compromisers who combine clenched fist pummeling with groundwork (laced, of course, with a sprinkling of elbowing, throwing, and one or two other tidbits). And of course there is not a single thing wrong with any of these things, until or unless you specify "PRACTICAL APPLICATION AND REAL WORLD PERSONAL DEFENSE" as your training objective. That changes everything, immediately.

Yes, competition fighters are genuinely tough fellows, and yes — certainly — many of them can defend themselves in actual situations. No doubt about it. However, the same can be said of boxers, wrestlers, judo men, kick boxers, and so on. None of which demonstrates anything at all of relevance insofar as establishing that which is required in HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT and EMERGENCY SELF-DEFENSE SITUATIONS, when the entire reason and purpose is preparing for combat and self-defense as opposed to competition.

To use an analogy with firearms:

An experienced and competent big game hunter can certainly employ his bolt action .378 weatherby magnum rifle (an upgrade of the brutal .375) in a battlefield environment, and perhaps even be successful in dropping an attacking soldier or two. But that does not make the .378 round, the bolt action rifle that fires it, or the marksman/hunter who employs this awesome combination, any kind of "model of that which is best suited to" REAL MILITARY BATTLEFIELD ENGAGEMENTS. A .308 battle rifle — designed, intended, and constructed specifically for warfighting — would be the intelligent man's choice, for going to war. And, similarly, the type and style of firing that the big game hunter excels in when dropping African big game, and which — admittedly — he may be able to apply to

antipersonnel engagements, is hardly the type and style of rifle shooting appropriate to combat.

Self-defense and hand-to-hand combat is a subject and study unto itself. Many in the martial arts do not (or do want to) realize this, and so they continually equate that which is sporting, aesthetic, classical, or theatrical with that which works in combat.

Self-defense is war. It is a microcosmic war between individuals, instead of between nations; but it is war, nonetheless. Where and when an activity is presented as "self-defense" in a non-warlike manner, then the term self-defense becomes a misnomer. It is self-defense when one individual is set upon by another, and when force or the threat of force is utilized for the personal satisfaction, gratification, or gain of the attacker against an innocent victim.

- Being jumped in the street by one or more savages is a self-defense situation
- Being seized suddenly from behind is a self-defense situation
- Being attacked by someone using a knife, club, firearm, or other hand-held weapon (or implement which he employs as a weapon) is a self-defense situation
- Being confronted by a punk, troublemaker, or bully whose intention it is to terrorize, push-around, beat up, intimidate or otherwise torment you is a self-defense situation

- Being suddenly aware that your home is being broken into — invaded — by marauding scum is a self-defense situation
- Being set upon by a deranged individual who proceeds, suddenly and without provocation, to violently assault you is a self-defense situation
- Being targeted for a kidnapping is a self-defense situation
- Being with a family member or other loved one and witnessing their being attacked is a self-defense situation
- Being confronted by some lout who proceeds for whatever reason to become physically harassing and abusive — pushing, leaning on, or shoving you — is a self-defense situation
- Being approached by someone who unlawfully blocks your path and refuses to allow you to leave the area is a self-defense situation
- Being run off the road and then attacked by a careful of human debris who are "out for kicks" is a self-defense situation
- Being threatened with bodily harm and observing the threatener reach for what you are certain is a concealed weapon is a self-defense situation
- Being set upon by one or more punks while you are riding on a public conveyance is a self-defense situation
- Being the victim of a carjacking in which you as well as your vehicle is the criminal's objective, is a self-defense situation

- Being the intended target of forcible rape constitutes a self-defense situation

Need we continue?

- Agreeing to a physical contest with someone who wishes to participate, and where there are rules and regulations of any kind — plus a referee — is NOT a self-defense situation
- Participating in a judo, boxing, karate, wrestling, kick boxing, or other competition match or event is NOT a self-defense situation
- Mindlessly agreeing to "step outside" (or remain inside!) and fight with someone is NOT a self-defense situation

If it is your purpose to prepare for the realities attendant the unfortunate predicament of finding yourself obliged to defend against serious criminal violence, then look to how violent offenders attack. Analyze their modus operandi. Over the last several hundred years it has been so well documented that we can tell with near certainty how attacks will occur. Certainly, every situation is "different"; but in a very real and provable sense, **ALL SITUATIONS IN WHICH VIOLENCE IS DIRECTED AGAINST VICTIMS, ARE ALSO — PREDICTABLY — THE SAME.** The types of situations in which violence occurs and the manner in which offenders move against their target-victims is known, is ascertainable, and is quantifiable.

Situational awareness (alertness) is of course rule number one for those wishing to be prepared for an emergency. Agreed-upon contests of all

types begin at appointed times. Attacks may begin at any time. And anywhere.

Once having determined that one has been targeted for a hostile approach by one or more others who appear to be intent upon the use of force, escape and avoidance — if possible, without incurring undo risk to yourself or to someone else — is the all round best course of action. When escape and avoidance is not possible, then **FEROCIOUS PREEMPTIVE ATTACK** — relentless, "ferocious, preemptive attack"! — is the wisest course. Seize the initiative and go after your attackers! Violently, mercilessly, viciously, and with every ounce of strength, resolve, fury, and determination you can muster.

Such techniques as are popularly labeled "self-defense techniques" are really the least desirable techniques upon which to rely in an emergency, because these techniques are applied against a full blown attack, and only after the attack has gotten fully underway. These techniques, providing that they are of real quality and not mere "artistic exercises", are necessary in a comprehensive program, of course — but only as a backup to techniques of **PREEMPTION**.

We train in American Combato then, to react to violence in one of three ways:

We **AVOID** it (the best of all possible options)

We **PREEMPT** the assailant (best option when avoidance is impossible)

We **COUNTERATTACK** the attacker's action (the least desirable option, but nevertheless one we all must be prepared to employ)

Taking a specific, concrete example:

If you notice that a suspicious individual is walking toward you as you proceed down the street your wisest course of action is to unostentatiously alter your own route and cross the street. **AVOIDANCE.**

If, as you cross the street, you observe that this individual has cued in on you and has crossed the street also, heading in your direction, you shift immediately to "condition orange". As the individual confronts you, you are in your ready position, distanced properly, and fully prepared for trouble (without revealing in any way that this is the case).

If the individual suddenly commences an aggressive action, you immediately attack. You lash out with a kick and break his leg, thrust a sharp fingertips attack to his eyes, or otherwise drive into him, preempting his onslaught. **PREEMPTION.**

Only in an instance when you were too carelessly oblivious to the stranger's approach, would you forego avoidance and continue to walk into a questionable situation. And, only if you were perhaps in "condition white" would the individual whose approach you had eventually to deal with as an attack need to be "countered" — since only because you blew the "avoidance" and the "preemption" options did it become necessary to handle his full blown attack with a reactive, "counterattacking" technique.

The important thing of course is that we train so as to be able to do that which we must (ie avoid, preempt, or counter) in suitably realistic contexts.

No one "squares off" in a self-defense situation or "agrees to fight". A self-defense emergency is like an ASSASSINATION attempt, not like a "contest". Prepare for it accordingly.

Many, many years ago (or at least it seems like many, many years ago!) we learned something very valuable from one of our beloved teachers: Charlie Nelson. We learned to clip and to study all news stories from local and even out-of-town newspapers regarding violent crimes. These stories, and not ridiculous attempts to master "contest strategies" and "winning actions" for competition will reveal precisely that which one is up against when one wishes to prepare for real world self-defense.

There is also personal experience, if one has been unfortunate enough to have amassed any.

There is also speaking with seasoned street cops.

There is also speaking with psychiatrists and psychologists who have specialized in studying criminal violence.

There is also interviewing and garnering information from military combat veterans (Note: this does NOT mean anyone who has served in the military. It means those who have been in hand-to-hand combat and who know — firsthand — what it involves.)

And finally there is the individual who has been victimized and who has been fortunate enough to survive the incident.

All of the foregoing is highly recommended. We have unceasingly been utilizing these methods and means of acquiring reliable knowledge about

close combat and self-defense since the late 1960's. And we continue to use these methods, whenever and wherever we are able, as frequently as we can.

We respectfully suggest: If you are after really reliable and practical doctrine regarding close combat and personal defense, you follow our example and our advice.

In preparing for survival one cannot be too "realistic".

Bradley J. Steiner

Two Unpleasant Facts

THE first is that most violent attacks today involve multiple assailants.

The second is that most violent attacks also involve assailants who are armed.

The above (for anyone having a problem with reading comprehension) does not mean that "all" attacks or that "every" attack involves multiple assailants and weapons. There are still plenty of instances when punks, bullies, and assorted other scum who like to make trouble, "go it alone and unarmed" and simply attempt to gratify their despicably insane desires and drives by targeting some soul whom they feel that they can push around, injure, humiliate, beat up, rob, or even kill without the assistance of fellow bacteria to back up their efforts. However, **THE MAJORITY OF UNAVOIDABLE, VIOLENT AND DANGEROUS PHYSICAL**

ATTACKS THAT OCCUR ON THE MEAN STREETS AND IN THE HOMES OF URBAN AND SUBURBAN AMERICA TODAY involve multiple and/or armed scum.

The implications of these two facts are profound. They at once tell us volumes about the state of moral and cultural decrepitude that our society has degenerated to, while at the same time teaching us some valuable lessons regarding **THAT WHICH WE NEED TO DO IN ORDER TO BE PREPARED TO DEFEND OURSELVES.**

Since even the worthless dailies and the carefully prepared and doctored evening "news" reports on TV have (unwittingly) presented all that any intelligent and objective individual might require in the way of evidence that Western culture is **FINISHED**, we will not dwell on this fact. Besides, it makes us nauseous even to think about it.

We'll shift right to the matter of preparing for the possibility of being forced to defend against more than a single adversary who attacks us, and/or for the possibility (read: probability) of having to contend with **WEAPONS** during any physical encounter.

What — really — must we understand about these types of situations, and what must we do to be reasonably sure that, if one of them ever comes to us, we stand a good chance of surviving and prevailing over the odds?

The first thing to understand is that life-threatening physical attack situations amount to situations of **WAR**. We are not "competing" when we undertake to fight a war — we are battling for survival! There are no rules in war, save one: **WIN!** The very concept of ethics, fairness,

sportsmanship, or even decency, is suspended "for the duration". And when the "war" is a self-defense emergency that has been foisted upon an unfortunate victim, **IT IS THE ATTACKER(S) WHO BEARS FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT OCCURS, AND IT IS THE ATTACKER WHO HAS CHOSEN TO SUSPEND ETHICS, FAIRNESS, SPORTSMANSHIP, AND DECENCY, BY VIRTUE OF THAT WHICH HE HAS CHOSEN TO DO.** If a defender is to have a chance to prevail in such an awful situation, he cannot and must not be burdened with concerns for such humane considerations that his attacker(s) has disregarded.

The second thing to understand about these situations is that **THEY ARE ALWAYS LIFE-THREATENING.** Whether multiple/and/or armed assailants are youngsters or older individuals, and regardless of their gender the threat that they pose is a lethal one. Thus, the reaction that a defender is not only justified in generating, but also **URGED TO APPLY WITHOUT HESITATION,** is deadly force.

The third lesson we must learn is that tactics must be suitable to the emergency. "Training for self-defense" by restricting oneself to one-on-one type predicaments, or to the assumption that no weapons will be involved (unless we **SEE** a weapon) is ridiculous. The proper tactical imperative for the student of close combat and self-defense is to train in the skills that he is acquiring by assuming that — even when he is not initially aware of the fact — the individual whom he initially confronts has assistance, and is armed. Statistics conform the validity of such an assumption.

The fourth lesson that offers is that those who train for self-defense must train in techniques that enable them to — a) Inflict immediate and

grievous injury, without tying oneself up with any single, individual adversary, and b) React under any conditions, anywhere, with skills that are reliably simple and that have been retained without any need for excessive practice. "Training for a contest" is a short-term, young man's game. Training for self-defense is a LIFETIME PURSUIT. If the skills with which an individual trains are not retainable and DOABLE when he is in his 70's and 80's, then what possible value can they have for real world self-defense? Remember: One becomes a more attractive target for human scum when one becomes old; one cannot claim that one is "retired from competition" and expect a trio of armed home invaders or street bacteria to retreat!

The fifth critical thing to learn from looking at the facts is that ONE MUST INCLUDE MODERN WEAPONS IN ONE'S TRAINING AND STUDY OF SELF-PROTECTION. Criminals carry and use firearms, knives, and other deadly weapons. There is no reason on earth why decent people should not avail themselves of such weapons, also — and make themselves MUCH BETTER SKILLED AND DANGEROUS WITH THOSE WEAPONS THAN ARE THE SCUM WHO WOULD PREY UPON THEM.

In our advocacy of the attitude, skills, armament, and tactical considerations that we have presented we wish to make it clear that in no sense do we condone, advocate, or in any manner sanction the breaking of any laws. We are simply trying to provide a wake up call to those whose sense of practicality may have been less than desirable in their efforts to prepare for actual, real world emergencies.

We have never believed that there was any reason why decent human beings should not avail themselves of the fullest measure of readiness for

dealing with any who might attempt to violate them. And in today's sick and violent world, "those who would attempt to violate them" generally move in packs (like hyena), and carry weapons to assist their evil purpose.

The Value Of Blows To The Head

WHILE it is no secret that clenched fist punching to the bony facial and head area will often result in more serious injuries to the one who delivers such punches than they inflict upon the recipient, the student of close combat must understand that not only are blows to the head critically important in real hand-to-hand engagements, but also that there are powerful and reliable methods of delivering such blows that — although banned in competition — are pure gold for emergency application when one is playing marbles "for keeps!"

Blows to the head are potentially very dangerous. They are also INSTANTLY DECISIVE, which makes them outstanding techniques to employ in an emergency. When the head is struck powerfully there is extreme shock to the brain. And if the head is struck ferociously in one direction and then in the opposite direction the result will almost invariably be a KNOCKOUT, since concussion is the likely outcome. The knockout results from tissue being torn inside the head as the brain is shaken violently within the skull from the successive hits. This accounts for the famous "one two" knockout sequence so often referred to in boxing: A left jab is snapped smartly into the opponent's face, and then a powerful straight right completes the job! The only problem with this excellent sequence is that it is a boxing sequence. The clenched fists sans gloves are not good for striking blows to the head (as stated earlier) outside the ring.

Besides, it can take six to eight months for a novice to train to the point where he can reasonably expect to deliver sufficiently accurate and forceful clenched fist punches to effect a reliable "one-two" sequence.

NOT SO with the following blows:—

- Edge of the hand
- Heel of the hand
- Hammerfist smash
- Elbow smash
- Head butt

Those blows — normally banned (and quite properly so!) from full contact application to the facial/head area in sporting contests, are perfect for employment against a violent attacker, when the "prize" is SURVIVAL.

No one struck viciously and solidly with any one of those five blows will fail to be at the very least disoriented long enough for a second blow — executed with the same or with one of the other natural weapons — that smashes his head powerfully in the opposite direction of the original blow. Here are some suggested combinations to work on:—

a) Snap a speedy leading edge-of-the-hand blow to the opponent's face, then drive your body forward as the chopping hand returns and smash a forward elbow blow across the opponent's temple.

b) Leading hand delivers an edge-of-the-hand blow, then step in and drive a chinjab smash (heel-of-the-hand blow) upward under the opponent's jaw with your rearmost hand.

c) Chinjab smash rapidly — alternating hands — driving two blows, one into each side of the opponent's head, in rapid succession.

d) Execute a sharp, untelegraphed vertical hammerfist smash to the opponent's temple or jaw hinge area with your rearmost hand. Followup instantly after impact by slamming a lead arm elbow smash into the opponent's head.

e) Head butt your opponent smartly as he moves in close to you (or you to him), then drive a hooking heel of the hand blow using your foremost hand into his temple or jaw hinge.

f) Deliver a chinjab smash using your rearmost hand to the opponent's jaw, then followup with a lead arm elbow smash across the opponent's temple or jaw hinge.

CAUTION!: The foregoing sequences are extremely dangerous and can result in serious injury. They are NOT to be practiced with contact to a live training partner, and they are NEVER to be used against anyone, except in a case where self-defense action is unavoidable in order to prevent grievous injury from an attacker. Work the blows in the air, on dummies, on a heavy bag, or on some other striking apparatus.

When you train, observe the following points:

- Always launch your attacks by surprise. Make no "cocking" or other telegraphing movements — just HIT!
- Get your entire body into the blows by utilizing waist-hip turn and driving forward into the attack.
- Although the sequence will almost certainly drop your man if successful, be prepared to followup relentlessly — just in case.
- Give lots of thought to all of the situations in which the sequences may be applied.
- Develop other sequences, according to your inclinations, experiences, and personal preferences.
- Become a "HEADHUNTER"! Go after your attacker's head with powerful barrages of successive unarmed combat strikes whenever you are in danger, and attacking in this manner appears to be suited to the situation!
- Never forget that the purpose of these specific combinations is to JAR and SNAP the opponent's head viciously in one direction and then suddenly in another — with the aim of causing concussion.

REREAD THE "CAUTION" AND PAY ATTENTION TO ITS MESSAGE! We do not assume any responsibility for your use or misuse of this or any other information imparted here or elsewhere. Be a responsible, law-abiding, non-troublesome and peaceful person. Use these types of actions **ONLY** in legitimate self-defense!

"Suppose He 'Squares Off' In A Fighting Stance?"

THE question sometimes arises concerning what to do and how to react when a troublemaker whom one is facing in a correct ready position that one has assumed, abruptly shifts from a belligerent or verbally threatening demeanor to an actual fighting stance. Remember: competition is completely unrelated to combat. And sparring in any form is wholly unrelated to "self-defense". Thus, as a properly trained student of self-defense you will take **NO OVERT "FIGHTING STANCE"**. Your assumption of that which we teach as a **"RELAXED-READY STANCE"** at the outset of an approach completely prepares you, should things turn nasty. And of course if you are simply attacked suddenly with no warning whatever, you must simply go into attack mode, and if you have not been rendered unconscious or disabled by the surprise attack, **YOU BECOME THE AGGRESSOR**. Hardly any point in considering a fighting stance if you are unaware of anything or anyone whom you are to "face" in the "stance" in the first place, is there?

But here you are, in the following situation:

A presumed troublemaker (punk, toughguy, piece of street scum, bully, etc.) is confronting you. Thus far he has made no indication of physical aggression, and so you are simply in **MENTAL CONDITION ORANGE**, distanced outside of arm's length if at all possible, and off-angled with your hands non aggressively held at about sternum level. Your eyes rest on his face, thus permitting you — via peripheral vision — to pick up every nuance of his movement.

Suddenly, with no real warning save the verbally offensive tirade that has thus far been hurled at you, this bacteria draws its hands into fists and positions itself obviously for fighting.

What action ought properly to be taken at this point?

Very simple: **ATTACK VICIOUSLY AND WITH EVERY OUNCE OF YOUR SPEED AND POWER! DRIVE INTO AND THROUGH THIS AGGRESSOR, TAKING HIS ASSUMPTION OF A FIGHTING STANCE TO BE THE FIRST MOVE OF AN OVERT PHYSICAL ATTACK, WHICH IT IS!**

THE PURPOSE OF BEING POSITIONED IN A RELAXED-READY STANCE IS TO PRIME YOU — JUST IN CASE — AND MAKE ANY FURTHER PREPARATORY ACTION, SHOULD WHOEVER IS CONFRONTING YOU INITIATE PHYSICAL FORCE, BEFORE MOVING IN AND TOTALLY NEUTRALIZING YOUR FOE.

When an individual has an apparent ability to harm you, a clear opportunity to harm you (due to his position and proximity to you, etc.), and what any reasonable person would interpret as an intention to harm you, you are completely justified in taking preemptive, decisively aggressive action, as far as we — as a lay person — understand the law to be. As the "assault" begins, so may your counterattacking action. You need not wait for the actual "battery" (i.e. blows or other force reigned upon your person) before you take action. Being in obvious, imminent physical danger is sufficient.

A "fighting stance" per se is of course appropriate to, and invariably assumed in, all contests and competitive events, since the participants

begin as equals, and must forego real combat tactics. The victim of an attack (ie YOU, perhaps) has no agreement with his tormentor, and would be truly idiotic to grant "terms of engagement" to some low-life piece of violent filth whose intention it is to victimize him!

Never mind how some gutter animal "wishes" to fight you. If he is attacking and you are defending, there is nothing sporting about the thing, whatever. **JUST DROP HIM WHERE HE STANDS.** And use the foulest, dirtiest, most viciously ruthless and destructive UNsporting actions of which you are capable.

That's real self-defense.

Note A: In fact you must train and prepare **PRIMARILY** for the type of attacker who does attempt to launch a surprise attack, and take you completely unaware. We have gone into this detail regarding what to do when a scumbag assumes a fighting stance only because it is apparently a concern of many students.

Note B" One of the simplest ways to react in the situation discussed here is to lash out with a side kick and break the punk's knee.

COMBAT EXPERIENCE

IN both armed and unarmed martial activities two completely different orientations exist:

1. SPORT — and — 2. COMBAT

Neither one is per se "better than" the other, but each is distinct and very different from the other, and it is the mark of one who lacks understanding of either to deny this.

Sport has always been more popular than combat training, and probably will always remain so. This is, we suspect, because sport is enjoyable for most people. Sport offers excitement without posing much if any real danger, and it is controllable as well as being, to a certain degree, predictable. Sport is ongoing, safe, interesting, recreational, healthful, and fun. Combat, on the other hand, is undesirable, astonishingly sudden, short-lived, very dangerous, never without unpleasant consequences, and all-too-often quite permanent in its results. Combat also has extremely serious moral and legal implications.

There is no round two in combat. Nor is there a next time (i.e. a rematch); it is now or never — EVERY TIME.

The other day we were reflecting at leisure upon something that we found fascinating. That is, the two different venues of COMBAT HANDGUN technique and UNARMED COMBAT owe their respective "wrong turnoffs" recently (insofar as close combat is concerned), to the unfortunate failure in both instances of enthusiasts and "experts" to look to COMBAT EXPERIENCE, as opposed to COMPETITION EXPERIENCE for validation of combat and personal defense skills and doctrine.

Prior to the advent of the so-called "new technique" of the pistol (a technique developed and "proven" 100% in the competitive arena, please note), it had been understood that POINT SHOOTING (which had been validated and established beyond doubt or any nuance of question as The Right Way to employ a handgun in combat) was in fact "combat handgun

shooting". Why? Because decades of real world, actual combat shooting EXPERIENCE in peacetime and during wartime, had proven it to be so.

Prior to the advent of the so-called "challenge events" in martial arts, and the foisting upon the public the observable phenomenon of grappling's superiority to hitting IN REGULATED SPORTING CONTESTS (something that tests in American universities and colleges had already proven years before the martial arts field was infected by the misleading spinoff that has since led to today's disgraceful chip-on-the-shoulderism, and "I'm a tougher-dude-than-you-are-itis") IT WAS UNDERSTOOD that blows were preferable in real battle. Why? Because COMBAT EXPERIENCE in peace and war had incontrovertibly demonstrated that FACT.

And in fact real combat experts — who were trained in grappling — understood the matter clearly. Fairbairn, O'Neill, Brown, Begala, and others — all of whom had been primarily and predominantly trained and experienced in grappling and in groundwork, tossed all of that and INSISTED UPON BLOWS (GOUGES, KICKS, JABS, ETC.) as the core of hand-to-hand training, when preparing men for war.

It does not surprise us that the majority of people who do not want to accept the truth simply do not accept it. This has been the way, throughout human history. Such individuals are not our concern.

We speak and have always spoken only to those who think and whose ultimate reference when deciding upon any issue is REALITY.

The reality, and the truth, is that only actual combat experience, with or without weapons, can ultimately reveal what does and does not work IN ACTUAL COMBAT.

In both combat use of the handgun and in unarmed and hand-to-hand combat, those of us who are professionals in this field HAVE looked to the realities of combat experience and we base all that we teach and do on what those realities demand.

Remember that this is not an attack on sporting competition in whatever form or version anyone may enjoy participating. We are merely establishing that sport and combat are different; and it is extremely dangerous for those seeking personal defense skills or hand-to-hand combat skills for war, to confuse the issue and fail to recognize this FACT.

Another thing, which we leave our readers with for the purpose of clarity:

In no dictionary or thesaurus that we have ever seen is the word "DIFFERENT" indicated as a synonym for "BETTER". We, and others like us who are in this field professionally, have never made the claim, and have never felt, that close combat and self-defense training is "better" than competition training. We only maintain — in fact, insist — that the two venues are different.

And it is reality and combat experience that has led us to our conclusion. We respectfully suggest that these are two VERY important considerations when determining how best to train for self-defense. That is, they are very important considerations if you are using your MIND to make the determination.

"Enter Battle Seeking Death!" An Explanation Of A Most Misunderstood Samurai Concept And Teaching

DURING the Vietnam War we remember a conversation that we had with a friend who had just returned on leave from Marine Corp Boot Camp. He and I both knew that, following Advanced Individual Training, he was going to be sent to Vietnam. In fact, this was my friend's objective at the time, and is why he enlisted in the Marines.

"So," we asked, "what was boot camp like?"

"Like a combination of prison and hard training," he said.

"Did you learn a lot of unarmed combat?" we asked.

"No, not at all. Just about six hours or so, very basic stuff. The real emphasis was on rifle marksmanship and physical training."

"You mean they didn't stress a lot about combat?" we asked.

"Oh yeah!" he said, "but it was mainly attitude and the need for being really aggressive. Like when they taught us bayonet work. We had to attack the field targets growling and screaming that we wanted to kill."

We smiled. "Sounds nice." Then we asked, "Do you feel you got a lot of practical as well as serious preparation?"

"Damn right. The Senior Drill Instructor had a talk with us at the end of Boot Camp, before graduation. He told us all: 'Look, you Marines are all going to Vietnam. Do your best. When you get there, make your peace with God, and expect to die.' Brad, you can't imagine the effect that talk had on us — on me, anyway — because it hit something deep in my gut. I realized what was happening — what was going to happen, and what our training was really all about — and that I'd better do exactly what the D.I. said. I had better prepare to die when I get to "Nam, and then just do my best."

Thank God my friend survived his tour of duty in Vietnam. He later told us that when he arrived he was 100% primed to be a WAR MACHINE. He gave no thought to being wounded or killed; and he believed, somehow, that his READINESS TO DIE was responsible for his effectiveness in combat, and for his having been able to come home.

As we studied and researched war, combat, martial arts, and psychology in the years after that conversation, WE DISCOVERED THAT OUR FRIEND'S INTUITIVE SENSE THAT HIS "BEING READY TO DIE" CONTRIBUTED TO HIS SURVIVAL, WAS ABSOLUTELY CORRECT!

Many students of the classical/traditional martial arts are familiar (or think that they are familiar) with the teachings of the Japanese samurai. "The samurai was taught to enter battle seeking death!" many have been told by their teachers; but the MEANING and the IMPLICATIONS of this fact (and it is a fact) are rarely if ever truly understood in the West.

We cannot count the times when we have heard "teachers" (complete with black belts wrapped around their waists!) authoritatively announce: "Well, the reason why the samurai were taught to enter battle seeking death is because there is much less respect for human life in Asia, than there is in Western society."

Nonsense. Utter, absolute, complete nonsense. (We might add, parenthetically, that speaking from our own experience exclusively, we have seen considerably MORE genuine and sincere "respect for human life" expressed by individuals who are from Asian cultures, than that which we have observed in Western societies. The treatment of the very young and of the very old — especially in Chinese and in Korean cultures — we have found to be so profoundly superior to much of that which we have witnessed in the West, that, by and large, it embarrasses Westerners when such conduct by Asians is juxtaposed with their own!) But this is an aside.

The reason why the Japanese warrior (bugei, or samurai) was taught to enter battle seeking death is because by so doing his mind would be free and clear of all anticipatory blockages and impediments to his own commitment to **ATTACKING AND DESTROYING THE ENEMY.**

One critical thing that we constantly strive to instill in our students is that they must **EXPECT TO GET HURT** in any physically violent encounter. Like Col. Rex Applegate, we regard as a complete myth the widespread notion that, assuming a person is a highly skilled "martial arts expert", he need not fear getting injured should he ever be attacked. People who believe that expertise in any form or style of unarmed or armed close combat somehow "guarantees" that they will remain unscathed in battle are seriously misinformed.

We believe, as the samurai did, that 100% focus of mind and body is required in close combat, and that so long as concern over being injured (even killed) occupies one's mind, one can only do battle at greatly reduced efficiency.

Does this produce recklessness? Not unless the individual is a truly stupid and violently-inclined savage.

An intelligent person who appreciates and understands what real combat is like, seeks all ways to avoid it. Only when and if he finds that there is no other possible alternative, will a reasonable and properly trained combatant physically go into aggressive action against another person. And then, when and if he does so, he realizes what is at stake and understands that all of his powers, training, and personal resources must go into seeing to it that he PREVAILS. He is not "reckless" when he abandons concerns about being injured; he is being efficient. He understands that nothing beneficial can come from his detracting in the least from his own ferocious attack. He may in fact be injured or killed, AND IT IS PRECISELY BECAUSE OF THIS, that he refuses to dwell even momentarily on the possibility, but drives in ferociously to eliminate the enemy who might be responsible for injuring or for killing him. Like the tightrope walker who is impervious to the possibility of falling, the effective fighter recognizes no mental blocks and concerns that remind him of the risk involved in the immediate battle.

So is samurai training of the classical/traditional variety the best way to go? Certainly not.

The point that we wish to make here is that truths that we expound today have not only been expounded before in history, but also by others amongst our contemporaries, even if, perhaps (like our friend's marine D.I.) such contemporaries do not express it exactly the same as we do, The truth is true and facts are facts. For now, and for all time.

What changes is not a fundamental truth. What changes is our depth of understanding in regard to it, and the extent to which we are able to discover ways in which to implement that which we have learned from discovering the truth in question.

The way the teachers of the feudal era samurai imparted the philosophy and mindset of combat was perhaps not clarified sufficiently in the presentations that were made to Westerners — hence misunderstanding.

Classical/traditional martial arts may not be the best way to go for modern self-defense and close combat, but there's a lot that may be understood by studying the philosophical doctrine of real warriors — be they ancient, like the Japanese samurai; or contemporary, like the United States Marine.

"Enter battle seeking death." That very well may be the best advice for surviving battle — and for STAYING ALIVE.

Spy Skills — And Self-Defense

ONE aspect of our long-ago background (ie that of our involvement with intelligence work) may seem to be largely irrelevant for close combat and self-defense. However, we wish to point out that there are aspects of training for clandestine work — entirely aside from the hand-to-hand and firearms training — that is quite adaptable to the needs of Mr. and Mrs.

Private Citizen in their quest for practical, real world defensive preparation.

One of those aspects is "surveillance detection" and the art of avoiding or of losing surveillants who are tailing you, once their presence has been confirmed.

In effect the skills involved in determining that in fact you are being surveilled (or followed) pertain to the application of the principle of ALERTNESS. By mastering the practical application of this principle, you will be able to spot someone — or someones — who may be attempting to follow you; usually for the purpose of ambushing you when they have determined the moment to be right.

Mastering COUNTERSURVEILLANCE TACTICS (evasive moves, also known as "ditching a tail") can be extremely helpful in eluding would-be muggers or other troublemakers who attempt to stalk and then pounce upon their victims, after following them to a secluded area.

When these skills are taught to intelligence professionals they are taught on the assumption that they will be employed against trained counterintelligence operatives. It stands to reason, then, that such techniques will likely work extremely well against relatively unsophisticated street scum. We in no sense mean to imply that street bacteria are not dangerous or quite proficient at plying their craft. However, they are nowhere near the level of proficiency and sophistication that agents working for a major intelligence service are! And so, if you learn some of the basic skills of detection and avoidance that the professionals are trained in, you will probably be able to apply them with enormous success, should you have to do so, against the

garbagy ruffraff and scum that skulks about the urban landscape and preys upon innocent people.

Among our several "projects-in-the-works" is a training manual describing the art of urban escape and evasion. The Manual will be quite complete in covering all but classified information on the subject.

What we wish to make clear right now is that "E&E" skills are of importance and of great value to the modern student of close combat and self-defense — especially those skills applied to the urban setting (an aspect that is NOT normally dealt with in the preponderance of military courses and manuals on the subject; those being limited to desert, mountain, and other aspects of wilderness escape and evasion).

We'll leave you with this simple hint regarding the subject, for now:

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS is key, and you must never allow yourself to become complacent in regard to your environment — whether at home, at work, or at leisure. Master the attitude of noticing things. Notice who is around or near you. Notice anyone who seems to "show up" near you (in a department store, while window shopping or when out for a stroll, etc.) **MORE THAN ONCE**. Operatives in the long-established and excellent Secret Intelligence Service — MI6 — of England are taught that observing a stranger in one's vicinity three times should be taken as verification that he is a "tail". We say **TWICE** is more than enough to confirm this; and we urge evasive action and avoidance at that point, just to be sure.

Be aware of anyone whose actions or behavior appear to be synchronized in any way with your own. For example: Did that fellow standing outside

the store you were shopping in become suddenly "awakened and active" as you exited? When your vehicle pulled out of the driveway and you began your trip to wherever you were going, did you notice any other vehicle pull away from the curb, also?

Etcetera.

Yes, we have given you very simple and obvious examples. This is because we are not in any way trying to teach the entire aspect of tradecraft at this juncture (a task that will be left for our Manual); we merely wish to make you aware of the general idea so that you can begin to give it some thought, and start to integrate fundamental aspects of it now — along with your technical training in self-defense skills.

Violent criminals — like trained terrorists — often engage in relatively lengthy periods of stalking their intended targets, so as to pounce when the time is perfect, and they feel certain of success. By being aware of this, sensitive to it, and by learning what to do **IN CASE IT BECOMES A REALITY FOR YOURSELF**, you arm and equip against it.

As in all aspects of personal defense, there can be no guarantees of success. But the absence of possessing these attitudes and methods may well guarantee tragedy.

Something to think about until next the edition of **SWORD & PEN**.

Now Visit Our Other Site

OUR second site, recently set up, offers more and different material pertaining to the subject of personal protection, close combat, and practical self-defense skills. The site is:

WWW.SEATTLECOMBATIVES.COM

We hope you'll visit often. There will be new material added AT LEAST every month. Often, there will be a new posting every week or so in one or more of the Site's sections.

And please, tell others about our sites so that they too can benefit from the information and instruction that we offer!

Until next month we wish you success in your training!

Yours in self-defense and preparedness,

Prof. Bradley J. Steiner

— E N D —