

CORSICAN STEEL

By

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## INTRODUCTION

Telling a man how to fight with a knife is rather like telling a duck how to swim. Usually a man can fight with a knife, especially when his life is at stake. Before you launch into protests that you don't feel that this applies to you, let's look this over. Not the techniques of knife fighting...just the idea itself.

If I handed you a knife and then attacked you, what would you do? I believe you would fight. You might not look pretty, but you would fight for all you were worth to save your life, right? Most untrained men I have met insist that they "don't know anything" and yet, if pressed into combat you see them fight---sometimes win. So what is the point here? I believe that it is closer to the truth that the person feels that he must have studied the knife or he knows nothing, so to speak. If this is true, then how did the men I have known learn to survive with a knife? None of them ever attended a school of knife fighting to my knowledge. In this book, I will give you some ideas that I have picked up here and there.

I have spent twenty years traveling around, and I've seen some well trained men, not in glittering dojos, but back street cellars and similar environments.

I have studied in twelve countries, and with men of all ages, colors and types.

Introduction, Cont'd

All of them had one thing in common, a strong will to win...no matter what. This single characteristic supersedes all the "techniques" you could read, believe me.

The French are proud of their food and their feet. And if you come with me some time to the waterfronts and streets of the Mediteranean ports, you will see a style of knife use as characteristic to these people as the razor is to the American Black.

I urge you to read every book you can on knife work. Train, train and train some more. Most of all develop the will to survive no matter what...and you'll do all right. Good luck to you.

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CHAPTER ONE

A knife is a potential weapon. It has potential use, but only if you have the will and the confidence to use it for survival. A knife in your pocket or hanging on your webbing is just that, and no more. In a survival situation, it takes a decision by you to pull that weapon and put it into use. If you go around any barracks or any barroom, you will always find there are guys that others seem to look up to as more confident when it comes to combat. That type person can take a minimum of training and seem to do well in hand to hand combat. What about you? If the truth is that you don't have much confidence, then what are you going to do?

I found an exercise that helps in this area, if you will do it. Don't forget now, all we are talking about here is how can we build YOU up a little. Take a walk through the streets...visit a few bars or hangouts. When you do this walk, I just want you to observe the people you meet. How many of them do you feel that you could handle in hand to hand combat? How many did you see that you felt you couldn't handle? Why? I'm sure you found a few guys whom you wouldn't want to tangle with. Why? What was the thing that made you feel that way? Let's look that over again. I don't want you to say, "Well, he looked tough," or some such answer. What specific thing did

COULD YOU HANDLE

you see?

Go out every single day and do this exercise until you can tell me the exact thing that made you feel less confident in facing certain people. Don't be at all surprised if you have to do this for a few days. Most guys I've trained took a week or more to finally see clearly and precisely what it was that made them "back off" on certain guys. Why are we doing this? I'll tell you why. You hear a great deal about the "self confidence" that people develop in martial arts or hand to hand combat training. How is it developed? I believe that a first starting point is for you to very clearly and precisely know what it is that makes you feel less confident. Once you can put a precise label on it, a large part of the battle is over. No, I'm not trying to oversimplify it. Let's say that as you did this walk every day, you finally see that it is "big muscles" that seem to make you feel less confident. Don't laugh. Many guys feel less confident if they feel less strong than an opponent.

If you were training with me, I would put you to weight lifting or something, to remedy this one point. If you don't remedy this point, it will always be there as a hidden attitude that can hold you back in combat. I'd have you lift weights until you could take a walk and NOT feel that same mental attitude of lack of confidence against muscular persons. I can assure you that if you did this drill over and

over you will find that it doesn't take long until you feel a whole lot more confidence in YOU. If you don't do it, you may never know what it is that you fear or back off from. When you suddenly face a combat situation, you have no time to do anything except handle the danger to your person. That takes confidence. In the past twenty years, I've trained a lot of men. More than once I saw a guy huff and puff and sweat a train...and turn to jelly when faced with a real fight in the street. I'm sure you have also. I've been in the streets in more than one place where a revolution was being pulled off, and seen so-called trained military quake and tremble while bare handed insurgents ran right over them. Let's just agree on one point here, and that is that it takes more than a few memorized "tricks" and a few hours on a combat course to give some guys confidence. The main reason, I feel, is that they never knew what it was they felt less confident about, so it never got out in the open where they or their instructor could handle it.

It has been my experience that confidence is a cumulative quality. If you set out to learn to do three new things this month. Things you never did before, we'll say. You will have soon increased your overall quality of confidence. You can't dance. Go take dance lessons. You never tried tennis. Go tackle tennis. You can ask yourself a simple question. If there anything you Wouldn't try if you felt confident you could do it? I'm sure that

is true for many of us. Really all we are dealing with here is the fact that to feel confident in life is a nice feeling. To feel confident when you talk to friends, see a girl, or get into a combat situation is all the same quality of mind. It is the same basic "I can do it," feeling no matter where you direct your attention.

Training is normally a method of you gathering lots of data into the mind. So you read lots of books, and you do lots of drills and exercises, and you can sit around over a beer and tell all your buddies about how hard you can punch and kick...or some such routine. At this point, you probably have your muscles fairly tuned up and your mind has lots of "now you're supposed to" things in it. Then a live situation hits and you feel scared and maybe do well, maybe not...and you go around wondering why. Did you, during the fight, have confidence? If you did not have confidence at that crucial moment, then you had no will to transmit the techniques for combat from the mind to the muscles to the opponent. Then, your confidence further shattered, you sulk around feeling like the village wimp. If the combat involved a knife, you might not sulk around. In fact, you might not be around. So, if we are going to discuss the use of a blade to save your life, let's not skimp or brush off the most basic ingredient...YOU and your confidence.

*Rehef*

The next exercise is simplicity in itself. And if you do it daily, you will be very very surprised at the results it gives. You and your training partner go outside with your blades. Probably it is a bit better here if I tell you to use a dulled down knife, but if possible, the same one you will carry. You should get the feel of the steel from the beginning.

Now that you and your buddy are outside, I want you to fight for about five minutes in absolute slow motion. Use any and all ideas that you want, just do them in very slow motion. Now let's examine what happened. Was there any move he made that you couldn't handle? Was there any technique he knew that you couldn't see coming and block or counter? Of course not. If for any reason there WAS something you couldn't see how to handle, go back and do it until you can. Now this part of the drill is simple enough. If your partner were to do the exact same moves, but keep increasing his speed, he could probably find a speed where he could get through to you faster than you could react. That speed, no matter how fast it is, is the speed you need to start out at in your training. No faster. Your partner needs to be alert to the exact speed, beyond which you have trouble, and see to it that he works with you to the point where you can handle that speed...then and only then increasing his speed of attack.

One fine point here about your training partner and you. In most two man sparring, you see one guy trying to show the other one how good he is. That isn't our game in this book. You only have one purpose for going out on the floor with the guy. You are there to help him increase his confidence...not to show him how good you are. You are there to coach him, not impress him. So in every drill, one of you is the coach and one is the student. Then you can reverse the roles. In the above example, all the coach is doing is trying to find the speed where you run into trouble, and work with you at that speed until you can handle it. Then step up the speed until he again finds the point where you can't do well, and work at that speed, etc. If you will do these drills in this fashion, you can bring each other along nicely. Later on, in free style fighting, you can have more of a contest to see who is the best. In training drills, keep the idea of "best" out of it and only work to help the other guy improve.

In every single training session, always do about five minutes of totally slow motion sparring at the beginning. Over a period of time, this deceptive drill will help build a great deal of confidence in you. Never mind how, just do it. Don't do it with an attitude of trying to figure it out. Just do it and keep all of your attention on him during the five minutes. Don't treat this as "silly" or you never will get to the point of grasping the principle in back of this drill.

There are two basic drills in this chapter. The drill where you took a walk to observe...and then found by observing, just where your weak areas might be in terms of confidence...and then you handled those weaknesses. This will build more and more of the quality called "confidence" into your life. Next was the slow motion sparring and working to find the speeds that gave you the most back off...and handling that back off with your partner.

Next we will look at some exercises to make use of a blade more effective. I realize knives are sharp and all that, but the stronger your moves are executed... the more effective they will be. There are many excellent books available on various techniques of blade use. I advise you to read them all. What you may not find "on every corner" is a school of knife fighting which can give you exercises to strengthen your techniques. This book will do that.

A further word to the wise. "Knife fighter" is not an occupation, and it's not a title. It's a circumstance of life that we find ourselves in. Getting wet in the rain isn't a title either. It's a circumstance that happens to people when they aren't prepared. Knife fights are often the same way. I hope this book serves as a permanent umbrella for you.

## CHAPTER TWO

In this area we will look at how you can develop more strength for the specific purpose of blade use. All too often a man feels that the blade is the answer to his problems, so to speak, and doesn't realize that an increase in his own strength can greatly enhance the usefulness of the blade. Keeping a blade sharpened is part of the game, for sure, but you can add a great deal to what the blade can do, or not do, by your own strength.

Do you have any reality what resistance a man's clothing, depending on the type, can be like? Do you know for sure what the hilt of your blade can be like when wet? How much more grip you will need in such cases? Hang a fatigue shirt and field jacket over an old tire and give it a try. Not a perfect example, but it will give you some idea of what I mean. If you are really curious, go to a poultry house and get some chicken blood and wet your hand and knife hilt and try the tire again. It may not be pretty, but it could help you see any limitations in your ability ahead of time. You also can get a good look at how your blade performs and have time to correct any faults that arise in such tests. Don't ever carry a knife into action that you haven't tested out. Would you want to carry a firearm you had never test fired? Yet, you would be surprised how many persons carry knives they have never tested. With the noticeable increase in knife tactics in the U. S., a greater selection of knives are available

to you than ever before. When you get one, test it out. This still gives you time to get new hilt pieces or add (or take off) features that proved objectionable under test.

I will list down here several exercises I have encountered over the years. I suppose you can pick out any that you can see you need, but I do advise you try all of them for a while. Only you, or your instructor, can see if you are getting stronger and more positive in your moves. If you are already good with the firearms of choice, I very much recommend you concentrate on developing every possible skill in knife work. If a knife is your backup, please don't neglect it. How long did it take you to get proficient with firearms? How long do pro's train to become proficient at hand to hand combat? Give it some thought, and then get with it. The life you save will be your own.

①  
First the grip. I have found the AMF WHITELEY hand exerciser to be excellent. It has six springs (you can add more if needed) which allows for gradual increase in resistance. Just follow the directions and you will have begun to develop a basic overall grip. One variation I recommend is to reverse the exerciser, squeezing with the thumbs for, say two sets, as a balance to the sets using the fingers. The thumb is often neglected in grip development. There are other commercial exercisers, but this one I know does the job. Whatever type you use, be sure to specifically use the thumb as a separate exercise on it.

2 Flipping your fingers is also very useful, while a bit more strenuous. Extend the arms shoulder height in front of you. Loosely close the fist. Then "flip" the fingers out very fast so they end up fully extended from the palm. The speed with which the fingers are flipped out determines the strengthening effect. Start this with whatever reps you can do, and add 2 to 3 reps a week.

3 Grip your knife hilt rapidly, i.e., squeeze then release the grip, but very rapidly for ten counts. This provides some pumping action to the muscles. On the tenth count, squeeze as tight as you can and hold it for ten counts, then relax. You can use a stick or somesuch for this, but everywhere possible I prefer you use your own blade. Do this, alternating hands, until tired.

4 For this next one, you need a post or a tree or some sort of object that is firmly rooted and will not give way under hard pressure by you. Walk up to the post and assume a basic grip of your choice on the hilt of your blade. Press the blade against the post as hard as you can, and hold for ten counts. Move to the next grip and do the same. Go through all the different ways to grip that you know of and do the same thing with each one. If, for example, you were to be practicing an ice pick grip for a downward stroke from behind (taking out a sentry from the rear); walk up to the post, apply a rear strangle to the post, and bring the knife to position. Apply the point to the post and then apply full

strength to the strangle and thrust. Hold for a ten count. Get the idea? This simple isometric approach can be expanded upon no end. Just for here, we are using it for the grip, but you can apply it any way you see fit.

5 I want to mention a point here. If you watch a man apply the above drill to his repertoire of hand grips, you will usually see he will do them with the arm and elbow in the position which gives him the best leverage. This is natural. Notice how he positions body and legs to give the most strength to the arm and hand. I recommend you also exercise from very unorthodox positions, seated at a table, lying down, etc. I point this out as I have rarely found myself in "comfortable" orthodox positions when the need arose to defend myself. Don't neglect this area of the unorthodox, it could be vital.

6 If you wish to get into something a bit more exotic, here is an exercise I picked up. In fact, two of them. The first is fairly simple. Sit in a squat position (called the horse stance in most martial arts books) and extend your arms in front of you. Use two sticks, say one inch dowel rod, 2-3 feet long, one for each hand. Do this in front of some object which you can beat down on with the sticks lightly. I used my kitchen cabinet, with a towel folded up as a pad on the cabinet surface. Extend the sticks arms length, and beat a gentle but steady rhythm on the surface of the object.

Only raise the end of the stick about 6 inches from the surface you are beating on. Keep they rhythm steady, not jerky. Keep the arms and wrists relaxed. First beat the rhythm using the entire arm, moving from the shoulder, and not bending the elbow or wrist. When this feels tiring, shift to using the arm only beiding at the elbow. You would then keep the arm from shoulder to elbow straight, but not tense. Only the forearm will rise and fall. When that gets tiring, shift to wrist only. At this point, the arm is still held straight, but relaxed, from shoulder to wrist and only the wrist beats the rhythm with the same 6 inch up and down motion. This one is a real killer, but very worthwhile if kept up. Those who are real gluttons for this one, can graduate up to lead pipes if they are brave. Filling the lead pipes with sand, then lead shot are two further levels for the real strong hearted. A man trained in nothing but just this exercise can sever your wrist with a hard to see 2-3 inch stroke, such is the power in their wrists for knife work. The man I watched took a fifty cent piece from his pocket and held it in his left hand. He put the index finger of his right hand on the back edge of the blade, and sliced through the half dollar like I would slice bread. All I said was, "Yes Sir and No Sir" after that. His exercise is worth doing. As you may have guessed, the above exercise may be extended to using the index fingers to beat the stick up and down with. Try it, you might like it.

The next one may appeal to those who are interested in Chinese internal boxing methods, which is where it stems from. Look over a book on Aikido and get familiar with a drill called the "unbendable arm." I'm sure most of you will have seen it, but if not, get such a book and drill it until you can do it easily and without strain. Don't go off into a mystical trip about Ki, etc., just do the drill. When you can do it well, do it with this modification. Take a stick and grip it as through it were a knife. Put the stick on your partner's shoulder (instead of your wrist as in the unbendable arm drill), and let your partner try to bend your wrist, by pulling down at the hand. I suggest you only put about 6 inches of the stick on your partner's shoulder at the beginning. Increase the amount of stick as you progress. A further note regarding this exercise. All too often I have seen persons doing this exercise entirely wrong. It is not a test of muscular strength. Right there you can lose about 80% of your audience. There are guys who cannot comprehend any other strength, save muscular. Other texts have been ably written on the subject of "ki" and internal strength, as it is called. For here, just grasp the basic idea that the entire purpose of your drilling with a partner is for you to increase his ability. No other reason exists. If each of you drills with a partner solely for the purpose, not of proving you are better than he is, but to help him improve, you'll be miles ahead. On this exercise in particular, just go at it from the idea that if you pull down gently on the guy's hand, you will find there

is a point at which he can use Ki to keep the wrist straight, just as the arm was kept unbendable in the Aikido exercise. Even if it is a downward pressure so slight that you hardly moved, that is OK. As you train, both of you will see increases in this type strength. Sooner or later, you will see things in it that you can develop if you wish.

This list doesn't cover all that could be written on developing the grip, but does give you something to work with. Now let's look at the forearm.

One guiding principle I've always used was for a man to be competent, he needed to do exercises that follow the patterns of motion of his trade. A ditch digger, by this idea would exercise with a lead shovel; a tennis player would play tennis with an iron racket, etc., etc. How to do this with a knife was simple enough...to a friend of mine. He showed me an idea one day which I'll pass on to you, and with my wholehearted endorsement.

He took a one inch piece of dowell rod, about two feet long, and pushed it through the center hole of a 2½ lb. plate from a set of weights. After about 6 inches of rod stuck through the hole, he handed it to me and invited me to go through various moves with it. I gripped it at the end where the weight was, leaving only an inch or so between my hand and the plate. I found very fast that I could tire my wrist and forearm

out in a short workout. Se we went over this little idea of his and finally agreed on some basic ways to exercise which I'll pass on here.

First of all we aren't dealing with bulk exercises. The type which only adds size to a muscle. For this reason, the weight was left at 2½ lbs. for something like a month. As you exercise, set your own time limit or repetition limit for each move according to the time you have. Then, when you can easily do this number of reps (or length of time), move the 2½ lb. plate about 4 inches further out on the stick. The first time you do this, for example, the plate would be about 4-5 inches from where your hand gripped the butt on the stick. By the time you have the weight as far as a foot from your hand, you'll see why I said only 2½ lbs. at first.

I took some books on knife use and went through the moves in them in fairly slow motion, using the stick and weight instead of a knife. After several reps in slow motion, I then went through the same moves rapidly, but as correctly per the book as possible. I found that in a short number of days, I could assuredly feel the increase of strength in my arms. I'm sure you will too. The simplest approach, as I have said, is to take whatever moves you are using or want to practice, and drill them using this stick and weight device. You can't ever develop too much strength with your blade.

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I have found still another method of exercising, which also has its merits. You can find in most sporting goods stores the type of exerciser which fits around the wrist or ankle and is filled with lead shot to give it weight. These items are promoted as good for running or whatever you desire to use them for. I found that putting them on the arm at the elbow joint provided an excellent exercise for upper arm and shoulder while doing moves with your knife.

I have not tried here to touch upon all the types of exercises there are. To my knowledge, this is the first book on knife work so devoted to exercise as a means to improve your use of a blade in self defense, or offense. It is odd to me to write such a book for Americans, as I see so few Americans using the knife as compared to Europeans. An American magazine I read recently pointed out a 200% increase in knife sales as a possible indicator that as the threat of gun control looms on the horizon of the U. S., more persons will use knives as a means of self protection in the future. Perhaps this is so.

If you will do these exercises and will practice your moves, you will develop skill with the blade. No author can give you courage or confidence. I do know that any man who drills a simple skill will be better at it than the man who doesn't. I advise you to drill. Better to grow old and recall the hours spent in practice, than to have need of survival skill and fail.

Before I leave this area of exercise, I'll give you another one I found very useful. I have not seen this one in any books on exercise, so it may be new to you. It isn't new, in fact, and originates in India. This exercise is quite good for the development of overall body strength. Notice I said "strength" not muscles. In some types of training there is a difference. All I want you to do is to wrestle a tree. Yes, I said wrestle a tree. I'm sure I lost most of you right there, but I felt the same way when I tried it the first time.

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Find a tree, or pole that is about a foot in diameter. I think I would find one in a very secluded place if I were you. (Trying to explain to some nosy neighbor why you wrestle trees isn't good for your image, is it?) What you do is simply do all you can to trip, strangle, bear hug, etc., etc., the tree (or pole). You work at this until you are tired. If you've stopped shaking your head in amazement, I'll continue. Wrestlers in India were are known for their strength. The guy I trained with was very deceptively strong. Like all good exercises, there are a few fine points to know. In this one, the trick is to put all your strength into the exact point of contact, and not leave the strength in the muscles needlessly. It's not as esoteric as you think. If you were to be trying to do a front choke, let's say, you are standing there with both hands clamped down on the imaginary throat of the tree. Just insure that all the muscles are as relaxed as possible in your arms and shoulder, while

concentrating every ounce of strength just at the points where your hands are in contact with the tree. Let's say you are applying the heel of your hand to the "chin" of the tree. You try to relax as much as possible the back, shoulder and arm...and pin point all that strength into only the heel of the hand. The first few days of this you possibly will only feel confused and tired. It is not a very common concept of exercising, and I realize that. But if you persist for a few days and try very hard to get the point of relaxing the entire body as much as possible...while putting your entire strength into just the area of contact...you will slowly but surely see the principles in this simple, but deceptive ancient exercise. One thing I found when I did it, was that when I intended to use strength, I was not able to just focus my strength on the exact point where it was needed. After telling you to wrestle trees, I feel I certainly owe you all the explanation I can give, so here is another way of looking at this. Let's say you have decided to punch someone. You send to the muscles a mental command to do this. If this mental command calls for, we'll say, 100 lbs. of force, do you then get all of that force to the exact impact point of fist on face? You can find that 10 lbs got left behind in the shoulder, and 15 lbs got left in the upper arm, etc. The muscles, not being properly trained, hold on to the force in the form of unnecessary tension in the muscles. All this exercise will do is two main things. It will give you a very

excellent overall workout in a very short time as it works many muscle groups in unison. It will also, done over a time, give you many insights into getting the maximum of your power into the exact focal point where you want to apply it, and not wasted by remaining needlessly in tense muscles.

After you have done the exercise for a few weeks, try doing it with your knife. Do the move you are practicing, and when the blade touches the pole, just work on putting every ounce of strength into the blade itself, while having the arm and back muscles as relaxed as possible. You'll see the value by that time I'm quite sure.

If you do the various exercises I've given you here in these few pages, you'll be getting a pretty air workout. Especially if you end off each session with this one on wrestling a pole.

## CHAPTER THREE

It may be somewhat surprising to Americans, but in Southern France, you can find many Savate students who mingle kicking art with knife work. From what I have seen of American Karate, the feet are a favored tool for Americans and justly so. It is my opinion that old Savate (not the more modern form which mixes with English boxing) is a foot art second to none, including the Chinese arts. Using the feet in a knife encounter is like many other things...if you can do it and get away with it, more power to you. I do feel that if you are going to need to survive in combat, every little bit helps. A bit of data on how to use feet to your advantage might help you. I won't attempt to teach Savate in this book. I will pass on a summary of tips and suggestions I picked up here and there. If you don't have access in your city to Savate, I will make a suggestion. Go to a ballet school. Yes, I said Ballet school. Never mind about your macho image...just go and watch the exercises they do. I can promise you this much. The leg exercises of ballet can develop a set of strong, limber legs like nothing you have seen before. Watch a ballerina use her legs, and then tell me what kind of kicks such legs could deliver. I know...I fought one once. (Never mind who won, just read the book). Learn their leg exercises and then go home and do them. You'll soon have kicks that will make your friends stop laughing, I assure you.

Here are some ideas that I obtained from Savate men. (1) A man needs to see, breathe, and stand in order to fight. If every move you make is to reduce his ability to do those three things, you will win. (2) To fight, a man must extend his arms or legs toward you in some fashion. Attack them. Never train to "block" him, as this gives him back his arm or leg to continue to use on you. Attack the arm or leg and do all you can to damage it beyond use. If you have a blade, then cut any and everywhere you can on the extended member. Loss of blood can mean loss of fight. (3) The knee is fragile. It is as high as you should kick. It is as high as you need kick, if done right, and is very very difficult to block for most oriental martial arts people who are not used to this type attack. In practice work, you may kick as high and hard as you like, as this helps limber legs, but put in as much time as possible on full power, low hard kicks to the knee region. Not terribly flashy, but extremely effective.

The Karate or Kunk Fu I have seen in Europe and the U. S. doesn't seem to do well on close quarter in-fighting. Their use of feet, from all I've seen, calls for long reaches. I hesitate to advise this type foot work against a knife. To some degree it's like "If you can do it and get away with it, then more power to you" type tactics. It looks good in the books and in the movies, but high kicks

or long reach type kicks may be asking for trouble against a knife or razor wielding opponent. Use good judgement. A knife, don't forget, can cut. A man can do a great deal of damage to a leg with only a small stroke if his hand carries a knife. In terms of close quarter kicking, however, I would have to give credit to an oriental school called Wing Chun. They have a rather unusual, but highly effective close quarter system of leg use. If you can find a Wing Chun teacher willing to show you the basic exercises and drills you might pick up an additional leg talent very much worth having. In Savate and also in some branches of Wing Chun the basic kick for a low fast thrust to the opponents knee is not a side kick as in Karate, as this side kick causes the hip to twist too much, misaligning the body. If you will simply raise up your foot to about knee height and then turn the toes outward, you'll see the foot position. A side kick would call for turning the foot so that the toes turn inside. This will twist the hip joint around also. The Savate/Wing Chun style kick lets you keep the body and hips more frontally facing and I found gives more maneuverability and speed.

If you bring the knee up, just as in a front kick, only turn the toes toward the outside of the body as you kick toward his knee...you'll feel a bit of strain as the leg isn't used to this position.

The best exercise I have seen for strengthening this type kick is as follows: (1) Get one of these stretch type exercisers from any sporting goods store. (The type which usually has five springs attached to handles and you pull the springs apart to exercise). (2) Hang it from the ceiling on a very strong support, so it won't come loose. (3) Fashion a loop of cloth or leather that will fit around the knee easily and not cut off circulation, and fasten this loop to the handle hanging down. (4) The Correct height (adjustable to taste) for our purposes is so that with the knee through the loop, your knee is about waist high, or lower if this is too much strain. (5) Kick slowly downward at the opponents knee while turning the toes outward. This makes the heel the striking surface. If you wish, study carefully the differences in how the leg and hip muscles operate in this kick and the standard side kick, and you will see some reasons why I advise this kick be practiced until you can do it well, and then this kick be the one used for low, fast kicks to the knee... or lower. When doing this exercise with the spring exerciser, you can start out with only one or two springs...but go for 100 or 150 repetitions. When you have done say 150 repetitions easily for a week or two, then you may increase to one more spring and reduce the reps down to a lower number working your way back up to 150 again. Your hip joint will protest this one, so don't be in a big hurry. It is a very specialized way of kicking, and not one you will master in a few days. DO NOT

DO THIS EXERCISE WITH WEIGHTS ADDED TO THE FEET. In close quarter kicking, the main power of the kick develops in the use of the knee and the extensor muscles of the leg. They develop best with this exact type exercise shown here.

In close quarter grappling, never underestimate the power of the stamping type motion this kick develops. Study the anatomy of the Human leg and foot and you will see a great deal can be done to his ability to stand just with this type kick.

Some further pointers that may be useful: (1) Drill foot use in the type clothing and shoes you normally wear in the street, and on the same type surface. Barefoot in a dojo is one thing, but work boots on a sidewalk can be a very different affair. Don't wait until the fight to learn your limitations in foot use, whether for kicks or just moving around. Know before you go is the rule. (2) Drill kicking while seated in a chair or at a table. As a man has his weight on his legs and is standing up to say "Let's go outside," can be a splendid time to kick the knee and break it. (3) Work very hard on developing short hard kicks through speed. Most people seem to want to throw a long kick. As the foot has a long way to travel, it picks up some speed. Work on trying to get the same power from a twelve inch kick that others get from drawing the foot back and

swinging it through a long distance. It can be done. A very fast but short kick can shatter a shin bone or knee quite effectively, I assure you.

As an exercise to balance the one I just mentioned (with the springs), here is a second one to be done as a companion to it. Stand relaxed with the feet about shoulder width apart. Turn your toes inward so you are standing pigeon toed, and let your knees bend as far as they will go. The knees will turn inward, as that is the way your toes turn. At this point the knee caps will probably be a few inches apart, but should not be touching. If they are touching, you need to widen the feet slightly. Keeping the legs as relaxed as you can, try to touch the knee caps together. Push them toward each other very gently, but steadily. Don't strain. When they have gone as far as possible, relax them. Do this for as many reps as you can, but slowly and gently, no straining or forcing the legs. A fine point here is to try to touch the knees together, but keep the rest of the legs as relaxed as possible all the while, i.e., no unnecessary tension. When you can do easily 150 reps of this one and do so daily, you will start seeing how it balances out the other exercise.

In India there is a dancing school that produces some quite nasty boxers. You hear how King Fu supposedly came from

India to China, right? Well, what makes you so sure that those ancient boxing schools aren't still there? If you really want to get an eye opener, and since I brought the subject up, go find a school that teaches the classical dances of India and look for their leg exercises, and talk to the instructor about how limber and strong their dancers legs need be. You might learn some useful exercises. I did.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

Here we'll look over the concept of attack drilling. It is a matter of attitude whether you defend or attack. It is a completely different outlook if you are intent on attack rather than protecting yourself and defending. If a man extends his arm to punch you, you can think of "blocking" or avoiding the arm, or how do I keep it from hitting me...or you can do all in your power to damage the arm beyond use as an attack. You can be backing away from an opponent and thinking how to avoid his rush...or you can be luring him in closer so you can complete the attack. One attitude would be defensive, and one would be on the offensive, even if the physical motions are the same. In order to have the attitude of "I'll survive no matter what" and the will to put that attitude into motion you might need to be drilled a bit. Have you ever heard the expression "Never back a coward into a corner?" If you have ever seen a coward cornered and seen him come out of the corner, you'll know it well. What is it that changes in the coward's mind when he is cornered? He is on the defensive, and backing away is his main defensive tactic. When cornered and he suddenly sees he cannot follow his tactic of retreat, he goes into the only mode left to him and that is to attack. And attack he will... like a caged lion he'll come roaring out of that corner all teeth and talons, and go through you like you didn't exist.

During such an attack he feels very little pain, if any, and has very little heed of anything except getting over around or through you.

I learned this one the hard way. A village bully had me and most of my friends quite cowered with his reputation and fighting ability. One night he chose me to demonstrate his wares on and tried to get me to fight him. I was in total fear and wouldn't. All night I thought about this and realized that no matter where I went from now on I would have this fear hanging over me, not to mention the future threats to my well being from a fight with him. The next day I had a friend drive me to his home so I could be there when he came in from work. When I told my friend I was going there to fight, he gave me the kind of look one reserves for the mentally unsound or little children, and quickly drove. There I was with no out left. I had burned my bridges of retreat, so to speak, as it was many miles to town. When the person drove in I came off his porch and started toward him. What he saw in my eyes I'm not sure, but one thing he knew was there was going to be a very nasty fight. He did a very wise thing. He offered me his hand, and then we drove to town and had a coffee. He was smart enough to see a cornered coward with nowhere to go except over his as I walked toward him. I decided to try my luck in a couple of other situations and found each time that it worked. By not leaving myself any retreat, I became a very different person and very much inter-

ested in survival...my own, that is. I found that in direct proportion to wanting my own survival to increase, I was less concerned with my opponents survival, and fought accordingly. How to get a man into this frame of mind where he must survive or else... kill or be killed...do or die, is no easy matter. How many times have you heard of someone throwing a child into the water and no matter what happened, the kid managed to swim to safety?

In times past, when man lived with a bit less social veneer tacked on to his society, and you were attacked on the road or in an alley, you didn't rely on a bunch of social rules or the local police to help. You just did what had to be done. I believe man was mentally prepared to rely more on his own ability to swing a cudgel than he is today. No doubt a certain amount of social rules do make the elbows rub together a bit more pleasantly, but in today's society you can get very hypnotized by all the advertising that warns you to smell good and drive the right car, and so when a combat situation occurs, you may not be able to shift gears mentally from "Social Joe" to "Survival Sam" fast enough. This social thing can even infect the martial arts, and by all I can see it has. Eighteen years ago I was visiting in a school of Kempo in Honolulu. I came out all ready to train in my nice white uniform, and noticed the students wore old fatigue shirts, or frayed denims but none of them had on what I thought was a proper Gi. I was asked to train with the black belts, and so a guy

came toward me to spar. I bowed, which was the polite way, and woke up on the floor. I protested this as "it wasn't fair, etc." and the senior instructor just shrugged and said that here men learned to fight. I thought this over a bit and could see his point at once. I went back out on the floor and fought. At the end of the night, I knew what I knew...and I knew what I didn't know. For the next months I was there every night, barefoot and in old blue jeans, slugging it out and learning the one rule they followed...WIN. When fighting one man seemed easy, they put two on you, then three, and four, etc. You never got a chance to relax and rest on your laurels. At no time did I see these guys parade around the floor showing flashy punches and kicks as in most oriental schools, but yet I noticed that they could fight beyond any group I had ever seen, or have seen since. If you ever go to Honolulu, go down to Hell's Half Acre and go to a few bars and ask for Adriano Emperado. Just tell him what I said about his fighters and get invited to go see for yourself. I'm sure it's all modern there now, but I feel that somewhere you'll find there is still a back room where these oldtimers go and where men still learn how to fight. If you will find it anywhere, it will be where Adriano and his boys are.

Over the years I was still curious about why those guys could fight so well. I started finding the answer one day in 1965 while reading a novel by Ian Fleming called

"You Only Live Twice." A comment was made to the hero which I won't attempt to quote from memory, but the context of it was that man only lives twice, once when he is born, and the second time when he has faced death. I puzzled over this and mentioned it to a friend. As he was a university student, he knew a bit about psychology and said it sounded like a reference to Pavlovian conditioning. Having absolutely no use for Russian psychology, I didn't pursue the matter, but my friend continued. He said some dogs had been trained to salivate when a bell rang as a form of conditioning their behavior, and when the laboratory was flooded some of the animals had died and some others had only narrowly escaped drowning when they were saved. After the dogs were saved, he said they no longer responded to this bell. They had lost their conditioning and their past behavior patterns and it seemed to be caused by this narrow escape from death. It occurred to me that this could be what happens to a man's social veneer when faced with an unexpected threat to his survival, such as in a fight. I thought back to my experience with the village bully, and could see that on a smaller scale something had, in fact, changed in me that day. My feelings of being afraid of this person, that this "conditioning" had certainly dissolved when my need to survive reached a do or die point.

I started going around to various martial arts schools and watching. I saw a very crude attempt to condition the students. Punch this way and no other way. When you kick, do it like this...no

other way. When he punches at your head, you must block it like this, etc., etc. These students would go up and down the floor repeating these kicks and moves over and over. They would stand and practice for hours to punch or move correctly. (Correctly meant the way the teacher would accept and give you praise for). When these same guys got out on the floor to free fight, they looked like different people. Gone were the carefully drilled moves. Nowhere in sight were the forms they had spent hours and weeks drilling. All you saw were guys waving arms and legs at each other, that vaguely resembled Karate, but vastly different from what the instructor had been trying to condition into them. Maybe you have seen this also.

I discussed this with some high ranking oriental instructors and found that they agreed with me as regards what I had seen, but that they themselves had no idea what to do about it.

Shortly after that I had some guys who wanted to train in the martial arts with me, so I decided to do a little experiment. From the first day I would tell the students, "Now, we'll practice fighting." I would take two of them and go out on the floor. I would tell one of them, "Your job is to hit this guy. Do it anyway you like, but your job is to hit him." To the other guy I would say, "He is going to be hitting at you, so if you don't want to get hit, keep him from hitting you. And if you like,

you can hit him back." Then I just walked off. What would follow was actually amazing. At first they would do all sorts of social things and walk around and look nervous...but sooner or later they would start to fight. The guy who was to attack would sooner or later let go and throw some honest punches. Real haymakers. To my surprise, the other guy would keep from getting hit...and throw a few himself. Do you know that not once did I ever see a man get hurt? Not once over many months did I see a man injured. What I did see was some guys turn into the most hell on wheels fighters I had ever seen in a dojo. Don't think they didn't land some punches and kicks. They did. What was amazing was that a punch that would make me wince just at the sound of it, would not even leave a mark at times. The attitude of these guys was a marvel to see. From telling me they were afraid, or couldn't fight their first day in the school, they became very quietly confident in one single thing...they could fight and could fight to win.

Then I took another group of guys and did the same, but along with the regular fighting, they drilled punches and kicks not unlike any other school. There was one exception. I told them that the techniques they were drilling, the punches and kicks, etc., were theirs to use or not use. At no time were they made to do a move if they didn't feel right with that move. They were to keep and rely on only the moves that they felt

were of use to them, no matter what their buddies did, or I did, they and they alone chose from among the moves the ones they wanted. When they practiced fighting, slowly but surely you began to see smoother moves, and more technique being applied. At no time was technique, or "how pretty it looked" placed as more important to the simple fact of fighting to win. Effectiveness was first and efficiency second at all times. As they grew to realize that they could fight and as self confidence came more to the surface, they would, on their own, start to work on polishing up their moves and getting a bit more economical with their moves. They chose to improve their moves only if it enhanced their own survival, not to please me. As a result they were not conditioned like dogs, they were trained like men. Men who wanted to survive better if they had to. No doubt the weak at heart will have heart failure that I could suggest their little Johnny train like this.

Fair enough, I won't suggest that any of you train like this. Those of you not so weak in spirit might take a look at the pages in this chapter and give it some thought however. The heat of combat does do something to a man. It does raise his necessity level upward and put a lot more adrenalin in the system. Fighting trains fighters. That much I know. Endless drilling that isn't put to the test becomes just so much mental nonsense to intellectually muddle over or impress your girl with.

It takes a lot of heat and pressure to make a diamond out of coal. It takes a lot of heat and hammering to temper and form a samurai sword. Maybe the same idea applies to people. Think so?

Now you see why I haven't filled these pages with lots of nice looking photos of how to stand and what to do if he tries this or that, etc. I think you'll learn more about knife fighting if you knife fight. If you can get to the point where you and your buddy can fight as though you were about to "kill or be killed" you'll do a lot better in the long run. Naturally, you have to use dulled down blades or whatever you choose as a substitute for live, sharp blades. That is as obvious as can be. I only want you to train as much as possible in the actual spirit of real fighting. You probably don't have many fights, and probably don't fight unless scared or angry. That is actually the worst time to fight. If you can summon the courage to train like the guys I described (even with just bare hands) you will soon see that you can fight tooth and toenail, but with a very cool head. You can get the adrenalin going by your own decision, not as a mechanical reaction to a threat. After all, if a man can only REACT to fight, then he is on the defensive, isn't he? Now do you get a better idea of what I meant when I said I wanted you to fight on the offensive at all times? Don't let the other guy control your adrenalin. Don't let his moves or gestures or words be the catalyst that triggers you into combat. That makes you like a robot...

and he is pushing the buttons. Train with the concepts I've given you here and I feel that you can do well for yourself.

So, if you were here to train with me now, we'd walk out onto the floor, and I'd tell one of you "your job is to cut him. Do it however you like." And I'd turn to the other guy and say "He is going to be trying to cut you so if you don't want to get cut, keep him from doing so. If you feel like cutting him back, well, go right ahead." Then I'd go back out and have a cold beer and watch the fur fly. I'd train you like that both with knives and with bare hands until you both got to where you weren't quite so robotic and social. Then I'd toss you some books on techniques of knife fighting (there are some good ones in America) and tell you to pick out whatever suited you and drill it. I'd put you through the mill on the exercises in this book and probably a few more to boot.

When you got too cocky, I'd team up with your buddy and we'd both go after you. Over the weeks we'd get a lot done toward making you a fighter. You might even begin to look a bit smoother when we drilled some of the techniques you found in the books that you liked. You might not ever look too pretty, and you wouldn't win any fancy trophies at a fencing contest, but you would sure be a man to ride the river with, and I for one would be proud to have you on my A-Team anytime and anyplace. What do you think?

## CHAPTER FIVE

Now that I have covered the aspect of how to approach combat training, let me remind you that you may have been a bit confused at first by the last chapter. All your life you have been told that to learn something you must practice it. That is partially true. Never buy this to such a degree that you decide that you CAN'T do something just because you didn't practice it. The preceding chapter talks about how to train men to fight. If you just look at the word "fight" exactly as it is, you will see that it says fight and that is all. No qualifications on it. Every single one of those guys I trained could fight, no ifs or buts about it. When you enter a school in most places, you enter into the world of authority. You start out by lying to yourself and saying you can't fight, then having this attitude, you elect some teacher as the authority who will now tell you all there is to know. He tells you that to be able to fight you have to do these drills up and down the floor and so you do them. I have never seen it fail that guys who do this think they are learning to fight. They really think they are. They think that because they want to is my guess. I have proven to myself and others over many years that they can FIGHT. They can fight from the first day they set foot in my school, because I refused to believe the lie that they couldn't fight.

Now let's take this up a notch. When a man thinks of hand to hand combat it only has to do with "can I survive" it all. If I go out there into the jungle and a charlie jumps me, what will I do? He is scared. Because he is scared, he hopes more than anything you will tell him that if he will just train with you, he will learn all he needs to know. I'm sorry if I'm bursting some of your favorite bubbles, but fighting is fighting. Drilling up and down the floor, if not applied as fighting...and I mean fighting...not this dojo stuff at the neighborhood YMCA, will possibly never be of any value to you. So let's just look honestly at the whole mess now...before the jumpmaster is slapping you on the fanny and trees are coming up at you.

My experience has shown me that if you drill fighting, just as in the previous chapter and if you parallel that fight drilling with some basic skills, you will gradually polish it up a bit and some of the drilling will begin to show up in your fighting. Don't waste time on trying to learn 2000 ways to hit and kick, only to go into combat and scratch and bite like a girl.

Take a book on Karate and count how many types of techniques it teaches. Look over the data and see how many different things you are supposed to be able to do if you know that form. Then sit down and watch some guys fight in a dojo or in a contest. Count how many different moves they used. See what I mean? Don't let

knife training be that way for you. In dojo stuff you can usually walk away and do it again tomorrow. In combat or in a tight alley against a knife, there may not be a tomorrow. It would all depend on you and not what you know...what you can DO would make the difference.

Go back to the idea of the slow motion drilling. Take the book of techniques you chose and go through the various moves you liked, but in slow motion only. Don't rush it. If you will start out every session with five minutes of slow motion using the moves you liked from the book, you will do a lot better over the weeks. Next I advise you to pair off and take a technique and use it to attack your partner, but at full throttle. He can defend however he likes, but also at full speed. Then stop, back off and then go again. So you will do one full move to its completion, then stop. Divide it however it suits you, but one of you attacking and one of you working on counters will give it some sort of orderliness. Every move you should be totally aware of what you did to him with the blade. If you aren't, then stop and discuss it. If he says your blade hit his arm, then find out how hard, and where and what would this have done to the opponent in real combat.

Just do this as part of your workouts. You can move around as much as you like, etc., but use this time to drill on techniques. Sooner or later you will begin to see some techniques show up in your fight drilling. They may not look pre-

cisely the way the author showed in his book, but the main thing is to use only what you want to use and use it well. Over a longer period, you'll have a bit more polish on your moves, but at all times, they are YOUR moves if you train like this. They are moves that may be used by you without your having to think what to do.

Study a bit about anatomy. Especially from the point of view of knife use. You do need to know where to put the blade and how hard you need to move to get the job done. Realize as you study that there are not that many of you likely to need to "kill or be killed" in your day to day life. If you are a civilian, it may be that your main worry is muggers and rapists, etc., in the cities. A brief look at the muscles will give you data on how to incapacitate a person by severing a muscle. Several points on the body have veins or arteries near the surface. If the guy has any sanity at all and you even slightly wound him, he may just evacuate at once, rather than risk more injury, over your wallet.

There is one thing for certain. Most criminals are not about to jump you if others are around. The criminal would fear exposure possibly as much as he would injury at your hands. A fight in a local bar is a different type affair usually, and even though knife use would probably be illegal, the motive for using it may be different. If two of you face off in the alley and knives are pulled, this is rather

a "moment of truth" for both of you. For you have gone a bit beyond hands and feet and the local gendarme may look unkindly upon this. If the guy was robbing you, etc., you may not have much choice but to act first and think it over later. In military or paramilitary situations, it's rather cut and dried what is going on, so don't quibble over niceties, just strike first and deepest.

Just look over some basics on anatomy so you realize that there is more to attack than just vital points. If you train yourself, you should reach a point where you aren't so afraid and less likely to attack in a panic and kill someone when you didn't need to. Overkill is common to beginners in any of these type activities, and fighting a novice is a sure way to get yourself mangled up. He will still be jumping up and down on you long after it was necessary. A guy I knew, for example, said he would never thrust at the eyes with his blade, but would cut above the eyes. This resulted in getting blood in the eyes, didn't seriously wound, but yet it still told the guy he had been cut, and if he could see, he was in for serious trouble. A novice would no doubt behead you and still keep whacking away until you got cold. Learn anatomy well enough to think like my friend, and you could not only stay alive, but not harm anyone beyond need. Drill applying what you learned so that you move positively and every move has a specific target with a specific result in mind, and you should do okay.

## CHAPTER SIX

I'll pass along some thoughts I have picked up in my travels, simply to give you some ideas, however unorthodox they may seem, that have worked out for others. In my opinion, unorthodoxy should be your rule of thumb anyway. The most valued weapon is surprise. If you really get down to the nitty gritty in talking to most beginners, the main thing they fear is that the other guy will do something they aren't prepared for and it will surprise them to such a degree that their opponent scores on them before they can counter. It could be why there is such a cult of data gathering in the survival arts. Guys ravenously buying and reading every book on the hand to hand combat field they can find in hopes that, given enough data bout fighting, there is little chance they will get surprised. Could be.

One thing I know is that the street fighter is a very hard to predict breed of cat. He doesn't do things by the book at all. He just does whatever pops into his head and usually on the spur of the moment. He is good at this type fighting, and can give even trained martial arts men a hard time. When it is all said and done, one talent he has developed is his willingness to face up to what is happening and not be afraid. Look back at the slow motion drilling again. Done at that speed, there probably isn't a technique or move that is frightening or that you couldn't figure out how to counter, right? A street fighter isn't burdened with lots of data, so keeps

his one asset...the ability to face you and let you come at him, knowing that he can handle whatever you throw at him. He is fighting "right now" and all his attention is there with him in the "right now" of the fight. However man loves to codify things and if something is successful, he will try it again and the next thing you know he is very predictable in his fighting. Even street fighters I have known pick up and continue to use ideas that work. Here are some odds and ends for you to think over and use if they suit you.

Strike first and from surprise. This can't really be drilled as you and your partner usually are there for the precise purpose of training. In the street, it is a rule second to none. Don't wait for the usual "Your mother wears tennis shoes" type insult swapping so popular with Americans. Just strike at the very instant you know a fight is imminent. A person I knew loved to carry these little spray cans of mace, and at the slightest provocation would be prepared to spray all and sundry with this stuff. I got a snort of it one day, and at least I stopped laughing at him. That stuff is murder. He also claimed the small cans of spray paint available in model shops were equally as effective as a man can't fight if he can't see, or if he is having trouble breathing. He used to put his tiny mace device under his watch band while seated at a table or in a rowdy bar. More accessible. I haven't a clue how this would work as a companion to a knife, but it could

save you the trouble of having to use a knife at all. If so, it is more than worth a try. Just be sure to leave yourself an exit before you cut loose, as that stuff is murder to the eyes and lungs.

While one is thinking of chemical assistance, he may or may not look over the various chemicals that a blade can be coated with and which would produce illness or some such distraction if it got into a small cut. There are books on such chemicals and at least one outfit in Hawaii, selling blowguns, which can provide you with a list of such chemical assists as used to coat darts for blowgun use against pests and animals.

For combat uses, it would help if you were familiar with two hand uses. Any move can be increased in power with the other hand being used to augment the knife arm. In practicing such moves, I found it helped to carry one arm in a waist high "ready" position, and use the other arm to lightly grasp the wrist of the knife arm. Thus the empty hand (or arm) could be easily used in grabbing or deflecting moves, but was also near enough to assist by adding extra pull on the knife arm if needed. As a basic move, to experiment with, I carried the blade in front of me at waist height. Lightly dropping the other hand on the back of the wrist of the knife hand, thus the two arms formed a triangle, with the blade at the apex. It took a bit of getting used to as I had felt better balanced with both arms able to move

separately and/or independently. I finally decided that it depended upon what I planned to do with the empty hand. If I had no particular use for it, this way of moving not only kept it out of the way of harm, but helped protect the center line of my body. It also was there to use for two hand strikes. The easiest way to practice it is to go through your favorite moves, but work out for yourself how you could use two hands in that move if the occasion warranted. Using two knives depends on your training. If you have access to an Escrima school, you can get some formal use of two blades under your belt. I don't know how many of the Chinese schools in the U. S. offer blade work except in classical sword. The moves can be adapted to knife work usually, but check it out first. My own training with swords proved applicable to short knives, but I didn't have to train for years to get down to blade work. Most classical schools won't go into blade work until you master their empty hand work. I have had at least one friend who carried three knives and very much favored throwing at least one of them, just to "liven thing up" a bit. It can get a bit dicey facing a man who may at any moment throw one of these blades at you, especially at close range. His basic approach was to have an arm extended a bit, almost like a fencer with a foil (but not extended too far) with the other one drawn back behind him "cocked" to throw if he had the chance. I didn't argue with him, and found the odds very much against me in combat with him if I was only using one blade and couldn't throw back.

His basic attitude was to "cock and throw" and warn his assailant. Then to exit as fast as possible. If the assailant(s) followed him, he would stop retreating and "give her hell," as he put it. He had a rather large assortment of scars from knife wounds, and said he wasn't a hero. He would evacuate the area if the attacker would let him. If not, he simply went for broke. Nine of his scars, he said, came from one fight in a Honolulu bar, back before he had the sense to retreat if possible.

Before you rush out and buy three knives or any other gear, I would suggest you look into your local laws. It could be that the local gendarme won't be at all impressed with your mail order paratrooper T-shirt and private arsenal. If you want to develop skills at armed combat, I personally recommend the Special Forces Reserves, or at least a group which can help you train and at the same time let you off a bit of steam if need be. If and when the U. S. had street riots start up again, you will find these guys well prepared and properly trained to defend your town. S.W.A.T. teams are also there as well in many cities. It can happen, however, that you are along when trouble comes your way, and in such cases, it helps to be at least familiar with survival weapons, to provide rudimentary protection to your person or to assist others in need. It isn't hard to look over your daily apparel and environment to get familiar with things which could be turned to

survival weapons in an emergency, especially if you have gotten familiar in advance. As an example, I had a friend once who threw an ashtray at a guy and this distraction helped him win the fight. I would not go around telling you to carry ashtrays in your pocket, etc. Any man who has survived trouble can usually tell you how he did it. Often you see that he made judicious use of something laying around in his area and turned this thing into a temporary weapon of survival. You could then take a few walks through your home or work place, and just study each thing you see from the view point of how could that object be used. Just this much familiarization can be a big help in time of need.

I have seen guys turn every day objects into makeshift weapons of some lethality. A watchman I met is one example. He carried his keys on his belt in one of these devices which allows you to pull the keys away from your hip for use, the spring inside the device retracts the chain and keys back to your belt. He would grip the keys, just like the handle of a club, while pushing the device off his belt. Then twirling his wrist, the chain would extend and whistling around at the end was the part that had fitted on his belt. All he pointed out was that this was a perfectly legal thing, commonly seen on peoples' belts, and yet judiciously applied, it was a weapon for him. He could use it in its crude form as a very nasty club, or to entrap a wrist.

If it got tangled up, he could just let go of it, and not get trapped by his own device. At the rate of speed he could have the thing whirring around, the centrifugal force kept the chain extended, and the velocity made the key carrier into a nasty missile to have up alongside your head, not to mention extending his reach a bit. Another very common item is coins. One night in the hold of a freighter in an African port, I watched while some guys were throwing knives for sport. One guy showed us how well he could throw coins. He did say he had to practice at it in order to be accurate, but that in a jam he could throw several and at least get the distraction value while he ran. I did see that he could throw quite hard and accurately and agreed with him that if you took time to practice such things, you could probably do so also. As he pointed out, the confusion factor alone made it worthwhile for the average citizen to try in a pinch. I agree.

Many of you are familiar with the use of belts as weapons I am sure. I have seen them used whiplike and also knew one guy who practiced with the belt in a fashion similar to the Thuggee of India. He practiced trapping the arms of an opponent, various means of entwining the neck and using the belt for strangulation from front, side and rear approaches. Unless you are familiar with the moves of Thuggee style, I doubt if you could develop that idea far. I was interested in one aspect of his repertoire, however. He would grip the belt in both hands, about 2-3 feet between the hands. Then he would pull the elbows tight in

against his side, and pull outward with the hands. This made the belt tight line between his hands, which he used to deflect arms or legs in sparring. Naturally he moved the arms around, but the idea remained to keep the belt stretched tight between the hands. The resulting tension in the belt gave it strength which easily deflected hands or feet thrown at him in sparring. If he succeeded in blocking a punch or strike, he would then snake the belt around the opponents head and be into a strangle before the person knew what hit him. I know. If you took a three foot length of broom handle and held it in front of you, with the hands 2-3 feet apart, then when I attacked, used the stick to ward off my blows, you would have it exactly. The difference was that when he pulled the belt tight between his hands, he got the effect of the stick, but was using a flexible belt which he could wear anywhere. When I asked about any special modifications of the belt, he said you could use your imagination as to type of buckles to try to get a heavy weight for whip type applications. He also pointed out that a two layer belt, ie., two strips of leather sewn lengthwise to form the belt, could be filled with a thin layer of lead shot, giving it some what more weight for use in the street. So if you are so inclined, you can use some time to work out with a belt and see if it is useful to you.

To extend the reach, you can try this method. Stand facing your partner, shoulders parallel. Both of you extend your hands and touch each other on the chin, adjusting your body until you can just barely touch each

others chins, with arms extended. Then rotate your shoulder toward him. If you keep the waist fairly still, but rotate the shoulder, you will see an extra few inches reach develop. If you practice until the extending of the shoulder is a rapid snapping movement you can score a clean hit. If the move is slow, don't try it is my advice, as you may not be able to pull it off with enough surprise to get away with it.

Never fight alone if at all possible. It may not seem "cricket" to you to fight two on one, but survival is senior to such social niceties. It may be a totally foreign concept to you as most survival training seems to train you for one on one type encounters. It might pay you and a partner, someone you hang out with frequently, to look this idea over. Drill enough so that you have it down pat as to who takes the "upper" and who takes the "lower" and how you will move if one is behind and one in front, or to the side. Also be aware that he may have friends and the whole mess could escalate very rapidly into a real donneybrook if you don't use some judgement as to when to use this.

One guy I trained with was not at all the "fighter" type. He was short and looked quite shy to boot. One thing we found was that if an argument got going, his distraction of the would-be assailant with utterly stupid remarks worked without fail. It was odd, as neither he nor I could ever see why it worked, and yet it did. If someone was

talking up a fight, this guy could say the strangest things...and sound like he was talking a normal conversation. The resultant mental confusion was very visible. He might be talking to a guy and start saying things like, "Well you know that my nose was so elbowed, that the knee walked off." He would say such idiocies in exactly the same tone, etc., as any other thing he would say, and the person would literally boggle his own mind. I watched him do this a couple of times one night in Portugal, and nearly split my sides laughing at this big clown he was talking to standing there shaking his head trying to make some sort of sense out of these words. I told a friend of mine about this and he said it was understandable to him. (He had studied the mind for several years). He said the mind will try to make logic out of anything it hears. If it doesn't make sense, he said, the mind will either reject the data or will make up its own data to "explain" what you said. I thought he was putting me on, until he showed me some texts on psychological warfare tactics. He went on to say that governments had been doing such things for years, not mention the advertising industry. All this was a bit over my head, so he said the same "stun" effect can be created with a sudden loud noise or sudden bright light. It all had to do with the mind's ability to assimilate data from its environment. He and I were talking as we walked and soon came to a friends house. As we were being let in the door by the friend, this guy suddenly (about a foot from my friend's face) yelled at him at the top of

his lungs. I wouldn't have believed the stunning, shocklike expression on my friend's face. For just a moment, he was, to all appearances, stunned. We calmed our friend down, and spent long hours discussing ways of applying such concept to personal survival training. All he kept emphasizing was that if the "thing" you did was totally unexpected and as much as possible not "explainable" to your opponents' mind, it would work. Greater or lesser amounts of stun could be effected according to what you did, but that the crazy things my friend said to people obviously had a small, but efficient use for him. He pointed out that what I had always said about "surprise" tactics was the same type thing. It meant to do or say something so unexplainable that for even a minute bit of the moment, the assailants mind was actually not functioning well enough to engage in combat. Use of light or sound, he said, could be looked up in most any university library. Psywar books were not as readily available, but if you looked any over, you could see this principle underlying some areas of psywar tactics. As he had looked over some of these books, he said that I might look at what I myself had just written, as regards slow motion drilling. He felt this was a similar thing. He pointed out that while a guy was moving in slow motion, a beginner's mind could be comfortable and could assimilate his moves easily, but if the movement got too rapid, the beginner couldn't assimilate all of it, so would not fight as well, if at all. This certainly made sense to me, as I had seen this happen before

and had had it happen to me as well. We ended off and he just reminded me that all that was required was to present something the person couldn't at all assimilate and if it was of sufficient volume, the stun effect could occur.

I was training a group of paramilitary men once, and as we trained, I picked up a useful idea from one of the guys there. He called it by no special name, but said his ideas centered around not being so confident that that confidence itself got him in trouble. He pointed out to me that most guys practiced getting into fights, but none practiced getting out of them. I really had to scratch my head on that one, but he explained further. He said if you studied most fighting methods they all had to do with how to get into the fight, get through the fight in one piece and out the other side as the winner. I agreed. So he said he also wanted to know a bit about how to handle times when it didn't all go "by the book.": He would, as an example, spend hours fighting from the ground. He would lay down and have guys attack him while lying on the ground. Odd? Not to him it wasn't. As he pointed out, no one is perfect, and you never knew when you might have to live...or die; depending on how well you could fight after you were downed by an assailant. He also showed me, to my surprise, that it is not at all easy to fight a man who is on his back. Most of us

would rarely think of it. To me, a guy on the ground somehow equaled a guy nearly finished. He had me attack him, and as I moved in, he went prone, and started moving. I had to admit it was so unorthodox, that I would have never thought of it.

I have since trained with Chinese boxers who have told me some incredible stories of "ground fighters" in China. Men who became extremely deadly from this unusual position, especially when armed with knives. I do have to admit being thrown off balance by his method. Most of you are accustomed to a man standing up to fight. Your mind gets accustomed, unconsciously, I guess, to the various angles and distances...then suddenly he not only isn't erect, he is flat on his back and ready for you. By all means practice it, and increase your overall skill by this extra idea. I tried it, and can now use it very effectively. Besides, as one friend put it, the opponent might think you fainted and walk off and leave you along. (He was joking, of course).

Now that he had me lying down to fight, he asked if I knew how to retreat. I responded that I was a fair runner, but this wasn't the right answer for him. He asked if I got into a fight, did I have any ways of disengaging in case I got in over my head. I had to admit that my training had not been exactly along those lines, so he continued to train me in his unusual ways.

His attitude was that we have all been "educated" to be brave men and that those who didn't fight were cowards...i.e., they were "bad," and not to be admired, etc. He felt that if a guy walked around believing such nonsense, he was as though hypnotized by his own image of himself as fearless and tough, etc. To suddenly be face to face with a rather threatening foe is a sure way to get brought down to earth. He had me practice a very simple but somewhat effective set of exercises. We would face off, as though to fight and then (alternately) we practiced a sudden, springing leap to the rear, and to the sides, which put us out of range of the foe and in a position to either "regroup" and continue or evacuate. A major point he stressed, was to NEVER fight unless you felt you could win, and to do all in your power to evacuate if you didn't think you could win. He was also quick to stress that you could always fight another day on terms more to your liking. The hardest thing, he said, was to get rid of the "propaganda" version of what was and wasn't considered manly, and simply grow up a bit in your ideas as to how to best survive in the streets. He would practice his evasion methods in his apartment, or anywhere else he could to simply get familiar with thinking and planning an escape on the spur of the moment. I had an occasion to know if his being cornered by a tough street gang, but successfully evading and escaping. Over the following weeks he then made his own assaults on each, as individuals, and either by combat or conversation he finally handled all of them to

the point where they were willing to leave him alone. He never got a scratch on him.

My final word to you on this area is this: be your own man; get rid of any feelings that you must be "big and brave" and replace those feelings with an honest look at how you stack up. Do all the exercises I have passed on to you, picking out any ideas that you like, and use them to your satisfaction. If you feel that you live in a dangerous environment, then go out and look over the things you consider dangerous. They may not be. The worst fear you can have is that which is given you by someone else, as you didn't observe the danger for yourself. Television and newspapers can give more fear per square inch than you'll ever see with your own eyes. A recent story I read is an example. It told that murders had increased 30% etc., etc. When I noticed this was factually 15 murders had occurred in one year, in a city of millions, then these additional facts helped me see that "Jack the Ripper" wasn't necessarily on the loose again. The full truth made it a lot less scary.

By all means be prepared for emergencies, but keep your perspective and know the facts about potential threats to your survival. You'll sleep better.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

Telling a man what blade to get and carry is like having a guy ask what you think of his new girl friend. From all I can read, it seems that the knife industry in America is enjoying a boom. This gives you more than enough choices, I'm sure. A folding knife in your pocket is probably a bit more legal, as well as having some form of usefulness in your daily life besides drawing and quartering all the bad guys in your street, so look the field over carefully and get what looks good to you. For myself personally, I own only Gerber Blades, and rely on the Mark II for the heavy stuff. On a visit to the U.S.A., I tried out a Mark II, and liked it. It seemed to do all I needed a blade for, plus was easily replaceable in case I left mine somewhere, plus the replacement was as fast as walking into a store and paying for a new one. Also, it proved effective for me in utility uses, such as camping. I don't know how available they are in Europe or Africa, but I do know that you can write to "GERBER LEGENDARY BLADES" at 14200 S.W. 72nd Avenue, Portland, Oregon (U.S.A) and they will gladly answer all your questions. The magazine "Soldier of Fortune" is another place to get excellent information concerning survival aspects of knife use. Through their advertisers, you can obtain all the books on the subject you will need, plus you can write to David Steele, who covers the subject of blades in his regular column,

and he can answer any technical questions you might need answered.

What else can I say? Get a blade, get the books on techniques, do the supplemental exercises I given you, and you are in business.