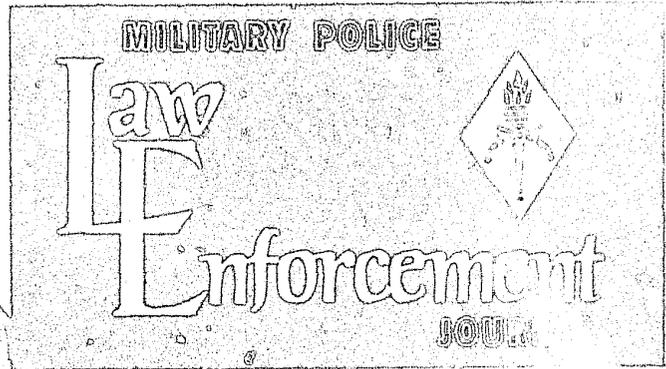


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385th MP BATTALION



The 385th Military Police Battalion crest is a shield of green upon which rests a shepherd's crook and sword. The shepherd's crook, adapted from the coats of arms of several cities of the Rhine province, represents the battalion's World War II service in that area. The sword represents the military and, like the shepherd's crook, symbolizes leadership and guidance. The shield rests upon the enscribed battalion motto: "Honor, Vigilance, Justice."

The 385th MP Battalion was activated in France, 3 Nov 44, where it performed its first mission as a Railway Security Battalion during the Rhineland Campaign of WWII. For its service, the 385th was awarded the Rhineland Campaign Streamer, 12 Dec 45.

Following the war, the 385th was assigned to regular occupational duties over a large area of southern Germany that included Karlsruhe, Mannheim, Augsburg, and Munich. The battalion was redesignated, 1 Aug

46, as the 385th MP Service Battalion.

The 385th was deactivated at Fuerth, Germany, 1 Nov 48. After 6 years, and while still on inactive status, the 385th was given a support mission to the US Seventh Army and was reactivated 9 Feb 55.

During the tense period when the Berlin Wall was being erected, a platoon from Company B was attached to the Berlin Brigade.

The 385th, with its three let-

tered companies, is presently responsible for 24,000 square miles of southern Germany including the cities of Heilbronn, Schwaebisch Hall, Stuttgart, Neu Ulm, Augsburg, Munich, Bad Toelz, Garmisch, and Berchtesgaden. An honor guard company from the battalion provides security for EUCOM Headquarters in Stuttgart. Whatever its mission, the 385th continues in a Tradition of Excellence.

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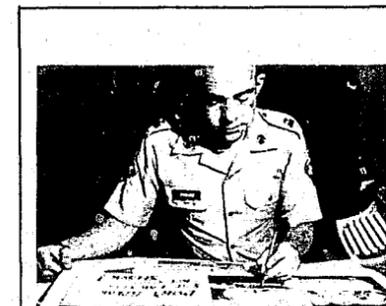
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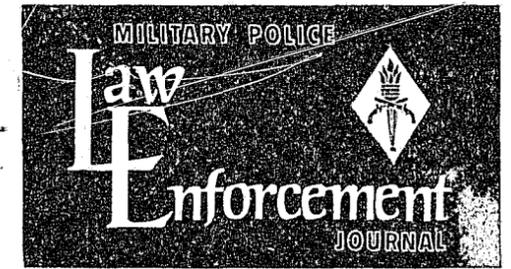
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Credit for our bicentennial cover goes to SGT Merle F. Boward, PIO, Ft Meade, MD. SGT Boward created the TOP COP cartoon character that was chosen to represent the Military Police Corps and writes the narrative for the TOP COP comic strip. Our thanks to SGT Boward for the cover art and for his help with illustrations throughout the Journal.



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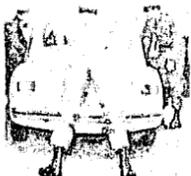
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35665

a functional program

Police Defensive Techniques

CPT Richard Y. Yamamoto, MPC

"What you need is a range of tools that permit you to use exactly that degree of control that constitutes necessary force." 1

Mention police defensive techniques to the average police officer and he may possibly visualize his awkward, open-hand training that rarely succeeded "on the street." Unfortunately, this response is too often encountered because it is the defensive technique taught in current police training programs. The "square-peg-in-a-round-hole" illustrates this situation very well (fig. 1).

Figure 1

Police self-defense techniques fail too often to work in real situations.

Too often police trainers focus solely on the unarmed defense aspect of defensive techniques and assume, incorrectly, that their minijitsu or minikarate courses are the remedy for all defensive situations. These trainers voluntarily restrict themselves to teaching a few techniques that are applicable in only certain types of situations. This leaves the working police officer unprepared to defend himself in the different or unusual situations that he may encounter.

Defensive Techniques

A study of police defensive requirements resulted in a program of techniques that combined martial arts movements, police tactics, and applied psychology. It was found that verbal techniques and armed physical techniques were required in addition to the traditional unarmed defensive techniques.

All police officers should be well trained in all defensive techniques so that they can deal with situations appropriately and effectively. Some police officers may use purely verbal techniques very effectively. They should use that particular talent whenever

possible but they should maintain an acceptable skill level in physical techniques as well. Other officers may be more effective using physical skills; but they should maintain proficiency in verbal techniques. Figure 2 shows how verbal techniques, physical techniques, and a combination of both are essential tools in police defensive techniques.

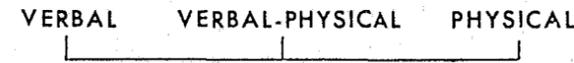


Figure 2

Verbal techniques require the officer to apply behavioral science to communicate with a subject in order to discourage offensive action. These techniques, which vary with the situation, include using a firm speaking voice, empathizing with the subject, gaining sympathy, shifting the blame, and rationalizing the offense. Verbal techniques are similar to techniques employed during interviews and interrogations.² Few police officers are given training in verbal defensive techniques because they are mistakenly considered to

be "mere common sense," or because there are no instructors qualified to teach and evaluate this soft skill.

Verbal-physical techniques combine physical approaches with dialogue to mask slight physical positioning movements. The old movie trick of distracting a subject by indicating that someone is behind him is a crude forerunner of this technique. Techniques that are employed are derived from actual street experience and refined by an understanding of mental and physical aspects.³ Talking with the hands and acting are examples of the techniques employed.

Physical techniques include fleeing, sidestepping, apprehension tactics, backstepping, hand and foot strikes, wristlocks, and revolver drawing. Rather than using physical techniques from various martial arts (as is commonly attempted by many trainers), a study was made to determine what types of physical techniques are actually needed in police work, and which types can be effectively integrated with a police officer's normal movements. Thus, instead of a "chop suey" of nice-to-know physical techniques, a system of truly interrelated movements evolved that were compatible with other techniques employed.

Discarded Physical Techniques

Many cherished physical maneuvers have been replaced by more efficient techniques. These beloved maneuvers include: ■ the aggressive hand-to-hand combat stance (fig. 3), which has outlived its usefulness in police work, ■ arm blocks, which require numerous hours of concentrated training to be used effectively against a more powerful and heavier individual; and ■ classic judo throws, which require too much training time for proper execution.

These discarded techniques have been replaced by:

■ The "interview stance" (fig. 4), which makes maximum use of the principles of balance, and conservation of energy.⁴ The body language of this stance produces a neutral effect (does not antagonize the subject), and personal target areas are minimized while maneuverability is accentuated.

■ Sidestepping and parrying, which insure a higher probability of successful defense than remaining stationary and attempting to ward off frontal assaults (fig. 5 and 6). The principles of surprise and the subject's own power may be used effectively to get



Figure 3

Figure 3. Classic "combat stance" may be counterproductive to police defensive techniques.

Figure 4. The interview stance does not forewarn subject of any contemplated police defensive action.

Figure 5. Attempting to block a head-on assault is not practical against a larger subject.

Figure 6. Sidestepping and parrying can be effectively used in most defensive actions.



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

out of the subject's way once his trajectory is unalterably established and to lightly parry any strikes a subject may attempt.

▪ Striking or applying wrist locks, which are no longer considered unacceptable police procedure.⁵ The archaic "kid glove" handling of assailants by throwing them rather than striking them is no longer absolutely essential.

"Just Enough to Get Hurt"

Those who are wary of self-defense courses indicate "you learn just enough to get hurt." This is necessarily true in many instances because students may devote insufficient time to learning many unnatural techniques. As is true of most athletic skills, numerous repetitions of fundamental movements, combined with instructional modeling and feedback, increase the skill level. If too much is crammed into a limited period of time, with too few repetitions, the axiom "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing" may well be applicable. Experimental psychologists⁶ have found that the cause of the decrease in long-term memory is "proactive" and "retroactive" interference (rather than memory trace decay). Without "rehearsals," most individuals forget their self-defense training and revert to previously learned ("proactive") defense techniques, e.g., street fighting, boxing, or wrestling.

It is therefore important to teach physical techniques that are not too dissimilar to

previous behavior and to conduct numerous "rehearsals."

While the program of new verbal-physical techniques (incorporated into the Apprehension and Defensive Techniques class of the Criminal Investigation Course at the MP School) is not the answer to all police defensive problems, it is a viable step out of the quagmire of questionable police defensive programs.



CAPTAIN YAMAMOTO is a collegiate self-defense instructor and a former commercial black belt karate instructor. Captain Yamamoto is the Chief, Criminal Investigations Group, DALET, USAMPS, and specializes in work motivation and defensive techniques.

FOOTNOTES

¹Robert K. Koga & John G. Nelson, *The Koga Method: Police Weaponless Control and Defensive Techniques*, Beverly Hills, California, Glencoe Press, 1967.

²Fred E. Inbau & John E. Reid, *Criminal Interrogation and Confessions*, Baltimore, Maryland, Williams & Wilkins, 1967.

³Psychophysiological phenomena such as stimuli habituation (gradual accustomization to constant patterns of movement) and sensorimotor responses (acts which are primarily dependent upon integrated functioning of sense organs and motor mechanisms).

⁴Seven principles which are stressed are: Surprise, Control, Balance, Body Dynamics, Using the Subject's Own Power, Timing and Conservation of Energy.

⁵FBI, *Defensive Tactics A Manual for Law Enforcement Officers*, Washington, D.C., FBI Dept. of Justice, 1970; Georges J. Sylvain, *Defense and Control Tactics*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1971; Bruce Tegner, *Defensive Tactics for Law Enforcement Volume One: Weaponless Defense and Control*, Ventura, California, 1972.

⁶Donald A. Norman, *Memory and Attention, An Introduction to Human Information Processing*, New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1969.

END