



Aikido Insights

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AIKIDO INSIGHTS

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25th ANNIVERSARY

TENSINKAI AIKIDO FEDERATION

EDITOR'S NOTE:



This is a special year and edition of "Aikido Insights." Why is it special? Because Tenshinkai Aikido Federation was founded by Sensei Dang Thong Phong twenty-five years ago. This is a Celebration Year!

In order to commemorate this time, Sensei Phong has invited different Aikido Dojos from Canada and the United States.

This special issue of "Aikido Insights" will bring a number of different Aikido experiential learnings from growing Aikidoka. In addition, you will see pictures about the beginning of Tenshinkai Aikido Federation.

First, I want to say that Richard Smith's interview with Sensei Phong is very interesting. Sensei shares the history of Tenshinkai Aikido Federation.

Jim Ogborn shares with readers his experience of the Seminar in Oakland. It was taught by Sensei Phong. Among the attendees were Sensei Hoa Newens (a former student of Sensei Phong) and Sensei Kim Peuser.

Richard Smith contributed an in-

teresting article about Aikido language.

From Canada, Bruce Mcleod, communicates news from Tenshinkai. In addition to Bruce's contribution, his two children who study Aikido have contributed two interesting thoughts. Genevieve Mcleod writes about her feminine experience with Aikido. Her brother Alexander shares with readers his experience of Aikido and self-defense.

Mike Meezan writes an interesting article about the Aikido-Ai Seminar with Ikeda Sensei given in Whittier, California. He and the other participants were impressed by the "beautiful Waza" demonstrated at the seminar.

Joseph Jill shares with readers an informed comparison of Tae Kwon Do and Aikido.

The Joys of Ukemi by Martin Dinel is an interesting article from the perspective of respect manifested in Aikido.

I want to thank Martin Dinel, Duong Dinh, Joseph Jill, Mike Meezan, Jim Ogborn, Richard Smith, Bruce Macleod, Genevieve Macleod, Alexander Macleod, Neta Wenrick, Eric Womack and last but not least, Dang Thong Phong Sensei for their many tireless hours and resources in bringing to you, the reader, this issue of "Aikido Insights."

Happy New Year to you and wishes that you continue to grow in the way of Aikido. May this year bring you harmony. □

Jim Wenrick

Congratulations!!! ■

Aikido Insights is proud to share the advancement to Shodan of

Di Duong Au

Sam Way Chan

Chien Ngo

The advancement to Nidan of

Chieu Xuan Cao

Hai Minh Nguyen

Best Wishes for your growth and continuing development in Aikido.



ADVANCEMENTS:

KYU 7

- #940. Richard E Desbiens
- #968. Julian Vu
- #971. Adam J. Lee
- #991. Miguel A. Fuentes
- #998. John Lewis Banks
- #999. Hoang K. Tran
- #992. Valerie San Luis
- #993. Patrick San Luis
- #995. Brian Bao Nguyen
- #1000. Lincoln Nguyen
- #1001. Alan G Stean
- #1003. Thuc Uyen Nguyen
- #1004. Timothy Ngo
- #1005. Ann Christine Crill
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- #1031. Shawn David Weddle
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TENSHINKAI AIKIDO FEDERATION 25th ANNIVERSARY

Interview with Sensei DANG THONG PHONG

By Richard L. Smith

During the 1960's in Viet Nam, Sensei Dang Thong Phong founded the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation. He was officially entrusted by Supreme Masters Morihei Ueshiba and Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba to develop Aikido in a spirit of love and peace. In honor of 25th Anniversary of the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation and in honor of the 5th Anniversary of the Federation in the United States, I interviewed Sensei Phong to provide insights regarding the Federation and its leader.

R.S.: *When and by whom was Aikido introduced to Vietnam for the first time?*

Sensei Phong: The first man to introduce Aikido to Vietnam was Master Dang Thong Tri. In France, during the decade of the 1950's, he was trained by the foremost disciples of Supreme Master Morihei Ueshiba. They were the well known Aikido grand masters Mutsuro Nakazono, Nobuyoshi Tamura, and Tadashi Abe.

In 1958, Master Tri returned to Vietnam and worked for the Youth and Sports Ministry whose minister was Mr. Cao



Richard Smith interviewing Founder Sensei Phong

Xuan Vy. In 1960, he founded the Vietnamese Aikido and Judo Association whose office was at No. 94 Phan Thanh Gian Street, 3rd Floor, Saigon, Vietnam. Here he also established one eighty square meter Dojo on the fourth floor to teach Judo and

Aikido. In addition, he took charge of training for Nguyen-Trai Intermediate Youth Training School, Gia-Long Girls High School, and Saigon Cultural Center Gymnasium.

R.S.: *Please tell us how your Tenshinkai Aikido Federation came into being.*

Sensei Phong: In 1964, the Monterey Gymnastic and Sports Club in California invited Mr. Tri to teach for them. For the three months during his absence, Mr. Tri asked me to take charge of the Dojo and run the Vietnamese Aikido and Judo Association. I was embarrassed by his request because at the time I was attending an intensive Taekwondo instructor course at the Military Martial Arts and Gymnastics School in Thu-Duc. The school was designed to develop martial arts, sports, and gymnastics cadre for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam, and the trainers were Korean high ranking masters in the Korean Expeditionary Force. As a trainee, I was being trained five hours a day over a twelve month period in order to



Sensei Tri transferring leadership of Vietnamese Aikido and Judo Association to Sensei Phong, Saigon, Vietnam, 1964.

graduate as a first degree black belt instructor.

R.S.: What did you decide to do regarding Mr. Tri's invitation?

Sensei Phong: Despite my involvement with Taekwondo, I decided to accept Mr. Tri's invitation, although I knew I would be overworked. I took over the Dojo with 25 trainees from Mr. Tri, and it was not easy going from the Dojo to the martial arts school every day to be trained in Taekwondo. It involved two bus transfers, and the schedule was very tight.

I tried my best to perform the task entrusted to me by Mr. Tri as I thought it was a great honor for me to have an opportunity to run and train such a martial arts association, and it was also a chance to evaluate my good will and energy. However, three months later Mr. Tri decided to settle in the United States which placed me in a new dilemma. I could neither drop out of the intensive Taekwondo course nor give up running the Association. Finally I decided to continue carrying out both tasks although I would have to face a lot of difficulties and endure tremendous hardships.

R.S.: When did you obtain your first degree black belt in Taekwondo?

Sensei Phong: In 1965, one year after accepting the responsibilities of running the Vietnamese Aikido and Judo Association, the number of trainees at the Dojo grew to over eighty; however, I succeeded in graduating first degree black belt in Taekwondo. I was among nineteen out of sixty-nine examinees who passed the examination.

R.S.: What was the next event following your graduation?

Sensei Phong: After graduating from the Taekwondo course, I was made Director of the Military Martial Arts and Gymnastics School in Thu-Duc run by the school Commandant Lt. Col. Pham Van Cu. It was then that I started my martial arts career in earnest. I alternatively taught Judo, Aikido, and Taekwondo. I conducted eight Aikido courses, and from

1965 to 1967 the number of members attending my Aikido courses was greater than 600. The increase in the number of students brought about problems regarding degree promotion, so to solve these problems I arranged to go to the Hombu Dojo for further training. In 1967 my dream came true, and I traveled to Tokyo where Supreme Masters Morihei Ueshiba and Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba trained me. I devoted all my time to training without missing a single class. There was not even time to go shopping.

R.S.: When did you return to Vietnam?

Sensei Phong: After passing the third degree black belt examination, I returned to Vietnam and started preparing the provisions and regulations for the foundation of Tenshinkai Aikido Federation. It was Supreme Masters Morihei Ueshiba and Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba who named the Vietnamese Aikido affiliation "Tenshinkai." They entrusted me with the responsibility to organize and develop Aikido in Vietnam in a spirit of love and peace. In 1967, the Vietnamese Ministry of Youth and Education issued an official decree permitting the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation to develop its activities throughout the Republic of Vietnam.

R.S.: How are the administrative members of the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation chosen?

Sensei Phong: The provisions and regulations of the Federation mandate that the executive board be selected every two years,

and each time I have been chosen chairman.

R.S.: What was your role in the development of the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation following its recognition by the Vietnamese Ministry of Youth and Education?

Sensei Phong: I taught Aikido for ten years before the fall of the South Vietnamese Government in 1975. During that time, the total number of trainees from various military and civilian institutions totaled more than 10,000. Most of the trainees were members of the military intelligentsia and officers in the Republic of Viet Nam Armed Forces. Among them were seven Generals. The Tenshinkai Aikido Federation continued to develop and flourish from 1970 until the end of April 1975 when the Communists took over South Vietnam.

R.S.: Besides Aikido, did you teach military trainees any other martial arts skills?

Sensei Phong: In the Armed Forces of the Republic of Viet Nam I was in charge of several courses to teach close combat fighting to officer cadets. These courses emphasized Taekwondo, Judo, and Aikido skills. At the Military Martial Arts and Gymnastics School I trained more than 3000 students. After graduation, they returned to their parent units to train their troops. At the civilian gyms, emphasis was placed on Aikido because I was in charge of the Dojo at the Federation Headquarters.

R.S.: Please tell us the various martial arts roles you played while in Vietnam.

Sensei Phong: In a civilian capacity, I held such positions as President of the Vietnamese Aikido and Judo Association, Director of the Oriental Aikido Gym, Director of the Phan-Dinh-Phung Taekwondo Gym, Secretary General of the Judo and Taekwondo Federation, National Arbitrator of Judo and



Sensei Phong, Saigon, Vietnam, 1967 Dojo office.

Taekwondo, technical consultant of various Aikido gyms throughout the country, and President and Founder of the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation.

In a military capacity, I held such positions as Martial Arts Director of the Military Martial Arts and Gymnastics School of Thu-Duc, Technical Commissioner for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam Martial Arts General Association, and coach and technical consultant for the Aikido gyms at various military academies and combat units of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam.

R.S.: *What were some of the civilian and military institutions that you taught at?*

Sensei Phong:

The civilian institutions included the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation Headquarters Dojo, the Duy-Tan Youth Activity Center, the Oriental Aikido Gym, the Gia-Long Girls High School, the Trung-Vuong Girls High School, the Petrus-Ky Boys High School, the Chu-Van-An Boys High School, the Cong-Hoa Stadium, and the Long-Xuyen Aikido Gym.

The military institutions included the Military Martial Arts and Gymnastics School of Thu-Duc, the Service Womens School of the Republic of Vietnam, the Active Officers Military Academy of Da-Lat, the 18th Infantry Division Headquarters, the 5th Infantry Division Headquarters, and the 4th Air Force Squadron Headquarters.

R.S.: *What happened to you after the fall of the South Vietnamese Government?*

Sensei Phong: At that time, I was a military officer, so after April 1975 I and my fellow officers were taken prisoners and sent to re-education camps. I was required to report to the communist authorities a

Taberd High School. Because this school was overcrowded, I was taken to Trung-Vuong High School. Afterwards, I was taken to Trang-Lon Military Base in Tay-Ninh Province. By the end of December 1975, I was taken to Phu Quoc Island. After six months there I was taken back of the mainland where I labored at Long-Giao Military Base. Nine months later I was transferred to Bui-Gia-Map Military Camp in Phuoc-Long Province. After being in custody there for one year, I succeeded in escaping from the camp and went to Saigon.

R.S.: *What happened when you reached Saigon?*



*Aikido class Headquarters Dojo
Saigon, Vietnam, 1972.*

Sensei Phong: In Saigon I tried to cross the sea, but unfortunately I failed. As a result, I was arrested and held in jail for eight months. By the end of 1979 I was released, and it was in this year that the communist authorities permitted martial arts, including Aikido, to resume their activities. I opened two gyms at Hamlet 17, District I: Tour D'Ivoir Gym for Taekwondo and Hawai Gym for Aikido and Judo.

R.S.: *When did you make your next attempt to leave Viet nam?*

Sensei Phong: After my gyms were established, I made another attempt to flee my country via Cambodia. Unfortunately I was arrested by Cambodian troops at Battambang Airport and delivered to Vietnamese troops. Eight Vietnamese communist soldiers hit and tortured me the whole night, trying in vain to extort gold from me. Finally they put me in jail. The

next morning, looking out of the cell through a gap, I saw the leaves of the palm trees outside revolving and realized that the kicks to my head the night before were responsible for this symptom. On that very morning I was taken to Battambang Prison where I was detained for five months before being sent back to Viet Nam. In Viet nam, I was incarcerated in Chi-Hoa Prison for one year and sent to various labor camps. By the end of August 1983 I was released. The price I had to pay for my border crossing was 37 months in jail, in addition to torture and persecution.

R.S.: *What did you do after your release?*

Sensei Phong: After being released, I worked for the Gym of District 5 as technical consultant for Aikido and Judo. Subsequently, I returned to Binh-Thanh District where I lived for a time. There I helped to improve the training curriculum of an Aikido program which was headed by Mr. Nguyen Thanh Cong who was a former student of mine. I was regarded by the Vietnamese communist authorities as an undesirable element of society because of my past crimes such as sea crossings, border crossings, prison escaping, and, above all, being an ex-officer of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces. I was not allowed to hold any key positions, so I served as a technical consultant.

R.S.: *When did you finally escape from Viet Nam and come to the United States?*

Sensei Phong: After 17 failures to escape by land and sea, I succeeded on the 18th attempt to flee Vietnam by boat to Galang Island Refugee camp in Indonesia. I arrived at the San Francisco Airport on February 25th, 1986 and was reunited with my wife and two sons after eleven years of separation. Since the mass evacuation in 1975, my wife and children had lived in Sacramento. I didn't accompany my family because as a soldier I couldn't leave my unit. After being reunited, we lived for four months in Sacramento and then moved to Orange County.

R.S.: *Since your departure from Vietnam, what has happened to Aikido there?*

Sensei Phong: As I have mentioned, martial

arts of various kinds have been allowed to develop on a large scale since 1979. At present in Vietnam, the number of Aikido students is second only to Taekwondo. Heads of Aikido schools in various districts are students whom I trained prior to 1975. Since 1975, they have had no qualified masters to learn from. Consequently, the Executive Board would like me to make a visit to Vietnam so that the heads of the various schools will have a chance to further their skills.



Aikido Demonstration at Officer Graduation . National Officer Academy , Dalat, Vietnam 1974.

To comply with their request, I would like to return to Vietnam in the near future to improve the skills of my former students. They are those who have sacrificed alot for the development of Aikido. They observe the way of the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation and remain subordinate to the mother school that is Aikikai.



Rank promotion - 18th Div. S. Vietnamese Army. Long Khanh, Vietnam, 1972.

R.S.: *When did you begin your present Tenshinkai Aikido Federation activities in the United States?*

Sensei Phong: One and a half years after moving to Orange County, I opened the first Dojo in the United States to be called Tenshinkai Dojo, but it had to be closed after 40 days because the landlord reclaimed his property. Two months later, I leased another place with 3,000 square feet to use as the Dojo and named

The first lease was signed on January 15th, 1988 and will expire on January 15th 1993. I intend to renew the lease for another term. That is why our Federation is organizing a ceremony to honor the 5th Anniversary of the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation in the United States. It will also be the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation.

R.S.: *Please tell us what degrees you have attained in the martial arts and whether you have any intention to further your skill.*

Sensei Phong: I have attained my 5th degree in Judo, my 6th degree in Taekwondo, and my 5th degree in Aikido. At present, I am training students in Aikido and am devoting all my time to the development of this martial art. I have served Aikido for more than

thirty years and have tried to develop it within the expectations of my Supreme Masters Morihei Ueshiba and Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba who had great belief in me and entrusted me with the task of organizing and developing Aikido in Vietnam during the 1960's. I have remained faithful to my mother school, the Aikikai Hombu Dojo, and my contribution to Aikido may be accurately assessed by the Aikikai Hombu Dojo.

R.S.: *Thank you very much Sensei Phong for taking the time to answer these questions. I am sure your answers will provide great insights regarding the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation and regarding your role in its development. It is hoped that the students of our Federation will follow the good example you have set through your sacrifices and devotion extending over three-fourth of your lifetime. It is further hoped that our students will make great contributions to Aikido through diligent exercise and unremitting efforts, and that the Tenshinkai Aikido Federation will become even stronger in the future. □*

Aikido Institute Seminar

*With
Sensei Dang Thong Phong*

by Jim Ogborn

Our trip to Oakland was a very memorable one, not only because of the shared knowledge, but because Phong Sensei was reunited with his student from Vietnam, Hoa Newens Sensei, (Fifth degree black belt). Hoa Newens Sensei's job had taken him to Northern California many years ago where he became involved with an affiliated dojo of Saito Sensei, Iwama, Japan. We were greeted warmly by Hoa Newens Sensei and his partner Kim Peuser Sensei, who had a dojo in Oakland, where Phong Sensei was invited to do a special seminar for one day. It was a unique experience to see the differences in practices and techniques. For example, Tori would execute a technique twice only right and left, then Uke would trade immediately. The switching between Tori and Uke after only two times seemed very aggressive and tiring practice.

Phong Sensei instructed all four one-hour sessions, two one-hour sessions before lunch and two sessions after. At lunch break Newens Sensei and Peuser Sensei invited us to a nearby park for a nice picnic lunch. The weather was a bit cold but the excitement of it all made the weather tolerable. Many of the attending Aikidoists made comments of the quality Phong Sensei demonstrated in his techniques. His smooth and flowing movements were graceful and dynamic.

By the end of the day we were all worn out and glad we had a short plane ride to look forward to instead of a long drive home.

Phong Sensei always encourages his students to attend seminars whenever they have the extra time and when it is financially feasible. It is always a wonderful experience to meet other Aikidoists, and feel my sense of Aikido has been broadened from such experiences. I was honored that Phong Sensei invited me and encourages us all to develop ourselves to the fullest potential. □



Aikido Insights

Insights into Aikido words

By Richard L. Smith

Every great art or field of knowledge has its own vocabulary consisting of the words which describe its concepts, techniques, and underlying philosophy. Some areas of learning, such as astrophysics, have such a sophisticated vocabulary that they seem almost incomprehensible to those outside the discipline. Others, such as psychology, have been so popularized that every person on the street feels as if they have some command of the field. And then there are those arts which are deceiving in that they seemingly may be understood with only a limited knowledge of the vocabulary.

Aikido clearly falls in the latter category. An individual may join an Aikido class with only the desire to learn a martial art, and they may do so with or without knowing that Aikido is a peaceful martial art or without knowing the philosophy underlying that concept. Even after months of study, an Aikidoist may do quite well if he/she has just learned the names of the techniques at his/her level and has developed the skills to execute them with proficiency. But if his/her knowledge of Aikido stops there, he/she is sadly missing out on the richness of the art.

Only by taking time to familiarize oneself with the literature of the field may one truly understand the vocabulary which gives Aikido its depth. Because much of this vocabulary is in Japanese, it may appear to be overwhelming, but one does not need to be a linguist to master the pronunciation and meaning of the major concepts. Many of the texts have pronunciation guides and clear vocabulary definitions. To take the time to explore the vocabulary of Aikido is like going on a treasure hunt into the vastness of our art. Even the simplest things we do may take on new meaning as we develop our insights. For example, you will unravel the meaning of the rowing-like exercise that we do before each class. Its name is

"**Fune O Kogi Undo**" or "**Fune Kogi Undo**" which literally means "**Boat (Fune) Rowing (Kogi) Exercise (Undo)**." It is also called "**Ama No Torifune**" which means "**Bird Boat of Heaven**." It is of Shinto origin and was designed to cleanse the mind and the spirit. When you perform this exercise, you are rowing your boat through the spiritual levels of heaven towards purification.

Another example relates to the wrist shaking we do after Ikkyo Undo, Kote Gaeshi Undo, and Nikyo Undo. Its Japanese name is Tekubi Shindo, and it is used as a preparation for the practice of Aikido during the kanjeido, or winter months, when students of Japan often perform basic drills outdoors in the snow. Its roots may be traced to Tibetan culture, through China and India, and it is often referred to in the martial arts as a basic way of producing inner heat. It is invaluable for stimulating your circulation, and if executed properly, should result in a pleasant tingling sensation.

Simpler insights come from just knowing the English translation of the Aikido vocabulary we use. "**Sayu Undo**" translates to "**Left and Right exercise**" and "**Kote Gaeshi**" translates to "**Reversing (Gaeshi) the Wrist (Kote)**." Other insights come from knowing alternative names for the common names we know. '**Ikkyo**' becomes "**Ude Osae**" or "**Arm (Ude) Control (Osae)**." "**Sankyo**" becomes "**Kote Hineri**" or "**Twisting (Hineri) the Wrist (Kote)**." The list goes on and on, and there is no limit to the insights we may gain.

It does take an effort on your part to develop these insights. It means taking time to read. It means formulating questions in your mind and asking Sensei Phong for the answers. But the time is well spent, and the rewards are immeasurable. □

ADVANCEMENTS

continued from page 2

KYU 7

- #1034. Chanh Nguyen
- #1038. Sandor Szabados
- #1042. Michael Sullivan

KYU 6

- #904. James C. Holder
- #908. Mark Bowie
- #920. Regina Uliana
- #933. Teresa Phuong Nguyen
- #934. Johnson Ba Nguyen
- #933. Mike Meezan
- #949. Ky Minh Lu
- #951. Huy Ho
- #954. Duy Tran
- #955. Toan Nguyen
- #956. Van Nguyen
- #957. Chinh Quoc Nguyen
- #958. Viet Huong Nguyen
- #960. Anh Vu Le
- #961. Anh Quan Le
- #962. Tuan Anh Pham
- #966. Thuan Quoc Hoang
- #970. Thuong Cao Do
- #976. Oracio Crisanto
- #878. Thu Dong Thi Le
- #979. Hai Long Le
- #982. Huong V. Nguyen
- #984. Tiffany Tran
- #985. Tammy Tran
- #986. Phuc Dao
- #989. Robert Edward Reed
- Minh Tran
- San Huu Tran

KYU 5

- #271. Quoc Long D. Ngo
- #607. Sean Sutter
- #721. Nha Duc Huynh
- #722. Nghi Thanh Huynh
- #726. Quoc Sean Hong
- #728. Mai Chi Hong
- #731. Dean Phan
- #732. Dennis Phan
- #743. Quang Tran
- #744. Long Tran
- #647. Bao Son Xuan Nghiem
- #752. David Nguyen
- #796. Nghi Nguyen
- #818. Liet Thanh Tran
- #898. Mike Kelly

Continued on page 24...

North of Forty Nine

by Bruce H. Macleod

Once again, it is time for news from the North. The Fort Saskatchewan Aikido Club counts among its attributes that:

- * it is the closest Tenshinkai Club to the people

- * it is only Tenshinkai Club in Canada

For those you who read the Spring issue (Aikido Insights, Spring 92, Vol.#2), you will know that Phong Sensei blessed his Canadian followers with a visit and

This is of some interest to me because, I seek to learn what Aikido techniques could be used to counter strikes from the feet. Because Phong Sensei is probably the very best person in the world to teach these techniques, I nurture the hope that someday, when I have achieved proficiency in Aikido, I may train directly under him. With the distance separating Edmonton and Westminster, I am aware that such training is unlikely to be regular or prolonged, therefore, I was very interested to learn how Van had man-

Among the good points of Aikido is the fact that it could prove useful, especially for females, in a progressively violent world. It is good for the physical self for and produces more stamina. I like the fact that because of it, I was stronger than all other the girls in my grade 6 class (last years).

More interesting than the physical aspects of Aikido are the mental self for and produces more stamina. I like the fact that because of it, I was stronger than all other the girls in my grade 6 class (last years). More interesting than the physical aspects of Aikido are the mental aspects. According to a book written by Steven K. Hayes, a martial arts master could perform Kokyu nage on a opponent without touching him. How is this possible? Definitely not just anyone could



seminar in February of the current years. Since that time, there have been a few changes North of Forty Nine.

The Fort Saskatchewan Aikido Club now practices mainly in the City of Edmonton. Although we have less total area at our facility in Edmonton, we have considerably more mat area. If you have ever practiced in close quarters, you will appreciate that we appreciate the extra room to move in.

Is a name change in the offing? Probably not, even if we are now primarily in the style of our instructor, Van Duong, (the style Phong Sensei.) Given the distance between (Edmonton) and Westminster and I have often wondered how Van picks up the finer points of instruction over such distance.

aged.

He provided the answer over a lengthy dinner time discussion. He practiced here with various groups in order to refine his basic techniques. Then, each time Phong Sensei visited, he worked hard, many hours per day, to put the Tenshinkai polish on them. Apparently, Phong Sensei was more than willing to arise early in the morning and practice till late at night.

Students here have a slightly easier time than Van did. We have a rigorous, competent instructor who has very high standards. Even so, it is comforting to me to know that, if I am willing to put in the work, I too may benefit from the direct instruction of our master. □

do it. You would have to have a very highly developed mind which can result from many years of Aikido practice. □

by Genevieve S. Macleod, 12 Yr. Old

Do you use Aikido for self defence?

If an attacker attacks you, your first instinct should be to disable them. When someone broke my collar bone (I won't mention any names) I didn't want to use Aikido to hurt anyone, but, now that it's broken, I would want to hurt someone if they attacked me again. Would you? If you are prepared to break someone's arm then Aikido is something to use. Should you really break their arm? □

by Alexander T. Macleod, 9 Yr. Old

AIKIDO-AI SEMINAR

With Ikeda Sensei

by Meezan Mike Richard

During the weekend of September 25, 26 & 27, Aikido-Ai Dojo, Whittier hosted a seminar by Ikeda Sensei (6 Dan) of Boulder, CO. This was the first Aikido seminar for me, and I was somewhat apprehensive. The first evening was to be a 2 hour training session. I arrived, changed and waited silently on the mat with about 40 others who looked experienced in the art of Aikido. Of those seated and waiting about 35 wore hakama. I was one of the five and felt that perhaps my limited training and skill level would not be up to what the Sensei would show. Quietly, Ikeda Sensei took his place on the "high seat" of the mat. We bowed solemnly and then began a brief warm-up. His first demonstration seemed simple enough, even for me. I found a partner and we tried to copy the technique he showed us. My nervousness was starting to dissipate and in its place was a feeling of enjoyment. "Hey, this is fun" I said to myself. At one point Ikeda Sensei turned toward me "Here, (he extended his wrist out to me) hold on." He looked at me "Strong hold?", I nodded and gripped strongly, I thought. He turned his wrist and easily flicked me off his arm. Several other demonstrations and practices followed as his quick wit and easy style made the time fly. All the

dance. After our bows and warm-up, Ikeda Sensei showed us more than we (or at least I) could really grasp quickly. A demonstration, practice of that



technique, was followed by observance of Ikeda Sensei of the same technique. This was repeated again and again, with each technique building on a previous technique or move. Observing the Sensei was, to me, almost mystical. So easily did he dispatch his uke.

Lunch break came too quickly, I was enjoying the training and didn't want to stop. Phong Sensei was in attendance. He turned to me and said "Come eat with us." I was dumbstruck, (gulp), me? I changed clothes and met Sensei Phong outside. I walked along with the small

entourage to a small deli close to the dojo. I sat down at the table with Ikeda Sensei, Phong Sensei, McGouirk Sensei and a few others I had met. With all my "Oh wow" feel-

ing going on, I noticed something: they didn't have an aura or glow or whatever (not yet anyway). What they did seem to have was a kind, considerate nature. We often hear of professional

athletes with big egos. Elite professionals at the top of their sport who berate others publicly, give their sport or themselves a "bad name". These men I sat with at the deli were quite the opposite, and when we returned to the dojo after lunch my bow to the Founder and Ikeda Sensei was indeed a bow of deep respect.

The afternoon session was weapons training. Again I was a little nervous, this

would be the first time ever I would hold a Bokken or Jo. I asked a fellow student from the Budo Center if this would be within my ability or should I sit this one out. "It shouldn't be too bad, give it a try and see what happens," he said. So I did and once again my fears proved to be unfounded. From the beginning training session, Ikeda Sensei

had been stressing "Spirals, Spirals, Spirals." A demonstration, practice, more demonstration and more practice followed. We finished that day with some seated Kokyu-Ho exercises and back stretches. I went home with a sense of calm I hadn't had in a long time.

The last day was a review and blending together of all the techniques Ikeda Sensei had so masterfully shown us. At the time, the techniques I could barely comprehend the day before, now came to me easily. His demonstrations were so smooth, effortless, and natural-looking and one could only wonder in amazement at his proficiency. Yet during the entire 3 days seminar Ikeda Sensei was humorous and sensitive to others feelings but also left you with the feeling that all this is quite easily possible with practice. The end of the seminar was heralded by applause for Ikeda Sensei to return next year. Kinship of a shared way of life, good feelings and generous spirit to others abounded and I was sad to see it end. I came to the seminars nervous, and left it calm and fulfilled. Thank you to all my partners and to Aikido-Ai of Whittier for your generosity and hospitality. Sayonara! □



while, I and others remarked about his effortless grace and the beauty of "waza" so finely tuned.

Saturday, the training continued with about 20 additional students in atten-

Comparing Techniques of Aikido and Tae Kwon Do

by Joseph Jill

Aikido, First Degree Black Belt

Tae Kwon Do, Fifth Degree Black Belt

There are different martial art styles which have various principles and concepts. Some are "soft styles" where the energy is received and directed to an end. Other styles are "hard" where there is aggressive kicking and punching. In addition, some "hard" styles

a "hard" form. In reality, Aikido when used with an untrained person, can be very dangerous because the individual may not know how to fall or move with the technique. Pain and injury may occur. In order for the "attacker" not to sustain serious in-



are performed in a "soft" manner and "soft" styles are executed in a "hard" fashion.

Aikido is considered a "soft" style where the attack is openly received, joined and directed to a less harmful conclusion for the attacker. It is believed by some that Aikido is a passive style. However, Aikido's origins were drawn by O' Sensei Morihei Ueshiba from many different martial art styles like Judo, Karate, Kendo, etc. Some of the original styles are extremely aggressive and executed in

jury he or she requires a great many hours of training.

In Aikido KI or internal energy is used to extend one's internal power while simultaneously being in harmony with the attacker and the universe. Winning in Aikido means changing imbalance to balance and achieving harmony in one's own mind and body. The intent is to neutralize an opponent rather than to harm or kill him or her, and to achieve a state of calm to avoid a fight rather than to provoke one.

Tae Kwon Do originated in China but comes from Korea. Practitioners use 75 percent leg and 25 percent hand techniques. Tae Kwon Do is known for being a "hard" style incorporating circular movements.

The forms in Tae Kwon Do are called Hyung or Poomse. They are practiced in order to gain coordination, balance and proficiency.

The similarities in Tae Know Do and Aikido are some of the circular movements and the philosophy. In both of these styles there is an emphasis on harmony with the universe.

In summary, Tae Kwon Do is more aggressive and combative than Aikido. In Aikido the focus of the practitioner is to center and neutralize the opponent while in the process attempting to protect the antagonist from harm. □

THE JOYS OF UKEMI

by Martin Dinell

Baring the technique for nage.

I cause a glitch, an imbalance into nage's universe, our universe. Nage brings back harmony into our universe. I feel the power of the technique, the transfer of energy, the effect of a particular movement which cause the balance to tilt back until my mine and my body give up and prepare to hit the mat without harm.

The respect of Uke

Nage brings balance back to the universe. Nage does not make the balance tilt the other way, he merely brings the balance back to its center. No harm was done to Uke, no harm was meant towards Uke, only harmony is restored into the Universe. □

In Celebrating of Aikido Tenshinkai Federation's 25th Anniversary, we are introducing a number of photographs showing some activities of the Federation as well as of its leader for the past 25 years. The majority of photographs and important documents were lost after Phong Sensei's numerous attempts to escape Communist Vietnam. The ones shown below will be able to depict the development and growth of the Federation.



(Above) From left: General Lam Quang Tho, Sensei Dang Thong Phong, Colonel Lam Quang Phong, Col. Lam Quang Phong's wife.

(Left) Sensei Dang Thong Phong; Federation Office, Saigon, Vietnam, 1969.

(Below) Aikido class; Federation Headquarters Dojo, 1971.





*Anniversary of O'Sensei Passing;
Headquarters Dojo, Saigon,
Vietnam, 1974. (left)*



*Aikido Dojo at Long-Xuyen Province,
Vietnam, 1972. (above)*



*Cong-Hoa Stadium, Saigon, Vietnam,
1970. (above)*



*Dong-Phuong Aikido Dojo, Saigon,
Vietnam, 1973. (left)*

In Celebrating of Aikido's 50th Anniversary, we are introducing showing our adoption of the Aikido Dojo in Vietnam.

Duy-Tan Aikido Dojo, Saigon, Vietnam, 1972.
(right)

5th Division Aikido Dojo, Ben Cat, Binh Duong,
Vietnam, 1972. (below)

Service Women's School, Saigon, Vietnam, 1972.
(bottom)





18th Division Headquarters Aikido Dojo, Long Khanh Province, Vietnam, 1972. (above)

Active Officer Military Academy, Dalat, Vietnam, 1974. (below)



Reserve Officer School , Thu-Duc, Saigon , Vietnam,
1972. (below)

4th Division Air Force - Aikido Dojo, Binh-Thuy
Airbase, Can Tho, Vietnam, 1970. (bottom)





Aikido Dojo at Fifth District, Saigon, Vietnam, 1979. This is the first Aikido Dojo after 1975. (above)

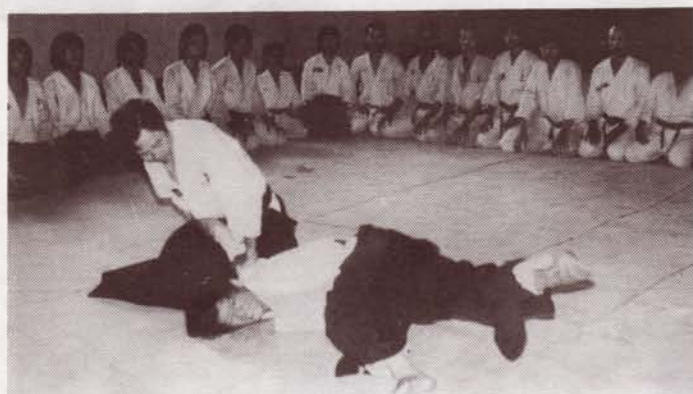
Party, Sensei Phong release from Labor Camp, 1980. (left)

Aikido Dojo at First District, Saigon, Vietnam, 1981. The second dojo opened after 1975. (below)





The third dojo at Binh Thanh District, Saigon, Vietnam, 1985. (above)



Binh Thanh Dojo, Saigon, Vietnam, 1985. (above and right)



Communist Government giving official permission for Aikido training to Nguyen Tang Vinh Sensei, Saigon, Vietnam, 1990. (left)



Celebrating First Anniversary
at new location, Westminster,
California, 1989.
(above & right)



First Tenshinkai Dojo
Garden Grove, California, 1987. (above)



Demonstration at First Anniversary.





The 22nd Commemoration of O'Sensei Passing at Tenshinkai Headquarters Dojo.
April 26, 1991,
Westminster, California .



Seminar
Westminster, California, 1992.



The 23rd Commemoration of O'Sensei Passing at Tenshinkai Headquarters Dojo.
April 1992, Westminster, California .



Aikido Demonstration at
Vietnamese New Year TET Festival
Westminster, California, 1990.



TET Festival Demonstration
Golden West College
Westminster, California, 1991.



Demonstration
Children Moon Festival
Westminster, California, 1990.



Children Aikido class
Westminster, California, 1990.

*Aikido Seminars
with Sensei Phong*



Budo Educational Center
Sacramento, California, 1986



Fort Saskatchewan Aikido Club
Edmonton , Alberta, Canada, 1992.



Aikido Institute
Oakland, California, 1992.



Zen Center, Mt. Baldy
California, 1992

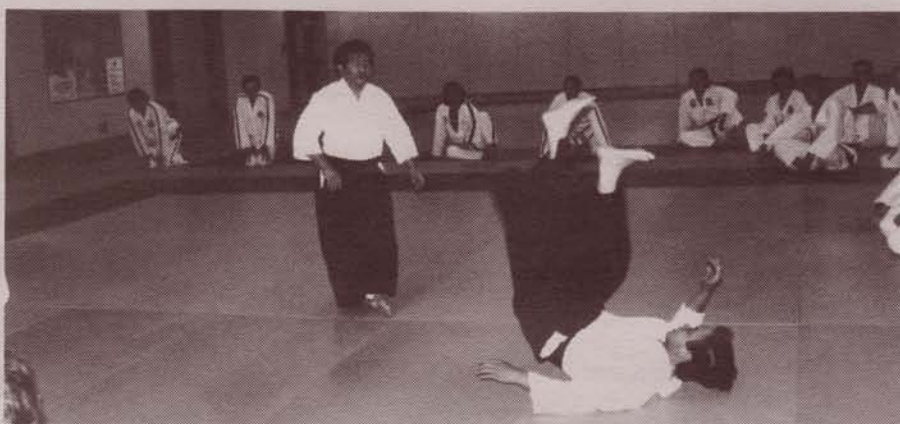


Aikido-Ai
Whittier, California, 1992



*Self-defense Seminars for
Tae Kwon Do Instructors*

Self-defense instructions for Tae
Kwon Do black belt candidate,
St. Foy, Quebec, Canada, 1987.
(left)



7th World Tae Kwon Do
Championship ITF
Montreal, Canada , 1990
(right & below)



Self-defense session for Tae
Kwon Do black belt instructors,
St. Foy, Quebec, Canada, 1987.
(right)



ADVANCEMENTS

continued from page 8

KYU 5

- #926. Stephen Rivera
- #927. Vine Peace
- #829. An Le
- #845. Kiet Nguyen
- #867. Clifford H. Matsuda
- #879. Jackie Haycox
- #989. Kelly Michael Eugene

KYU 4

- #696. Roberto J Concha
- #792. Thuan Q. Hong

- #821. Tho Le
- #854. Richard L. Smith
- #888. Christiaan Adam Carrillo

KYU 3

- #705. Eric Womack
- #707. Andrew Avalos
- #738. Duong X. Dinh
- #758. Huy Anh Pham

KYU 2

- #568. Bill Thomas Malohn
- #629. Jim Ogborn
- #630. Jim Fischer

KYU 1

- #411. Tam Huu Do
- #516. Frank Kane

SHODAN

- #207. Chien Ngo
- #313. Di Duong Au
- #388. Sam Way Chan

NIDAN

- #418. Hai Minh Nguyen
- #499. Chieu Xuan Cao

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Monday thr. Friday

8 - 9:30AM Adults

5 - 6:30PM Juniors

6:30 - 8PM Adults

Saturday & Sunday

10 - 11:30AM Juniors

11:30 - 1PM Adults