

From Publisher W. Hock Hochheim

## THE SMOKE OF THE ENEMY'S FIRES

*“In years six hundred, no Spartan woman has beheld the smoke of the enemy’s fires.”  
— old Spartan adage*

Six hundred years! How confident they must have felt, how unsullied and untouched they remained for centuries while the ravages of invasion and conquest raged all around them. Of course history reveals to us that Greece, like Rome, like the British Empire, the Soviet Union and so many other superpowers saw a reign of centuries, then fell by war, or slow erosion. To this day, the Spartans are renowned as perhaps the hardest-core warrior culture and STILL they fell from invading Persians! The lesson? In the big picture of mankind, ALL empires come and go, rise and fall. This change is one true thing we do know to be self-evident—that and weakness is a vacuum for evil.

Groups of all races, creeds and colors since antiquity, have congregated both officially and unofficially in “fighting classes” of one kind or another. Martial historians know well how these eternal “work-out” groups have practiced. Aside from full-time military training, in places like Greece, Rome, in Medieval Europe or on the plains of Africa to name a few, citizen/soldiers have gathered much like the Army Reserves or National Guards of today, to practice defending their lands. Their sessions often ended in picnics and festivals. While some peoples practiced their martial arts in regular classes, in occupied lands natives hid from their local governments while instructing their systems like silat and karate, because their fighting arts were considered forbidden tools for revolution and resistance. STILL they gathered! Openly or covertly, still the knowledge of combat was passed on from generation to generation.

The American military had a saying similar to that of the Spartan campfire theme, that “the only way a foreign soldier would drink from the Ohio River, or camp in the Smokies, was by invitation!” In this same vein, I was struck decades ago while stationed in South Korea and talking with one of their ROK Marine sergeants while we were on a foot patrol. “Nobody ever invade United States!” he said in his broken English. “Everybody got guns. Everybody can get guns!” Really?

Now, as we sit perched atop our little decadent sugar cupcake we call the United States, the forces of famine, unrest,



violence and evil rages around us. Narcoterrorism in Columbia. Coups in Equador. The CIA declares that Russia is “virtually a full-fledged kleptocracy.” The Chinese loom over the Panama Canal and thirst for Taiwan. Ethnic cleansing in Europe and Africa. Turmoil in Indonesia. Middle eastern, religious jihads. Biological warfare. Terrorists sneak in through Canadian borders ... need I go on? History is a book written by what Professor Jared Diamond calls Guns, Germs, and Steel. What makes us believe that the tides of almighty, unfair and fickle time won’t surprise us with bullets, biological warfare and the end of a knife? Yet the small-minded push their tunnel-

istic view and the ignorant sit back and let our liberal laws strip us of guns and whittle our military down to a confused police force. Is there ever really a “peace-time army?”

The few civilian fighting schools we have today are sadly preoccupied with fair play and sport fighting, and cluttered with children, from which only the most abstract of real-world fighting skills can be developed. I have a saying when conducting my seminars; “These techniques we teach are geared for two opponents — the enemy soldier and the criminal. Sometimes we take them prisoner. Sometimes we kill them.”

Indeed it might be uncomfortable for many to imagine using some of the close quarter combat tactics shown in this magazine or that I teach, but once educated in history you learn that these “dark and violent” things must be kept alive. Must — as they have been for centuries — be passed on as before from generation to generation. When you educate yourself in the ways of hand, stick, knife and gun combat — when you learn how to really fight for your life you touch upon this ancient and natural lineage.

While you may not use these violent means yourself, that is not the point! Your great grandson may have to use them to kill a “commie” on the steps of the Capitol! Stranger things have happened in our real world! Just ask the raped Spartan women, found staring lifelessly at the smoke of the enemy’s campfire. ☛