

## **Restraint**

(May 14, 1993, amended November, 1999)

Our United States Martial Arts Association, our leaders, and I personally, have been attacked from time to time with lies, rumors, and gossip. I cannot remember a year since 1960 since we were free from this nonsense. It is part of building a great Association. As the old saying goes, "When you stand in a high place, lightning will strike you."

If I attempted to study, let alone answer all these windy charges, this shop might as well be closed for any other business. Even one minute spent responding to this drivel is a waste. It takes time from valuable, constructive positive efforts to build American Martial Arts.

If someone asks what we intend to do about these empty attacks, my answer is: Nothing. First because the authors of this nonsense (who often lack the courage to sign their false accusations) eagerly desire that we take notice of them, like little children who throw their food on the floor to gain attention. Second, because these attacks are beneath our contempt. Ronin are masterless, stray dogs will howl, nothing can or needs to be done about it. Let us pray that these misguided people will be relieved of their burden of hatred, envy and untruth. Of course, in a few cases of outright libel or slander, we have and will take legal action. The law has always provided a remedy in our favor.

Many of you have asked why these people are squabbling. In most cases it is because I have befriended them. In a way, I have rescued them from Martial Arts oblivion and tried to give them a job. They have come to me swearing eternal loyalty and asking to take part in our USMA activities. They usually start by begging for some honor, such as Martial Arts Rank, an honorary Ph. D. Degree, or an important position on one of our boards or committees, promising to do great labor if only I will give them higher rank or other credentials, which is all they really desire. Later, deciding that they have not been honored enough, they turn against us, forgetting the words of the Roman statesman Cicero: "The first mistake of man is the delusion that personal gain is made by crushing others." Our loyal workers don't ask for anything, they just contribute without end, God bless them.

Please remember the advice of Thucydides, the great Athenian historian (471-400 BC) Of all the manifestations of power restraint impresses men most " The great Roman leader Cato said - "I think the first virtue is to restrain the tongue; he approaches nearest to the gods who knows how to be silent, even though he is in the right "

My years are running out. I have a great determination to continue serving our members in any way I can. In gratitude for your loyal support and personal friendship, I shall also resist any wastage of my time in fruitless argument. Life is too short and too beautiful to squabble.

You are always in my heart.

O-Sensei