

Precepts, WAR and Peace

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Contents

Acknowledgements

Foreword

Introduction

Levels of conflict

Level 5 – at peace

Level 4 – uneasy peace

Level 3 – build up to possible conflict

Level 2 – imminent threat

Level 1 – war/combat

Level 1 to 5 – making the peace

Conclusion

Annex 1 – levels, issues and precepts

Annex 2 – comparison of alert conditions

References

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Foreword - Andi Kidd, Chief Instructor, Genjitsu Karate Kai

Part of the requirements for Genjitsu Dan grades is the writing of an essay. This requisite is so that students can explore and expand on ideas at a deeper level than in a normal dojo setting. It also gives the instructors an insight into their personal philosophy of karate training. Some students hate the task and find it much harder than the physical component, others enjoy the challenge.

Sometimes these essays go above and beyond what is required of them and this composition by Gary Charlton is one of those occasions. Gary has put a piece of work together that deserves more than being in the Genjitsu databanks and is much more than just another grading essay. This is an excellent piece of work that deserves a much bigger audience and with that in mind we decided to put it out onto the web for more people to enjoy.

I hope you appreciate this work as much as I did and I hope that Gary will write some more articles in the future.

And by the way, he did pass his grading.

Introduction

The focus of this paper draws on the similarities, overlaps and language associated with the “spectrum of conflict” and that of self-protection. Concepts such as national alert conditions, stages of military readiness and personal readiness are introduced along with links to Funakoshi’s Twenty Precepts. Refer to Annex 1 and 2 for further information.

Whilst not wishing to get bogged down in definitions, it is clear that the distinctions between martial arts, combat, self-protection, conflict and fighting are often blurred. Several high level descriptions of conflict and violence have been identified including interpersonal, inter group, intra state and interstate (Hall, 2015).

In this paper the use of ‘warfare’ and ‘combat’ is in reference to interstate violence at the nation state level and self-protection in the case of interpersonal violence. Within the US military “the spectrum of conflict uses violence as a discriminator on an ascending scale that ranges from stable peace to general war” (US Army, 2008, p2.1). Self-protection covers a wide spectrum of activity “from spotting danger before it occurs to fighting for your life and all things in between” (Kidd, 2015, p36).

To use other terms such as ‘martial arts’ can offer confusion in this respect as it has the potential to cross over both categories depending on when it is being applied. For example, martial arts are often considered to include the likes of karate, judo, MMA etc. but the term derives from the Latin “god of war”, Mars. As such it could be said that martial arts refer to the “older, battlefield forms [while] judo, karate and aikido are examples of martial ways” (Lowry, 2009, p77). Similarly, tracing back the history of karate to its Okinawan roots (and beyond), the art was clearly developed to tackle everyday confrontations with a focus on a “civil tradition and not for the battlefield . . . or not for use against a professional fighter” (Abernethy, website articles - <http://www.iainabernethy.co.uk/articles>).

The “Martial Map” (Abernethy, website, audio book/podcast - <http://www.iainabernethy.co.uk/content/martial-map-free-audio-book>) provides a good account of this crossover between martial arts, fighting and self-protection.

Whilst there will always be discussions around definitions, it is the parallels and cross over in terminology between warfare and self-protection which perhaps provides an interesting and different entry into many closely associated themes, ideas and concepts. This crossover in language may help some who are following a martial way to better understand some of the wider implications of personal self-protection.

Drawing in other ideas and concepts within this overall structure such as levels of readiness, Cooper’s Colour Code and Funakoshi’s precepts adds further cross cutting themes which can help provide this broad context and a more rounded approach to self-protection. Before delving into the stages and similarities of warfare and self-protection in more detail it is useful to highlight some of the key aspects associated with each of these.

A hierarchy of alert conditions (ALERTCONs) exists in the United States and

developed as LERTCONs in US/Allied forces assigned to NATO. These can be further broken down into high alert Emergency Condition levels (EMERGCONs) and the more familiar Defence Conditions (DEFCONs). Other conditions include Force Protection Conditions (FPCONs) for terrorist threat levels, Information Operations Conditions (INFOCONs) for information systems/computer network threats (soon to become Cyber Operations Conditions or CYBERCONs), Readiness Conditions (REDCONs) of use in military/combat operations, Hurricane Conditions (HURCONs) and Tropical Cyclone Conditions of Readiness (TC-COR). In the UK Threat Levels are categorised into five states from low to critical. Other countries around the world have similar alert systems in place. Refer to Annex 2 for a comparison of alert conditions.

Jeff Cooper was a US Marine, World War Two veteran and an expert in the use of firearms, especially the pistol. The code he created (Cooper's Colour Code) is associated with a person's state of mind in terms of awareness – in other words what's going on around you at any given time/location. Cooper identified four colours within his code - white is based on a total lack of awareness; yellow is when you are generally aware of what is going on around you; orange when a particular threat has been identified and red when that threat turns into a real problem and some sort of action is required.

Some have taken the Colour Code further and linked the condition levels to heart beats per minute (bpm) with white running at about 60-80 bpm and red at about 115-145 bpm. Red has been associated with "optimal survival and combat performance" (Grossman, 2008, p30) and additional colours have been added in some descriptions. These include condition grey where those with appropriate training (such as those in the military) can push through some of the effect of adrenalin and high levels of heart rate and black where gross motor skills such as running deteriorate. This aspect may be more relevant to those personnel who are connected to "live fire" situations although, for those following civilian self-protection, it is useful to be aware of the links between heartbeat, the release of adrenalin and the possible loss of some bodily functions such as fine motor skills within the early stages of condition red. Whilst Cooper's Code is not without its critics, its overall principles and simplicity make it a useful tool within self-protection circles.

Add into this Funakoshi's Twenty Precepts or principles, then we have another layer of cross-cutting themes which, when looked at in more detail, help to provide a more rounded approach to self-protection. Funakoshi first published his principles ("Niju Kun") in 1938 which stress "spiritual considerations and mental ability over brute strength and technique" (Teramoto, 2012). Funakoshi was keen to highlight that karate as a "way" transcended physical training and could be applied to many aspects of life – very much in line with his eighth principle that "karate goes beyond the dojo". With this in mind it is interesting to apply Funakoshi's precepts to the levels of combat and self-protection outlined below.

Levels of Conflict

The cross over themes identified allow many elements of violence to be considered and to be brought together in a way that helps understand the broad underpinnings of self-protection. This, of course, is not the only way that these can be brought together but the crossover in language alone may allow some to grasp these underpinnings a little more.

The levels below are broken down into five sections and reflect the spectrum of conflict and levels of awareness at both the nation state and individual level. It is within each level that broader ideas and concepts are introduced based on overlapping language.

Level 5 – at peace

Coopers Code = white/yellow

Spectrum of conflict – stable peace

LERTCON – 5/4: peace time conditions

REDCON – 4: minimum alert

Condition white is used to describe a person who is “unfocused and unprepared for anything bad to happen and is the lowest level of readiness” (Grossman, 2008, p30).

In today’s world there must be few, if any, nation states that find themselves in a negative readiness condition. True, there may be some societies who purport to be pacifists and certainly there have been those that declare their neutrality in the face of war. However, most, especially with the growing threat of radicalised terrorism and violence, will have various degrees of readiness, even if only low level yellow – “experts predict globalisation will continue to support the exportation of terrorism worldwide . . . populations will both suffer and become more apt to embrace radical ideologies to express their frustration and increase their desire, if not ability, to share global prosperity” (US Army, 2008, p1.1).

In contrast it would seem that many individuals go about their day to day business in a permanent state of condition white. Many might think that “nothing bad will happen to me around here” or shut themselves off from their immediate environment via the use of modern technology – or, more often than not it just doesn’t occur to people that anything bad could possibly happen. However, there are numerous news articles and CCTV images which show people being mugged/attacked and which could have perhaps been avoided if a little more attention was being paid. But condition white also goes beyond the realms of violence when one considers, for example, crossing a busy road or being aware of building work surrounded by scaffolding – if people are not aware of their surroundings and potential risks then they cannot be avoided, a state condition yellow allows.

Level 4 – uneasy peace

Cooper Code = yellow

Spectrum of conflict – stable peace

LERTCON – 3.5: peace time conditions/simple alert

REDCON – 4: minimum alert

Whilst it would be impractical to be on a high level of constant alert it is not impossible to be generally aware of what is going on around you in any one place and time – without being paranoid. Condition yellow is described as “a level of basic alertness and readiness” (Grossman, 2008, p30).

Many nation states at “peace” are, however, at a constant level of alertness and have scenarios for many potential disruptive activities from extreme weather events to acts of terrorism (and, in fact, are more likely to be at an “uneasy peace” condition).

Most, if not all, nation states have crisis response procedures devised at the highest of levels, for example the UK Cobra Committee (Cabinet Office Briefing Room A) and Civil Contingencies Committee, and the US White House Situation Room. The most strategic of Alert Conditions have been devised for use by the US and allied forces connected to NATO and use five levels of LERTCONs. Within these broad descriptions there are emergency conditions which include both civilian and military spheres. For example the military use Defence Conditions (DEFCONs) at five levels. Readiness Conditions (REDCONs) are “used to refer to a units readiness to respond to and engage in combat operations” (Wikipedia) and again contain five levels. Refer to Annex 2 for more detail. It is within these descriptions that a clear crossover between language used in self-protection and nation state protection becomes clear.

As mentioned, both the nation state and individual need to be in a constant state of readiness. This is perhaps one of the most important aspects of self-defence – having a constant sense of general awareness or zanshin.

Issues around awareness have been recognised for many years in both the military and self-protection worlds. For example, Sun Tzu talks of “neutralising an adversary” before a physical conflict stage is reached, whilst Funakoshi recommends “avoid an encounter” before it begins. Funakoshi’s eighth precept has already been mentioned as important, but within this level, both precept seven (“calamity springs from carelessness”) and sixteen (“when you step beyond your own gate you face a million enemies”) are relevant.

More recently it has been highlighted that “we must be constantly aware of our surroundings and should an undesirable situation develop we can attempt to avoid it all together” (Abernethy, 2000, p15) and “if you are aware of your surroundings you can avoid a multitude of problems” (Kidd, 2015, p17).

Keeping up appropriate levels of intelligence represents another crossover theme. This falls into the well-known Sun Tzu maxim of “know your enemy” and covers a multitude of approaches. In the military, for example, this spans knowing about other nation states’ social, economic and environmental circumstance through to satellite surveillance and cyber hacking. Cyber warfare could, of course, escalate very

quickly especially as “artificial intelligence” becomes more developed and humans are taken out of the decision making process. Whilst there are many definitions of cyber warfare it could “range from low level threats such as spreading propaganda and disinformation via social media through to cyber espionage . . . and all the way up to using digital weapons to create damage in the real world – the nightmare scenario of hackers attacking . . . critical national infrastructure such as energy, transport, financial services or food”, (Ranger, 2016, p18).

For the individual this spans knowing (and perhaps avoiding) where the local, more violent “hangouts” are located through to having an appreciation of local, regional and national statistics on violent crime and its spatial distribution. For the individual, this is all part of understanding yourself and your neighbourhood and aligns with Funakoshi’s fourth precept - “first know yourself then know others”.

An obvious cross over is the maintaining and build-up of a nation states or individuals defences. For the nation state this extends from traditional border control to all aspects of military training to the protection of highly sensitive, digitised satellite information in an era of potential space warfare and “Star Wars” (also known as President Reagan’s 1983 Strategic Defence Initiative against attack by ballistic nuclear weapons). For the individual this could include the likes of keeping fit, eating as healthily as possible and avoiding known bad places and enrolling in a long term self-defence/martial arts school.

It is at this level that doubt, uncertainty and questions can enter – are a nation state’s/individual’s defences good enough to meet various threats? What happens if they don’t work? What happens if they work too well? What injuries could be sustained during training and whilst building up defences? All valid questions which rest with both individuals and those responsible for a nation’s well-being. All difficult questions to answer although nation states have a plethora of lawyers versed in national and international law that could “justify” almost any action. At the individual level, good guidance from a self-defence club and Sensei can help address such questions via a well thought through and broad syllabus, including other areas discussed below such as knowledge of the law. Funakoshi’s eleventh precept lends itself well within this section - “karate is like boiling water: without heat it returns to its tepid state”.

Level 3 – build up to possible conflict

Coopers Code = yellow/orange

Spectrum of conflict – stable peace/unstable peace

LERTCON – 3: military vigilance

REDCON – 3: reduced alert

There are many overlaps between levels 2 and 3 although level three could perhaps be described as a darker shade of yellow! Whilst there may be a heightened awareness the threat remains somewhat unspecific.

For nation states this might be brought about by other nation state military manoeuvres or war games near to actual or perceived national borders or warships/aeroplanes entering disputed air/sea space – all meant to probe and test both the “invaded” state’s physical defences and political and social responses to such activity, or simply to show and demonstrate power. At the individual level this may manifest itself in an overall change of atmosphere within a social space, be that a pub, nightclub or gathering such as a peaceful protest.

Understanding what might instigate an actual confrontation, for example by replicating war games on the other side of the border, moving reserve troops to a border position, retaliating in more provocative ways or antagonising a social mood within a public space, will therefore help avoid a deeper confrontation developing. However, in a nation state’s case the opposite might hold true where a lack of a show of force may indicate a perceived weakness, and therefore having an intelligent insight into other nation states is vitally important. A useful crossover term is “situational awareness” which “means immediate knowledge of the conditions of the operation constrained geographically and in time” (US Army, 2008, p6.13).

For the individual, for example, someone may enter what is considered to be your personal space, and whilst this poses no immediate threat, perhaps something has been sensed or “clocked”. This may well lead to nothing, general chit chat or something more overt. Whilst an overreaction or jumping to conclusions is to be avoided, instincts should still be listened to – “if you get a feeling that someone is a bit suspect or that a situation is just a bit wrong don’t just dismiss that feeling” (Kidd, 2015, p22).

Whatever you want to call it - trust your instinct, gut feeling or feminine intuition – “intuition is soaring flight compared to the plodding of logic . . . intuition is the journey from A-Z without stopping at any other letter along the way. It is knowing without knowing”, (De Becker, 1997, p26).

Level 2 – imminent threat

Coopers Code = orange/red

Spectrum of conflict – unstable peace

LERTCON – 2: reinforced alert

REDCON – 2: full alert and ready to fight

Again overlaps exist between orange and red but at this level we have climbed up a notch from dark yellow to orange to light red. Whereas yellow has moved from an overall state of readiness to something more defined (but still unfocused) orange introduces the idea that something could really “kick-off” at any moment – “the likelihood of any attack must be considered”, (Abernethy, 2004. p22).

At this level, for both the nation state and individual, attempts have already been made to avoid or at least not to antagonise a given situation (unless that is a specific strategy) – now is the time that a defensive “fence” may need raising.

At the nation state level this might mean “advertising” the fact that troops are in position and could be activated at any time – a current example is the superpower flashpoint in the South China Sea with America “deploying long range nuclear bombers to Australian airbases after Beijing reinforced its claim to virtually all of the South China Sea”, (Lagan and MacLeod, 2016, p28). In parallel, frantic international “shuttle diplomacy” and negotiations could be underway with the aim of preventing any escalation to actual physical combat. In the arena of radical terrorism this may entail taking action in actual spheres of conflict – taking the war to the enemy – as in the current proactive (pre-emptive?) air strikes within Syria, whilst also stepping up national/internal security via increased intelligence and propaganda activity.

At the individual level the opportunity for avoidance and/or escape has been missed and the territory of verbal de-escalation has been entered into, whilst not engaging in tit for tat “monkey dancing” – a human “built in ritual to establish social dominance or defend territory” (Miller, 2008, p42) with specific steps including staring, challenges, moving closer, gesticulating to throwing an actual punch (most likely a right “haymaker”).

It is at this stage, when all other avenues of de-escalation have not worked, that a pre-emptive strike may be required and, in doing so, moving the level into red. To instigate such a strike is often difficult and so an action trigger can be used which “is a word or sentence used to trigger action” (Thompson, 1997, p49).

With the language of pre-emption the analogy between nation states and the individual is clear to see. Both can use deception to feign weakness or distraction in one quarter to then strike where an opponent is not expecting - “the first attack usually gets in” (Miller, 2008, p130).

For the individual it is important to be aware of the four Ds used by attackers in the run up to an assault, namely i) dialogue ii) deception iii) distraction and iv) destruction (Thompson, 2012, p19).

Several of Funakoshi’s precepts are relevant within this level. Number two (“there is no first strike in karate”) would, at first glance, seem to go against the idea of a pre-emptive strike, but this is not the case if all other avenues of escape have been tried;

number twelve (“do not think of winning, rather think of not losing”) is applicable as if avoidance can be used from the outset then a confrontation has not been won via knockout or submission, but it has not been lost as injury has not been sustained; number seventeen (“kamae, or ready stance is for beginners, but later one stands in shizentai or natural stance) where the appearance of unreadiness can lead to deception via, for example, a pre-emptive strike.

Level 1 – war/combat

Coopers Code = red

Spectrum of conflict – general war

LERTCON – 1: general alert

REDCON – 1: full alert and unit ready to move and fight

Condition red is when a “potential problem is now identified as an actual problem” (Kidd, 2015, p18) and a nation state or individual has either acted in a positive, pre-emptive way or reacted if attacked first, either via deception, distraction or being completely “blind-sided” (although it is hoped that being in condition yellow may have provided sufficient warning to act first). It is at this stage that the human “fight or flight” response is activated and, within this level, the overlaps and language similarities between war/combat and self-defence really becomes apparent.

Pre-emptive striking has already been mentioned. The use of counter attack, for the individual, is perhaps best represented by the flinch response – “this is about surviving the first contact of an assault in such a way that you can recover” (Miller, 2011, p93). Good self-defence classes based on karate kata and kata application (bunkai) offer potential solutions to surprise attacks by building on the natural flinch reaction, and an important point to remember is that “every kata move is designed for use in combat” (Abernethy, 2000, p9). For example the opening moves of Shotokan’s Heian Nidan, Heian Yondan, Bassai dai and Kanku dai, and self-protection techniques such as “Dracula’s Cape” and “Spearhead Entry” (Miller, 2012, Swindon seminar) fall into this category.

A key element of the initial stages of a conflict at either nation state or individual level is to proactively do something rather than nothing or spend wasteful time in deliberating what to do. Caught in the trap of doing nothing is often referred to as “the freeze”. At the individual level this is often caused by extreme stress which releases massive adrenal dumps. If not understood, adrenal dumps can cause sensations similar to fear and can induce “the freeze” via, for example, shaking and the inability to move (although it can also aid speed and strength and dull pain) – “the adrenal syndrome needs to be understood and addressed so that it can be harnessed” (Thompson, 2012, p73). This is a complex area of study and space precludes more detail here – there are many sources of further information available, and see, for example, Thompson’s “Adrenal Map” (2012) and Miller’s work cited under references.

Another useful reference point which can be applied to both nation state and individual level is the OODA loop. This was developed by Colonel Boyd of the US Air Force and is “the standard model for decision making in combat” (Miller, 2011, p95), consisting of i) observation ii) orientation iii) decision and iv) action. As mentioned above, it is imperative that some initial reaction is set in place, as those instigating the attack will already be ahead in the loop whilst the recipient is in danger of being stuck at the beginning of the cycle, especially if multiple strikes are incoming. Employing a simple, fast and trained initial flinch reaction can help break the freeze whilst also forcing your opponent back down to the beginning of the cycle – “offensive and defensive operations place a premium on employing the lethal effects of combat power against the enemy. In these operations, speed, surprise and shock are vital considerations it allows a force to act before the enemy is ready or before

the situation deteriorates further” (US Army, 2008, p3.4).

A further cross over applies around the concept of avoiding an enemy’s strengths and applying very focused, surgical strikes against vulnerable or weak areas. This can have great results (although it is recognised that these targets are often not easy to access) where a constant reaction to changes in circumstances needs to be made. For the individual, this might mean fighting hard not to go to ground where vulnerable parts of the body can be easily exposed, especially if attacked by multiple opponents (or even by bystanders) or, for a nation state, not getting bogged down in entrenched positions which reduces the options in securing a quick win. A number of Funakoshi’s precepts are applicable here including: “make adjustments according to your opponent” (number thirteen), “the outcome of a battle depends on how one handles emptiness and fullness (weakness and strength)” (number fourteen), “think of hands and feet as swords” (number fifteen) and “do not forget the employment or withdrawal of power, the extension or contraction of the body and the swift or leisurely application of technique” (number nineteen).

Other language similarities include the use of shock and awe tactics, long/close range combat and fighting dirty. Long range warfare has become much more prevalent over the years especially as the development of military technology has advanced. Ever since a stick or stone was used for fighting the concept of distance between opponents has been recognised, with the one wielding the stick or stone having an obvious advantage. Long range sniper rifles, GPS guided precision missiles and the use of drones are all very apparent in modern day warfare. The language of shock and awe tactics became common parlance following the Second Gulf/Iraq War starting in 2003. This was a term that was developed by Pentagon strategic analysts in the mid-1990s and is a “term for a military strategy based on achieving rapid dominance over an adversary by initial imposition of overwhelming force” (oxfordreference.com). An equivalent was also well recognised in the Second World War by the term Blitzkrieg where “In war the psychological effect of Blitzkrieg was just as important in Hitler’s eyes as the strategic – it gave the impression that the German military machine was more than life size, that it possessed some virtue of invincibility against which ordinary men could not defend themselves” (Bullock, 1962, p379).

However the reverse is true for most self-defence situations, with attacks occurring usually from very close range confrontations. Shock and awe can be applied at the individual level where a sustained and violent response (but still proportionate) may encourage an assailant/s to back off and allow an escape. Of course, an assailant can equally employ such tactics. There are many close combat methods in karate over and above kicks and punches, including strangling, gouging , biting, ear and eye attacks, groin attacks etc., all of which were practiced by karate’s Okinawan masters and are represented within kata. Much of this could be thought of as dirty fighting but combat and fighting is a messy business and when it comes to life or death or high risk situations then all options are open (reflecting Funakoshi’s eighteenth precept: “perform kata exactly; actual combat is another matter”). “Once combat begins nothing is held back” (Kane and Wilder, 2005, p90).

To a certain degree, levels of appropriate violence can be considered well before any confrontation has begun by thinking through scenarios where protection of

yourself and/or others may be required – for example if your family were in imminent danger, then a high level of response would no doubt be deemed acceptable (to you, your peers and the law in all probability). Knowing what level of force to use can only be determined at the point of contact although it is useful to be aware of these levels before an encounter has developed into violence – for example being aware of UK self-defence law which highlights that a person may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances. Levels of force descriptions include i) presence ii) voice iii) touch iv) empty hand/physical restraint v) less lethal force and vi) lethal force. Whilst i-iii reside more under imminent threat levels iv-vi sit within the war/combat level. Those thinking of self-protection therefore need to “select the level you need to safely prevail/escape” (Miller and Kane, 2012, p54).

If you are mentally prepared to end a confrontation once it has been initiated then “you must never give the assailant the chance to recompose themselves and always strive to end the confrontation as quickly as possible” (Abernethy, 2000, p22). Funakoshi’s fifth precept fits in here: “mentality over technique”. An important point to reinforce is that escape should be sought as soon as possible and that a fight does not continue under the guise of an “educational beat down” (Miller, 2012, Swindon seminar). Of course this may not always be possible. There may be situations when escape is not appropriate e.g. if you are protecting others who cannot move quickly, in which case neutralising the threat as soon as possible would be the preferred response.

Level 1 to 5 – making the peace

Coopers Code = backing down from red to orange to yellow

Spectrum of conflict – from war to peace

LERTCON – from 1 to 5/4

REDCON – from 1 to 4

Knowing when to back off from a situation is just as important as knowing and appreciating levels of appropriate violence for any given situation. Both the nation state and individual needs to be satisfied that an enemy is sufficiently weak or damaged for them not to re-engage given the chance. However, re-engagement could be immediate, during the same hour/day/night, the following week, month or even year/s. Understanding and accepting possible post-conflict repercussions and “consequent management” (US Army, 2008, p2.7) is therefore important. “A fight can take place over time – it’s called a feud and its bad”, (Kane and Wilder, 2009, p275).

In warfare this can go on for many years. Smouldering national tensions and resentment over lost territory or a perceived unjust outcome can lead to future negative re-engagement. There have been many examples of this throughout history - for example Germany’s First World War capitulation and the humiliating Treaty of Versailles was “universally resented in Germany” (Bullock, 1962, p59) and directly contributed to the rearmament of Hitler’s army, the reoccupation of lost territory in the Saar and Alsace/Lorraine and pre-emptive strikes in eastern Europe leading to the Second World War - although much of this had been earlier declared by Hitler in Mein Kampf: “we will have arms again!” (Bullock, 1962, p314). The modern day equivalent can perhaps be seen in the Russian/Ukraine conflict – “the escalation of fighting in east Ukraine and political manoeuvring in the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad all point to trouble ahead” (Boyes, 2015, p30).

Whilst physically backing off from a confrontation both the nation state and individual need to be alert to possible re-engagement and this could come from unexpected quarters – in terms of allies or friends of either party (or bystanders as previously mentioned).

For the individual, because of possible tunnel vision, the immediate vicinity needs to be scanned for any signs of trouble whilst, at the same time, gesticulating and verbalising that the confrontation is over (whilst maintaining a guard/fence) – all potentially good points if picked out by CCTV cameras or if the police become involved and seek witness statements.

Within this period a “stay or go” decision is required having previously (as part of a strategy) determined what the consequences of each might be – “you have to look at the aftermath and all that it contains before engaging in battle” (Thompson, 1997, p51). For example if a “stay” decision is made (even if only for a short period of time) then some knowledge of basic first aid might be useful especially if an opponent is knocked unconscious and needs putting into the recovery position. Personal injury checks also need to be made as adrenal releases may have masked or blocked any previous sensation of pain – think of soldiers doing a “pat down” following a near explosion or having sustained rapid and chaotic incoming fire. The effects of adrenal comedown also need to be recognised, for example, uncontrollable shaking and the risks of PTSD need to be understood no matter what the outcome of an actual

civilian or military confrontation might be.

Having at least a basic knowledge of the law in relation to self-defence can help no matter what strategy or action is implemented – “understanding the connection between the martial arts and the legal system is as important as learning how to kick, punch and grapple” (Mireles and Christensen, 2009, p271).

The law, of course, is a complicated area, especially at the international level encompassing the “laws of war”, treaties and international agreements. The legality of potential military action is always the focus of intense scrutiny, discussion and debate and, as with the current complex crisis focused in the Middle East, a nation’s “calls to arms” will always be justified within certain circles – “there is a clear legal basis for military action against Isis in Syria, the Prime Minister told MPs. This was based upon Article 51 of the UN Charter which recognises the right of self-defence”, (Haynes and Jones, 2015).

For the individual, put simply, it means of avoidance, escape and the use of “reasonable force” is employed then “generally if your actions are morally justifiable then the law is very likely to be on your side” (Kidd, 2015, p44). Understanding when appropriate violence can be applied in a self-defence scenario is based around the “doctrine of competing harms or doctrine of necessity in plain terms this means that, under the right circumstances, you have a legitimate excuse for breaking the law and will not be held criminally liable for your action”, (Kane and Wilder, 2009, p116: a US law but based on English Common and Criminal law – “A person may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances in the prevention of crime, or in effecting or assisting in the lawful arrest of offenders or suspected offenders or of persons unlawfully at large”, Section 3 (1), Criminal Law Act 1967).

However, like all other self-defence training, this needs to be practiced and thought about before any altercation takes place so that good articulation and communication of the incident can be used in defence of actions undertaken.

Conclusion

“Conflict and violence are a very broad range of human behaviour” (Miller and Kane, 2012, p295) some of which have been highlighted within this paper. Self-protection is more than the actual fight, and it is useful for those following a martial way to have some sort of structure which helps “box up” some of the relevant issues and themes (whilst acknowledging the overlaps and synergies).

Whilst there are many possible ways of presenting these topics, this paper has focused on how an analogy between conflict/warfare and associated language can perhaps provide one framework. The cross overs in the use of language with those of self-protection is evident the more the topic is delved into. This is especially apparent in language connected to the actual fight such as pre-emptive strikes, counter attacks and exploiting weaknesses.

And yet it is the notion of constant awareness, readiness and “states of readiness” that cut across all the levels of conflict/warfare and self-protection and it is this understanding, via one’s own frame of reference, that helps provide a broader perspective of the many associated themes and issues.

Funakoshi got it right in his precepts which, one could argue, are much more about the non-fight elements of self-protection which go well beyond the dojo – “the deeper truths of the martial arts are not tied to the techniques, tricks and strategies for winning – they are tied to the strategies of life” (Terramoto, 2012, p11).

Annex 1 – levels, issues and precepts

State of a nation or individual	Colour code	Key issues	Precepts
5. At peace	White-Yellow	Avoid and warn others of code white.	7 – Calamity springs from carelessness; 8 – Karate goes beyond the dojo
4. Uneasy peace	Yellow	Build and maintain defences (e.g. regular training); keep up intelligence (e.g. know your enemy); be prepared (e.g. awareness/zanshin))	4 – First know yourself, then know others; 7 – Calamity springs from carelessness; 8 – Karate goes beyond the dojo; 11 – Karate is like boiling water: without heat, it returns to its tepid state; 16 – When you step beyond your own gate, you face a million enemies
3. Build up to possible conflict	Yellow-Orange	Heightened awareness (although still non-specific); understand and think through what might cause a confrontation; move away from the area/escape; avoid in the first place; trust your instinct	Crossovers to 2 and 3
2. Imminent threat	Orange - Red	Avoid/escape/run; fence; talk down, don't monkey dance; pre-emptive strike (analogy to war – use of deception)	2 – There is no first strike in karate; 12 – Do not think of winning. Think, rather, of not losing; 17 – Kamae (ready stance) is for beginners; later one stands in shizentai (natural stance)
1. War/combat	Red (plus grey and black)	Beating the freeze; OODA loop; counter attack (flinch response); surgical strikes (weak/vulnerable spots); shock and awe; avoid an enemy's strengths; don't go to ground; strength in numbers (allies); autopilot; fear/adrenalin	5 – Mentality over technique; 13 – Make adjustments according to your opponent; 14 – The outcome of a battle depends on how one handles emptiness and fullness (weakness and strength); 15 – Think of hands and feet as swords; 18 - Perform kata exactly, actual combat is another matter; 19 – Do not forget the employment or withdrawal of power, the extension or contraction of the body, the swift or leisurely application of technique
From 1 to 5. Making the peace	From red to orange to yellow	Know when to back off; backing off and tunnel vision; verbalising and possible witnesses/CCTV; assess for injuries; first aid; "should I stay or should I go"?; come down (adrenalin); aftermath/hunting down; mental/PTSD; consequences; the law	Cross over with 1 plus: 20 – Be constantly mindful, diligent and resourceful in your pursuit of the way

Annex 2 – comparison of alert conditions

Levels - this paper	5 - At peace	4 - Uneasy peace	3 - Build up to possible conflict	2 - Imminent threat	1 - War - combat
In relation to:					
Coopers Colour Code	White – Yellow	Yellow	Yellow - Orange	Orange - Red	Red
Spectrum of conflict	Stable peace	Stable peace	Stable peace – unstable peace	Unstable peace	General war
LERTCON	Peace time conditions	Peace time conditions – simple alert	Military vigilance	Reinforced alert	General alert
DEFCON	Normal readiness	Above normal readiness	Air force ready to mobilise in 15 minutes	Armed forces ready to deploy and engage in less than 6 hours	Maximum readiness
REDCON	(Minimum alert)	Minimum alert	Reduced alert	Full alert and ready to fight	Full alert and unit ready to move and fight (includes. 1.5)
FPCON	Normal	Alpha	Bravo: somewhat predictable terrorist threat	Charlie: terrorist activity imminent	Delta e.g. following 9/11 attack
UK Threat Levels	Low: an attack is unlikely	Moderate: possible but not likely	Substantial: strong possibility	Severe: highly likely	Critical: imminent

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