

**HOLIDAY GREETINGS**

I wish to express my heartiest greetings to all of my students and friends for the Holiday Season and the coming New Year. I hope everyone will enjoy continued success and good health. I hope everyone will make a New Year's Resolution to continue their hard training and excellent progress in Aikido.

I want to thank everyone for their generous support of the dojo this last year. And, I hope I may rely on everyone's further kind support and energy in 1988.

I also wish to thank my assistants for all of their help in teaching and guiding the members. I am grateful for the many friends of the dojo who have also shown their generous support.

My thoughts and prayers are with all of my students and friends throughout this Holiday Season and will be in the coming New Year.

Faithfully,

Daniel M. Furuya,
Chief Instructor
Aikido Center of Los Angeles
San Fernando Aiki Kai

REFLECTIONS OF 1987

We have had a very busy 1987. As I look back, it has really been a very good year for us. We have had three important seminars with Yoshimitsu Yamada Sensei of the New York Aiki Kai, Mitsunari Kanai Sensei of the New England Aiki Kai and Seiichi Sugano Sensei also of the New York Aiki Kai. We had very successful and popular demonstrations at the annual Nisei Week Festival in Little Tokyo and the Martial Arts Festival at the Japanese Village Plaza, which we hosted. We also conducted seminars in self-defense for the senior citizens of the community and held a CPR class at the dojo. Our membership has grown, and many, many students are making excellent progress and training very hard in Aikido. I have also had a chance to appear on the Hour Magazine show with Gary Collins and Dick Cavett. This is also the year we re-entered the United States Aikido Federation and have affiliated ourselves with the Eastern Region under Yamada Sensei and Kanai Sensei. Kanai Sensei is my very old and beloved teacher

of twenty years ago and I am very happy with our present relationship with his dojo.

We have come a long way in the last four years since the opening of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles. And, I believe, we have a very great deal to be thankful for. This is also the year that we have been able to pay our rent on time every month. What an accomplishment!!! I am particularly thankful to see the membership grow and to see the wonderful progress of the older students. We are also developing a fine core group of senior students of excellent character. This is important for a growing and ever-developing dojo.

We have a lot to look forward to in 1988. I hope we can see our membership continue to grow at a steady rate and I hope we can see the further development of our senior students and assistant instructors. I plan to have three or four major seminars in 1988. I would like to continue having the CPR class at least twice a year. I hope the younger students will become more involved in the dojo and attend these seminars.

As I have said many times before, this is the dojo of the students, not the teacher. I hope each one of you will take this to heart and try to involve yourself more with the continued growth and development of this dojo. I hope that you will come to think of the dojo as your home away from home and use it to full advantage to develop your Aikido, make good friends and learn how to reach new horizons in your life. I hope every one of you will begin to see how much Aikido has done and can do for your life and your health and happiness.

Our society is changing so fast and we are making such great strides in our technology and science. Our spiritual lives, however, have been ignored and neglected. It is this dilemma that causes us so much suffering in our daily lives. There is an old story which illustrates this well. In old Japan, there was a rather comic character living in the capital. As he was walking down the street one day he bumped into his friend who was pulling along his horse by a rope. The guy asked his friend, "Why don't you ride your horse?" His friend replied, "I can't, this horse is much too wild and no one can ride him." With this as a challenge, he immediately jumped onto the horse

to ride him. The horse took off with a start down the streets of the old capital. All he could do was hang on for his dear life. As he was going down the street, lickity-split, he passed by another friend. The friend shouted out, "Where are you going in such a hurry!" And the poor dumb fellow could only reply, "I don't know, ask the horse!"

This poor fellow is today's society and the horse is our technology and science. We have become caught up in the momentum and have no way to stop or slow down and find our direction. The Chinese also say, "It is easy to mount a tiger but very hard to get off."

Aikido is just the "harness" we need to get a better grip on our own lives. We should control the direction of our technology. Our technology should not control us. The Founder of Aikido often talked about "Chinkon Kishin." This literally means to "Calm the spirit and return to Mother Nature." There is something we had and now we have lost it. Some people call it "our humanity." Aikido is the way to re-discover it within ourselves. This is what we do in the dojo everyday as we practice and work together with each other.

WHERE'S THE BEEF?

There was a commercial which I used to enjoy on television. A little old lady buys a hamburger in a fast food outlet and, disappointed, takes it back to the counter and asks, "Where's the beef?" Nowadays, it seems that when we buy a hamburger, the meat looks nothing like "real" meat. Yet, how many billions of these hamburgers and others have been sold? For a while, everyone was asking, "Where's the beef." But, the commercial went off the air and soon people stopped asking. I, myself, am still asking, "Where's the beef?"

I was talking with a farmer from up north the other day and he was telling me how scientists are beginning to worry that we may lose the original taste of the many vegetables and fruits we eat today. There has been so much genetic engineering with plants to grow out of season or in different soil or under odd conditions and this has effected the taste and value of the vegetables and fruits today.

There is a fish in Japan that used to be caught by feeding them shrimp. The fishermen would throw out the shrimp to attract the fish and then catch them in their nets. When shrimp became more expensive,

the fishermen began to use another species of shrimp which is not really like a shrimp at all. After many years the fish have forgotten the taste of shrimp and will no longer eat them.

Today, when we go to a sushi bar, we find that the hot "wasabi" is now often served in what looks like a tooth paste tube. Before, we all know it was in powdered form and had to be mixed with a little water and a drop of vinegar and mixed into a paste. In Japan, when young people now go to a sushi bar, they don't really like the tooth paste type of wasabi and ask for "real" wasabi. This is a big joke. The powdered form is not "real" wasabi but a convenient substitute for the wasabi root which was always freshly ground at the sushi bar. The wasabi root is not too hot but very juicy and cuts the oily taste of the fish. The wasabi root doesn't keep well so they began to make the powder which can be stored indefinitely. This taste is merely hot. However, when one mixes the powder, the taste or hotness varies with the amount of water or powder used. Now, they serve it in a tube which has a uniform consistency of taste and eliminates the bother of mixing a powder. This is no way resembles the taste of the original root, even its light green color is artificial. It is only a taste and does not cut the oiliness of the fish.

Today, it is always a treat to go to a restaurant which serves freshly squeezed orange juice. How different it is! But it is odd to think that, years ago this was the norm and any kind of orange juice which came out of a can or a paper carton would most likely have seemed very odd to them.

A little while ago, I met a famous singer and I was surprised to learn that he had practiced a little Aikido. He mentioned his teacher's name but I have never heard of him. Then the singer said, "Oh, yes, my teacher has done wonderful things with Aikido. It is now 'conflict resolution' or some such thing." Aikido is changing its flavor as well. It is becoming "this and that" and we are in danger of forgetting the original taste of Aikido. I imagine in a few years, students will be going to their Aikido teachers and asking, "Where's the beef?"

PROMOTIONS

The followings students have been promoted on November 4, 1987 at the Aikido Center of Los Angeles.

Congratulations!

6th Kyu

Ms. Janis Wilkins
Mr. Callahan Fritz-Cope
Mr. Brigido Anaya
Mr. David Schweizer

5th Kyu

Mr. David Perry

4th Kyu

Mr. Mark Moore
Mr. Ron Rocha
Mr. Yasushi Matsuki

3rd Kyu

Mr. David Pascal
Mr. Adam Balzano
Dr. Issac English
Mr. John Solberg
Ms. Carole Almaguer
Mr. Richard Eloriagga
Mr. Ron Hill

2nd Kyu

Mr. Allan Hardy
Mr. Stephan Stephanides
Dr. Michael Albertson

1st Kyu

Mr. Blake Ashley
Mr. Manuel Almaguer
Mr. Tom McIntyre
Mr. Tony Gonsalves
Mr. William Heath

Candidates for 1st Degree Black Belt

Mr. Rick Cushing
Mr. Victor Rodriguez
Ms. Mitsuko Yoshimoto
Mr. Blake Ashley
Mr. Eric Stout

The following promotions have been made for the San Fernando Valley Aiki Kai. Congratulations!

6th Kyu

Ms. Tanya Silva
Mr. Bobby Silva

4th Kyu

Mr. Russell Muranaka
Mr. Charles Muranaka
Mr. Daniel Shea

3rd Kyu

Mr. Gary Kawashima
Mr. Toshio Sato

2nd Kyu

Mr. Barry Asato

AIKIDO ON HOUR MAGAZINE

On Wednesday, November 11, 1987, we taped an Aikido demonstration and interview on *Hour Magazine* on channel 11 with host Mr. Gary Collins. Special guest star and co-host was Mr. Dick Cavett visiting Los Angeles from New York. He had just returned from Japan where he made the second series of *Faces of Japan* to be aired on PBS. He is also hosting the *College Bowl* program on cable. Members of the ACLA participating on the program were Sensei, Mr. Douglas Firestone, Mr. Kaz Nishida, and Ms. Mitsuko Yoshimoto. The program aired on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 1987 at 12 pm noon on channel 11.

MR. DICK CAVETT FROM NEW YORK

Dick Cavett spent eight days in Los Angeles in November hosting various shows and programs including the *Comic Relief* program which was aired live on November 14, 1987. Dick practiced Aikido everyday at the dojo and everyone enjoyed his company. His visit was a special treat for us and we look forward to his next visit to Los Angeles. He stayed at the New Otani Hotel in Little Tokyo.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

All the members, students and friends of the dojo are encouraged to bring in new students to the dojo. We should try to start off the New Year with many new faces and new friends. Let us all try hard to build up our membership and help out the dojo.

NEW TRAINING SCHEDULE

There are several changes in the teaching schedule. The schedule will be revised again after the New Year.

Sensei will be going to the San Fernando Valley dojo every Thursday along with two assistants. The Saturday class in SFV will be alternating each week with the assistant instructors: Mr. Douglas Firestone, Mr. Brian Reverman, Ms. Kathy Heinemann and Mr. Kaz Nishida will be teaching one Saturday each during the month. Students, especially senior students, are asked to help out the assistant instructors by going with them and practicing in the Valley once in

awhile. We are building up the membership at the Valley dojo.

The Thursday evening class will be handled by the assistant instructors. The second class (7:30pm to 8:30pm) during the weekdays will become an intermediate, advanced or weapons class. Beginning students are welcome to participate with Sensei's prior approval. Intermediate and senior students are asked to participate in as many advanced and intermediate classes during the week as possible. Candidates for black belt should begin helping out with instruction of the new students.

We are also asking intermediate and senior students to help out with the Children's Class on Sundays (12:00pm to 1:00pm).

The teaching schedule of assistant instructors will be determined for 1988.

NEW MEMBERS

When new members join the dojo, they have many questions about what to do and how to behave. Everyone should try to help them out and make them feel at home and welcome into the dojo. This is an important part of our training. Please help our new students.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**
