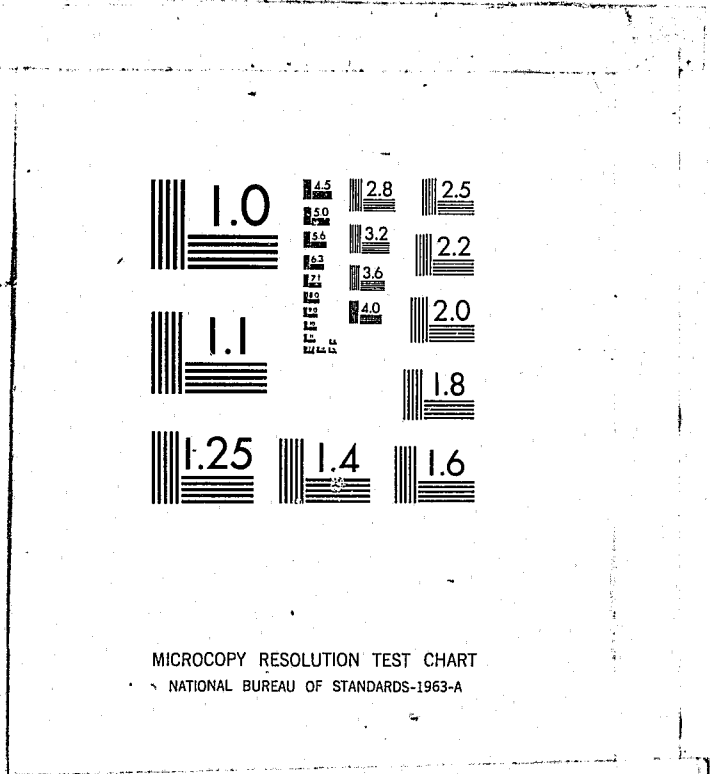


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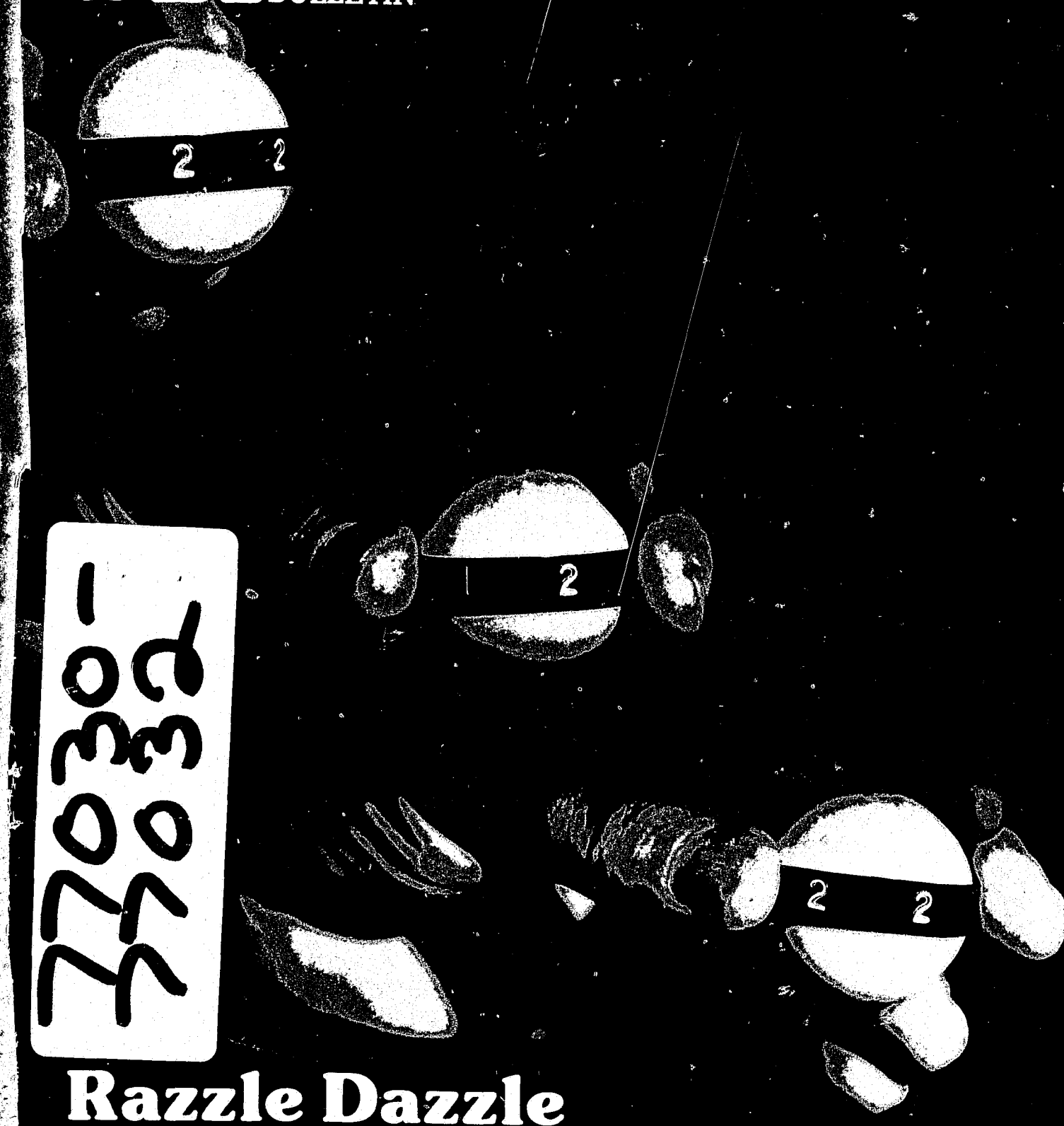
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# FBI LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

MAY 1981

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## Razzle Dazzle



# FBI LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

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The Cover: Numbered ping-pong balls are used in one version of the "game" of Razzle Dazzle. See article p. 2.

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William H. Webster, Director

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Training

# Officer Reaction The Key to Survival

By COL. JACK WALSH  
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Colonel Walsh

It was a gray, cold November afternoon when a Ohio State trooper stopped an automobile with two male occupants for weaving on the road. The trooper approached the car cautiously, with his holster unsnapped and his hand resting on the butt of his service revolver.

Upon request, the driver handed him an out-of-State driver's license, but stated that he didn't have the registration papers for the car. The trooper then asked the driver to step from the car and keep his hands in sight.

Immediately upon getting out of the car, the driver quickly reached back in above the visor while stating, "Let me get my cigarettes." Drawing his revolver, the trooper commanded, "Hold it!" The driver then pulled his hand out slowly, holding a pack of cigarettes. As the driver turned to the trooper and saw the gun, he fearfully exclaimed, "What the heck you gonna do, shoot me?"

The trooper slowly exhaled a breath of relief. As he holstered his weapon, he responded, "No, I'm not going to shoot you. Just don't make any more sudden moves like that. And you can't smoke, so put the cigarettes away."

The driver willingly complied. At this moment, the passenger started to open the glove compartment; the next thing the trooper remembered was hearing the crack of a pistol.

He felt the first round strike his left shoulder. The rounds continued to strike him in the chest and stomach. The trooper stared in amazement at the driver who was standing 3 feet in front of him with a snubnosed revolver in his hand, firing off the last two rounds. In less than 3 seconds, the driver emptied his revolver into the officer's chest. The officer stood frozen in his shoes, not moving or even drawing his weapon.

The driver and passenger were instructors at the Ohio State Highway Patrol Training Academy; the officer, a veteran trooper going through a new concept in firearms survival training.

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#### Training to Stay Alive

In this particular training situation, the officer is given a revolver identical to the one carried on duty, since prior to the training exercise, all officers are required to surrender service weapons and all live ammunition. In addition, this weapon's cylinder has been modified so that a live round cannot possibly be inserted into it. Although a full-sized, empty shell casing will not fit into the cylinder, it is capable of housing a short, red plastic blank. The blank is stuffed with cotton, and the resulting crack of the large pistol primer and impact of the cotton striking a body at close range gives the situation realism. The violators are equipped with similar weapons having 2-inch barrels. To avoid any possibility of using a regular service revolver, the grips of the training weapons have been painted bright red.

To return to the situation previously outlined, one major question remains, "Where did the gun come from?" The sudden appearance of the gun was no feat of magic. It was above the visor. When the trooper told the driver to put the cigarettes away, he felt no threat as the driver reached into the car. At the same time, the passenger opened the glove compartment, distracting the trooper.

But, did the trooper have a chance? Yes, IF HE HAD REACTED INSTANTLY when fired upon.

Does the fact that an officer has been hit in the shoulder mean he's going to die? Does it mean he has lost? In life and death situations, if an officer experiences these feelings or beliefs, chances are he will stand there preparing to die instead of reacting to survive.



If an officer is wearing a protective vest, it is very likely that the first few rounds fired will strike the vest. However, when officers do not react immediately, they stand the chance of joining the many officers who have died from the third or fourth shot from a criminal's weapon. Police officers have been wounded and knocked to the ground, believing they've lost, only to have the assailant approach and deliver the fatal round to the officer's head.

The reaction of an officer "freezing up" is not uncommon. Drawing quickly and firing accurately at a paper target that does not return fire is relatively simple and creates little or no stress. However, officers react quite differently when totally surprised by a person firing a weapon, when they feel their bodies being struck by bullets. If officers do not learn to react in these training situations, they will not react properly in actual encounters, when their life is flashing before their eyes, their stomach is in a knot, and their legs are weak from sudden uncontrollable fear.

#### Defensive Combat Course

This training is called the Defensive Combat Course, since it teaches officers to defend themselves. Most firearms training is strictly offensive, with little or no stress involved. Any officer checking his heart rate at the 25-yard line, firing at a paper target, will find his pulse rarely exceeding more than 10 beats per minute above normal. Yet, during this new course, the average officer's heart rate doubles. For example, one officer's resting heart rate was 55, but after an exchange of three rounds, it soared to 150. This course requires the officer to *develop tactics* and *quick reaction* in returning fire and to scramble for available cover, while experiencing the stress of a shooting situation.

The Defensive Combat Course is a progression in firearms training for the highway patrol. All officers have been trained on a standard police combat course and are familiar with double-action, single-action, right- and left-handed barricade, standing, kneeling, sitting, and prone shooting. This had been the conventional firearms training for the Ohio Highway Patrol and is still a necessary part in police recruit training, since it develops marksmanship skills. After years of firing this standard course, the patrol progressed to a quick-draw, double-action combat course, with a maximum distance of 25 yards. Troopers are still required to qualify twice yearly on this course, but are now being exposed to the new Defensive Combat Course. The exchange of fire that takes place in the Defensive Combat Course is unlike any normal firearms range training.

Since the officer is most likely to confront a person who has been drinking, most of the simulated situations are designed to include this variable, as well as the presence of illegal weapons. The instructor, acting as the driver, does not use a weapon in every situation. Sometimes he will pull out a wallet or other nonlethal article from under his shirt or the seat. This makes the exercises more realistic, since the officers never know whether a weapon will be used. And since this is a training exercise, the officers know there is a very good chance that they may be fired upon at any moment. Consequently, they usually keep their hand close to their weapon, ready for action.

Yet, in spite of extreme caution practiced by the students, the instructors have developed some simple but effective tactics which, in some cases, have allowed them to fire six shots before the student ever clears leather. The element of surprise is ever-present. One officer who failed to react stated, "His hands were empty and I had my hand on my gun. All of a sudden he's shooting me. I couldn't believe it. I just stood there."

Officers can experience three or four different situations, yet never know what is going to happen. Many officers discover their reaction under fire is not what they thought it would be. However, those exposed to training a second or third time show remarkable improvement in their ability to react. Some who "froze up" in the first encounter reacted very quickly the second time around. However, on the highway, there is never a "second chance."

When confronted with a sudden lethal or panic situation, humans will react reflexively, as they have been trained. The Defensive Combat Course is designed to put troopers in situations as close to real life as possible so that one day they will not join the ranks of those slain in the line of duty.

#### Night Firing

The Defensive Combat Course is supplemented by a multiple-target night firing course. The firing takes place on the academy's indoor firing range in very low, light conditions and without flashlights. Since approximately 40 percent of police/suspect shootouts involve more than one assailant, three targets are used. They are placed at 10-, 12-, and 14-foot intervals from the officer with a 3-foot space between the targets. In the simulated night environment, the officer can see the targets, but he cannot see the service revolver he is holding in front of him.

Officers who can usually shoot a 5-inch group by quick drawing at the 3-yard line in daylight are fortunate to even hit the man-sized target four out

of six times when they cannot see their weapon. This is because accurate quick drawing and firing is dependent on hand/eye coordination. Even when looking at the target, the officer will line up the gun in front of him, because it is in his field of vision. Blocking that field of vision will put the officer in an entirely different situation.

Night firing training is important for two reasons. Of the officers who participated in the Defensive Combat Course, none of them ever looked at their weapons when firing. They did not take time to line up their sights or position their feet in a combat stance when returning fire to defend themselves. Most of the officers stated the only thing they remember seeing was the gun the assailant was firing. Would actual combat be any different? Probably not. Therefore, an officer must be able to draw and fire accurately without taking time to worry about sight alignment, grip, breath control, or stance. All these things must come automatically when an officer's eyes are riveted on an assailant who is trying to kill him.

Second, the use of a flashlight in this training would illuminate the officer's weapon and subsequently cause him to take time to line up with the paper target before firing. This is a luxury not afforded in actual shooting situations. Also, most police/assailant encounters occur within 10 feet, and the officer does not need a flashlight to see the assailant. Teaching an officer to assume a certain position with a flashlight before returning fire can force him to lose valuable time and possibly his life. Officers must be able to draw and fire accurately in the quickest possible time, unhindered by fancy shooting positions.

#### Training Reflects Real Situations

Data compiled from actual shooting cases involving Ohio State troopers show that most officers were assaulted with handguns at very close range. This training is designed to reflect this pattern and would certainly be valuable to any police officer, since national statistics from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports reveal that of the 106 police officers killed in 1979, 100 of them were slain with firearms and 76 of those with handguns. Of the total officers slain in the past 5 years, 69 percent were within 10 feet of their assailant and nearly 50 percent were within 5 feet.

The better trained and prepared officer is less likely to be taken by surprise and caught in a shooting situation. This training helps develop alertness and caution. But in spite of all the precautions an officer may take, there is always the possibility that a shootout may erupt at any time. Hopefully, this training will better prepare the officer mentally and physically to *react*, the key to officer survival. **FBI**

## Number of U.S. Bombings Remains Constant

According to preliminary figures of the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program, the number of bombings occurring within the United States and its territories in 1980 remained virtually the same, when compared to those of 1979. The 1,221 attacks reported in 1980 exceeded the previous year's total by only 1 incident.

Explosives and firebombs were the devices used in the 1980 bombings; 821 of the incidents were caused by explosives and 400 were the result of firebombs. There were 188 individuals injured or killed, with property damage estimated to be over \$12.3 million.

Of the 154 persons injured by bombs in 1980, 78 were innocent bystanders, 47 were perpetrators, 31 were intended victims, 2 were law enforcement officers, and 1 was a fireman. Fewer personal injuries resulted from the bombings than during the previous year, when 179 individuals were physically harmed.

In 1980, the total number of fatalities reached 34, representing a 55-percent increase from the 22 persons killed by bombings in 1979. Nearly 50 percent (16) of those killed by bombs last year were the perpetrators. Fifteen persons who lost their lives were the intended victims, and 3 were innocent bystanders.

Residents were the most frequent targets of bombers last year, accounting for 91 percent of the incidents. Twenty percent were directed at commercial operations and 19 percent at vehicles. A variety of other targets comprised the remaining 80 percent.

Geographically, 37 percent of the incidents occurred in the Western region of the Nation. The Southern and North Central regions each reported 26 percent of the attacks, and the States in the Northeastern region recorded 10 percent. The remaining 1 percent occurred in Puerto Rico.

**END**