



"IT'S YOUR NEW LIST OF 'IN' WORDS FOR SERMONS."

## The Slot Man A Soldier's Soldier

By Carmen Viglucci



Armed Forces Day and Memorial Day, the peace movement, and increasing attention on things military, have gotten me to reminiscing about a person who may rank as one of the outstanding soldiers of history—Shapiro.

I've been lucky to know quite a few people named Shapiro and they've all been sweethearts but this particular Shapiro was a nonpareil.

I can't remember his first name and frankly may never have known it—unless it was Private.

A thin, stooped-over guy with hang-dog eyes and a wan smile, Shapiro emigrated to the green acres of Ft. Dix, N.J., from the streets of Newark.

While I've indicated high regard for Shapiro's soldiership, a General MacArthur he was not. He was rather a rookie's rookie, the kind of misfit that could make the other recruits forget themselves and turn their attention, ranging from near-rage to affection, to this soldier, destined to be a private no-class for his military career.

For instance, once when returning from a week's bivouac in the soft Dix countryside, we were told in the morning that if we could get our barracks in shape by noon, we would be blessed with a 72-hour pass.

With typical Army "no sweat" we did it; the first sergeant announced we passed inspection then suddenly asked the 100 or so men involved if each had taken a shower.

A chorus of "yehs" faded as Shapiro announced that "in all honesty, I have to admit that I haven't."

The sarge said our passes would be delayed pending Shapiro's cleansing.

"But does a sponge bath count?" was Shapiro's query as he was rushed bodily toward the showers.

He got into serious trouble when he came back from that pass wearing the Congressional Medal of Honor ribbon.

He explained to a flustered

orderly room non-com that "it wouldn't be honest to wear it all the time I was in Newark and take it off when I came back to the base."

As a last harassing move, on our final day in basic training, we had to break down our own rifles into their three parts, clean them speckless and return them to our supply sergeant.

This was early on a Saturday and the sergeant spent the day sending their temporary owners back to "clean them again."

Shapiro, an expert on military tactics, clued me in: "Look, they've got to take the rifles back and we got till midnight so let's take ours back then and there's no sweat."

I agreed and things went smoothly except for a violent thunderstorm late at night. To keep the rust-sensitive rifle impeccable, I carried it to the supply room wrapped in a poncho. Shapiro disdained this and to make things worse deliberately dropped his rifle into the mud before turning it in.

The supply sergeant hit the roof, ordering Shapiro to take it back and clean it again. Shapiro cautioned, "If you make me do that I won't bring it back here."

The next morning at reveille, our last at Ft. Dix, there lay the three muddy components of Shapiro's rifle on his unmade bunk. But no Shapiro. He was announced AWOL.

I would never have heard of Shapiro again except that another buddy wrote about a year later that one day while he was walking through the streets of Munich, Germany, he spotted a thin, stooped-over soldier playing in the streets with a passel of German kids.

It was Shapiro, still a private no-class, teaching the Munich youngsters stickball, Newark N.J., style.

So, peace activists, before you hiss a man in uniform in the street, think twice. He may be a Shapiro. And though many years have passed, if he happens to be bending to the breeze and emaciated, he may be The Shapiro. He warrants a salute.

## Letters

### We Must Fight Communism

Editor:

We refer to "Statement On The War" published in the C-J, 5/20/70. We understand that our bishop was a party to this statement.

We believe that our bishop, as our spiritual leader, should clarify this statement. First, for the service men in our diocese, particularly those who have been or are involved in the Vietnam conflict, and, secondly, for the rest of us in the diocese.

Our bishop said that the war in Indo-China constitutes a "great moral evil." Does he mean that we are fighting an "unjust" war? that those of us who are fighting in it or approve its purpose are being sinful? Or does he mean that giving in to Communism has become a lesser evil than fighting it?

Certainly we all want an end to this horrible conflict, but do we want it at the expense of walking away from our commitments to preserve, to the best of our ability, the freedom of what little of the world is still free?

Have the ones who made the statement forgotten, among other things, Hungary? or, more recently, Czechoslovakia?

The ideology of Communism does not permit sincere compromise. Therefore, we have either to fight and forcibly resist Communism, or, eventually, give in to it.

Let's be more anxious to pray for our President than condemn him.

Adolphe and Loe d'Oudiffret,  
Naples

On the Line

### Modern Life By the Numbers

By Bob Considine



New York — The computers are becoming a bit too much. Not only am I known to the Defense Department's computer as little old 9700100.41 2001.0511, 0531 \$49156 DD6K56 (really) but Newsweek now has me down as CNS 1710 5th IR 7 Oal922 0471. I'd hate to tell you what the Internal Revenue Service calls me, but it calls me it quite often.

One humanizing development in the computerized world may be RCA's Spectra 70/45. At the flip of a switch it can almost instantaneously get me a motel room in Walla Walla as I take leave of Baden Baden, another well-known spa. Spectra 70/45 works for a company named Reservations World. It is an odd company in this day and age. It doesn't send out any bills to its customers. It derives its income from the service charges it levies against the firms with which it does business.

It can book rooms, ranging from the cheapest to the best and, if you want one, have a car waiting for you at the end of the trip. "Down the line," as we say in the computer business, meaning "pretty soon," it will be capable of instantly reserving your plane seats or even ordering flowers for the boss' wife.

Spooky, but so is the ultimate electronic computer, the human brain. That little old gray matter mechanism has more than 14 billion memory sinks, a cross-file system that would fill a wing of the Library of Congress, incredible perception, judgment, etc. And, of course, it's the only computer that can be made by unskilled labor.

Sports is probably the least-policed big business in America.

Nobody any longer seriously reveres movie people, let's say, as demi-gods. The nation was stunned years ago when comedian Fatty Arbuckle was caught on a morals charge and Wallace Reid died of dope. Nowadays, if they were alive, their problems would increase their box-office attraction. Cary Grant got the only standing ovation at the Academy Awards. Tony Curtis' next picture is bound to break records.

But the simple naivete of sports fans as a whole remains as chaste as it was the day the stricken kid (who probably wasn't there) stood there in front of the court house as Joe Jackson emerged, after the Black Sox trial, and blubbered, "Say it ain't so, Joe."

There is an increasing number of human termites working in the rich fields of sports. The pickings are potentially prodigious. Jackson and the other poor suckers on the 1919 White Sox were paid coolie wages by Charles Comisky, and their payoff for throwing the World Series to Cincinnati was pathetically small. Today, everything is in box-car figures. Denny McLain, making \$80,000 a year, is said to have found himself much more than that in hock to fellow bookies. A Kentucky Derby winner of recent vintage won with the aid of a wake-up pill. Basketball had a towering scandal a few years back. Joe Namath, idol of millions, was told to unload his part ownership in a club said to be frequented by gamblers.

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