

HARRY GOLDEN

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The "innocence" of the unmarried Portuguese women is considered sacrosanct and valuable. All American personnel, arriving in Portugal, go through a lengthy briefing session about the proscribed moral and ethic practices of Portuguese courtship.

A soldier has to include a duenna, a chaperon, on every date. Invariably this is a member of his girl friend's family. She is very hard to bribe. A boy gets to talk seriously to his girl friend only through a heavily screened window, like the convicts in the old James Cagney movies used to talk to their mouthpieces.

But once the girl invites the fellow in for a cup of

coffee, his acceptance is automatically a proposal from which there is no chance of reconsideration. There is even less chance of reconsideration if the fellow is an American.

One of these fellows either by bribe or chicanery made the most of his time. And the girl friend filed a formal complaint.

She wasn't an "innocent" at all, insisted the soldier. She was, too, insisted Mama and Papa.

The military authorities explained to this embryonic Don Juan that he had broken two laws at once. One was a Portuguese law which makes "deflowering" a criminal offense and carries with it a five-year stretch in a Portuguese jail. The other is a

military offense which makes having "carnal knowledge of a woman not a man's wife" a criminal offense and carries with it ten years in the post stockade. There was only one way out and the soldier grabbed it.

"All right, I'll marry her," said the errant GI.

"Si, si," said Mama and Papa.

"But I'm not a Catholic," said the GI.

"A civil wedding will do," said the military provost.

"Si, si," said Mama and Papa.

"But I want to get married in my own faith," said the GI.

"Si, si," said Mama and Papa.

"We'll do anything we can," said the provost.

"It will take about two months for the rabbi to convert her," said the GI.

When the translator hit the word "rabbi," Mama and Papa said volubly, "May on the wedding day."

Moral of the story? Forty other GIs bought transcripts of the testimony.

CLOSING THE NAVY YARDS

The closing of the Brooklyn Navy Yard is bringing anguish and inconvenience and unemployment to thousands of people. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara said it had to be done, that the return on the tax dollar was too small to justify further expense.

It would seem to me that the yard will indeed close down. In a country where the income tax is a constant source of agitation and contention there is little likelihood that a popular demand to keep these installations open will take place.

But I think we should all understand this is not a sudden blow from on high; for the past decade the folks have suspected the Defense Department would sooner or later close down the super-

fluous military and naval establishments. Like most suspicions that portend a crucial change in everyone's life, the people try to dismiss them and forget them and never put such suspicions to the acid test.

The cutback the Johnson Administration ordered is a huge one. But it is nothing compared to the cutback that private enterprise executes day after day. In the last decade and a half, four daily newspapers in New York City have closed down. This is probably true in some degree of every major city. This meant reporters out of work and the girls who took the classified ads were out scouting for jobs and editors in their late 50s probably never made another connection in the profession to which they had given their lives.

Coal was still king at the end of World War II. In fact, I can remember a Federal judge levying a huge fine on the United Mineworkers Union for going out on an unauthorized strike. But now the miners sit on their weatherbeaten front porches, rocking back and forth endlessly, studying their gnarled hands which unfit them for other work, waiting for the siren at the sewing factory to take the lunch box to their wives.

Factory after factory has pulled up stakes in New England and moved into the more salubrious and non-union South. Often these industries leave behind a ghost town. The small merchants board up their shops. The realtors sadly desert the place. And over the question of profits, people watch the happiness of their lives and their security trickle quickly away.

This is perhaps the essential problem of our urban-industrial society. Almost everybody wants to work yet there is not always enough work to go around. In some areas there is a critical labor shortage; in others

there is vast unemployment. Our experts have provided the formula to save on the tax dollar, they can chart with absolute precision how to improve profits, they can predict uncannily the size of the market and its needs; but no one has yet to come up with the plan to provide gainful employment to all.

For those whose jobs are more or less secure, say the white collar executive, there is still a vast amount of settling and resettling to keep that work.

The executive works in Akron and then spends two years in New York and four more in Seattle and maybe four more in Beloit. He has accustomed himself to this life because his salary is more than adequate to insure a minimum of inconvenience.

But the welder makes \$15 no matter where he works and though the Government promises to pay his moving bill, they do not promise to compensate his wife for the new curtains she will have to make for a different-size window, nor is there a plan to show children how to leave their friends without heartache, and make new friends the following morning.

Though we pride ourselves on progress and boast we can collect untold amounts of material wealth, I think we have not worked hard enough at a formula for stability within our fantastically mobile society. Mark my words, that a week after the Brooklyn Navy Yard closes, the welders and shipfitters and riveters who line up for their unemployment compensation will be categorized by a vocal majority as an inconvenience and an annoyance to the city.

TEL AVIV, (JTA) -- Orders for shipment of matzoh from Israel to individual addresses in the Soviet Union were being accepted here by Soviet shipping agents, beginning this week.

ARABS HATE ALL JEWS

NEW YORK, (JTA) -- A report showing that the Arabs are conducting not only a campaign against Israel but also worldwide propaganda against Jews in general was issued by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. The report said that a sampling of the Arab press and radio showed anti-Jewish statements covering areas completely unrelated to their feud with Israel.

"Because there is rigorous government press censorship in most Arab countries, statements in major Arab newspapers are at least, authorized reports, if not actually official government releases," Arnold Forster, ADL General Counsel stated. He said that, although the Arabs claim to differentiate between Zionism and Judaism, "the evidence is all to the contrary".

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