

Are We Worthy Leaders?

WILLIAM T. SHARP

Today as never before America stands as the champion of democracy. Again we have successfully defended our democratic ideals against the forces of oppression. Not only have we protected them for ourselves, but it is now our aim to spread this freedom to the less fortunate people of the world who have never enjoyed it before. Our ancestors drenched this land of ours with their own blood in order that we might be a free nation. Now it is our noble purpose to make this freedom universal.

Before we set ourselves up as an example, let us look over our record and make sure that we are really worthy of leadership. If we carefully examine some of our very recent history, we might detect certain distasteful elements which other nations would not want to adopt.

We Americans were extremely devoted to the undertaking of our country during this war. Production records were shattered, recruiting quotas were easily filled, people bought War Bonds, and many fathers left their families to answer the call to arms. Finally, after many months of hard fighting, the victory was won. It came upon us suddenly — much sooner than most people had anticipated.

The ink on our victory newspapers was no more than dry until our extremist attitude appeared. Now that the immediate danger was over the demand for rapid demobilization arose like a great storm. With no thought for the need of protection of the principles which we had won at such a tremendous cost, the public demanded immediate return of the boys. Although such action was vigorously protested by our Army and Navy

officials, the people of America demanded their democratic right, and upon their insistence our armed forces have disintegrated rapidly. Our Navy officials state that our fleet is completely incapable of battle today. Conditions of our once mighty Air Corps are so bad that its officials say that few of the planes are really safe in the air. The discipline of the men has undergone even greater disorganization. Our soldiers are now attempting to take the situation into their own hands and make demands with threats of mob violence. This is something unprecedented in American militarism. Our enemies have been watching and waiting for such a break in the morale and discipline in our occupation forces. This is the cue for their subversive forces to swing into action and take advantage of our weakness. Our victory does not appear complete now that we are failing to follow through.

This deplorable condition is not the fault of our Army and Navy officials, nor is it the fault of the enlisted men of the armed forces. The root of this evil is right here in the United States. It is the outgrowth of internal friction. We demand the immediate return of the veteran, but what do we offer him upon his arrival? He comes home expecting great prosperity and enjoyment, but what does he find? He cannot buy the things that he has dreamed of during those long months he was away because there is nothing being produced. He returns to his job only to find that the doors have been closed in his face through the unreasonable demands of his countrymen whom he has fought to protect. The men who

held the good jobs during the war are now creating a situation which will cause prices to soar even higher. This is a condition which was carefully guarded against during the war. These ungrateful citizens will be able to pay these prices for a while because they have had an opportunity to save from their good salaries. On the other hand, the veteran's income has been so meager that he has no savings to rely upon. His greedy countrymen have blocked any chance he might have of getting a new start in life. We express our gratitude for a job well done by refusing to manufacture the com-

modities which are so vitally needed, but most unforgivable of all, we close his source of employment and leave him without any means of bettering his situation except charity. This is our thanks to the veteran.

Is this the true principle of democracy? If that is the case, I doubt that many other nations will desire to follow our example. History has some great lessons for us. Men remain free to govern themselves only as long as they are willing to remain progressive and united within themselves.

A Trap

C. W. BOCKSTAHLER

Just after I was discharged from the Army, my parents and other people often asked me what I disliked most about the Army. Was it the regimentation, the food, the officers, — what was my pet peeve? My reply has been very consistent: *the pockets on Army fatigue pants.*

I always managed to carry the essentials of life in my pockets, which included: a handkerchief, a candy bar, cigarettes, matches, some money, and a deck of cards. The pockets are very easily made. The manufacturer discovered after completing the M 2 A 3 fatigue pants that he had forgotten to include pockets. This problem was solved by sewing a rectangular piece of scrap material six inches by nine inches on the front side of the pants about two inches below the belt line. For the sake of beauty a pleat was included down the center of the newly born pocket. These

pockets being rectangular had square corners. We all know how the dirt in a house always converges to the corners, and so it was with these pockets. I've spent up to ten minutes trying to locate some small object that has snuggled innocently in a pocket corner. When we were children, all of us have gone to the pantry to snatch some cookies. Reaching inside the jar and grabbing as many cookies as possible, we attempted to withdraw our clenched hand only to find the neck of the jar was too small to emit our hand. The similarity between the cookie jar and pockets on fatigue pants is astounding. Slipping your hand into the pocket and pulling out some article is practically impossible. Anything placed in fatigue pants pockets is trapped until the pants can be removed and a thorough search with a flashlight can be made.