

Deputy Supt. Sirgo A Newsman's Cop

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THE ST

By JACK DEMPSEY

The late Deputy Supt. of Police Louis Sirgo was a "policeman's policeman," as everyone agrees. And he was also "a newspaperman's policeman."

He knew the true definition of "news," and he was always ready to fill in the details of a police story in precisely the manner an eager reporter wanted them.

Lou liked to boast that he got his start in the newspaper business as a newsboy in the Third Ward area in which he grew up.



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LOU WAS A ROOKIE policeman about the time I was a cub police reporter. This was more than 25 years ago, and we liked to reminisce in recent years that we sort of grew up together on the police beat.

Our last rap session was held a couple of weeks before the Howard-Johnson sniping.

It was in his office, and the conversation was in the form of a gripe about the cloak of secrecy which is often thrown up whenever a major incident occurs.

I pointed out that members of the police department had been making some outstanding arrests in recent months but were hiding their accomplishments under a bushel-basket, as the old expression goes.

WE TALKED IN specifics, since that is the way he liked to talk.

He agreed that the flow of information from the department to the public was unduly slow, and he attributed it to a lack of proper understanding among the men.

He promised to correct the situation, and I will never forget his exact words. "I'm

going to bring down my scrap book one day soon and show how we got good police coverage in the good old days!" he said, flashing a broad smile.

The late deputy chief was a firm believer that the public should be kept properly informed at all times.

HE WAS NEVER a publicity hound, and as such never solicited a story. On the other hand, he never refused to supply details of a story when sought out by a newsman.

It was a mutual trust. He trusted members of the press and they, in turn, trusted him.

He won the "Badge of the Week" many times in this corner, and he is going to be sadly missed.

In a story printed a day following his murder, I reflected briefly on his role as a celluloid cop on the old "NOPD" television series and referred to him as "Beaujac."

A **QUICK** correction came in the mail from one of his legion of fans, Mrs. Monica Buras Robichaux, who recalled his TV identity as "Detective John Conroy." A Hollywood actor, Stacey Harris played the role of Vic Beaujac.

"That was my favorite television series," wrote Mrs. Robichaux.

To Louis Sirgo's wonderful widow and daughters and family go my deepest sympathy in their great loss.

And although I did not have the pleasure of knowing the other brave young officers as intimately as I did the late deputy chief, my condolences also go out to their families and friends.

SHORT SHOTS: CHRIS CANTON, clerk in the Orleans Parish Coroner's office who was hit during the Howard-Johnson sniping while moonlighting as an ambulance relief driver, is well on the road to recovery from a gunshot

wound of the shoulder. He'll be in Room 7412 at Baptist Hospital for another week and a half and would like to hear from his friends . . . Members of the new and old police pension systems who would like to cast absentee ballots in the pension board election Feb. 6 can call 821-2000, Ext. 280 and receive one in the mail . . . LOU MADUELL of the FAA will be guest speaker and show a film at a meeting of the NOPD Flying Club on Jan. 28 in Room 226, Administration Building, Lakefront Airport . . . Lt. NICK CUCIO, (Ret.), clerk in Judge Jerome Winsberg's section of Criminal District Court, was sworn in Thursday as president of the Crescent City lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police . . . PAUL A. SERPAS SR. has been promoted to building services supervisor III and inherited some new duties, namely supervising cleanup of the Criminal District Court Building . . . welcome aboard to JOE MAGGIO, maintenance repairman at police headquarters. He used to cut my hair during World War II in the navy . . . DEWEY McCOY, the friendly florist from whom most policemen get their flowers, is celebrating his "39th - plus" birthday, and says he doesn't want anyone sending him flowers! . . . HARRY ROMAN spotted this sign on the rear window of a station wagon containing two dogs, parked by the Cafe Du Monde: "Dogs tattooed with Social Security number and registered with the National Dog Registry." And how do you like that for an ounce of their prevention?