

U.S. Naval Academy



U. S. NAVY PHOTO

The United States Naval Academy was founded at Annapolis, Maryland in 1845. Its purpose then, and continuously since, has been to educate its students to meet the mission and the needs of the Navy, in other words, to educate young men to be Naval officers. Obviously, the Navy's needs have become much more complex since 1845, and the Naval Academy has kept up with those needs in a most satisfactory way.

Two weeks ago about 60 high school principals and counselors from Oregon were taken back to Annapolis to acquaint them with the job that the academy is doing, and to more fully inform these educators on the needs of the academy in terms of academic and personal achievement of these young men. I was one of three Oregon newsmen who were privileged to accompany the educators on that trip, and indeed it was a privilege and a real source of enjoyment and information to me. Having been associated with the Navy almost all of my adult life, going to Annapolis was a goal that I had long looked forward to.

Our group was given two full days of exposure to every part of the life of the midshipman. We were greeted by the Superintendent of the Naval Academy, by the Commandant of Midshipmen, by the Academic Dean, by the Dean of Admissions, by the Athletic Director, and by heads of every department at the academy.

We visited Bancroft Hall, where the midshipmen live, the largest dormitory complex in the world. We ate in the dining hall, where 4,200 midshipmen eat together, and are served in 20 minutes. We toured the chapel, an inspiring and beautiful place of worship. John Paul Jones, the father of the American Navy, lies in a circular crypt beneath the chancel. We visited the Nimitz Library, the museum, the fieldhouse, the sailboat moorage, and all parts of the 310-acre campus.

We found out that the instructors are about half military, bringing with them current problems and experiences of the Naval officer; and the other half of the instructors are civilian, maintaining the continuity of classroom instruction.

We were told time and again that the Naval Academy isn't for every young man, and only the best academically and physically can graduate. The academy loses about one-third of its students in four years, with a 10 percent loss the first year for various reasons. About 60 percent of those gradu-

ating make the Navy a career, and all are obligated to five years of commissioned service after they graduate. There is only one reason for a young man to come to the academy, and that is a desire to be a Naval Officer.

Incidentally, there is no plan to enroll girls in the academy. They can't serve in combat billets, and women are being trained for non-combat billets in college ROTC programs. The academy sends about 900 officers to the fleet or the Marine Corps each year, ROTC sends about 800 regular and 300 contract officers to line commissions. Another 2,000 are enrolled at Pensacola for flight training each year. It costs nearly \$60,000 to graduate an officer from the Naval Academy, and each midshipman has an opportunity to choose one of 27 majors that range from aerospace engineering to literature to oceanography.

A highlight of our visit each day was the opportunity to eat with the 39 midshipmen from Oregon at lunch in a private dining room. Keith Oldemeyer, a Nyssa High School graduate of 1971, is in his third year at the academy and doing very well. He must decide soon between nuclear engineering or aviation, his main career choices, and will spend six weeks next summer on the staff at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

We three newsmen, which included Ben Cook, KSRV, Leverett Richards of The Oregonian, and myself had the opportunity to interview Vice Admiral William P. Mack, USN, Superintendent of the Naval Academy. Admiral Mack graduated and was commissioned an Ensign in 1937, and his most recent command before returning to the academy in June, 1972 was Commander Seventh Fleet, where he was responsible for approximately 120 ships and 80,000 men in the Southeast Pacific.

I think that each of the educators has a better realization of the mission of the academy after their visit, and will be better equipped to counsel the right young men in their schools as to the opportunities and rewards available at the Naval Academy. It is hard to visualize a better or more responsible career than that of a Naval officer, and quite possibly one of our own young men some day will be Commander Seventh Fleet.

After visiting with these young midshipmen, it is reassuring to know that these young officers-to-be will be eminently qualified to take their places on the carriers, nuclear submarines, aircraft, and other ships of the U.S. Navy, our first line of defense.

Incident to the tour of Annapolis was an opportunity one evening to visit the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and to see some of the buildings and monuments in Washington, D.C. by night. Before departing from Andrews Air Force Base to return home we were able to spend several hours in Washington on Friday morning, March 1. The whole group visited Arlington Cemetery, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the graves of President John Kennedy and Robert Kennedy. Then as time permitted we broke off to visit the White House, Washington Monument, the Smithsonian Institute, the Capitol, and the National Archives.

Having been in Washington, D. C. several times before, it still is a thrill for me to re-visit and to be re-inspired at our seat of government. George Washington and our early leaders had a sense of the historical importance of the decisions they made almost 200 years ago, and many of them are reflected at every turn in that great and beautiful city.

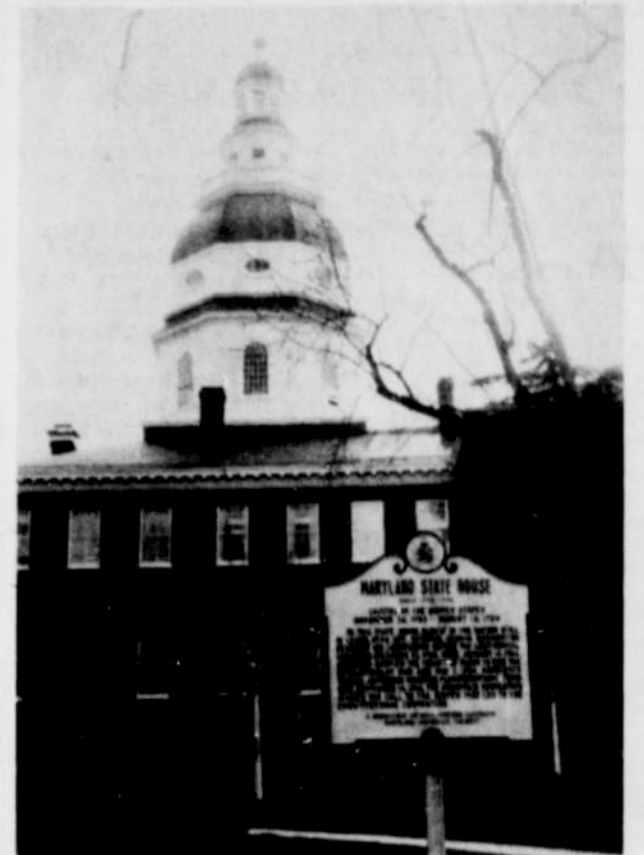
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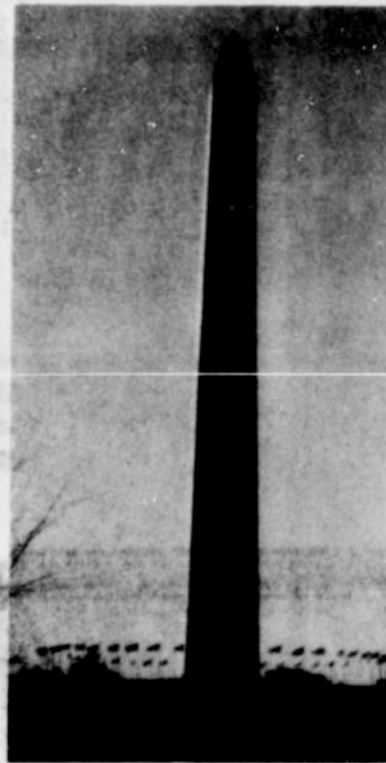
WHITE HOUSE FROM WASHINGTON MONUMENT



VICE ADMIRAL WILLIAM P. MACK SUPERINTENDENT, U. S. NAVAL ACADEMY



MARYLAND STATE HOUSE



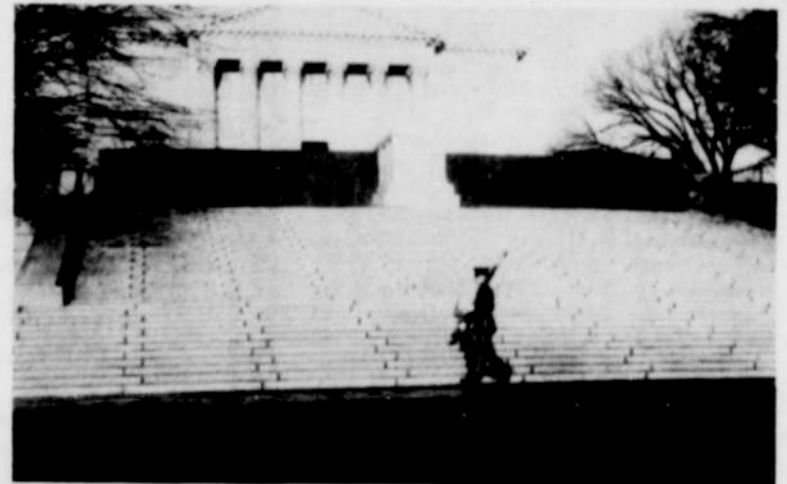
WASHINGTON MONUMENT



NAVAL ACADEMY CHAPEL



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TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

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