

Commo. Russell Ihrig, Superintendent Of Academy, Issues Statement On State Budget Hearing For School

Commo. Russell M. Ihrig, USN (ret.), superintendent of the California Maritime Academy, issued a statement yesterday for presentation to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee. The committee will hold a hearing on the proposed elimination of the academy and reach a recommendation on the future of the school. The committee's subcommittee on education last week voted eight to three to abolish the academy and transfer its students to another state school.

Commodore Ihrig's statement points out that the proposal to abandon the academy by deleting its funds from the state budget is based on two premises: That the training of maritime officers is not a necessary state function; that the excessive cost of the academy is not warranted on the basis of the return for the money expended.

A preface to his statement informs the committee that the purpose of his presentation is to show: That the training of maritime officers is a proper and necessary function in this state; that the cost of operating the academy is not excessive, and that these costs, on a per student basis, are being steadily reduced.

Text of the statement follows: The function of education for any field of public enterprise rightfully belongs to the states and the American system of education has been developed on this theory. This state, like all others, has accepted the obligation to educate engineers of all kinds, technicians, lawyers, doctors, business men, miners, farmers, foresters—in fact, to educate youth in almost any field of endeavor for the benefit of the state, the local communities, and, in the ultimate, the nation as a whole. Only in the straight national defense, at West Point and Annapolis, has the Federal government previously entered the field of education, and then under the authority of Section 8 of the Constitution to provide for the common defense. The Constitution makes no reference to public education as a function of the Federal government, and wisely, in the Bill of Rights, in the Tenth Amendment, it is declared that the powers not delegated to the Federal government, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

The U. S. Maritime Commission is an executive agency growing out of the Merchant Marine Act of 1936, which states in part that the United States shall have a Merchant Marine owned and operated by citizens insofar as practicable and manned with a trained and efficient citizen personnel. The Act further states that it shall be the policy of the United States to foster the development and

vate industry, and the officers in charge are, quite naturally, reluctant to forego their positions and their school, which is handsomely equipped and liberally supported by Congressional funds.

Thus, we have the Federal government entering the field of education for a private industry, so labelled by law. This entry was only 10 years ago, whereas state academies are based in a Federal law of 1874, which states that every assistance and encouragement shall be given by the Federal government to state schools. The Federal government has never challenged this basic law. In fact, where the Maritime Commission supervisory regulations now conflict with the codes of the states having state academies, it is agreed in writing that the state regulations shall prevail.

The Legislative Auditor's report states that the Federal Academy is supported by the Federal subsidy to the Merchant Marine. This is a misconception, since the Federal Academy is supported by specific congressional appropriations for this educational activity and ship operators derive no benefits from its graduates that are not derived from graduates of state academies as well. We do not have Federal education for farmers simply because potatoes are subsidized.

The Legislative Auditor's report states that any restriction made by the Maritime Commission in enrollment in the Maritime Academies will not occur in the state academies, but will result in restricted enrollment in the Federal Academy, which is supported entirely from Federal funds. I am sorry to differ with this statement, but the fact is that the state academies have, as recently as January 10, 1950, been limited to specific numbers of students who can receive the individual Federal aid. But, it should be noted, there can be, legally no restriction by the Fed-

eral government on the number of students not qualified to receive individual Federal aid. We have, in fact, at this date, 11 students in that status, who pay the full state fee and receive no Federal grant whatever.

The Legislative Auditor's report states that the curriculum at King's Point has been extended to a four-year course in order to limit the number of

graduates each year. I am com-

17 million tons of cargo moved through Los Angeles harbor in that year. Long Beach harbor is a tremendous development and rapidly approaching the tonnage of Los Angeles. If we add the very large number of back-up industries, such as ship building and repair yards, we have a colossal capital investment and operation. The \$224,000 net cost to the state of the Academy's budget represents only 3 thousandths of one per cent of the value of the commerce through the Golden Gate alone. I venture to say that it represents less than one-tenth of that percentage for the total ocean-born trade of the state and related maritime industries. There is no

place in this great field of private enterprise where the graduate of the California Maritime Academy is not qualified to take his place. It might be more logical to assess the cost of the Academy on this basis than on the basis of cost per student. Closing the Academy will simply be one more step backward in the difficult situation already faced by the maritime industries of the state.

The report states that if capital outlay is added to support, the difference in student costs would be much greater. This might be true, although figures are not given to substantiate this statement, but it would be true only because the capacity of the Academy is limited by uncontrollable factors. In this respect, I submit that a limited minority that is willing to pay a high price for specialized education should have reasonable facilities as well as the majority who are required to pay a lower price. I have not previously heard of arguments being presented in budget sessions on the difference in cost to educate a farmer as compared to a teacher, or a business student as compared to an artist or musician.

The report states that the annual cost to the Federal government should be considered by the state legislature. I respectfully submit that it should be a matter of pride to the state that this small Academy can merit the generous aid that is granted. Several state college presidents have informed me that they would be delighted to be able to have Naval R.O.T.C. units which would place their colleges, in that respect, on a level with the 52 leading universities of the nation. The Academy is the only institution in California on the college level which has that honor, and that honor is accorded our Academy because of the thorough professional training in nautical sciences. Actually, the Navy instructors listed in item 5 would be assigned somewhere else if they were not assigned to

the annual budget of \$224,000 represents a little more than 2 cents per person in this state of 10 million people. I believe that at least half of them would be willing to contribute a nickel annually to continue this Academy, which fulfills a vital educational need in compounding theory and practice as does no other school. The Golden Bear, in the process of training these men for a pro-

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courage the maintenance of such a Merchant Marine.

As a result of the recognition of the demands which would be imposed upon American shipping, by the impending World War II, the U.S. Maritime Commission entered the field of training personnel for the Merchant service and the Federal Academy was established. But it must be remembered that the Merchant Marine in World War II was not nationalized, that it was still operated by private companies under charters or supervision of the Maritime Commission. Subsequent to the War, every effort has been made by both the Commission and the industry, to get the Commission out of what is legally, and so recognized, a private business. In fact, 70 per cent of the subsidies granted to American shipping companies over the last 10 years has been recovered by the provisions of the recapture clause applying to profits. But the Maritime Commission had built up its war powers to include the field of education for this pri-

pelled to point out, first, that such an extension would only delay the output of any given number of graduates for the first year after it was placed in effect, after which the output would be the same annually; and second, that the reason King's Point went to the four-year course was in order to receive Congressional approval of the Bachelor of Science degree for its graduates. It is pertinent to note here, that our graduates receive in three years the same attainments as received by the King's Point graduate in four years, and are considered on a par with them by shipping interests.

The Legislative Auditor's second premise is based in what he has chosen to refer to as excessive cost.

It is stated that 4.9 state college students are educated for the cost of one student at the Academy, on the basis of 1948-49 budget figures. Taking four years at the colleges, against three years at the Academy, we find the total cost to produce

the Academy. And item 6, Training Ship, is a duplication of item 2, which should read \$42,500 instead of \$50,000. We are not authorized, nor do we receive, more funds than these for the Golden Bear. Item 7, Services of the Navy Yard, does not cost the Federal government anything. The clothing and material we obtain from the Mare Island Naval Shipyard are paid for at cost.

The report refers to the abolishment of the Pennsylvania Maritime Academy in 1947. I am informed that the basic reason why that Academy failed is because it had been placed under a public service commission instead of under the department of education, and ended up as a political football which finally got kicked over the fence.

The report states that the Academy has failed to keep track of the graduates. We are not allowed personnel for placement records and I do not believe that state colleges in general keep track of graduates, at least for very long. No state college guarantees a position to any graduate, but the Academy comes close to the mark because its graduates are eagerly sought.

I am of the opinion also that there is no obligation placed upon any graduate from any college to follow the profession or vocation for which he was educated. Insofar as our graduates are concerned, they hold licenses and can re-enter the Merchant Marine when jobs offer, which many of them do. The Merchant Marine at this time, particularly in California, is hard hit, for reasons which no one seems to be able to control. But I do not believe that students are refused permission to take any course in colleges because a given industry is suffering from a slump. Education is not yet geared to a law of supply and demand, but rests upon the free choice of the individual. I do not believe any American would have it otherwise.

The report states that the California Maritime Academy is not needed for furnishing maritime officers. It might also be stated that technicians in any field need not be educated in state colleges of this state. They can be educated in other states, and if there is a demand for their services here, they will gravitate to this state. But I believe this state, second in population and near the top in per capita wealth, accepts its obligation to educate and train its youth for all essential purposes. I submit that the great maritime interests of this state are essential, in fact, vital. The value of foreign commerce alone through the customs district of San Francisco in 1947 was over \$600 million, of which \$400 million was exports. Over

from books alone, has brought great credit to this state. It has cruised some 33,000 miles in the past two years, always on schedule, with no machinery derangements and no casualties to midshipmen. That represents the acid test to shipping executives. Governor Warren, in letters to the Governors of Texas and Louisiana, where the Golden Bear is now headed on the 1950 training cruise, said, and I quote: "Our State is proud to send them forth as its representatives."

The cost to the state of operating the Golden Bear is only 22.9 per cent of this budget. I informed this committee last year that as our experience factors developed, we would offer further cuts in these costs. I am prepared to offer cuts which will reduce the cost of operating the Golden Bear to 17.8 per cent of the budget as presented last Fall, because we have acquired free from the Maritime Commission considerable quantities of sea stores and have now in effect a method of budgetary controls which, for the first time, shows that we can effect these reductions.

To reassure this committee that we do our best to operate economically, I wish to point out that \$19,000 of our 1947-48 funds reverted to the State Treasury, and \$31,600 in 1948-49.

If the alternate recommendation of the Legislative Auditor is to be considered, I strongly urge this committee to delete the last item of his recommendation, which is to cancel the building program. The plans are practically completed and the Division of Architecture has informed me that bids for contracts for construction could be called for on March 15. The completion of the building program will enable us to handle 200 students as against a maximum of 122 with the present temporary buildings. In the budget we presented, we offered a 47 per cent increase in student body, with only a 10 per cent increase in support and a 25 per cent reduction in cost per student.

Driver Asks Trial On Hit-Run Count

Otis L. Rowell, 40, of 10 Adams street, pleaded not guilty and asked for a jury trial on two charges of hit-run driving and drunken driving in Police Court yesterday.

Acting Police Judge Raymond J. Sherwin set the trial for Mar. 11.

Rowell was arrested Feb. 11 after he allegedly hit a car belonging to James Callaway, 26, of 819 Porter street, police said.

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