

U. S. M. A., Library
Office of the Chief
Archives & History
West Point, New York

REPORT

of the

BOARD OF VISITORS

to the

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

WEST POINT, NEW YORK



17 February 1957

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT, NEW YORK

17 February 1957

SUBJECT: Report of Board of Visitors to the United States
Military Academy, 1957.

TO: The President of the United States.

1. APPOINTMENT OF THE BOARD

The Board of Visitors to the United States Military Academy was appointed in accordance with the provisions of sections 1055-1056 of Title 10, United States Code. Pertinent extracts from the Code are appended to this report, marked Exhibit A.

2. PERSONNEL OF THE BOARD

The membership of the Board as constituted for the year 1957 was as follows:

SENATORS

Sam J. Ervin, North Carolina
representing Richard B. Russell,
Georgia, Chairman of the Com-
mittee on Armed Services.
John O. Pastore, Rhode Island

REPRESENTATIVES

Melvin Price, Illinois, representing
Carl Vinson, Georgia, Chairman of
the Committee on Armed Services.
Olin E. Teague, Texas
Louis C. Rabaut, Michigan
Gerald R. Ford, Michigan
Jackson E. Betts, Ohio

PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTEES

Dr. Leonard Carmichael, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
Dr. Francis M. Dawson, Dean of the College of Engineering, State University
of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.
Dr. James P. Baxter 3rd, President, Williams College, Williamstown, Massa-
chusetts.
Dr. John A. Hannah, President, Michigan State University, East Lansing,
Michigan.
Dr. William V. Houston, President, The Rice Institute, Houston, Texas.
General Anthony C. McAuliffe, American Cyanamid Company, New York, N.Y.

Colonel Charles J. Barrett, Professor of Foreign Languages, United States Military Academy, was appointed Executive Secretary for the Board by the Superintendent, United States Military Academy.

3. PRELIMINARY DATA

After consideration of all factors affecting the choice of dates for the annual visit, including especially the most suitable periods from the Congressional point of view, the Superintendent notified all members whose terms extended into 1957 that February 14-17 had been designated for the visit. Announcement of those dates was sent to all new members as notification of their appointment was received.

The Superintendent likewise caused to be distributed to all members certain reports and informational material, and a suggested program for the visit. A list of the data furnished is appended as Exhibit B.

4. CONVENING OF THE BOARD

The Board met at 12:15 p.m., February 14, 1957, in the U.S. Hotel Thayer at West Point. Present at the initial meeting were the following members:

Mr. Price	Dr. Baxter
Mr. Betts	Dr. Houston
Dr. Carmichael	General McAuliffe
Dr. Dawson	

At the initial meeting Dr. Baxter was unanimously elected Chairman, and Dr. Dawson was unanimously elected Vice-Chairman.

Senator Pastore and Mr. Teague were detained in Washington, the former arriving at 11:15 a.m. and the latter at 4:00 p.m. on February 15.

It is greatly regretted that presidential duties at Michigan State University prevented the attendance of Dr. Hannah and that duty elsewhere kept Senator Ervin, Mr. Ford, and Mr. Rabaut from attending with the Board.

Important engagements caused the departure early on February 16 of Senator Pastore, Dr. Carmichael, and Dr. Baxter. The remainder of the Board departed at 2:00 p.m. on February 16 with the exception of Dr. Dawson, who was designated to represent the Board in the final stages of the visit.

5. PROCEDURE

The detailed program followed by the Board in its visit is appended hereto, marked Exhibit C. Morning and afternoon of each day were devoted to inspections, observation or conferences. In some cases, particularly in the inspection of academic departments and their methods, the

Board was divided into several groups so that simultaneous observation in differing fields was possible. Special conferences or interviews were arranged for members who were unable to be present during the entire period of the visit.

6. COMMENTS

a. MORALE

(1) CADETS

In its many and varied contacts with cadets in interviews, in the dining hall, in the classroom or gymnasium or on parade, the Board found every indication of excellent morale. Some concern was voiced about the inadequacy of recreational facilities (see paragraph 6e(2) below) but the Corps of Cadets appears to be well and happy, loyal to the ideals and principles for which the Military Academy stands, and confident in the leadership of that institution.

(2) STAFF AND FACULTY

Every officer with whom the Board came in contact was alert, interested in his work, and taking obvious pride in his role of training leaders for tomorrow's Army. The preparation of the instructors for their classroom appearances was very much in evidence and their skill in promoting discussion in the group under instruction was notable. Cooperation between departments and staff agencies of the Academy was apparent and the Board's impression of the internal administration of the Military Academy was one of smoothness and harmony.

(3) REMAINDER OF THE COMMAND

The appearance, bearing, and courtesy observed in all members of the command were pleasing. The soldierly qualities, the military knowledge, and the pride of accomplishment of members of the 1st Regimental Combat Team as seen in ceremonies and in a demonstration of instruction methods are evidence that the enlisted men share with the officers a true understanding of the importance of their role in the mission of the Military Academy.

b. DISCIPLINE

From every indication it appears that high standards of discipline are being maintained and that problems which arise are being effectively handled.

c. CURRICULUM

The Board views with approval the efforts which have been and are being made to extend the areas of cadet study, as recommended by previous Boards of Visitors. The monograph program in Social Sciences requires each member of the two upper classes to select a topic in that field, conduct the necessary research, exercise the methods of thoughtful analysis, and prepare a critical paper thereon. Formal periods of counseling are provided, in addition to which the cadet is urged to meet informally and voluntarily with his advisor.

Advanced courses designed to build upon a cadet's prior knowledge of French and German are currently being offered, and a similar course in Spanish is soon to be introduced. Improvements in the Mechanics laboratory previously suggested by a member of the Board of Visitors have been accomplished, and increase the area of experience open to the cadet. Cadets are encouraged to undertake research projects in Electrical Engineering, Mechanics, and Ordnance. In all Departments the courses are tailored in accordance with the relative capabilities of groups within the class. A cadet's progress in any subject is keyed to his aptitude for that subject and not to his general standing in his class.

The Board realizes that the curriculum must start with fundamentals; that the cadet cannot fittingly pick a specialty at the end of one or two or even of three years of his course; and that the Army provides graduate schooling, civilian or military, for officers who are required in the increasing number of specialist areas in today's military profession. The West Point curriculum is designed primarily to provide the most suitable base for the future growth and development of the officer graduate. In an effort to locate weaknesses or shortcomings in that base the Superintendent is causing to be prepared a questionnaire by means of which the experiences and views of graduates may be obtained, collated, and studied. The Board believes that that study will have great value and looks forward to learning its conclusions.

d. INSTRUCTION

(1) ACADEMIC

The Board finds that the caliber of instruction throughout the Military Academy is high. The oral presentations heard were very good. Visual aids are varied in nature, adapted to the subject in which they are used, and highly effective.

With a curriculum such as that of the Military Academy the quality of the teacher is most important. In the great majority of cases at West Point the classroom instructor is a young officer, selected because he is known to combine leadership, intelligence and interest, given from one to two years of graduate training in the subject he is to teach, and then assigned to academic teaching duties for a period of three years. West Point does not have the facilities for research which insure the continuing growth of a professor at a typical college or university. Pace with progress is maintained at West Point by the replacement annually of about one third of its classroom teachers by new ones who, schooled in the latest developments in their subject, apply their enthusiasm in instruction during the relatively short period of three years, and then return to purely military duties with an experience and a skill that serve the Army well for many more years.

One Department, that of Law, will soon be unable to use Military Academy graduates among its instructors because the Army is prohibited by law from sending regular officers to schools for legal training. The Department feels that this condition may appreciably affect its ability to project itself into the students' way of thought. There will come a time when no graduate of West Point will be able to teach in the Department of Law, which will then have no officer qualified to judge from experience the efficacy of its instruction from the viewpoint of the cadet.

The Board of Visitors believes that the men and the methods combine to present excellent instruction at the Military Academy, and that continuing care in selection and insistence on graduate training will maintain the present high standards.

(2) MILITARY

No actual tactical instruction was observed. The Board visited the Infantry Training Room and observed a demonstration of some training procedures. All the latest weapons are in the hands of the 1st Regimental Combat Team for the training of cadets.

The Board was informed that regularly appointed cadet officers in the cadet companies have been temporarily replaced by other cadets in order that the latter may have experience in command and administration. The Board observed the performance of these cadets in command positions during the review and found it highly satisfactory.

It is believed that the military instruction is up to the general high standards of the Military Academy.

(3) PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Board received information concerning the physical education program of the Military Academy and observed the high degree of cadet enthusiasm for, and participation in, its voluntary aspects. The program appears to be well conceived in its twin objectives of insuring that the newly-commissioned officer will have that degree of physical fitness which he will require for the rigors of active military service, and of equipping him to plan and direct corresponding programs for the men he will command.

e. PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT

(1) CADET BARRACKS

Living accommodations for the Corps of Cadets have fallen far behind the current needs. Rooms designed for occupancy by two men are all required to house three, and elimination of four-man occupancy of some of the same rooms has only recently been possible with the departure of those cadets who failed the first semester's work. The average size of the rooms is approximately 300 square feet; as a result, the floor area provided per cadet is below the approved Army standard of 180 square feet for its officer candidates.

The first step proposed for ameliorating the crowded conditions is the conversion of the present West Academic Building to cadet barracks immediately following movement of academic activities to the new Thayer Hall in mid-1958. New construction at West Point in the amount of \$9,950,000 plus 5% overrun was authorized in Public Law 534, 83d Congress; the estimates supporting the request to Congress included both Thayer Hall and the West Academic Building conversion. With the passage of time, however, the costs of construction increased and it was necessary to utilize nearly the whole authorization for the Thayer Hall project. The change in plan was made with both Congressional and Bureau of the Budget approval.

In order to proceed with the conversion of the West Academic Building to barracks space it will be necessary to obtain additional authorization and appropriation from Congress. It was reported to the Board of Visitors that the Department of the Army plans to submit request for the authorization and appropriation during the current legislative session. The Board believes that such action should be taken without delay.

The proposed conversion, however, is only one step toward the provision of adequate living space; a major fraction of the current shortage will still exist when the conversion is completed. A study has been made of all possible construction sites, considering the need for accessibility to the messhall, to the academic buildings, and to other much-used facilities. The cheapest solution would involve construction of barracks on the main parade, one of the extremely few flat sites suitable for military drill, ceremonies, and intramural athletics. The second most economical solution, with provision of equivalent facilities, would require relocation of the hospital, conversion of the modern wing of that building to cadet living space, and erection of additional cadet barracks in the area between the present hospital and the present South Barracks.

A location has been selected for a new hospital, moving it from the presently crowded headquarters and cadet housing area, yet leaving it within easy supporting distance. The present hospital consists of one wing, built in 1884, for the maintenance of which costs and labor requirements are mounting annually, and a modern, well-designed and well-equipped wing. Except from the standpoint of maintenance of the older wing the present hospital is adequate and satisfactory. Its removal to a new site, however, is requisite to the solution of the housing problem, for the loss of a portion of the main parade to barracks space would seriously affect the training area.

The Board of Visitors indorses the opinion of previous Boards that conversion of the West Academic Building to cadet barracks should be undertaken at the earliest possible time. The conversion is, however, only the first step; still more barracks space is required. To provide it without excessive cost and without disruption or dislocation of required daily activities of cadets the present hospital area must be freed. Conversion of existing buildings, construction in a new location of suitable hospital facilities, and the subsequent utilization for cadet barracks of the present hospital building plus some new construction adjacent to it are all interdependent parts of the one basic project for adequately housing the Corps of Cadets.

(2) RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

As a result of its talks with cadets and of its observation of the recreational facilities available to them in their free time, the Board finds that great need exists for the provision of suitable entertainment areas for their use. The

theatre was built as a gymnasium; its flat floor and box-like shape contribute not at all to visibility or audibility. Soda fountains and snack bars are small and scattered and none of them are fully satisfactory as a place to entertain guests. No provision whatsoever is made for social pastimes such as bowling. There is no major college or university in the country that does not make more adequate provision than does West Point for the wholesome, leisure-time activities of its students.

Unlike the students of most colleges, who enjoy complete freedom of action during non-scheduled time, cadets must find their recreation and relaxation within the limits of the post of West Point. The need for one or more buildings with facilities similar to those found in student union buildings on many campuses is apparent.

The Board is aware of a long-range plan for erection of such a building. It believes that barracks expansion should take precedence over recreational facilities but the present need makes it desirable to initiate action, piecemeal if necessary, to improve the recreational opportunities of the Corps of Cadets. It considers that the provision of such facilities in three or four increments, capable where possible of later integration into one large center, is more important than postponement of the entire project until one costly and elaborate building can be constructed.

f. FISCAL AFFAIRS

No deficiencies in maintenance were reported to the Board and no specific problems are known to exist in connection with the Academy's operating budget.

g. TENURE OF SUPERINTENDENT

The Board notes that the average length of assignment of an officer as Superintendent of the United States Military Academy is too short to permit him to impress his stamp upon the Academy. Two of the three immediate predecessors of the present Superintendent served less than two years in the post. Most new college presidents would find it difficult if not impossible to arrive at a reasoned evaluation of their colleges in such a short time.

On the other hand officers of the caliber necessary in a Superintendent are in demand for other important assignments in the military establishment. West Point must not become a dead end, a

place in which officers who are not capable of larger responsibilities may serve out a lengthy tour in comparative obscurity. Cadets must have dynamic leadership, inspiration and example for their own development.

The Board believes the Department of the Army should strive to lengthen the tour of duty of the Superintendent of the Military Academy while continuing to assign only outstanding officers to a position of such responsibility and trust.

h. STATUS OF PERMANENT PROFESSORS

The twenty-one permanent professors of the United States Military Academy (the Dean of the Academic Board is included in this number) are a devoted group, giving their finest efforts to the preparation of tomorrow's leaders in our Army. Those selected from the Army have been officers of great promise; five of the professors now at West Point were actually general officers in World War II. Those selected from civil life have demonstrated corresponding qualities in the field of education. A special provision of law permits retention of these officers on active duty until they reach the age of sixty-four, an age more nearly comparable to the retirement age of civilian educators, and one which permits the accumulation of years of service in excess of the thirty which bring about the retirement of other colonels in the Army.

At the time the professorships at West Point were instituted colonels and brigadier generals with thirty years of service received the same pay. Subsequent divergences of the pay scales created a difference. The retirement of colonels after thirty years of service explains the lack of further increases in that grade. It is probable that the continuation on active duty of the outstanding officers at West Point was overlooked when the pay scales were drawn up.

The Board believes that the dedication of these officers to their mission at West Point while some of their contemporaries of equal ability go on to higher rank is deserving of recognition. One tangible form of recognition is that of pay. By amendment of present pay tables or by inclusion of a similar provision in future pay proposals, colonels with thirty-five years of service could be assigned the same rate of pay as brigadier generals with thirty such years. The number of officers immediately affected would be six. For one year in the foreseeable future the number would rise to seven; at all other times it would be six or less.

The Board has been given to understand that the Department of the Army is making such a proposal. It is to be hoped that higher echelons of the Government will look upon it with favor and that the Congress will give it favorable consideration.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board makes the following recommendations:

a. BARRACKS

That prompt action be taken to secure authorization and funds for conversion of the West Academic Building to barracks space for cadets, so that the work may be undertaken immediately after removal to Thayer Hall of academic activities now centered in the older building.

b. NEW HOSPITAL CONSTRUCTION

That the proposed new hospital be constructed to make way for the next step in providing suitable living accommodations for the Corps of Cadets.

c. RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

That an immediate study be made of the means of providing more adequate recreational facilities for the Corps of Cadets, and that consideration be given to providing them in progressive installations rather than in one large project.

d. TENURE OF SUPERINTENDENT

That the Department of the Army adopt as a policy the assignment of an officer as Superintendent of the United States Military Academy for a normal term of four years, but that only officers be so assigned who have the capacity for higher rank or greater responsibilities.

e. PAY OF SENIOR OFFICERS

That the pay tables be extended in such a way as to provide increased pay for colonels with thirty-five years of service, which in practice means only the heads of some of the Academic departments of the Military Academy.

8. CONCLUSION

The Board of Visitors believes that the administration of the United States Military Academy is in good hands. The Superintendent, Major General Davidson, is an impressive leader and a true gentleman. What is

more, he has a capacity for self-analysis and a receptivity for constructive criticism which augur well for the continuing progress of his command. Under his leadership all of the many departments and offices are engaged in a continuous self-evaluation and a search for betterment in the relatively small areas still open to improvement.

The Commandant of Cadets, Brigadier General Throckmorton, is a very capable officer whose competence inspires the respect of the officers who assist him and of the cadets who are his charge.

The members of the Board, as citizens of the United States, take pride in the spirit, the aims, and the accomplishments of the United States Military Academy. The enthusiasm of the Corps of Cadets, their loyalty, and their devotion to the great principles expressed in their motto of Duty, Honor, Country, are evidence of their worthiness to represent and to defend the American way of life.

JAMES P. BAXTER 3rd
President, Williams College
Chairman

JOHN O. PASTORE
United States Senate

FRANCIS M. DAWSON
Dean of the College of Engineering
State University of Iowa
Vice-Chairman

MELVIN PRICE
United States House of
Representatives

LEONARD CARMICHAEL
Secretary, Smithsonian Institution

OLIN E. TEAGUE
United States House of
Representatives

WILLIAM V. HOUSTON
President, The Rice Institute

JACKSON E. BETTS
United States House of
Representatives

ANTHONY C. MC AULIFFE
American Cyanamid Company

Board of Visitors
United States Military Academy

§ 1055. Appointment of Board of Visitors

There shall be appointed on or before the last day of every year a Board of Visitors to the United States Military Academy. June 29, 1948, C. 714, § 1, 62 Stat. 1094.

§ 1056. Composition of Board

The Board shall be constituted as follows:

- (a) The chairman of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate or his designee;
- (b) Three other Members of the Senate to be appointed by the Vice President or President pro tempore of the Senate, two of whom shall be members of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;
- (c) The Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives or his designee;
- (d) Four other Members of the House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, two of whom shall be members of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and
- (e) Six persons to be appointed by the President. The first Board to be appointed pursuant to the provisions of sections 1055-1060 of this title shall, with respect to the nine (sic) Presidential appointees, consist of two persons appointed to serve for a period of one year, two persons appointed to serve for a period of two years, and two persons appointed to serve for a period of three years. Two Presidential appointees shall be appointed to each subsequent Board to serve for a period of three years. June 29, 1948, c. 714, § 2, 62 Stat. 1094.

§ 1057. Filling of vacancies on Board

In case of the death or resignation of a member of a Board during the term for which such member was appointed, a successor shall be appointed for the unexpired portion of the term. Such a successor shall be appointed by the official, or his successor, who appointed the member who died or resigned. June 29, 1948, c. 714, § 3, 62 Stat. 1094.

§ 1058. Visitation of Board or individual members

The Board shall visit the Academy for which it is appointed once annually, and the Board or the individual members thereof may, with the approval of the Secretary of the Army, make such other visits on matters per-

taining to the duties of the Board, or for purposes of consulting with the Superintendent of the Academy, as the Board or its members may determine to be desirable. June 29, 1948, c. 714, § 4, 62 Stat. 1094, amended June 30, 1954, c. 432, Title VII, § 732, 68 Stat. 356.

§ 1059. Duties of Board; reports to President; consultations with advisers

(a) It shall be the duty of the Board to inquire into the state of morale and discipline, curriculum, instruction, physical equipment, fiscal affairs, academic methods, and other matters relating to the Academy which the Board may decide to consider.

(b) The Board shall, within sixty days after the meeting designated as the annual visit, submit a written annual report to the President regarding its action as such Board, together with its views and recommendations pertaining to the Academy. Any report based on a visit other than the annual visit shall be submitted by the originator or originators thereof to the President within sixty days after approval of said report by at least a majority of the members of the Board.

(c) The Board is authorized to call into consultation upon prior approval of the Secretary of the Army such advisers as it may deem necessary or advisable to effectuate the duties imposed upon it by the provisions of sections 1055-1060 of this title. June 29, 1948, c. 714, § 5, 62 Stat. 1094.

§ 1060. Travel expenses of Board members and advisers

(a) Each member of the Board shall receive not more than \$5 per day and be reimbursed under Government travel regulations for actual expenses of travel while performing duties as a member of the Board.

(b) Advisers called for consultation by the Board in connection with the business of the Board shall be compensated in the same manner as members of the Board in accordance with the provisions of subsection (a) of this section. June 29, 1948, c. 714, § 6, 62 Stat. 1094.

PAMPHLETS AND OTHER DATA
FURNISHED TO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS

Official Register of the Officers and Cadets, United States
Military Academy, for the Academic Year ending 30 June 1956

Catalogue of the United States Military Academy, 1956-1957

Report of the Board of Visitors, United States Military Academy, 1955

Report of the Board of Visitors, United States Military Academy, 1956

Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1956

Suggested schedule for annual visit, 1957

PROGRAM
OF
BOARD OF VISITORS 1957

First Day (Thursday, 14 February 1957)

AM Arrival

12:15 PM Luncheon and organization meeting, US Hotel Thayer.

1:20 Met Superintendent in lobby of hotel.
To Headquarters, US Military Academy, honors en route.

1:45 Conference with Superintendent.

3:00 Visit to Department of Tactics, observed facilities
and training.

5:00 Conference with selected cadets, Pershing Room of
Cullum Hall.

Dinner with Superintendent.

Second Day (Friday 15 February)

AM
8:45

Visits by sections of Board to

Department of Mathematics
Department of Physics and Chemistry
Department of Social Sciences

10:00

Conference with Dean of the Academic Board.

11:00

Conference with Commandant of Cadets.

Luncheon with cadets in Washington Hall.

PM
1:00

Visits by sections of Board to

Department of Military Topography and Graphics
Department of Ordnance
Department of Social Sciences

2:15

Visits by sections of Board to

Department of English
Department of Foreign Languages
Department of Law

3:30

Visit to 1st Regimental Combat Team.

8:00

Executive session at Hotel, discussion of report.

Third Day (Saturday, 16 February)

AM
8:45 Visits by sections of Board to
Department of Electrical Engineering
Department of Mechanics
Department of Physics and Chemistry

9:45 Inspected Library

10:30 Visits by sections of Board to
Department of Mechanics
Department of Social Sciences

PM
12:15 Luncheon with junior officers, West Point Army
Mess

1:15 Review, Corps of Cadets, Central Area.

2:00 Visits to scenes of intercollegiate competition
in progress.

Visits during evening to
Varsity basketball
Weapons Room
Army Theater
Cadet Hop, Cullum Hall

Fourth Day (Sunday, 17 February)

AM
11:00 Attendance at Cadet Chapel

PM
Departure