

SECTION THREE

**CLASS OF 1965 INDOCTRINATION
EVALUATON**

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD ACADEMY

Name _____ Section _____ Date _____

OPINIONS ON FOURTH CLASS SYSTEM
(TITLE)

CLASSES OF:

1965

1966

1967

GROUP MEMBERS

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD ACADEMY

Name _____ Section _____ Date _____

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INDOCTRINATION EVALUATION

GROUP MEMBERS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CLASS OF 1965

A Co.

Harry W. White

D Co.

Leonard J. Sanders

B Co.

Russell J. Helbert

E Co.

Robert W. Mason

C Co.

William C. Riskey

F Co.

David K. Duffy

QUESTIONNAIRE

One of the facets of the fourth class system has been changed since leave. The "Chase Hall brace" has changed to the less rigid military brace. This change has also gone into the mess hall where after seats is given, eyes may be "taken out of the boat." Please answer the following questions as fully as possible. Your opinion should be well thought out and the reasons for them stated. Write as much as you feel the subject merits, additional sheets may be used. Any comments on the fourth class system besides those specifically mentioned may be added. SENIOR MEN WILL PICK THESE UP FRIDAY night, 24 January.

1. State your opinions on the indoctrination policy at the present time.

2. State your opinions on the following: (1) do you think the 4/c system is necessary, (2) do you feel it should be more intense, less intense, or about the same as at present, (3) could the system be improved, how. GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWERS.

3. State your opinion on the pre-Christmas indoctrination. Do you feel it was beneficial, how, and why?

In view of the most recent changes in the fourth class policy, great concern has arisen over the implications in methods of future cadet indoctrination. A questionnaire asking for individual thoughts and ideas on the present system was given to every member in the class of 1965. From these questionnaires, a general consensus of opinion was obtained. It is our desire to relate to you our opinion.

As was expected, ideas varied from area to area, some were unanimous in opinion and others were quite antithetical. However, even those areas in which opinions differed, the main idea disclosed was that what we do must be in the best interest of the Coast Guard, aimed towards the building and education of a better officer corps.

The biggest variation in opinions was in the field of the new brace and new methods of correction of fourthclassmen. The majority of feeling on the new brace was that this did not create a hindrance to military correction. It alone was not the root of a problem. The problem that does arise, however, comes from the relaxed atmosphere which it creates. The thought planted into the fourthclass mind is one of reduction in corrections and a reduction in effort, from what was expected in the initial system of military duty. This attitude has been very evident in recent indoctrination examinations; the interest and extent of study in table indoctrination; and in general, the appearance of the fourthclass around the reservation and in public. At the present time the fourth class are in a state of mediocrity; undisturbed at gross mistakes and having no fear of the true rigid system that is needed to form the character of a good military man. To produce men of sound satice, like those men "Mayor Meyers" says our country needs and "George Company" had. However, the class of 1967 will not be hurt by the changes, due to what we feel was a sound period of rigorous testing and training, but our immediate concern is with the new class of cadets. What effect is this relaxed atmosphere going to have for the initial period of physical and mental adjustment to a military way of life? To us this is the big question. The answer, we feel, is a collapse in esprit de corps, loss of pride in the Coast Guard Academy, and a severe blow to the fundamentals of the military system.

To most of us, the first taste of regimentation and military life came during our training in that summer. The incoming class in July comes out of high school. They have no real idea, least of all an understanding of the military system. They must be made to see its autocracy, its unquestioning obedience to orders, respect to an individual senior, and above all they must learn to respect it. To accomplish this goal, primary in the mind of a future leader of men, an officer, they must have it tougher than any soldier or marine ever had it in boot camp. Now, more than ever, training along this line must be in effect, since the transition is to occur in a shorter length of time. Only the experienced orator could talk to these men and make them feel the sense of duty, challenge, surrendering their individual independence to become an integral, useful, and most of all important part of the "service of their country and humanity," which they need to ever become effective officers. Therefore, it is a requisite to the program to have an intense indoctrination in the summer, if only to weed out the undesirable candidates. A look into the rigid Air Force Academy summer program may prove helpful to our problem.

Important also to the future officer is self-respect and confidence. Again, we feel that they must be tested, not only to demonstrate the way to them, but to prove to themselves that they can stand up to all pressures and come out stronger, handling any of the varied responsibilities given to them at time of stress. They must strive to prove to themselves, as well as the upperclass, that the limits of personal accomplishment and satisfaction come after a hard fight was a goal in mind.

Where will future classes learn "trained initiative and leadership" if not from a rigid military program during the first half of the year? Does it refer to classes and academics? As it is at the present time, many fourthclassmen cannot handle the responsibilities given to them in the field of academics. For example, the past week (27 January-1 February) there were 31 fourthclass receiving an extra hour of study on the weekend because they didn't have the initiative to do homework during the week, yet day after day, week after week, many go to bed at 2200 rather than 2300. We feel that this is not a fault of the system, but of lack of desire upon the individual cadet. The same applies to all cadets.

Finally, we venture in the area where the class is most solid in its feeling: physical punishment during the regular year and an intensified indoctrination program some time, during the year. We feel the intensified indoctrination program is valuable to both the upperclass and fourthclass. For the upperclass, it is a period to observe the actions of the new members of the corps under stress; to see what the group can do together as well as observe individuals. To us this is a period of extreme importance to a future officer, due to the fact that it builds character into a somewhat unpositive individual. At this time he receives a reason, a purpose, and a goal--never let the men break up under pressure like some in Korea. These men never had training under pressure, therefore, were not ready for the challenge. To abolish this system of indoctrination on the grounds that the upperclass are incapable of good judgment is as meaningless as abolishing swab summer, for there is the time of most influence.

We have tried to give you some idea of the views of the class of 65, although fair judgment cannot be given until more time has been allotted for observation of the new program. We are greatly concerned for the welfare of the class of 67, the United States Coast Guard, and most of all, the United States. Our duty is to help mold men; we feel certain rights should be granted in order for us to do a job in which we have pride. We realize that we are in no position to criticize, however, it is our obligation to present our consensus of opinion on this important matter of military training.

Report on the Fourthclass System at the Academy

The following is the consensus of the opinions of the members of the Class of 1966 concerning the Fourthclass System. It is derived from answers given on a questionnaire.

The fourthclass year is intended to change the civilian into a military cadet ready to be trained as an officer. It must be tough to cope with those who would rebel against the military life. It must eliminate or change those who are unfit physically or mentally, those who are uninterested, and those who would quit if the going got rough. It must develop dependable adults who can think under pressure and assume the responsibilities of an officer in the Coast Guard.

Before a man can be a good officer and leader, he must learn to be a good follower. He must have been subjected to strict discipline. He must learn to respect his seniors and follow orders quickly, completely, and without question or procrastination. He must be taught the importance of reporting back. The meaning of Honor must be instilled within him. All this and much more must be learned in one year. It takes applied discipline to accomplish this change.

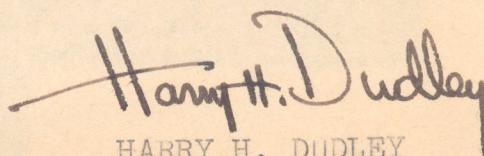
From applied discipline comes self-discipline, which builds independence, initiative and confidence. A rough fourthclass year pulls men from their shells, gives them pride and forces them to apply themselves; to accept the physical and mental challenge or get out. It is an incentive to study, to be the best, to work hard at things worthwhile. Working usually includes doing things with others. When a group can pull together at a difficult task, there develops a pride within that group - esprit de corps.

Physical development is also important. Strength and endurance are lacking greatly in America's youth; it must be developed. The posture must be corrected after some eighteen years of slouching. The full brace produces straight men who carry themselves well.

The Academy is not just for giving a college education; it must produce well-rounded men to be commissioned as officers in the Coast Guard. The tradition of a tough fourthclass system at the Academy places the Academy man far above any other college graduate in the eyes of the public.

Slacking of the fourthclass system as has been done this year has produced a lessening of the qualities which the Academy should instill in a man. Fourthclass year has become more of a game. There is no challenge and, therefore, no pride. The relaxed brace is quickly followed by complete relaxation and minimum military bearing. With no corrective force available, jobs are only half done, respect for seniors diminishes and an attitude of getting away with as much as possible sets in. Time has lost its value, for there is now an excess, and it is wasted. This leads to the long list of flunking fourthclass cadets.

The Class of 1966 believes the fourthclass year should be rough. The Thirdclass makes no claims to be experienced leaders or to know everything about training men, but the opinions expressed above are from men who have just completed the fourthclass year of the rough system, and believe they are better men for it.



HARRY H. DUDLEY
President, Class of 1966

INDOCTRINATION EVALUATION

January 26, 1964

Tom Killes
Pres. Class of '67

We, as fourth classmen, were presented a chance to collect and express our views on the present fourth class system and the present total indoctrination program. This is an evaluation of individual opinions of the members of the Class of '67. The major trends and the most outstanding points are included in this report. The system very recently has undergone a change. This change consists of the termination of physical exercises, flat hands, and chins. The overall effect has been a more relaxed atmosphere within Chase Hall. This more relaxed atmosphere is the main topic of the discussion.

The opinions of the individual fourth classmen were taken from a questionnaire which is attached to this report. This evaluation concerns itself mostly with the first two questions. The questionnaires were reviewed by two members of the class and compiled into this paper.

The first two questions deal with the total indoctrination policy including the more relaxed atmosphere. The general opinion is favorable toward the present policy. There is about a fifth of the class who thinks we should revert to the old, more intense policy and a fifth who believe that carry-on should be granted after Christmas. We must see our objectives before we can work in the direction of our goals. The foremost goal is to make a military man out of a civilian. The new comer must be taught discipline, to follow as well as lead, to take responsibility, to think quickly, and have confidence in his decisions, and to respect authority. The making of a man also involves character, pride, and self-discipline. These are a few of the traits which the fourth classman must learn during fourth class year to build men out of the boys they begin as.

The members of '67 feel that this transition should be made through a full year's program. The summer indoctrination program should be very intense. It should then ease up just enough so that academics can be included in the fall program. The last few weeks before Christmas should become very tough climaxing as happened this year. The party at the end of the hardest week at the Academy seems to climax Swab year and as we are accepted into the Corps, fourth class year starts. The general trend is that after Christmas the "bore-ass" of swab year should be eased off without any slack in responsibilities. In other words a period to use what we've learned to fulfill our responsibilities as underclassmen without the unnecessary little requirements, routines, and traditions which have already transposed us into military beings. Some points brought out is that the ultra-intense indoctrination before Christmas and the party on the last night create an actual climax and the rest of the year, if unchanged, is little more than something to put up with. The training now should come from incentive rather than force and the incentive from respect as well as rank. To sum up the opinion to this point--we feel that the fourth class system is completely necessary in that up to this point it is the best way known to make a respected and competent officer out of a young, immature civilian. This program of indoctrination follows the lines of both intense physical and mental harassment up to Christmas leave. Since during leave the cadet has the chance to see what he has accomplished and also to see his weaknesses, he is ready to accept more of the responsibilities himself. The bulk of the initial "bore-ass" becomes obsolete and a more constructive criticism becomes necessary.

These questions also asked for ideas on improvements which could be made with the indoctrination program as a whole. As the trend of stress goes more to academics, the indoctrination policies should not interfere; however, the indoctrination should be stressed as much as possible without interfering. The greatest problem cited was the research assignments and facts asked for as table indoc. These mostly unimportant details may take a couple of hours of study time a night. They should either be cut to a minimum or assigned for over a weekend. It is also believed that the bore-ass can go to a ridiculous point. After this point nothing is gotten out of it except disrespect. It works against its purpose if overdone. There were many thoughts that service indoctrination should be more general rather than including tedious details to memorize. This is another thing which is a good teaching instrument before Christmas leave. It possibly could be exchanged for more lasting service indoctrination. The feeling on table indoctrination is that the meal could be eaten with carry-on and yet discussions on vital news, small conversation, jokes, in the light that it is necessary to know what to say, to use manners, and to feel at ease in more formal associations with persons of higher rank. Many things such as keeping a good brace, not just good posture, is stressed whereas learning to really use and practice good manners, to discuss events intelligibly, and to know a good amount of small talk might be better training and better applied now than next year.

This evaluation contains the major trend of thinking of our class. There are some who feel differently, of course. The chance to express ideas on paper has given each fourthclassman a better knowledge of his own feelings and the feelings of the majority of the class. Since this subject was brought up because of change, this quote from one of the answered questionnaires is very appropriate. "It is nice to be able to say we braced up a full year, but ~~is it~~ is completely necessary. Are we bound to tradition or to reason?"