

or represented at every Board meeting to participate in the USO effort to provide the best possible "in town" service to service personnel.

The USO staff works directly with special service offices at all Armed Forces installations in the Washington vicinity and neighboring States to accommodate individual visitors from those installations and to arrange guided tours or other special projects for groups. These individuals and groups come from the nearby posts, camps, stations and bases, such as Andrews and Bolling Air Force Bases, Fort Belvoir, and the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico, and also from as far away as Fort Meade, Aberdeen Proving Ground and Patuxent Naval Air Station in Maryland, Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, Fort Lee and the various Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard facilities in the Norfolk, Virginia area, and from installations in North Carolina.

Although more than 250,000 young men and women of the services come to the Lounge or Club in the course of a year, the USO is aware that many thousands of others would be served if the USO were in a centralized transportation situation such as the National Visitors Center will create. It would not be unreasonable to estimate that a USO in the National Visitors Center would be required to accommodate at least 500,000 servicemen, women and dependents in a twelve month period. There is little or no prospect that the number of Armed Forces personnel stationed in or passing through the Washington area will decrease in the foreseeable future. Even in a peacetime situation there will be hundreds of thousands of young men and women in the Armed Forces, many away from home for the first time. When they come to Washington, they and the community and their country will be best served if the USO is there, prepared to serve them in every respect at the least cost to them.

On the basis of USO experience in other major centers of troop concentration or travel, the USO is hopeful that as much as 12,000 square feet of space in the National Visitors Center can be made available for USO use. Since many of USO's visitors arrive with heavy duffle bags or other luggage, an area on the ground floor would be preferable, although space on the mezzanine or second floor would not be unacceptable provided escalators are installed. Also, considering administrative and control requirements, it would be preferable and more economical to have all USO space on one floor; however, the important consideration is the total amount of space that will be needed and USO functions could be divided, if necessary, to have part on the ground floor and part on the mezzanine, or part on the mezzanine and the remainder on the second floor.

The 12,000 square feet of space would allow for the necessary administrative offices and meeting rooms, for a transient lounge (to include an Armed Forces Information Central, reading room, game room, radio-television room, snack bar, cloak and baggage checkroom, shower room "do-it-yourself" laundry, women's dressing room and nursery for dependent wives with small children) and for a club room for special parties, such as inductee groups and troop units of 40 to 100, for "between trains" sleeping, for scheduled events such as chess tournaments, and the various social and entertainment features such as breakfasts, luncheons, suppers, dances, movies, variety shows and other amateur and professional presentations which are sponsored or arranged by cooperating organizations.

National Capital USO has not indulged in wishful thinking to the extent of having any floor plans drawn to show precisely how the 12,000 square feet of space would be used. However, the National Headquarters of the USO in New York does have and will furnish copies of floor plans of comparable USO facilities. Since these plans have been developed in the course of 25 years of USO experience in major cities of the United States and other countries, it is believed that they will serve the purposes of the authorities who will be responsible for the final plans for the National Visitors Center.

By approving the National Visitors Center Study Commission's proposal, to include adequate space for a combined USO Club and Lounge operation offering free or at-cost services to all Armed Forces personnel and their dependents, the Members of Congress can reaffirm their own and the Government's concern for the welfare and well-being of members of the Armed Forces when they are in Washington and give the Nation's Capital the kind of USO it should have.

The USO in the National Visitors Center should be a "show case" facility, a source of patriotic pride for this community and for the country. The officers and directors of National Capital USO are confident that the people of the Washington area will continue to support the USO through the United Givers Fund and through any special projects that may be in order to meet the operating costs of such a USO facility in the Center.