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Stansfield Turner urges graduates at Bryant to scrutinize governmen

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SMITHFIELD — Calling the United States "the largest and most important public organization in the world," the chief of the CIA urged graduates at Bryant College's commencement exercises yesterday to get involved in government and to take a keen interest in its affairs.

Admiral Stansfield Turner issued the call in a commencement address heard by an estimated 7,000 persons, including 950 graduates, on the lawn of the Bryant campus and just after receiving one of the college's six honorary degrees.

Throughout his speech, Turner barely mentioned the CIA and spent his time depicting government as an exciting and rewarding career.

He suggested that this year's class, having studied in comparatively peaceful times, was luckier than those that went to school in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

"While your predecessors were understandably and justifiably concerned with the social and political wrongs they saw around them," he said, "in some measure they became the victims of their own crusades.

"In their day participation in causes was viewed as either black or white. You were either for them or against them. If you were a moderate you were copping out. The pressure on college students to choose sides was intense, and the pressure to choose the side against that amorphous mass known as the government was intense indeed."

Turner said this year's graduates, having avoided those "unnatural pressures," can now "go forward with a more objective outlook and conduct an objective scrutiny of the activities of government" for the rest of their lives.

"Only by having you and our other citizens do this can we be insured against excesses such as Watergate."

Yesterday's commencement, held under partly sunny skies, was the 114th in the college's history. The graduates includ 569 baccalaureate, 285 associ and 118 graduate degrees.

Other honorary degree rec ents included Connecticut G Ella Grasso, who arrived earl in the morning by helicopter; Rev. Thomas R. Peterson, O. president of Providence Colle Demetrios Haseotes, chairman the board of the Cumberla Farms store chain; Judge Jose R. Weisberger, presiding justi of the Rhode Island Superi Court, and Charles J. Wielgu 1947 Bryant graduate and no senior vice president of Dun Bradstreet.

The event was also highlign ed by the investiture of D William T. O'Hara, who becam Bryant College's fifth presider last September.

Turner, a former command of the United States Second Fle and NATO Striking Fleet Atla tic in 1974 and commander i chief of Allied Forces Souther Europe in 1975, was president c the Naval War College in New port five years ago. Today h receives an honorary degre from Salve Regina College.

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