

Elite Nixon Guard Shaken Up--Pot

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — Almost one-fourth of the elite Washington ceremonial guard unit, a crack 137-man military contingent assigned to work near President Nixon and visiting heads of state, have been transferred for allegedly using marijuana.

The Navy said yesterday it had transferred 35 sailors in the unit to less sensitive posts, including 13 who participated in official ceremonies welcoming Soviet Communist Party leader Leonid I. Brezhnev.

Enlisted Men

Rear Adm. Arthur G. Esch, commandant of the Naval District of Washington, said the 35 sailors, all enlisted men between the ages of 18 and 23, "have been transferred to other duties within the Naval District of Washington because of alleged use of marijuana."

It was the third such incident in less than two months involving Navy and Marine Corps personnel assigned to posts near the President.

The Navy declined to say whether it was investigating any links among the three incidents, but one official said, "We're all wondering about just that."

65 Total

A total of 65 Navy men and 28 Marines have been reassigned as a result of the incidents, the Navy said.

The first incident resulted early last month in 28 Marines and 18 sailors being transferred out of the security and maintenance force at the Camp David, Md., presidential retreat.

Late last month, the Navy said, 12 more sailors assigned to the unit that operates Nixon's yacht, the Sequoia, were moved to new jobs after some were discovered smoking marijuana.

See SF Chronicle 5 Jun 73, "President's Protection," this file.