



DEPUTY SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE



1949 - 2021



HISTORICAL OFFICE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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“I believe that the Deputy should be versed, across the board, in the problems and responsibilities that the Secretary of Defense has, so that he can always step in and not just be in the wings somewhere, waiting to be called . . . I would keep the Deputy’s role as one of a generalist, of being available in all areas, of being versed and experienced, and of dealing with whatever came up, as a junior partner and alter ego for the Secretary.”

Roswell L. Gilpatric
former Deputy Secretary of Defense



Prepared by Dr. Shannon E. Mohan, Historian
Dr. Erin R. Mahan, Chief Historian



Secretary of the Navy (and future Deputy Secretary of Defense) Paul H. Nitze meets with Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus R. Vance, April 1965. (OSD Historical Office)



(L-R) Deputy Secretary of Defense-designate David Packard and Secretary of Defense-designate Melvin R. Laird with their predecessors, Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul H. Nitze, January 1969. (OSD Historical Office)



Five former Deputy Secretaries of Defense (L-R): William Howard Taft IV, John J. Hamre, Paul H. Nitze, Robert F. Ellsworth, and John P. White, November 1998. (OSD Historical Office)

HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

The National Security Act of 1947, which established the position of Secretary of Defense, did not carry provisions for a Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Public Law 81-36, signed by President Harry S. Truman on 2 April 1949, created an Under Secretary of Defense. According to this law, the Under Secretary would “perform such duties, and exercise such powers as the Secretary of Defense may prescribe. The Under Secretary of Defense shall act for, and exercise the powers of, the Secretary of Defense during his absence or disability.”

The 1949 National Security Act Amendments, signed into law by President Harry S. Truman on 10 August 1949, renamed the post of Under Secretary of Defense to Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Under the 1949 Amendments, the Deputy Secretary’s duties remained the same, but the Deputy now took “precedence in the Department of Defense immediately after the Secretary of Defense.”

Several more laws have affected the Deputy Secretary. A second Deputy Secretary was created by Public Law 92-596 in October 1972, filled in late 1975, and abolished by Public Law 95-140 in October 1977. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 amended the eligibility requirements for the Secretary and Deputy Secretary. The nominees for both positions may not have been on active duty as commissioned officers within seven years of their nomination, as opposed to ten years as originally stated in the 1947 National Security Act and 1949 National Security Act Amendments. The seven year clause may only be waived by an act of Congress.



DEPUTY SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE

1949 - 2021

TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION

STEPHEN TYREE EARLY

10 August 1949–30 September 1950



- Served in the U.S. Army 1917–1919
- Journalist with United Press 1908–1913
Associated Press 1913–1917, 1920–1927
- Assistant Secretary to
President Franklin D. Roosevelt for Press 1933–1945
- Considered the first modern press secretary
- First Under Secretary of Defense
before the position was
redesignated “Deputy” 2 May 1949–9 August 1949

TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION

ROBERT ABERCROMBIE LOVETT

4 October 1950–16 September 1951



- B.A., Yale 1918
- Served in the U.S. Navy 1917–1919
- Special Assistant to the Secretary of War 1940–1941
- Assistant to the Secretary of War for Air 1941–1945
- Under Secretary of State 1947–1949
- Secretary of Defense 1951–1953

TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM CHAPMAN FOSTER

24 September 1951–20 January 1953



- Attended MIT
- Served in the U.S. Army1917
- President, Pressed and Welded Steel Products Company1946
- Under Secretary of Commerce1946–1948
- Administrator, Economic Cooperation Administration .1948–1951
- Director, U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency1961–1969

EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

ROBERT BERNARD ANDERSON

3 May 1954–4 August 1955



- B.A., Weatherford College1927
- University of Texas Law School1932
- Served one term in the Texas House of Representatives1933
- General Counsel; Manager, W.T. Waggoner Estate1937–1952
- Secretary of the Navy1953–1954
- President, Ventures Limited1955–1957
- Secretary of the Treasury1957–1961
- Special Ambassador to Panama1964–1973

EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

ROGER MARTIN KYES

2 February 1953–1 May 1954



- B.A., Harvard1928
- General Manager, Truck and Coach Division,
General Motors Corporation1950
- Vice President, General Motors Corporation1950
- Vice President, Accessory Group,
General Motors Corporation1959–1965
- Executive Vice President, Automotive Components
Group and Defense Division,
General Motors Corporation1965–1970

EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

REUBEN BUCK ROBERTSON, JR.

5 August 1955–25 April 1957



- B.S., Yale1930
- Member, War Production Board1942
- Served in the U.S. Army1942–1945
- President, Champion Paper and Fibre Company1950–1955
- Wage Stabilization Board1950–1951
- Vice Chairman, Hoover Commission's
Committee on Business Organization
of the Defense Department1955

EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

DONALD AUBREY QUARLES

1 May 1957–8 May 1959



- B.A., Yale1916
- Served in the U.S. Army1917–1919
- Engineer, Bell Telephone Laboratories1919–1948
- Vice President, Bell Telephone Laboratories1948–1952
- President, Sandia Corporation1952
- Assistant Secretary of Defense for
Research and Development1953–1955
- Secretary of the Air Force1955–1957

EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

THOMAS SOVEREIGN GATES, JR.

8 June 1959–1 December 1959



- B.A., University of Pennsylvania1928
- Partner, Drexel and Company1940
- U.S. Naval Reserve1942–1945
- Under Secretary of the Navy1953–1957
- Secretary of the Navy1957–1959
- Secretary of Defense1959–1961
- Chief, U.S. Liaison Office to
the People's Republic of China1976–1977

EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

JAMES HENDERSON DOUGLAS, JR.

11 December 1959–24 January 1961



- B.A., Princeton1920
- Harvard Law School1924
- Assistant Secretary of the Treasury1932–1933
- Served in the U.S. Army, 1918; U.S. Army Air Forces . . .1942–1945
- Under Secretary of the Air Force1953–1957
- Secretary of the Air Force1957–1959

KENNEDY & JOHNSON ADMINISTRATIONS

ROSWELL LEAVITT GILPATRIC

24 January 1961–20 January 1964



- A.B., Yale1928
- Yale Law School1931
- Partner, Cravath, Swain & Moore1940–1951; 1953–1961
- Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Material1951
- Under Secretary of the Air Force1951–1953
- Chairman, Board of Trustees, Aerospace Corporation . .1960–1961
- Deputy Chairman, Board of Directors,
New York Federal Reserve Bank1970
- Chairman, Board of Directors,
New York Federal Reserve Bank1971

CYRUS ROBERTS VANCE**28 January 1964–30 June 1967**

- B.A., Yale1939
- Yale Law School.1942
- Served in the U.S. Navy1942–1946
- Associate; Partner, Simpson, Thacher and Bartlett 1947–1956; 1956–1961
- General Counsel, Department of Defense1961–1962
- Secretary of the Army.1962–1963
- Secretary of State1977–1980

PAUL HENRY NITZE**1 July 1967–20 January 1969**

- B.A., Harvard1928
- Vice President, Dillon, Read, and Company1939–1941
- Served in the U.S. Government during World War II
- Director, Policy Planning Staff, Department of State1950–1953
- Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs1961–1963
- Secretary of the Navy1963–1967

DAVID PACKARD**24 January 1969–13 December 1971**

- A.B., Stanford.1934
- M.A., Stanford1939
- Cofounder with William Hewlett, Hewlett-Packard Company.1938
- President; Chief Executive Officer; Chairman of the Board, Hewlett-Packard 1947–1964; 1964–1969
- Chairman, President's Blue Ribbon Commission on Defense Management1985–1986

DAVID KENNETH RUSH**23 February 1972–29 January 1973**

- B.A., University of Tennessee1930
- Yale Law School.1932
- Associate, Chadbourne, Stanchfield & Levy1932–1936
- Professor of Law, Duke University1936–1937
- Vice President; Director; Executive Vice President; President, Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation 1949; 1958; 1961; 1966–1969
- U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany1969–1972
- Deputy Secretary of State.1973–1974
- U.S. Ambassador to France1974–1977

NIXON & FORD ADMINISTRATIONS

WILLIAM PERRY CLEMENTS, JR.

30 January 1973–20 January 1977



- Attended Southern Methodist University
- Served in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1941–1945
- Founder, Southeast Drilling Company 1947
- Chairman, Board of Governors, Southern Methodist University 1965–1973
- First Republican Governor of Texas since Reconstruction 1979–1983; 1987–1991

NIXON & FORD ADMINISTRATIONS

ROBERT FRED ELLSWORTH

23 December 1975–10 January 1977



- B.S., University of Kansas 1945
- University of Michigan Law School 1949
- Served in the U.S. Navy 1944–1946; 1950–1953
- Republican Congressman from Kansas 1961–1967
- U.S. Ambassador to NATO 1969–1974
- Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs 1974–1975
- The first and only Second Deputy Secretary of Defense 1975–1977

CARTER ADMINISTRATION

CHARLES WILLIAM DUNCAN, JR.

31 January 1977–26 July 1979



- B.S., Rice University 1947
- Served in the U.S. Army Air Forces 1944–1946
- Administrative Vice President; President, Duncan Foods 1957; 1958
- Head, Coca-Cola Company's European operations, 1964
- Executive Vice President; President, Coca-Cola Company 1970; 1971
- Secretary of Energy 1979–1981

CARTER ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM GRAHAM CLAYTOR, JR.

24 August 1979–16 January 1981



- B.A., University of Virginia 1933
- Harvard Law School 1936
- Served in the U.S. Navy 1941–1946
- Associate; Partner, Covington & Burling 1938–1967
- Vice President; President; Chairman, Southern Railway Company 1967–1977
- Secretary of the Navy 1977–1979
- Acting Secretary of Transportation 1979

REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

FRANK CHARLES CARLUCCI

4 February 1981–31 December 1982



- A.B., Princeton1952
- Served in the U.S. Navy1952–1954
- U.S. Foreign Service Officer, Department of State1956–1969
- Assistant Director for Operations;
Director, Office of Economic Opportunity1969–1970; 1971
- Associate Director and Deputy Director,
Office of Management and Budget1971–1972
- Under Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare1972–1974
- U.S. Ambassador to Portugal1974–1978
- Deputy Director, Central Intelligence Agency1978–1981
- Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs1987
- Secretary of Defense1987–1989

REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM PAUL THAYER

12 January 1983–4 January 1984



- Attended the University of Kansas
- Served in the U.S. Navy1941–1945
- Test Pilot; Chief Test Pilot, Chance Vought1948; 1949–1950
- Flight Test Director; VP of Sales, Chance Vought1952–1954
- President, Chance Vought Aircraft1961–1965
- President, LTV Aerospace Corporation1965–1970
- Chairman and CEO, LTV Corporation1970–1982

REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT IV

3 February 1984–22 April 1989



- B.A., Yale1966
- Harvard Law School1969
- Legal adviser to Chairman, Federal Trade Commission1969–1970
- Executive Assistant to Secretary,
Department of Health, Education and Welfare1973–1976
- General Counsel, Department of
Health, Education and Welfare1976–1977
- General Counsel, Department of Defense1981–1984
- Acting Secretary of DefenseJanuary 1989–March 1989
- U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO1989–1992

BUSH ADMINISTRATION

DONALD JESSE ATWOOD

24 April 1989–20 January 1993



- S.B., MIT, 1948; S.M., MIT1950
- Served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps1943–1946
- Vice President and Treasurer, Dynatrol Corporation1952–1959
- President, GM Hughes Electronics Corporation1984
- Executive VP; Vice Chairman of the Board, GM1984; 1987

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM JAMES PERRY

5 March 1993–3 February 1994



- B.S., Stanford 1949
- M.S., Stanford 1950
- Ph.D., Penn State 1957
- Served in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. 1946–1947
- U.S. Army Reserve. 1950–1955
- Laboratory Director, General Telephone and Electronics 1954–1964
- Founder; President, ESL, Inc 1964–1977
- Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering 1977–1981
- Secretary of Defense 1994–1997

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

JOHN MARK DEUTCH

11 March 1994–10 May 1995



- B.A., Amherst College 1961
- B.S., MIT 1961
- Ph.D., MIT 1965
- Systems Analyst, Department of Defense 1961–1965
- Assistant Professor, Princeton University 1966–1969
- Professor; Dean; Provost, MIT. 1970–1977; 1980–1993
- Director of Energy Research; Under Secretary of Energy 1977–1980
- Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology . . 1993–1994
- Director, Central Intelligence Agency 1995–1996

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

JOHN PATRICK WHITE

22 June 1995–15 July 1997



- B.S., Cornell 1959
- M.A., Syracuse University 1964
- Ph.D., Syracuse University. 1969
- Served in the U.S. Marine Corps 1959–1961
- Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower,
Reserve Affairs, and Logistics 1977–1978
- Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget, . . 1978–1981
- Chairman, Commission on
Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces 1994–1995

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

JOHN JULIAN HAMRE

29 July 1997–31 March 2000



- B.A., Augustana College 1972
- Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University 1978
- Deputy Assistant Director for
National Security and International Affairs,
Congressional Budget Office 1978–1984
- Staff member, Senate Armed Services Committee 1984–1993
- Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller 1993–1997
- Chief Executive Officer and President;
Langone Chair in American Leadership,
Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2000–

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

RUDY FRANK DE LEON

31 March 2000–1 March 2001



- B.A., Loyola Marymount University1974
- Legislative Assistant, U.S. Senate1974–1977
- Staff member, House Armed Services Committee.1985–1989
- Staff Director, House Armed Services Committee.1989–1993
- Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense1993–1994
- Under Secretary of the Air Force1994–1997
- Under Secretary of
Defense for Personnel and Readiness1997–2000

BUSH ADMINISTRATION

GORDON RICHARD ENGLAND

4 January 2006–11 February 2009



- B.S., University of Maryland1961
- M.B.A., Texas Christian University1975
- Executive Vice President, General Dynamics1997–2001
- Secretary of the Navy 2001–2003; 2003–2005
- Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security 2003
- Acting Deputy Secretary of Defense 2005–2006

BUSH ADMINISTRATION

PAUL DUNDES WOLFOWITZ

2 March 2001–13 May 2005



- B.A., Cornell1965
- Ph.D., University of Chicago1972
- Special Assistant, U.S. Arms Control and
Disarmament Agency1973–1977
- Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Regional Programs . . . 1977–1980
- Director, Policy Planning, Department of State1981–1982
- Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. . . 1982–1986
- U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia1986–1989
- Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.1989–1993
- President, World Bank2005–2007

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM J. LYNN III

12 February 2009–5 October 2011



- B.A., Dartmouth1976
- Cornell Law School1980
- M.P.A., Princeton1982
- Executive Director, Defense Organization Project,
Center for Strategic and International Studies1982–1985
- Legislative Counsel, Sen. Edward Kennedy1987–1993
- Director, Program Analysis and Evaluation,
Office of the Secretary of Defense1993–1997
- Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller1997–2001
- Senior Vice President of Government Operations
and Strategy, Raytheon Company2002–2009

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

ASHTON BALDWIN CARTER

6 October 2011–3 December 2013



- B.A., Yale1976
- D. Phil., Oxford University1979
- Assistant Secretary of
Defense for International Security Policy1993–1996
- Professor, John F. Kennedy School of Gov't, Harvard1996–2009
- Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition,
Technology and Logistics.2009–2011

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

ROBERT ORTON WORK

5 May 2014 –19 July 2017



- B.S., University of Illinois1974
- M.S., University of Southern California1980
- M.S., Naval Postgraduate School.1990
- MIPP, Johns Hopkins University
School of Advanced International Studies1994
- Served in the U.S. Marine Corps1974–2001
- Senior Associate, Toffler Associates.2001–2002
- Senior Fellow, Center for
Strategic and Budgetary Assessments2002–2006
- Vice President for Strategic Studies,
Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.2007–2009
- Under Secretary of the Navy2009–2013
- CEO, Center for a New American Security2013–2014

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

PATRICK MICHAEL SHANAHAN

19 July 2017 –23 June 2019



- BSME, University of Washington1985
- M.S., MIT1991
- M.B.A., MIT1991
- Vice President and General Manager,
Missile Defense Systems,
The Boeing Company.2004–2007
- Vice President and General Manager,
787 Dreamliner Program,
The Boeing Company.2007–2009
- Senior Vice President & General Manager,
Airplane Programs, Boeing Commercial Airplanes,
The Boeing Company.2009–2016
- Chair, Board of Regents,
University of Washington.2014–2016
- Senior Vice President,
Supply Chain & Operations,
The Boeing Company.2016–2017

DAVID LUTZ NORQUIST

31 July 2019-9 February 2021



- B.A., M.A., University of Michigan,1989
- M.A., Georgetown University,1995
- Presidential Fellow, CCP Program/Budget Analyst, Department of the Army,1989-1995
- Director, Resource Management, U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command,1995-1997
- Professional staffer, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense,1997-2002
- Deputy Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller)2002-2006
- Chief Financial Officer, Department of Homeland Security,2006-2008
- Partner, Kearney and Company,2008-2017
- Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller),2017-2019
- Performed the Duties of the Deputy Secretary of Defense, 1 January 2019-23 July 2019

KATHLEEN HOLLAND HICKS

9 February 2021–Present



- A.B., Mount Holyoke College1991
- M.P.A., University of Maryland1993
- Ph.D., Massachusetts Institute of Technology2010
- Senior fellow, Center for Strategic and International Studies2006–2009
- Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Forces2009–2012
- Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy2012–2013
- Senior vice president; Henry A. Kissinger Chair; director, International Security Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies2013–2021
- Donald Marron Scholar, Kissinger Center for Global Affairs, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies2013–2021



DEPUTY SECRETARY DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of Confirmed Deputies
since the post was created in 1949: 35

Five Deputies later became Secretary of Defense:

Robert A. Lovett
Thomas S. Gates, Jr.
Frank C. Carlucci
William J. Perry
Ashton B. Carter

Average Age of the Deputy when entering office:
55 years old

Youngest Deputy Secretary:
William Howard Taft IV
38 years old when sworn in on 3 February 1984

Oldest Deputy Secretary:
Gordon England
68 years old when sworn in on 4 January 2006

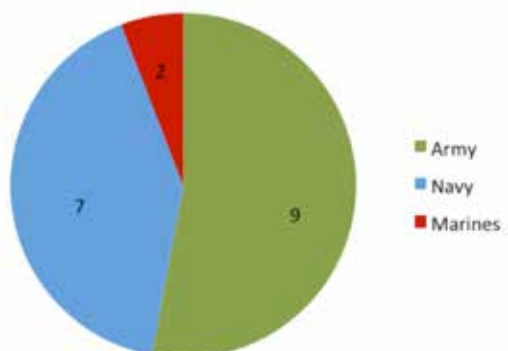
First woman to serve as confirmed Deputy Secretary:
Kathleen H. Hicks

Average tenure for a Deputy Secretary:
25 months

Longest tenured Deputy Secretary:
William Howard Taft IV, 1,906 days

Shortest tenured Deputy Secretary:
Thomas S. Gates, Jr., 176 days

MILITARY SERVICE: 18 OF 35 DEPUTIES SERVED IN THE ARMED FORCES



HISTORY OF THE POSITIONAL COLORS FOR THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

This flag was approved by President Harry S. Truman on 20 April 1949. It is in reverse colors to the flag of the Secretary of Defense, which is medium blue with the embroidered eagle in its center and with a white, five-pointed star with one point upward in each of the four corners. The Secretary of Defense's flag was designed in October 1947.

The emblem of the American eagle facing to its right with horizontal wings, clutching three crossed arrows, and bearing a red, white and blue shield was part of the seal of the National Military Establishment in 1947 and the redesignated Department of Defense in 1949.

According to the 1947 press release from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the eagle facing to its right indicates honor. "The eagle is defending the United States, represented by the shield of thirteen pieces. The thirteen pieces are joined together by the blue chief representing Congress."

When the position of Under Secretary of Defense was redesignated Deputy Secretary of Defense in August 1949, the flag remained as originally designed.



Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert O. Work announces details of the Department of Defense's FY 17 budget proposal during a press briefing at the Pentagon, February 2016. (DoD)



Deputy Secretary of Defense Patrick M. Shanahan learns about the mission of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, November 2017. (DoD)



Deputy Secretary of Defense David L. Norquist hosts the David Packard Excellence in Acquisition Award ceremony at the Pentagon, December 2019. (DoD)



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