DEPUTY SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE

1949 - 2019
“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
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.
Stephen Tyree Early
10 August 1949–30 September 1950

- Served in the U.S. Army.......................... 1917–1919
- Journalist with United Press....................... 1908–1913
- 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

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. Army................................. 1917
- President, Pressed and Welded Steel Products Company . . . . 1946
- Under Secretary of Commerce ............................. 1948–1951
- Administrator, Economic Cooperation Administration . . . . . . 1951
- Director, U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency ........... 1961–1969

ROBERT BERNERD ANDERSON

3 May 1954–4 August 1955

- B.A., Weatherford College ............................... 1927
- University of Texas Law School ............................ 1932
- Served one term in the Texas House of Representatives ....... 1933
- General Counsel; Manager, W.T. Waggoner Estate ............. 1937–1952
- Secretary of the Navy ...................................... 1953–1954
- President, Ventures Limited ............................... 1955–1957
- Secretary of the Treasury .................................. 1957–1961
- Special Ambassador to Panama .............................. 1964–1973

EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM CHAPMAN FOSTER

24 September 1951–20 January 1953

- Attended MIT
- Served in the U.S. Army................................. 1917
- President, Pressed and Welded Steel Products Company . . . . 1946
- Under Secretary of Commerce ............................. 1948–1951
- Administrator, Economic Cooperation Administration . . . . . . 1951
- Director, U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency ........... 1961–1969

REUBEN BUCK ROBERTSON, JR.

5 August 1955–25 April 1957

- B.S., Yale ............................................. 1930
- Member, War Production Board ................................ 1942
- Served in the U.S. Army ................................. 1942–1945
- President, Champion Paper and Fibre Company ............. 1950–1955
- Wage Stabilization Board ................................ 1950–1951
- Vice Chairman, Hoover Commission’s Committee on Business Organization of the Defense Department .................. 1955

EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

ROGER MARTIN KYES

2 February 1953–1 May 1954

- B.A., Harvard ............................................. 1928
- General Manager, Truck and Coach Division, General Motors Corporation ............................. 1950
- Vice President, General Motors Corporation .................. 1950
- Vice President, Accessory Group, General Motors Corporation ................. 1959–1965
- Executive Vice President, Automotive Components Group and Defense Division, General Motors Corporation .................. 1965–1970

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ROGER MARTIN KYES

2 February 1953–1 May 1954

- B.A., Harvard ............................................. 1928
- General Manager, Truck and Coach Division, General Motors Corporation ............................. 1950
- Vice President, General Motors Corporation .................. 1950
- Vice President, Accessory Group, General Motors Corporation ................. 1959–1965
- Executive Vice President, Automotive Components Group and Defense Division, General Motors Corporation .................. 1965–1970

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ROGER MARTIN KYES

2 February 1953–1 May 1954

- B.A., Harvard ............................................. 1928
- General Manager, Truck and Coach Division, General Motors Corporation ............................. 1950
- Vice President, General Motors Corporation .................. 1950
- Vice President, Accessory Group, General Motors Corporation ................. 1959–1965
- Executive Vice President, Automotive Components Group and Defense Division, General Motors Corporation .................. 1965–1970
DONALD AUBREY QUARLES

1 May 1957–8 May 1959

- B.A., Yale .......................................... 1916
- Served in the U.S. Army .......................... 1917–1919
- Engineer, Bell Telephone Laboratories .......... 1919–1948
- Vice President, Bell Telephone Laboratories ........ 1948–1952
- President, Sandia Corporation .......................1952
- Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Development ........ 1953–1955
- Secretary of the Air Force .......................... 1955–1957

THOMAS SOVEREIGN GATES, JR.

8 June 1959–1 December 1959

- B.A., University of Pennsylvania ................... 1928
- Partner, Drexel and Company ........................1940
- U.S. Naval Reserve ................................. 1942–1945
- Under Secretary of the Navy .........................1953–1957
- Secretary of the Navy ................................1957–1959
- Secretary of Defense ................................. 1959–1961

JAMES HENDERSON DOUGLAS, JR.

11 December 1959–24 January 1961

- B.A., Princeton ...................................... 1920
- Harvard Law School ................................ 1924
- Assistant Secretary of the Treasury ............... 1932–1933
- Served in the U.S. Army, 1918; U.S. Army Air Forces ...... 1942–1945
- Under Secretary of the Air Force ...................1953–1957
- Secretary of the Air Force ..........................1957–1959

ROSWELL LEAVITT GILPATRIC

24 January 1961–20 January 1964

- A.B., Yale .......................................... 1928
- Yale Law School ..................................... 1931
- Partner, Cravath, Swain & Moore ................. 1940–1951; 1953–1961
- Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Material ........ 1951
- Under Secretary of the Air Force ..................1951–1953
- Chairman, Board of Trustees, Aerospace Corporation ...1960–1961
- Deputy Chairman, Board of Directors, New York Federal Reserve Bank ........ 1970
- Chairman, Board of Directors, New York Federal Reserve Bank ........... 1971
KENNEDY & JOHNSON ADMINISTRATIONS

Cyrus Roberts Vance

- B.A., Yale .......................................... 1939
- Yale Law School ..................................... 1942
- Served in the U.S. Navy .......................... 1942–1946
- Associate; Partner, Simpson, Thacher and Bartlett .... 1947–1956; 1956–1961
- General Counsel, Department of Defense .......... 1961–1962
- Secretary of the Army ............................. 1962–1963
- Secretary of State ................................. 1977–1980

KENNEDY & JOHNSON ADMINISTRATIONS

Paul Henry Nitze
1 July 1967–20 January 1969

- B.A., Harvard ....................................... 1928
- Vice President, Dillon, Read, and Company ....... 1939–1941
- Served in the U.S. Government during World War II
- Director, Policy Planning Staff, Department of State .... 1950–1953
- Secretary of the Navy ............................. 1963–1967

NIXON & FORD ADMINISTRATIONS

David Packard
24 January 1969–13 December 1971

- A.B., Stanford ....................................... 1934
- M.A., Stanford ...................................... 1939
- 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 Management .......... 1985–1986

NIXON & FORD ADMINISTRATIONS

David Kenneth Rush
23 February 1972–29 January 1973

- B.A., University of Tennessee ........................ 1930
- Yale Law School ..................................... 1932
- Associate, Chadbourne, Stanchfield & Levy ........... 1932–1936
- Professor of Law, Duke University ................. 1936–1937
- 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 Germany ..... 1969–1972
- Deputy Secretary of State ......................... 1973–1974
- U.S. Ambassador to France ........................ 1974–1977
NIXON & FORD ADMINISTRATIONS

WILLIAM PERRY CLEMENS, JR.


- 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

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

NIXON & FORD ADMINISTRATIONS

ROBERT FRED ELLSWORTH

23 December 1975–10 January 1977

- B.S., Rice University ................................. 1947
- Served in the U.S. Navy ......................... 1944–1946; 1950–1953
- Republican Congressman from Kansas ............. 1961–1967
- U.S. Ambassador to NATO ......................1969–1974
- The first and only Second Deputy Secretary of Defense ..................1975–1977

CARTER ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM GRAHAM CLAYTOR, JR.


- 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., Princeton .............................. 1952
- Served in the U.S. Navy ......................... 1952–1954
- U.S. Foreign Service Officer, Department of State .... 1956–1969
- Assistant Director for Operations;
  Director, Office of Economic Opportunity .... 1969–1970; 1971
- Associate Director and Deputy Director,
  Office of Management and Budget ............. 1971–1972
- U.S. Ambassador to Portugal ................. 1974–1978
- Deputy Director, Central Intelligence Agency .......... 1978–1981
- Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs 1987
- Secretary of Defense ......................... 1987–1989

REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT IV

3 February 1984–22 April 1989

- B.A., Yale ........................................ 1966
- Harvard Law School ............................ 1969
- Legal adviser to Chairman, Federal Trade Commission ... 1969–1970
- Executive Assistant to Secretary,
- General Counsel, Department of
- General Counsel, Department of Defense .......... 1981–1984
- U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO ......... 1989–1992

REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM PAUL THAYER

12 January 1983–4 January 1984

- Attended the University of Kansas
- Served in the U.S. Navy ......................... 1941–1945
- Test Pilot; Chief Test Pilot, Chance Vought .... 1948; 1949–1950
- Flight Test Director; VP of Sales, Chance Vought .... 1952–1954
- President, Chance Vought Aircraft ............. 1961–1965
- President, LTV Aerospace Corporation .......... 1965–1970
- Chairman and CEO, LTV Corporation ......... 1970–1982

BUSH ADMINISTRATION

DONALD JESSE ATWOOD

24 April 1989–20 January 1993

- S.B., MIT, 1948; S.M., MIT ....................... 1950
- Served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps ............ 1943–1946
- Vice President and Treasurer, Dynatrol Corporation ... 1952–1959
- President, GM Hughes Electronics Corporation .... 1984
- Executive VP; Vice Chairman of the Board, GM .... 1984; 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
• 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


• 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; Pritzker Chair, Center for Strategic and International Studies ................ 2000–
CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

RUDY FRANK DE LEON

31 March 2000–1 March 2001

- B.A., Loyola Marymount University .................... 1974
- Legislative Assistant, U.S. Senate ..................... 1974–1977
- Staff member, House Armed Services Committee ....... 1985–1989
- Staff Director, House Armed Services Committee ...... 1989–1993
- Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense .......... 1993–1994

BUSH ADMINISTRATION

GORDON RICHARD ENGLAND

4 January 2006–11 February 2009

- B.S., University of Maryland ............................ 1961
- M.B.A., Texas Christian University .................... 1975
- Executive Vice President, General Dynamics .......... 1997–2001
- Secretary of the Navy ................................. 2001–2003; 2003–2005
- Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security ............... 2003

BUSH ADMINISTRATION

PAUL DUNDES WOLFOWITZ

2 March 2001–13 May 2005

- B.A., Cornell ............................................. 1965
- Ph.D., University of Chicago ............................ 1972
- Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Regional Programs .. 1977–1980
- Director, Policy Planning, Department of State ...... 1981–1982
- Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs . 1982–1986
- U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia ........................... 1986–1989

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM J. LYNN III

12 February 2009–5 October 2011

- B.A., Dartmouth .......................................... 1976
- Cornell Law School ...................................... 1980
- M.P.A., Princeton ....................................... 1982
- Executive Director, Defense Organization Project, Center for Strategic and International Studies .... 1982–1985
- Senior Vice President of Government Operations and Strategy, Raytheon Company ................... 2002–2009
OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

ASHTON BALDWIN CARTER

6 October 2011–3 December 2013

- B.A., Yale .......................................... 1976
- D. Phil., Oxford University .......................... 1979
- Professor, John F. Kennedy School of Gov’t, Harvard ........... 1996–2009
- Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics .................. 2009–2011

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

PATRICK MICHAEL SHANAHAN

19 July 2017 – 23 June 2019

- BSME, University of Washington ...................... 1985
- M.S., MIT .............................................. 1991
- M.B.A., MIT ........................................ 1991
- 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 ........ 2009–2013
- Chair, Board of Regents, University of Washington .................. 2014–2016
- Senior Vice President, Supply Chain & Operations, The Boeing Company .................. 2016–2017
- Acting Secretary of Defense .................. 1 January 2019–23 June 2019
- Longest tenured Actng Secretary of Defense to date, 174 days

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

ROBERT ORTON WORK

5 May 2014 –19 July 2017

- B.S., University of Illinois ............................ 1974
- M.S., University of Southern California .................. 1980
- M.S., Naval Postgraduate School ...................... 1990
- MIPP, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies .................. 1994
- Senior Associate, Toffler Associates .................. 2001–2002
- Senior Fellow, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments ........ 2002–2006
- Vice President for Strategic Studies, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments ........ 2007–2009
- Under Secretary of the Navy .................. 2009–2013
• 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
**Deputy Secretary Demographics**

Number of Confirmed Deputies since the post was created in 1949: 34

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

Average tenure for a Deputy Secretary: 775 days or 25 months or 2 years

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

Shortest tenured Deputy Secretary:
- Thomas S. Gates, Jr., 177 days

**Military Service:** 18 of 34 Deputies served in the Armed Forces

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**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.
Two former Deputy Secretaries of Defense who later became Secretaries of Defense: Ashton B. Carter (left) and William J. Perry (right), March 2015. (DoD)

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)