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Gordon Gray (politician)

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Gordon Gray (May 30, 1909 – November 26, 1982) was an American attorney and government official during the administrations of Harry Truman (1945–53) and Dwight Eisenhower (1953–61) associated with defense and national security.

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Biography

Family

Gordon Gray was born in Baltimore, Maryland, the son of Bowman Gray Sr. and Nathalie Lyons Gray. He was married in 1938 to the former Jane Boyden Craige, and they had four sons: Gordon Gray Jr., Burton C. Gray, C. Boyden Gray and Bernard Gray. After Jane's death, Gray married the former Nancy Maguire Beebe. His father Bowman, his uncle James A. Gray Jr. and later his brother, Bowman Gray Jr., were all heads of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company.

His son, C. Boyden Gray, a graduate of Harvard and the University of North Carolina Law School, served as White House counsel for President George Herbert Walker Bush. His nephew, Lyons Gray, also a graduate of both North Carolina and Yale, is a former member of the North Carolina House of Representatives, chief financial officer of the Environmental Protection Agency, and state Secretary of Revenue.[1][2]

Education

Gordon Gray attended Woodberry Forest School for high school. He graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1930, where he was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity (Beta chapter) & the secretive, Order of Gimgihoul. He earned his law degree from Yale Law School in 1933 and practiced law for two years in New York City before returning to Winston-Salem. UNC presented Gray with an honorary law degree in 1949.

Public career

Gray began his public life as a lawyer. In 1937, he bought the Piedmont Publishing Company, owner of the Winston-Salem Journal, The Twin City Sentinel, and WSJS radio. He added WSJS-FM in 1947 and WSJS-TV in 1953. He sold the newspapers in 1968, but formed Triangle Broadcasting to hold onto WSJS-AM-FM-TV. He also bought the local cable franchise for Winston-Salem, a move that forced him to sell off the broadcasting outlets in 1972.

He served in the North Carolina General Assembly from 1939 to 1943 and from 1947 to 1949, representing Forsyth County. He entered the U.S. Army in 1942 as a private and rose to captain, serving in Europe with General Omar Bradley's forces. Gray's service to the federal government began with his appointment as President Harry S. Truman's assistant secretary of the army in 1947; two years later, he was appointed Secretary of the Army. He served in this post from 1949 until 1950. The following year he became director of the newly formed Psychological Strategy Board which planned for and coordinated government psychological operations; he remained in the post until his resignation in January 1952, all the while continuing to lead the University of North Carolina.[3][4] He was the second president of the Consolidated University of North Carolina, succeeding Frank Porter Graham in 1950.

In 1954 Gray chaired a committee appointed by AEC chairman Lewis Strauss which recommended revoking Robert Oppenheimer's security clearance. The Gray Board, as it was known, issued its split decision on May 27, 1954, with Gray and Thomas A. Morgan recommending the revocation, despite their finding that Oppenheimer was a "loyal citizen." Dr. Ward V. Evans, a conservative Republican and the third member of the board, dissented, saying that most of the allegations against Oppenheimer had been heard before, in 1947, when he had originally received his clearance.[5] In the book American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer the chairmanship of Gray during the hearings was described as severely lacking. Gray had allowed that the prosecutors briefed the committee for a full week without representatives from the defendants being present. Moreover, Gray let the prosecutors use documents and testimonies that the defendants attorneys were denied access to, as well as material that was obtained by illegal means such as unwarranted wiretaps. The authors called the Gray Board a "veritable kangaroo court in which the head judge accepted the prosecutors lead".[6]

Gray shocked proponents of public education in North Carolina when he said, in a November 1954 Founder's Day speech at Guilford College, that "if I had to make a choice between a complete system of publicly supported higher education or a complete system of private higher education, I would choose the latter as a greater safeguard of the things for which we live." [7] Less than a year later, Secretary of Defense Charles Erwin Wilson named Gray assistant secretary for international security affairs and Gray's brief career in academia was ended.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed him to head the Office of Defense Mobilization in 1957, where he served until the office's consolidation in 1958. Eisenhower then appointed Gray his National Security Advisor from 1958 until 1961. On January 18, 1961, President Eisenhower awarded Gray the Medal of Freedom. He served on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board under Presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard M. Nixon and Gerald R. Ford. In 1976, he was awarded the United States Military Academy's Sylvanus Thayer Award.

From 1962 to 1963, Gray was head of the Federal City Council, a group of business, civic, education, and other leaders interested in economic development in Washington, D.C.[8][9]

Gray was also publisher of the Winston-Salem Journal, chairman of the board of Piedmont Publishing Company and chairman of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

References

- 1. ^ Lyons Gray picked for top state revenue job - Winston-Salem Journal (12-21-2012). Retrieved August 13, 2019.
- 2. ^ ZSR Library-Gray Family Antique Photo Album
- 3. ^ Prados, John (2006). Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA. Ivan R. Dee. p. 82. ISBN 9781615780112.
- 4. ^ "Staff Member and Office Files: Psychological Strategy Board Files". Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum.

Gordon Gray
4th United States National Security Advisor
In office June 24, 1958 – January 13, 1961
President Dwight Eisenhower
Preceded by Robert Cutler
Succeeded by McGeorge Bundy
Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization
In office March 14, 1957 – June 24, 1958
President Dwight Eisenhower
Preceded by Arthur Flemming
Succeeded by Position abolished
Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs
In office July 14, 1955 – February 27, 1957
President Dwight Eisenhower
Preceded by Struve Hensel
Succeeded by Mansfield Sprague
President of the University of North Carolina System
In office October 12, 1950 – June 10, 1955
Preceded by Frank Graham
Succeeded by Bill Friday
2nd United States Secretary of the Army
In office April 28, 1949 – April 12, 1950
President Harry Truman
Preceded by Kenneth Royal
Succeeded by Frank Pace
Personal details
Born May 30, 1909
Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.
Died November 26, 1982 (aged 73)
Washington, D.C., U.S.
Political party Republican
Spouse(s) Jane Boyden Craige
Nancy Maguire Beebe
Children 4, including Burton and Boyden
Education University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (BA)
Yale University (LLB)
Military service
Branch/service United States Army
Years of service 1942–1945
Rank Captain

5. [^] Crow, Jeffrey J. (April 2008). "The Paradox and the Dilemma: Gordon Gray and the J. Robert Oppenheimer Security Clearance Hearing". *North Carolina Historical Review*. **85** (2): 163–190. JSTOR 23523398.
6. [^] Bird, Kai; Sherwin, Martin J. (2005). *American Prometheus: The Triumph And Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer* (1st ed.). A.A. Knopf. ISBN 9780375412028. Retrieved April 29, 2019.
7. [^] quoted in Crow, p. 188
8. [^] Hailey, Albon B. (January 9, 1962). "Gray Elected to Federal Council Post". *The Washington Post*. p. A1.
9. [^] Smith, J.Y. (November 27, 1982). "Gordon Gray, Former Secretary Of U.S. Army, Dies at Age 73". *The Washington Post*. p. B4.

External links

- Inventory of the Office of President of the University of North Carolina (System): Gordon Gray Records, 1950-1955, in the University Archives, UNC-Chapel Hill.
- Papers of Gordon Gray, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library Archived 2014-04-24 at the Wayback Machine
- Records of the White House Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library
- Undersecretary of the Army biography
- Gordan Gray biography in *Secretaries of War and Secretaries of the Army*, United States Army Center of Military History.
- The American Presidency Project
- Gordon Gray Photograph Collection United States Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Political offices		
New office	Assistant Secretary of the Army 1947–1948	Succeeded by Tracy Voorhees
Preceded by William Draper	United States Under Secretary of the Army 1949	
Preceded by Kenneth Royall	United States Secretary of the Army 1949–1950	Succeeded by Frank Pace
Preceded by Struve Hensel	Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs 1955–1957	Succeeded by Mansfield Sprague
Preceded by Arthur Flemming	Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization 1957–1958	Position abolished
Preceded by Robert Cutler	National Security Advisor 1958–1961	Succeeded by Mac Bundy
Academic offices		
Preceded by Frank Graham	President of the University of North Carolina System 1950–1955	Succeeded by Bill Friday

V · T · E	United States Secretaries of War and the Army	[show]
V · T · E	Assistants to the President for National Security Affairs	[show]
V · T · E	Cabinet of President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953–1961)	[show]
V · T · E	Presidents of the University of North Carolina System	[show]
	Authority control	[show]

Categories: 1909 births | 1982 deaths | Lawyers from Baltimore | Military personnel from Baltimore | 20th-century American politicians | Bowman Gray family | Eisenhower administration cabinet members | Leaders of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill | North Carolina state senators | Presidents of the University of North Carolina System | United States Assistant Secretaries of Defense | United States National Security Advisors | United States Secretaries of the Army | United States Under Secretaries of the Army | University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill alumni | Woodberry Forest School alumni

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