

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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FOR THE PRESS

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JOSEPH PALMER 2nd SWORN IN AS NEW ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Joseph Palmer 2nd of Maryland was sworn in today as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.

Mr. Palmer, a Foreign Service officer with the rank of Career Minister, has been serving as Director General of the Foreign Service since February 16, 1964. He has had more than twenty years of experience in African affairs. From 1960 to 1964 Mr. Palmer was United States Ambassador to Nigeria.

The new Assistant Secretary, who was nominated by President Johnson on March 15, succeeds Governor G. Mennen Williams who resigned to return to Michigan to campaign for a seat in the United States Senate.

Born on June 16, 1914 in Detroit, Michigan, where his family lived for a brief interval, Mr. Palmer went to school in the Boston, Mass., area. He attended Harvard University where he received a bachelor's degree in 1937. The following year he did graduate work at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service.

After passing the Foreign Service examination, Mr. Palmer was appointed a Foreign Service officer, Vice Consul and Secretary in the Diplomatic Service in November, 1939. His first foreign assignment came in January, 1940, when he was posted to Mexico City as a Vice Consul. A year later he returned to Washington and entered the Foreign Service School.

Mr. Palmer's long experience in African affairs began in June, 1941, when he was assigned as Vice Consul in Nairobi. He served there until 1945 when he returned to the Department where he worked in the Division of African Affairs and was concerned with Ethiopian matters and the disposition of the former Italian colonies in Africa.

He was promoted to Assistant Chief of the Division in October, 1947 and later became Acting Chief. He went to the Embassy in London in May, 1949, where he served as an African, Near Eastern and South Asian specialist. During his tour in London he was promoted to First Secretary and Consul. Returning to the Department in October, 1953, he was appointed Deputy Director of the Office of European Regional Affairs and in March 1955, became Acting Director.

When it was decided in 1956 to set up a separate Bureau of African Affairs, Mr. Palmer was named Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and given the responsibility for organizing it.

Upon completion of this task he was assigned as Consul General at Salisbury, capital of the then Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, in September, 1958. He was accorded the personal rank of Minister for this assignment.

Mr. Palmer's appointment as Ambassador to Nigeria followed in 1960. In July, 1962, he was promoted to the rank of Career Minister in the Foreign Service. He returned to the United States in 1964 to take up his duties as Director General of the Foreign Service.

Mr. Palmer

Mr. Palmer is married to the former Margaret McCamy Jones. They have two sons, Joseph Woodbury who was born in Africa and is now serving with the U.S. Navy in South Viet-Nam, and Thomas Jones, and a daughter, Heather Gordon. Their home is at 5414 Kirkwood Drive, Springfield, Maryland.

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