

L. Patrick Gray: Renaissance Man

By Ronald J. Ostrow
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L. Patrick Gray III, 55, the assistant attorney general who will be nominated to be No. 2 man in the Justice Department, is the closest individual to a Renaissance Man in the Department hierarchy.

A 20-year Navy veteran who commanded a submarine during the Korean War, a skilled lawyer in and out of the Navy, a onetime member of Vice President Nixon's personal staff, executive assistant to Robert Finch when he was under fire as Health, Education and Welfare Secretary, Gray's affable manner cloaks rigid self-discipline and methodical ways.

A month after arguing his first case before the Supreme Court without a single note in front of him, he related that he spent 66 hours and 25 minutes preparing for the half-hour presentation — because he kept a record of his time.

His inner core of toughness shows through in personal habits. When a luncheon companion, expressing admiration for the fact that Gray gave up both smoking and alcoholic beverages last May, noted that more than half a year had passed, Gray said without a trace of a smile: "I intend to give both up forever."

Gray has had to call on this reserve of toughness in the 15 months he has headed the Justice Department's Civil Division. The job has included directing the administration's legal response to antiwar demonstrations in Washington and on federal property elsewhere.

In that capacity last year, he was roundly chewed out by an irate federal judge after the Justice Department

backed down and withdrew its request for a restraining order against Vietnam veterans who set up camp at the Mall below the Capitol. Aides noted that Gray easily could have delegated the uncomfortable task of facing the judge to a subordinate.

Gray is a rarity among administration officials in that he admits to second thoughts about the mass arrest policy used to quell Mayday protests in Washington last year, later criticized by a federal court.

"The Mayday thing keeps a lot of us awake wondering what other alternatives there were," he said in an interview. He added immediately, however: "I have never

seen evidence that anybody in this government with malice aforethought set out to deprive an individual of his constitutional rights."

Department associates who have been in meetings with Gray for hours cite his deliberateness and careful, analytical mind as prime attributes. They expect these qualities to help offset quick judgments on the part of Deputy Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst, who is to succeed Attorney General John N. Mitchell.

These associates expect Gray to provide the same kind of balance for Kleindienst as the extroverted, candid Kleindienst lent to

the introverted, extremely close-mouthed Mitchell.

Gray has known President Nixon for 25 years. They met when Mr. Nixon was a freshman congressman and Gray, a lieutenant commander in the Navy, was studying law at George Washington University.

Later, when Gray was serving as special assistant to the Secretary of Defense, he watched the then vice president at various Cabinet sessions.

When Gray retired from the Navy he joined Mr. Nixon's personal staff, remaining through his unsuccessful campaign for the presidency in 1960.

Gray had experience in



MARTHA MITCHELL

... "I'm very sad"

civil rights, currently one of the Justice Department's most sensitive areas, while top aide to Finch.