

FRANCIS PATRICK MATTHEWS
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

Francis Patrick Matthews of Omaha, Nebraska, became Secretary of the Navy on May 25, 1949, following unanimous confirmation by the United States Senate of his appointment by President Truman.

Mr. Matthews brought to the Navy Department a background of many years of activity in law and banking, in welfare work and in such civic projects as the Chairmanship of the United States Chamber of Commerce's Committee on Socialism and Communism and as a member of President Truman's Committee on Civil Rights.

Mr. Matthews is the first Nebraskan to serve as Secretary of the Navy. Although he is not a veteran, he was very active during World War II in welfare work for the United States Armed Forces and subsequently in relief work for the peoples of the liberated areas of Europe. He was one of the founders of the U. S. O.

Mr. Matthews was born at Albion, Nebraska, March 15, 1887, the son of Patrick Henry Matthews and Mary Ann (Sullivan) Matthews. He lived for a short time at Okalona, Mississippi, and later at Spalding, Nebraska, where he helped his widowed mother support the family of seven children. After he was graduated from Albion High School, the family moved to Omaha, where he worked his way through Creighton University by doing odd jobs and tutoring in Latin and Greek. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Creighton in 1910, his Master of Arts Degree from the same university in 1911 and his Bachelor of Laws Degree in 1913. He was admitted to the Nebraska Bar in 1913.

He received honorary degrees of Doctor of Laws from Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1940 and from John Marshall College, Jersey City, New Jersey, in 1943, and from Villanova College, Philadelphia and Loyola University, Chicago, in 1950.

Mr. Matthews' political activity was limited to serving as Chairman of the Douglas County Democratic Central Committee from 1932 through 1936, and to serving as Chairman of the Nebraska delegation to the Democratic Convention in Philadelphia in 1948 which nominated Harry S. Truman for President of the United States.

From 1933 until his appointment as Secretary of the Navy he served as Counsel for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation of Nebraska and Wyoming. He is President of the First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Omaha; Director, President and General Counsel of Radio Station WOW, Omaha; Director and Member of the Executive Committee, Northwestern Bell Telephone Company; and a member of the law firm of Matthews, Kelley, Matthews and Delehant, in which his son Francis P. Matthews, Jr., is associated.

Since 1941, Mr. Matthews has been a director of the United States Chamber of Commerce for the Department of Finance; and was Chairman of the Committee on Socialism and Communism of the United States Chamber

of Commerce, which issued reports on Communism in 1946, 1947, and 1948. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Omaha Chamber of Commerce from 1937 to 1941 and President from 1938 to 1939.

His welfare activities include membership in the Citizens' Committee, Community Chests of America, Board of Governors, Omaha Community Chest, 1930-34, and President, 1938-39. In 1936 he served as Chairman of the Omaha Community Chest Campaign.

He is a member of the Board of Directors, Father Flanagan's Boy's Home, Boys Town, Nebraska; member and past chairman, Board of Regents, Creighton University; Director, Duchesne College and Convent of the Sacred Heart, Omaha, Nebraska; Past Director and Chairman of Omaha Public Library Board. He also is a member of the Omaha Bar Association, the Nebraska State Bar Association and American Bar Association.

He was Vice President, Board member and member of the Executive Committee of the National War Fund; Vice President, member of board, of Executive Committee, and incorporator, United Service Organizations; Chairman, Executive Committee, National Catholic Community Service 1940-42; member and board secretary, War Prisoners Aid; member, President's Committee on Civil Rights, 1946 and co-Chairman, Associated Services for the Armed Forces, 1950; Vice President and member Board of Directors, United Defense Fund, 1951.

He visited England, Ireland and Scotland, 1943, and various countries in Europe and Middle East, 1944, in connection with welfare services for U. S. Armed Forces and relief for people in liberated areas. He is a member of the Irish-American Historical Society of New York and the Nebraska State Historical Society.

He was Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, from 1939 to 1945.

Mr. Matthews is a member of the Omaha Rotary Club, the Omaha Athletic Club, the Metropolitan Club of New York, the National Press Club and an honorary member of the Army-Navy Club of Washington, D. C.

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