



REAR ADMIRAL G. H. PATRICK BURSLEY, USCG
CHIEF COUNSEL
of the
U. S. COAST GUARD
(1976 -)

George Herbert Patrick Bursley was born on April 5, 1925, at Istanbul, Turkey. He is the son of the late Herbert S. Bursley, a career foreign service officer and former U. S. Ambassador to Honduras and Mrs. (Robertina H.) Bursley who presently resides in Washington, D. C.

He graduated from the U. S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, Conn. (B. S. Degree) and was commissioned as Ensign in the U. S. Coast Guard on June 5, 1946. He then served at sea respectively, as Executive Officer of the Cutter IRONWOOD, as a line officer on board the Cutter TANEY and the Cutter GRESHAM on ocean station (weather) patrol, and the Cutter TRILLIUM which was engaged in logistics support of Western Pacific Loran Stations.

In October 1949, he was assigned as Executive Officer of the Cutter EWING based at Alameda, Calif. From January to August of 1951, he was a training officer at the Coast Guard Training Station at Alameda.

He next was selected for post-graduate training at George Washington University Law School in Washington, D. C. which awarded him the Degree of Juris Doctor upon graduation in 1953. He was admitted to the District of Columbia Bar in 1954. In 1964 he was admitted to the California Bar. He has since been admitted to practice before the U. S. Court of Military Appeals (1967) and the Supreme Court of the United States (1968). He has been designated pursuant to the Uniform Code of Military Justice as a Military Judge of General Courts-Martial and is also certified as Trial and Defense Counsel of Courts-Martial.

From 1954 to 1958 he served as District Legal Officer of the 13th Coast Guard District, Seattle. From August 1958 to July 1960, he was Commanding Officer of the Cutter MAGNOLIA, based at San Francisco. He then served as District Legal Officer of the 12th Coast Guard District, San Francisco, until July 1961, when he was assigned as District Legal Officer of the 14th Coast Guard District, Honolulu.

In February 1964, RADM Bursley was assigned to the Program Analysis Division at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D. C. On July 15, 1964, he was detailed to the Treasury Department as Coast Guard Liaison Officer and Aide to the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Coast Guard Affairs.

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RADM Bursley was a member of the interagency task force which drafted the legislation to establish the Department of Transportation and coordinated activities of the executive agencies in support of its enactment by the Congress in 1966. For exceptionally meritorious performance in that assignment, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the Coast Guard's highest award for non-combatant service.

Early in 1967, while a member of a special staff assembled by the Secretary of Transportation to activate the new Department, RADM Bursley organized the Executive Secretariat of the Department of Transportation and placed it into operation. Upon activation of the Department on April 1, 1967, RADM Bursley, as Assistant to the Deputy Under Secretary of Transportation, participated in the development of program concepts and policy proposals covering the full spectrum of Departmental activity. He was particularly concerned with Departmental program proposals for the revitalization of the merchant marine and with the formulation of the organization of the Office of the Secretary of Transportation. In September 1968, RADM Bursley joined the Department of Transportation Office of Policy Review which was responsible for the coordination of policy development in the Department. In March 1969, he was given additional duties as Departmental Representative of a White House Interdepartmental Working Group on Maritime Policy. His services in these two capacities led to the award of the Coast Guard Commendation Medal.

From July 1969 until June 1972, RADM Bursley served as Chief of the Maritime and International Law Division in the Office of the Chief Counsel of the Coast Guard. During that period he was also the alternate to the Chief Counsel of the Coast Guard. In addition, he served as the alternate to the Chief Counsel of the Coast Guard as the Department of Transportation representative on the Interagency Law of the Sea Task Force. He served collaterally as a Judge of the Coast Guard Court of Military Review.

On July 7, 1972, RADM Bursley assumed the duties of Commander, Coast Guard Group, Baltimore. Concurrently, he served as Captain of the Port of Baltimore and as Commanding Officer, Coast Guard Port Safety Station, Baltimore.

Following his nomination by the President in January 1974, and approval of the Senate, the then Captain Bursley was promoted to two-star flag officer to rank as Rear Admiral from July 1, 1974. At that time he was assigned to the post of Commander, 2nd Coast Guard District with offices in St. Louis, Mo.

In July 1976, RADM Bursley returned to Headquarters to assume the post of Chief Counsel of the U. S. Coast Guard.

RADM Bursley is married to the former Claire Mulvany of Oakland, Ca. They have two children, Kathleen Anne and Devin Herbert.

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