



# Commandant's Change of Command

**30 MAY 1978**



**ADMIRAL OWEN W. SILER**  
**U.S. COAST GUARD**

When he took office as Commandant of the Coast Guard on 1 June 1974 Admiral Owen W. Siler brought to his post a broad spectrum of service experience which enhanced his understanding of every Coast Guard mission. He had served at sea, commanded air stations, and served in various administrative assignments in district offices and at Coast Guard Headquarters. On appointment as rear admiral, he commanded the Second Coast Guard District in St. Louis.

Admiral Siler's term of office has seen dramatic operational and regulatory challenges. These include the implementation and enforcement of the Fishery Conservation and Management Act; redoubled efforts in environmental protection, particularly through improved oil tanker safety programs; and a dramatic increase in the interdiction of contraband being smuggled into the United States. These challenges have been met efficiently and effectively with only a minimal increase in resources.

Admiral Siler was born in Seattle, Washington, and reared in Santa Maria, California, where he received an A.A. Degree from Santa Maria Junior College in 1940. He graduated from the Coast Guard Academy with a B.S. Degree in Marine Engineering in 1943. He graduated from the National War College in 1967, and earned an M.S. Degree in International Affairs from George Washington University in 1968. He earned his wings in 1948. He holds a number of World War II campaign medals for action in the Bougainville invasion and other Pacific landings. He holds the *Meritorious Service Medal* and the *Legion of Merit Medal* in recognition of his services while Commander, Second Coast Guard District from 1971 to 1974. In 1977 he was awarded the *Coast Guard Distinguished Service Medal* and the *Secretary of Transportation's Award for Outstanding Achievement* for his accomplishments as Commandant.

## SEMPER PARATUS

By Francis S. Van Boskerck, Captain, USCG

1. From Aztec Shore to Arctic Zone,  
To Europe and Far East,  
The Flag is carried by our ships  
In times of war and peace;  
And never have we struck it yet  
In spite of foemen's might,  
Who cheered our crews and cheered again  
For showing how to fight.

### CHORUS

We're always ready for the call,  
We place our trust in thee.  
Through surf and storm and howling gale,  
High shall our purpose be.  
"Semper Paratus" is our guide  
Our fame, our glory, too,  
To fight to save or fight and die!  
Aye! Coast Guard we are for you.

2. From North and South and East and West  
The Coast Guard's in the fight.  
Destroying subs and landing troops  
The Axis feels our might.  
For we're the first invaders  
On every fighting field.  
Afloat, ashore, on men and Spars  
You'll find the Coast Guard shield.

### CHORUS

3. Through howling gale and shot and shell  
To win our victory.  
Semper Paratus is our guide  
Our pledge, our motto too,  
We're "Always Ready" do or die!  
Aye! Coast Guard We fight for you!!

### CHORUS

**CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY**

**30 May 1978**

*on board* **USCGC RELIANCE at**

**Washington Navy Yard**

**SELECTED MUSIC**

**U.S. COAST GUARD BAND**

**Lieutenant LEWIS J. BUCKLEY, Director**

**Arrival of Admiral OWEN W. SILER**

**Arrival of Admiral JOHN B. HAYES**

**Arrival of The Honorable BROCK ADAMS, Secretary of Transportation**

**19 GUN SALUTE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Vice Admiral ELLIS L. PERRY**

**INVOCATION**

**Rear Admiral JOHN J. O'CONNOR, CHC, USN**

**REMARKS**

**Secretary ADAMS**

**REMARKS**

**Admiral SILER**

**19 GUN SALUTE**

**ADMINISTRATION OF OATH**

**Secretary ADAMS**

**19 GUN SALUTE**

**REMARKS**

**Admiral HAYES**

**THE NATIONAL ANTHEM**

**BENEDICTION**

**Captain ALFRED R. SAEGER JR., CHC, USN**

**SELECTED MUSIC**

**U.S. COAST GUARD BAND**

**CGC RELIANCE and CGC ALERT open for visitors following ceremony**

**ADMIRAL JOHN BRIGGS HAYES**  
**U.S. COAST GUARD**

Admiral John B. Hayes, 16th Commandant of the Coast Guard, has a wide variety of experience covering a broad spectrum of mission areas.

During his more than 32-years in the Coast Guard, Admiral Hayes has served in positions of increasing responsibility both ashore and afloat. He has long service at sea, and has held top administrative posts in district offices and at Coast Guard Headquarters. He commanded a Coast Guard patrol division in combat in Southeast Asia. Admiral Hayes was appointed Rear Admiral in 1973, serving as Comptroller of the Coast Guard until 1975. Before assuming his present post, he was Commander of the Seventeenth Coast Guard District, Juneau, Alaska.

Admiral Hayes was nominated by the President to his present rank in early 1978. He commands approximately 44,000 Coast Guard military and civilian personnel stationed in the United States and in many overseas locations. These personnel man a wide variety of ships, planes, and shore facilities.

Admiral Hayes was born in Jamestown, New York, and received his early education at Bradford High School, Bradford, Pennsylvania. He is a 1946 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut, with a B.S. Degree in Engineering. The admiral also holds a M.A. Degree in International Affairs from George Washington University. He was awarded the *Secretary of Treasury Commendation Award Medal* in 1962 for the development of a long range plan for replacing aging cutters. As Commander of Division Two of Coast Guard Squadron One in South Vietnam, then Commander Hayes was awarded the *Legion of Merit with Combat "V"* for his part in the prevention of infiltration of supplies, arms and men to enemy forces via the sea. He received two unit awards and two personal awards from the Republic of Viet Nam. In recognition of his services as Chief, Planning and Evaluation Staff, Office of Boating Safety, Hayes was awarded the *Coast Guard Commendation Medal* in 1968.

Later as Comptroller of the Coast Guard he earned the *Meritorious Service Medal*, and, for service as Commander, Seventeenth Coast Guard District, he earned a second award of the *Legion of Merit*.

## THE OFFICE OF COMMANDANT

The office of "Commandant," like the U.S. Coast Guard, has evolved through the years. Although the agency traces its birth to August 4, 1790, it was not until the 19th century that the office of "Commandant" became established "de facto." Beginning in 1894, captains of the Revenue Cutter Service served as "Chief, Division of Revenue Cutter Service," when for the first time, there was a statutory requirement that the head of the service be a uniformed officer from its own ranks.

The use of the title and rank "Captain Commandant" first occurred in 1908 with the Revenue Cutter Service. It was subsequently formalized in the 1915 legislation which merged that Service with the Life-Saving Service to form the U.S. Coast Guard. The essence of the role and position has been continuous, despite the changes through which both the name "Coast Guard" and the title "Commandant" have evolved.

As the Coast Guard's size and responsibilities have increased, the rank of the Commandant has also been elevated from that of captain to full admiral. The first four star Commandant of the Coast Guard was Russell R. Waesche (1936-1946). Following the Second World War the position was reduced to Vice Admiral and remained there until June 1960 when it was again made a four star position.

### Commandants of the Coast Guard

Captain Leonard G. Shepard	1889-1895
Captain Charles F. Shoemaker	1895-1905
Captain Worth G. Ross	1905-1911
Commodore Ellsworth P. Bertholf	1911-1919
Rear Admiral William F. Reynolds	1919-1924
Rear Admiral Frederick C. Billard	1924-1932
Rear Admiral Harry G. Hamlet	1932-1936
Admiral Russell R. Waesche	1936-1946
Admiral Joseph F. Farley	1946-1949
Vice Admiral Merlin O'Neill	1950-1954
Admiral Alfred C. Richmond	1954-1962
Admiral Edwin J. Roland	1962-1966
Admiral Willard J. Smith	1966-1970
Admiral Chester R. Bender	1970-1974
Admiral Owen W. Siler	1974-1978

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 30- Admiral John B. Hayes (left) became the 16th Commandant of the U. S. Coast Guard today, relieving Admiral Owen W. Siler (right), who retired after 35 years of service. Admiral Hayes, a 1946 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, was nominated for the top post by President Carter last Feb. He had been serving as Commander, 17th Coast Guard District, Juneau, Alaska.