

Raymond E. Mabus Jr.

Mississippi '69

Oxford Cup Roll No. 078

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Raymond E. Mabus Jr., *Mississippi '69*, was initiated into the Beta Beta Chapter on March 19, 1967, as Roll No. 616. He graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor's degree in English and political science from the University of Mississippi. Shortly thereafter, he attended Johns Hopkins University and received a Master's in political science and was then admitted to Harvard Law School and graduated magna cum laude.

Serving two years in the Navy as a surface warfare officer from 1970-72 aboard the cruiser USS Little Rock, Mabus also served as a law clerk in the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He began his professional career working in Washington, D.C., as legal counsel to the U.S. House Agriculture Committee. Following the election of Governor William Winter, he returned to Mississippi to work in the governor's office. In 1983, Mabus was elected state auditor and served from 1984 to 1988. He participated in a large FBI sting operation ("Operation Pretense"), which recovered millions in misspent and stolen public funds and ensnared 57 county supervisors in 25 counties. All but two supervisors served time in prison.

Mabus ran for Governor of Mississippi in 1987, becoming the youngest governor in the nation at the time. He served from 1988-1992, and during his tenure, he stressed education and job creation. He passed B.E.S.T. (Better Education for Success Tomorrow), known as one of the most comprehensive education reforms in America.

In 1994, Mabus was appointed Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He served in the role from 1994-96. As Ambassador, a 1994 border crisis involving Yemen was defused, a 1994 crisis with Iraq was deterred, and Saudi Arabia officially abandoned the boycott of U.S. businesses that traded with Israel.

In 2009, Mabus was sworn in as 75th Secretary of the Navy after receiving the nomination from President Obama and unanimous Senate approval. Currently, he leads the Navy and Marine Corps and is responsible for an annual budget in excess of \$170 billion and some 900,000 personnel. Leading the world's only global navy, he has traveled 715,000 miles and visited more than 95 countries. Maintaining an active presence on Facebook by personally commenting on his daily affairs, he is believed to be the first branch secretary to maintain such a high-profile web presence.

A year later, President Obama asked Mabus to prepare a long-term recovery plan for the Gulf of Mexico in the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. After extensive travel and many meetings, his report "America's Gulf Coast: A Long-Term Recovery Plan After the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill" was released in September 2010. The report was met with broad bi-partisan support.

During his illustrious career, Mabus has garnered an impressive list of awards. He received the U.S. Department of Defense Distinguished Public Service Award, was named one of Fortune Magazine's top ten education governors, was honored with the U.S. Army's Distinguished Civilian Service Award and given the Martin Luther King Social Responsibility Award from the King Center in Atlanta. Mabus also received the King Abdul Aziz Award from Saudi Arabia.

An avid photographer, he has raised thousands of dollars for Mississippi charities. As an expert on Middle East affairs, he has been featured on "60 Minutes," "Nightline" and even the television drama series, "NCIS."

The father of two daughters, Elisabeth and Annie, Mabus lives in Ridgeland, Mississippi.