

## ITALY

### Ambassador John A. Volpe

Ambassador Volpe was born in 1908 in Wakefield, Mass., one of six children of Italian immigrant parents. After a period of employment in his father's construction business, he attended Wentworth Institute in Boston and majored in architectural construction, graduating in 1930. In 1933, he opened his own construction firm, which closed during World War II when Ambassador Volpe volunteered for duty with the Navy Civil Engineer Corps. The firm re-opened after the war and achieved a national reputation for construction excellence.



In 1950, Ambassador Volpe entered Massachusetts politics, becoming Governor of the state in 1960. After defeat by a narrow margin in 1962, he was again elected Governor in 1964 and 1966. Ambassador Volpe was appointed Secretary of Transportation by President Nixon in January, 1969, and served throughout the President's first term.

During his career, Ambassador Volpe has received 21 honorary degrees from American colleges and universities. He was Chairman of the National Governors Conference and President of the Council of State Governments during his service as Governor of Massachusetts. He holds the Italian Order of Merit and two orders from the Vatican as a Knight of Malta and Knight Commander of the Holy Sepulcher.

Ambassador Volpe was appointed Ambassador to Italy in February 1973.

Ambassador Volpe is married to the former Jennie Benedetto. They have a son, a daughter, and several grandchildren.

October 1973

## BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

OF

### AMBASSADOR JOHN A. VOLPE

Mr. John A. Volpe is the twenty-third United States Ambassador to Italy. He was designated by President Nixon last December and his nomination was confirmed by the Senate of the United States on February 1, 1973.

Born of parents who immigrated to the United States from the Abruzzi section of Italy, Mr. Volpe started his career modestly and soon became a contractor of multi-million dollar projects. He then entered public life to become America's first Federal Highway Administrator; later he was elected governor of his native State of Massachusetts. He was serving this third term as chief executive of the State when President Nixon chose him to be Secretary of Transportation where he served as a member of the President's Cabinet 1969-1973.

Mr. Volpe was born in Massachusetts, one of six children.

At the age of 12, Volpe went to work for his father, first as a hod carrier and then as a plasterer's apprentice. After graduating from high school, he worked for his father full-time and attended Boston's Wentworth Institute evenings. Two years later, he gave up his work as a plasterer, returned to the Wentworth Institute full-time, and graduated in 1930, having majored in architectural engineering. In 1933, he started his own construction business in Massachusetts.

During 1943 Volpe closed his construction firm and volunteered for duty with the Navy's Civil Engineer Corps (Seabees). He left the Navy with the rank of Lieutenant Commander and returned to building schools, hospitals and office buildings.

Mr. Volpe first entered politics as Deputy Chairman of the Massachusetts Republican State Committee in 1950. In 1953, he received his first major public appointment: Massachusetts Commissioner of Public Works. From there he served in 1956-57 as the first Federal Highway Administrator, and was elected Governor of Massachusetts in 1960 for a two-year term. Losing by a narrow margin in 1962, Volpe came back and was returned to office in 1964. In 1966, he was re-elected Governor for the first four-year term in the State's history by the largest margin ever accorded a Massachusetts gubernatorial candidate -- over a half million votes.

In his nearly three terms in office, Mr. Volpe established a record in fighting for civil rights, consumer protection, natural resources, cultural resources and conservation; set many precedents in his State in education, public health, mental health, economic development, and increased efficiency in State government.

Mr. Volpe brought to the Department of Transportation his ability as an organizer and his reputation for getting things done. He guided the Department toward a new emphasis on environment in response to his sense of responsibility to the citizens of America he has been serving.

Ambassador Volpe made 20 trips to Italy before becoming Secretary of Transportation and three trips to Italy during his tenure in that office -- in October, 1969; during President Nixon's visit to Italy in September-October, 1970; and in October, 1971.

During his visit to Rome in 1969, Mr. Volpe was presented with the decoration of Knight of the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic by President Saragat.

During his 1969 visit the Ambassador paid a nostalgic visit to the Abruzzi mountain town of Pescosansonesco, the birth place of his parents and the home of his ancestors.

The Ambassador is the recipient of the highest honor of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic... the Knight of the Great Cross. He has been knighted by the Vatican both as a Knight of Malta and as a Knight Commander in the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. In addition Mr. Volpe has received many other honors including 25 honorary degrees from colleges and universities in the U.S. He is past chairman of the National Governors' Conference and past president of the Council of State Governments. Mr. Volpe is past president of the Associated General Contractors of America and the Society of American Military Engineers and the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Volpe is married to the former Jennie Benedetto. They have a son, John A., Jr., living with them in Rome; a daughter, Mrs. Roger Rotondi; and four grandchildren.

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

December 12, 1968

JOHN VOLPE: SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION DESIGNATE (PROFILE)

In the State Capitol on Beacon Hill in Boston, Massachusetts, the official policy is that "The people of Massachusetts shall have a dollar's worth of value for every dollar spent."

It is expected that this motto of Governor John A. Volpe will serve him in good stead when he is approved as Richard Nixon's Secretary of Transportation.

Mr. Volpe, who is in the middle of his third term as Massachusetts' Governor, is an erstwhile architectural engineer who served as the first National Highway Administrator during the second half of the Eisenhower Administration. In this post, he supervised the launching of the Nation's 40 billion dollar Interstate Highway Program.

The new Cabinet appointee, one of a group of prominent Republicans who seconded the nomination of Mr. Nixon at the Party's Convention last August in Miami, was born 60 years ago this week to Italian immigrant parents. He spent several years after High School working as a plasterer while attending Night School, and then resumed his education on a full-time basis.

After graduating from the Wentworth Institute in Boston with a degree in Architectural Engineering, he cashed in a \$300 insurance policy to start a construction company in Malden, Massachusetts.

He served in the Civil Engineering Corps of the U.S. Navy from 1943 to the end of World War Two and returned to civilian life after attaining the rank of Lieutenant-Commander.

He achieved a solid reputation for his construction work all along the Eastern Seaboard and, in 1953, was appointed Commissioner of Public Works for Massachusetts. He was named to the national highway post by President Eisenhower in 1957.

In 1960, he sought and gained the State House in Boston. Except for a two-year period following a defeat for re-election in the middle of the Kennedy years, he has served continuously as Governor.

His 1966 victory for the State's first four-year gubernatorial term was achieved by a margin of one half-million votes, the largest plurality in the State's history.

He has been active in such fields as crime prevention, civil rights, consumer protection, natural and cultural resources, education, conservation, public and mental health and economic development.

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