

Cummings. Mr. Cummings served his country for over 30 years, first with the U.S. Army and then with the U.S. Department of State. Mr. Cummings earned a bachelor's degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1972, and then became an active military officer in 1972, where he completed training to become an airborne ranger, one of this Nation's elite forces. Instead of what surely would have been a distinguished career in armed combat, Mr. Cummings took another path and with the support of the U.S. military, entered George Washington University Law School. He studied a variety of subjects that were directly relevant to legal work in the international sphere, such as international law, Chinese law, human rights law, diplomatic and consular law, and United Nations law, and served on the G.W. international law journal. In 1975, he graduated first in his class of 317 students.

Mr. Cummings was on active duty with the U.S. Army until 1979, graduating from judge advocate general's schools, and serving in the Office of the Judge Advocate General where he represented the Department of Defense at a number of international negotiations related to the Law of War. He remained in the Army Reserve from 1979 to 2000, assigned to the War Crimes and Prisoners of War Branch of the Office of the Judge Advocate General. He retired as a lieutenant colonel.

In 1979, because of his distinguished representation of the Defense Department and his exceptional contributions to the U.S. delegations in which he participated, Mr. Cummings was invited to join the Office of the Legal Adviser of the U.S. Department of State where, over the course of nearly twenty five years, he has served as an attorney and adviser to numerous U.S. officials throughout the Government. Among other positions, he has been the Assistant Legal Adviser for Politico-Military Affairs, Assistant Legal Adviser for Nonproliferation, Assistant Legal Adviser for Arms Control and Verification, and Counselor for Legal Affairs at the U.S. Mission in Geneva. From 2000 to the present, he has served as the U.S. Head of Delegation to negotiations relating to the Convention on Conventional Weapons. Appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 1987, Mr. Cummings has received numerous awards for superior service to the Department of State and has written on such subjects as the law of belligerent occupation, war crimes, arms control, international humanitarian law, and extradition.

But this description of his career does not do justice to his accomplishments. Last year, after he was diagnosed with the pancreatic cancer that killed him yesterday, George Washington University Law School organized a symposium entitled *Lawyers and War* in honor of Mr. Cummings, which was held on September 30, 2005. Mr. Cummings was fortunate not only to hear a set of knowledgeable remarks, but to hear the gratitude of his colleagues and proteges and to reflect on the amazing set of accomplishments that he participated in. Whether it was negotiating status of forces agreements to protect our troops abroad, helping draft the first set of comprehensive sanctions against South Africa during the apartheid era, supporting and then leading negotiations to control the use of conventional weapons that might cause unnecessary suffering, or aiding in the positive developments in international human rights and international humanitarian law, Mr. Cummings

made an invaluable contribution to this nation and to humankind.

Let me just cite three accomplishments that can be directly related to Mr. Cummings that may not be his most important but have special significance to some of my colleagues in this body. First, Mr. Cummings was instrumental in fashioning the compromise that allowed the United States to become a party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. For those who did not follow that debate, most countries around the world wanted to ban the recruitment of any individual under the age of 18. However, because the United States recruits students in high school, the U.S. military insisted that the age be reduced to 17. This position put the United States in the posture of preventing an international consensus and seeming to be in league with those who were not committed to banning this terrible abuse at all. It was Ed Cummings who originated the idea of allowing voluntary recruitment of 17 year olds but not allowing them in combat until they were 18, creating an international consensus that put the focus where it always should have been, on militias that conscript 12, 13 and 14 year olds.

Mr. Cummings also worked for decades on enhancing the substance and image of the laws of war. One life long accomplishment in this area was the recent decision by the countries that are party to the Geneva Conventions to create a new symbol in addition to the red cross and red crescent to allow the Israeli society, the Magen David Adom, to become an official member of the Red Cross community. This success, which will do much to erase a small but important irritant in this country's relation to the International Committee on the Red Cross, was due in large part to Mr. Cummings 20 year dedication to achieving this end.

Another of his major accomplishments was his success in persuading the international community to agree on the extension of the Conventional Weapons Convention to all forms of armed conflict, whether international or internal in character. It has been in the savage internal armed conflicts of past decades that the civilian population has suffered most from the indiscriminate use of conventional weapons, and Mr. Cummings efforts will help to mitigate and limit this lamentable carnage.

These three examples of a much deeper and richer career represent all that was exceptional about Mr. Cummings's service to this country. Using his full grasp of the complex issues he dealt with, his deft understanding of the U.S. military and the mechanisms of government, his keen eye for cutting through the issues to find a way through controversy, his strong personal relationships with individuals across our government and around the world, and his unwavering commitment to accomplish his mission, Mr. Cummings was able to accomplish these three difficult goals, thereby increasing both stature and national security of the United States. There are countless other successes of this sort which would take up pages of this record if they were described in full.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Cummings was an extraordinary human being. His colleagues and friends speak personally and movingly about his commitment to others as individuals and as attorneys. If the law remains a place

where law school is but a starting point and it is the learning from one's colleagues that is the most important basis for success, Mr. Cummings has served as "master" to many "apprentices" who are now serving their own distinguished careers in many walks of life (although Mr. Cummings would have dismissed those terms, calling everyone "colleagues"). This is a legacy that will last beyond Mr. Cummings final horizon. And with his personal warmth and his many avocations such as opera, mountain climbing and skiing, Mr. Cummings was admired by all who knew him.

Mr. Speaker, it is tragic that just at a time when Mr. Cummings was considering moving on to a new stage in his career and life, he was diagnosed in December 2004 with an untreatable form of pancreatic cancer which took him from us just yesterday. From all reports, his efforts to combat this illness and to show grace in the face of death itself demonstrated once again why Mr. Cummings is respected and loved, and our heart goes out to his wife and life partner, Clair, during this difficult time.

While Mr. Cummings was a clear example to all of us of a life well-lived, his tragic end is still a loss for all of us. We can only be thankful that this fellow traveler was able to do so much for his friends and acquaintances and for his country while he was with us.

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IN HONOR OF EARLINE MILES

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 28, 2006*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a woman who can only be described as truly American, Earline Miles.

Ms. Miles began her academic career by attending I.M. Terrell High School. From here, she graduated from Huston-Tillotson College in Austin, Texas then obtained her law degree from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law in Houston, Texas. Ms. Miles then turned her sights to education by becoming an instructor at Tarrant County College teaching business law.

Ms. Miles was involved in the civil rights movement in which she was a strong advocate of equality for all people. During her employment in Fort Worth, Texas, she was a determined worker for minority hiring initiatives. It was through Ms. Miles' hard work that countless disadvantaged people were able to now find employment.

Ms. Miles' community has benefited a great deal through her involvement in many organizations. She has done extensive volunteer work through her community. Even though Ms. Miles is now retired, she still dutifully works for her community by collecting food, clothing, and essential supplies for the homeless.

Today, we honor Earline Miles for her commitment to education and her dedication to helping others. She will always be remembered for her kindness and generosity to others, and may she serve as a role model for others in the future.