

A-12 Wednesday, April 17, 1985 The Honolulu Advertiser

obituaries

Retired Brig. Gen. Edwin F. Black

Edwin F. Black, a retired Army brigadier general, international business consultant and an active proponent of foreign relations forums in Honolulu, died Monday of an apparent heart attack. He was 69.

His wife, Cobey, said he collapsed at his Kaha-la house Monday night. The general had a history of heart problems, but was otherwise in excellent health, she said.

Services will be announced. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that contributions be made to the American Cancer Society.

"He was a tremendous worker," said Brenda Lei Foster, executive director of the Pacific and Asian Affairs Council. "I've never seen anybody so dedicated to promoting international affairs in Hawaii. He never got paid for it."

In speech and print, Black was a staunch and conservative defender of the Reagan administration's military buildup, including the proposed space-based missile defense system. He was a consultant in the areas of food irradiation and alternate energy resources.

He was vice president of the Pacific and Asian Affairs Council and a founder and chairman of the Honolulu Committee on Foreign Relations, a chapter of the New York-Based Council on Foreign Relations. He was a frequent contributor to newspapers and magazines on subjects of military, political and international affairs.

Black was born in New Orleans and was graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1940. He later attended the National War College and received a master's degree in international relations from George Washington University.

In Europe in World War II, Black served with the Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner

of the Central Intelligence Agency. He was OSS chief William "Wild Bill" Donovan's liaison to Gen. Dwight Eisenhower.

He later held a number of important planning posts for military commands and agencies in Europe, the Pacific and Washington.

Among his assignments over more than 30 years of active-duty Army service, Black in 1967-69 was commander of U.S. Army troops in Thailand, where he played a key role in building the country's communications, roads, ports and hospitals. He was assistant division commander of the 25th Division in Vietnam in 1969.

Black was also military assistant to three deputy secretaries of defense and retired in 1970 as assistant chief of staff, U.S. Army Pacific, headquartered at Fort Shafter.

Black was former director of international business development for LTV Corp. and former executive vice president of the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge.

He was Hawaii representative of an Australian bank, Nugan Hand, that became the focus of controversy in 1980 amid allegations of involvement with the CIA. Black denied any CIA link.

He was past president of the Honolulu chapter of the American Cancer Society and was an avid chess player.

During the Vietnam War in 1971, Black wrote in a letter to the Atlantic Monthly, "A soldier believes in truths he considers self-evident. He finds it hard to explain them to an intellect which is basically agnostic; which finds the price of liberty inordinately high in view of other more fashionable priorities; which presumes to judge, as Soviet propaganda would have it do, between 'just and unjust wars,' disregarding our commitment to sustain the freedom of an ally, a commitment already sealed in blood . . . we would all do well to remember that when the country loses faith in its soldiers, the soldiers will lose faith in their country."

Black is survived by his wife, Cobey, who has been a columnist for both the Star-Bulletin and The Advertiser; a sister, Lillian; six children, Star, Christopher, Noel Black Ackerman, Nicholas, Brian and Bruce; and three grandchildren.



Edwin F. Black