

Gilven Max Slonim Dies

Gilven Max Slonim, 87, a retired Navy captain and destroyer squadron commander who was president of a nonprofit foundation concerned with ocean use, died Nov. 22 at Inova Fairfax Hospital after a heart attack. He lived in Falls Church.

Dr. Slonim retired in 1965 from the office of the chief of Naval Operations, after a career as a wartime intelligence officer and combat commander. He began his Navy service at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo before World War II and was stationed at Pearl Harbor when it was bombed.

During the war, he served in the Pacific on the staffs of Navy Adms. William Halsey and Raymond Spruance. He participated in intelligence operations that lead to the bombing of Tokyo in 1942 by Doolittle's Raiders and the shooting down in 1943 of the plane carrying Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto, the leader of the Japanese fleet who had planned the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Dr. Slonim was an adviser to Spruance leading up to the Battle of Midway, considered the turning point of the war in the Pacific. In 1945, he was senior interpreter at the Japanese surrender ceremony.

Dr. Slonim commanded ships that included the Irwin during the Korean War and was commander of a destroyer squadron during the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1962. He was chief of staff to the commander of the 3rd Fleet in Hawaii.

His honors included a Legion of Merit, Bronze Star and Navy Commendation Medal.

Dr. Slonim was a native of Duluth, Minn., and a 1932 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis. After he retired, he was director of university relations at Long Island University, special assistant to the president of the Naval League of the United States and public relations director of Central Charge Services.

He received a doctorate in human sciences from the Minneapolis-based Walden University in 1987.

He taught courses in humanities and ocean sciences for the University of Virginia and founded the Oceanic Education Foundation in 1970. He wrote articles about public policy and the oceans.

His marriage to Louise Slonim ended in divorce. His second wife, Frances Dim Slonim, died in 1994.

Survivors include three children from his first marriage, retired Navy Lt. Cmdr. Richard G. Slonim of Charleston, S.C., David R. Slonim of Savannah, Ga., and Patricia S. Gordon of Falls Church; a brother, retired Navy Capt. Charles E. Slonim of Manassas; and three grandchildren.

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