



In Memoriam

Eldon H. (“Took”) Crowell

Eldon H. (“Took”) Crowell, the beloved founding partner of the international law firm that bears his name and a leader in Washington, D.C. public interest activities, died at home on May 23, 2010 at the age of 86.

Mr. Crowell was a leading practitioner of government contracts law. His legal career started in 1951 as an associate at the Washington, D.C. firm of Cummings & Stanley, where he worked as an assistant to Homer Cummings, the former Attorney General under President Franklin Roosevelt. He was a partner in the successor firms of Cummings & Sellers and Sellers, Conner & Cuneo, where he specialized in international and government contracts law. In 1970, he joined Reavis Pogue Neal & Rose, a Washington affiliate of Cleveland’s Jones Day, and started a government contracts practice. Within a few years, the practice became one of the leading government contracts practices in the country, representing many major government contractors, including Boeing, United Technologies, Honeywell, IBM, Northrop, Lockheed, and TRW.

However, in 1979 the Jones Day management, attempting to gain control over the Washington office, tried to oust Mr. Crowell and his government contracts team of lawyers. Over 50 of the Washington lawyers rallied around Mr. Crowell, and, in what the Washington Post reported as “The Split,” terminated their relationship with Jones Day and founded Crowell & Moring. Mr. Crowell served as the Firm’s chairman in its first years.

In the 1980s, when defense contractors were besieged with allegations of fraud, Mr. Crowell took the lead in teaching contractor employees the rules of

“doing business with the government” through “Ounce of Prevention” seminars and related videotapes for in-house use. Crowell & Moring lawyers trained significant portions of the defense industry. As an example, when a major contractor was indicted in the mistaken DIVAD prosecution and subjected to suspension proceedings, it commissioned Crowell & Moring lawyers to review its policies, training, and practices across the spectrum of contracting rules and risks. This set the precedent for numerous Crowell & Moring “compliance reviews” of other contractors.

Although Mr. Crowell actively litigated against the government, he was also a leading proponent of alternative dispute resolution – as a member of the Administrative Conference of the United States, he advocated the passage of legislation authorizing and promoting the use of such informal processes by the government.

Today, Crowell & Moring has grown to a firm of more than 500 attorneys with offices in Washington, Orange County, New York, Los Angeles, Anchorage, San Francisco, London, and Brussels. The firm’s practice extends to a wide range of specialties and still serves many of the same clients it advised in 1979 the day it opened its doors.

“Took touched deeply every member of the Crowell & Moring family, from the most senior partners to the most junior staff members,” recalls Kent Gardiner, the firm’s current Chairman. “He constantly – and loudly – reminded the lawyers to do excellent work for our clients, and to strive to make the firm great, but never at the expense of respect and caring for all who work here. He taught us all the value of balancing business success with an adventurous spirit and the humbling experience of not taking ourselves too seriously.”

In 1990, Mr. Crowell retired as a partner and became senior counsel to the Firm, actively promoting its leading *pro bono* service program, as recognized by public interest organizations in the District. Twice the D.C. Bar named Crowell & Moring the “*Pro Bono* Law Firm” of the year. He also took an interest in the younger generations of Crowell & Moring lawyers and staff, encouraging them to understand what he called the “soul” of his firm. Instead of hosting parties for summer associates, Mr. Crowell loaded them on buses to visit homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and non-profit associations that serve the District’s needy. The so-called “Took tour” led many to take on *pro bono* assignments.

Mr. Crowell also devoted his substantial energy to many public interest organizations. He served on numerous boards: the City Lights School from 1994-2000, serving for three years as President; Equal Justice Works from 1994-2001, as President from 1995-2000; the Conservation Research Foundation from 1999-2002; the Judiciary Leadership Council from 1989-1993; Constitutional Accountability Center from 2005 to the present. In 1997, he established a small, private charitable foundation, The Took Trust, which assists troubled, hurt, and at-risk youth. Mr. Crowell was awarded the “Servant of Justice Award” from the Legal Aid Society in 1999, and he was awarded the “Scales of Justice Award” from Equal Justice Works in 2000. In 2008, *Legal Times* named Mr. Crowell as one of 30 “visionaries” in its list of “Greatest Washington Lawyers of the Last 30 Years.”

David Stern, Chief Executive Office of Equal Justice Works, describes Mr. Crowell as “passionate about eradicating injustice.” Mr. Stern credited “Took’s leadership as chair of the board of directors for Equal Justice Works (then known as the National Association for Public Interest Law (NAPIL), as transformational.” “Took was instrumental in helping the organization grow from a \$1 million annual budget to a \$6 million annual budget in five years. He arranged for Crowell & Moring to be the very first firm in the nation to sponsor a lawyer through the Equal Justice Works postgraduate fellowship program. Took Crowell, prominent and

successful lawyer, rolled up his sleeves, used his credibility and relationships to build this organization. He traveled the country with me to approach law firms and corporations to sponsor fellowships. Took helped grow the fellowship program from seven fellowships in 1993 to more than 100 fellows in 1998, making it the nation's largest postgraduate fellowship program for lawyers.”

Mr. Crowell was born in Middletown, Connecticut, on May 15, 1924. After service in the Army/Air Corps in World War II, he graduated from Princeton University, *cum laude*, and the University of Virginia School of Law. He was a visiting lecturer at the University of Virginia Law School and the George Washington University National Law School. He served on the Council of the Public Contract Law Section of the American Bar Association. He was a fellow of the American Bar Foundation and a Public Member of the Administrative Conference of the United States. He was a Fellow of the National Contract Management Association and recipient of its 1992 Roback Award for outstanding service.

He also served on the boards of the Madeira School, the Williston-Northampton School, the Greenergy Investments Foundation, the Foreign Student Service Council, and the Experiment in International Living. He was a member of the Metropolitan Club and the Chevy Chase Club.

Mr. Crowell was a resident of the Washington area from 1951 to 2009, when he moved to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. He maintained residences in the District of Columbia and Flint Hill, Virginia. His former wife, Mimi Crowell, died in September 2006. He is survived by his niece, Carolyn (Lynne) Fouch, and nephew, Richard Pauli, both of Washington State.