

# Stephen Leo, Former ARO Executive, Dies

Stephen F. Leo, 74, the first public relations director of the Air Force, a retired vice president of Sverdrup Corp. and retired director of administration for ARO at Arnold Center, died Saturday in a hospital in Brunswick, Maine, after a short illness.

Mr. Leo had resided in South Harpswell, Maine, since his retirement in 1969. He was a native of Yonkers, N.Y., and the son of the late Stephen F. and Sara G. Clark Leo.

He and his family made their home on Jackson Circle in Tullahoma while he was employed at Arnold Center.

Mr. Leo attended Bowdoin College in Brunswick, served as administrative assistant to the state director of the Works Progress Administration in Maine, and became a reporter for the Gannett newspaper chain. In 1940, he took a leave of absence from Gannett to become executive secretary and administrative

assistant to Gov. Sumner Sewall of Maine. The governor also named him chairman of the Maine State Liquor Commission during a period of reorganization for that agency.

Mr. Leo entered the Army as a private in 1942. He was commissioned the following year as a lieutenant in the Army Air Force and was assigned to the Truman Committee as a military aide in its investigation of the conduct of the war. He served two years in the Burman-India-China theater and was attached to the Air Planning Service in late 1945. He was deputy director of the internal affairs and communications division of the U.S. Military Government in Berlin in 1946.

In 1951, he became vice president of Sverdrup, one of the nation's largest professional services companies, which is engaged in the planning, design, construction and operation of

(Turn to Page 5-A, Col. 1)

# Stephen Leo Dies at 74

(Starts on Page 1-A)

capital facilities. He was initially stationed at the company's corporate headquarters in St. Louis, and served for a period as a consultant to the Senate Preparedness Committee.

Mr. Leo was named director of administration for ARO shortly afterwards, establishing the administrative management organization by



STEPHEN F. LEO

which Sverdrup operated Arnold Engineering Development Center for many years under contract to the Air Force. Sverdrup had designed and supervised construction of AEDC, which was created in the aftermath of World War II as the nation's primary aviation and aerospace testing and research center.

Edward H. Barker, a retired Sverdrup vice president who worked for ARO under Mr. Leo for several years, paid him tribute in the 1978 Sverdrup Corp. publication, "Legacy: The Sverdrup Story."

"The man had an incredible grasp

of the English language," Baker said. "If you misinterpreted what Steve Leo said, believe me it was your problem and not his. He is a brilliant organizer and administrator. He holds letters of highest praise from presidents of the United States — and they are not exaggerations."

Mr. Leo received the Air Force Association citation of honor at ceremonies in St. Louis in 1954, presented "for long efforts in furthering public understanding of air power."

In 1954, he became manager of Sverdrup's Washington, D.C., office, a position he held until his retirement.

At a retirement dinner in 1969, attended by Sens. Stuart Symington of Missouri and Edmund Muskie of Maine, former Air Force Secretary Eugene Zuckert, and former Air Force chiefs of staff Gen. Carl A. Spaatz and Gen. John P. McConnell, Mr. Leo was cited by Symington for being "as instrumental as anyone in creating the Air Force" and a person to whom "everybody who believes in air power and a great Air Force owes a debt."

Mr. Leo moved to South Harpswell upon his retirement and was appointed a director of the alumni fund for Bowdoin College in Brunswick.

A memorial service was held Monday at Elijah Kellogg Church in Harpswell.

He is survived by his wife, Helen Louise Eyssel Leo of South Harpswell; a son, Stephen Frederick Leo of Atlanta; two daughters, Stephanie Leo, Woodcock, Va., and Eleanor S. Leo of Popeham, Maine; a sister, Mary Leo Eaton of Brunswick, and two grandchildren.

---

For Best Results  
Use Our  
Classified Ads