

*“...These fair islands are ours to treat with reverence and pass on to our children, and they are not to be destroyed by greedy and thoughtless men.”*

Tom Gill, July 9, 1970

## **Thomas P. Gill dies at age 87**

Former Lt. Governor, U.S. Congressman, and State Representative Thomas P. Gill died today, June 3, 2009. He was 87 years old. His wife of 61 years was at his bedside at the time of his death at 10:47 AM.

Tom Gill was born in Honolulu on April 21, 1922. He was educated in the Hawaii public schools and graduated from Roosevelt High School as a National Merit Scholar and Student Body President in 1940.

During World War II, Tom Gill served in the US Army and earned a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star for his service under General MacArthur from Australia through the liberation of the Philippines. He refused a battlefield commission in the Army, choosing to return to Hawaii after the war.

After the war, Mr. Gill attended the University of California at Berkeley, where he met and fell in love with Lois A. Hanawalt. After Tom and Lois were married, Gill received his law degree from Boalt Hall at U.C. Berkeley.

In 1951, Tom and Lois returned to Honolulu, where Tom began his legal career, in which he represented both the Teamsters Union and the Hotel Workers Union Local 5, and embarked on a life of public service.

In the early 1950's, Tom Gill served as campaign chairman for the Democratic Party in 1952 and 1954, as the Chairman of the Oahu County Committee of the Democratic Party, and as a Majority staff attorney for the Territorial House of Representatives.

Tom Gill was elected to the Territorial House of Representatives in 1958, and to the State House of Representatives after Hawaii achieved Statehood. In 1962, Gill was elected to the United States Congress, and served in the House of Representatives. As a freshman in Congress, Gill served on the Education and Labor Committee and on the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. During his term, Gill was deeply involved in the writing and passage of historic civil rights legislation, and served as House floor leader for the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Returning to Hawaii after an unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Senate in 1964, Tom Gill was tapped by then Governor John Burns to run the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Tom Gill won election as Lt. Governor of Hawaii in 1966, and worked to institute computerized voting procedures, and to protect Hawaii's historic sites. He ran unsuccessfully for Governor in 1970 and 1974.

In his later years, Gill remained active on the Board of Directors of the American Civil Liberties Union, and in the Democratic Party of Hawaii. He was appointed by Governor Ben Cayetano to chair the State Commission on Sexual Orientation and the Law in the early 1990's.

Thomas Gill is survived by his wife Lois, his brother Lorin T. Gill, his six children: Thomas Anthony Gill, Andrea Tiare Gill, Eric William Gill, Ivan Ponce Gill, Timothy Michael Gill and Gary Lorin Gill, 12 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. A private family service is pending. In lieu of flowers, the public is invited to make monetary donations to the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii.

**Press contact info:**

Members of the Gill family will be available for press queries this afternoon at 3:30PM. Press representatives are invited to the offices of UNITE HERE Local 5, 1050 Queen St., #100 (corner of Queen and Kamake'e).