TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL RHODE, JR.

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, I rise today to note the passing of and to pay tribute to Michael Rhode, Jr., of South Carolina. Mike Rhode died after a brave bout with cancer in May, only too briefly after he retired from his position as Secretary of the Panama Canal Commission. I only recently learned of Mike’s death.

I first met Mike when he served as Chief of the Army’s Senate Legislative Liaison Office in the early 1970’s when I was a newly elected Member of the Senate. We both had combat experience in Korea and Vietnam, literally took under his wing and played a major role in my education about the capabilities of the U.S. Army and the other services. He accompanied me on my official travels, particularly to the territory of our NATO allies.

Mike was extremely knowledgeable about NATO and my first-ever report to the Armed Services Committee on NATO specifically cited Mike’s invaluable assistance and expertise on NATO matters.

I continued my association with Mike when, upon his retirement from the Army after 26 years of dedicated service to our Nation, he became the Secretary of the Panama Canal Commission. Mike had that unique ability to explain complex proposed legislation and to speculate through experience in Korea and Vietnam, literally took under his wing and played a major role in my education about the capabilities of the U.S. Army and the other services. He accompanied me on my official travels, particularly to the territory of our NATO allies.

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When her daughter died, Mrs. Cohen, a writer like her husband, stopped writing. For months, years it seemed, she stopped doing much of anything. Days passed, months in a blur. Four years ago, the Cohens moved from Port Jervis, N.Y., where they raised her daughter, to Cape May County in New Jersey. “I couldn’t stand that house any more.” Mrs. Cohen said. “I couldn’t take the memories any more.

Though deserted by her husband, she knows she is not alone. One woman she knows who lost her 20-year-old son to Pan Am 103 visits his grave every day, sometimes twice a day. Another woman whose husband “has been as devastated by his loss as I am by my daughter’s,” Ms. Cohen said. “It takes a great poet to describe this. It takes genius to be able to put the depths of pain, and I’m not a great poet or a genius.”

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