

COLD WAR SARGENT MARTIN SAYLES

By Richard Long

School children's unique experience in the 1940's was being educated in one room schoolhouses containing all eight primary grades. Martin's one of those kids. From this beginning he developed intense devotion to patriotism. He remembers raising the flag each Monday morning and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance with his school mates.

It was natural, therefore, to fulfill the call to duty joining the US Army Reserve in 1956, serving on active duty for the next two years. On his aptitude testing, he scored high in the areas of science, structure and integrity. In the second week of basic, he was invited to interview with the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project and later was assigned to MPs.

Sargent Sayles duties—to provide security and secrecy for the Nuclear Testing Program. He had to be sure no one without proper credentials had access to military secrets, both in written form and seeing actual weaponry. Notice the back of his badge pictured, it has "authorized binoculars". Reasoning? Foreign agents also wanted binocular access at his locations!

Martin fondly recalled off duty time spent in the ocean in the Marshall Islands. There, with two civilian construction workers, he searched the ocean floor for treasures. His—shells, theirs—mother of pearl shells for jewelry. With access to a jeep, transporting their treasurers home was easy.

Upon discharge from active duty, Martin studied history, economics and Spanish. And, met his idol, African-American economist/author Walter Williams.

Sargent Sayles, we honor you and thank you for your service.

