Congressman Mickey Leland: Mickey Leland in Ethiopia

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George Thomas (Mickey) Leland was born in Lubbock, Texas, on November 27, 1944, to Alice Rains. It was Leland’s maternal grandfather who nicknamed him “Mickey.” Leland was active in the civil rights movement as a student in the late 1960s, often participating in protests and describing himself as “Marxism” and a revolutionary. While in the state Legislature, Leland made his first trip to Africa. The young politician developed a deep affection for the continent, staying in Tanzania for three months rather than scheduled there weeks nobody knew where I was, “Leland recalled, “My mother thought I was dead. But the fact is that I got totally absorbed in Africa. Leland ability to garner support from both the district’s black and Hispanic constituents sealed his victory over Hall, with 57 percent of the vote. Leland proved an active advocate for all minorities, focusing particularly on the needs of his black and Hispanic constituents, to best serve the large Mexican-American population in his district, Leland learned Spanish.

Leland’s greatest passion developed from his three-month stay in East Africa When famine struck east Africa in the mid-1980s, Leland was an outspoken advocate for alleviating hunger on the continent. Leland often involved two images from his frequent trips to Ethiopian refugee camps: a strong of starving people rubbing their stomachs and pleading for food and an Ethiopian girl who dies in his harms as he turned to ask her caretakers about her condition. “Every day I see her face”, Leland said. The needs of the world, regardless of who they are or where they are from. “People in positions of power should help that in need, regardless of who they are or where they live”.

Moving forward, the papers, images, chronological milestones of Leland accomplishments will be posted to the “new” Mickey Leland Center website further developed for a Leland Exhibit. As new findings are discovered. The website and Mickey Leland Archives will be enhanced and expanded through the use of Social Media such as Facebook and Twitter.

http://www.tsu.edu/academics/colleges__schools/publicaffairs/mickeyleland.php
http://www.answers.com/topic/mickey
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