The original documents are located in Box 24, "3/4/76 - Remarks at Ceremonies for the Presentation of the Medal of Honor to Four Recipients" of the President's Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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MEDAL OF HONOR PRESENTATION CEREMONY

THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 1976

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEE

MEDAL OF HONOR

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

• MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

• DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

| <u>FYI- INVITED</u> | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| SENATOR FANNIN | CONG. DEERLIN |
| NELSON | WILSON |
| MATHIAS | STEIGER |
| BEALL | ZABLOCKI |
| STONE | SPELLMAN |
| THURMOND | DICKINSON |
| | STRATTON |
| | MONTGOMERY |

- SECRETARY RUMSFELD
- SECRETARY MIDDENDORF
- SECRETARY REED
- MEMBERS OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
- LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

WE ARE GATHERED HERE TODAY TO HONOR FOUR AMERICANS

FOR EXCEPTIONAL MILITARY GALLANTRY IN THE SERVICE

OF OUR NATION.

ALL FOUR OF THESE MEN <u>DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES</u> ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY• I <u>DEEPLY</u> REGRET THAT ONE OF THE AWARDS, TO THE LATE CAPTAIN LANCE P. SIJAN (SIGH - JAN) OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, IS POSTHUMOUS• THE OTHER THREE -- REAR ADMIRAL JAMES B. STOCKDALE, UNITED STATES NAVY; COLONEL GEORGE E. DAY, THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE; AND LIEUTENANT THOMAS R. NORRIS, UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE -- ARE WITH US TODAY.

WE CONFER OUR HIGHEST DECORATION UPON

× .

THEM FOR THEIR INSPIRING AND HEROIC CONDUCT. WE DO THIS IN REALIZATION OF THE SIMPLE TRUTH THAT THEY HAVE HELPED TO PRESERVE AMERICA'S FUTURE PEACE BY DEMONSTRATING THROUGH THEIR COURAGE THE DEDICATION OF THOSE ENTRUSTED WITH OUR DEFENSE.

THEIR BRAVERY PLACES THEM IN THE RANKS OF THE FINEST OF AMERICA'S HEROES FROM THE PRESENT BACK TO THE YEAR 1776 -- WHEN WE WERE FORCED, AS A NATION, TO FIRST TAKE UP ARMS TO DEFEND OUR LIBERTY. THESE FOUR MEN SERVED IN VIETNAM. THE WAR IN VIETNAM

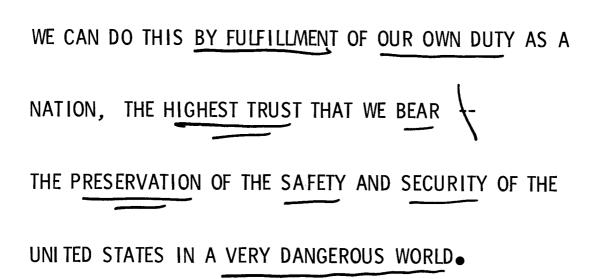
IS NOW OVER.

BUT AS WE TODAY <u>CONFER</u> THE <u>MEDAL OF HONOR</u> ON HEROES WHO <u>DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES IN VIETNAM</u>, WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN OTHERS WHOSE FATE STILL REMAINS UNKNOWN. WE WILL CONTINUE, ON <u>HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS</u>, TO <u>PRESS</u> FOR A <u>FULL ACCOUNTING</u> FOR THOSE <u>MEN</u> TO RESOLVE QUESTIONS THAT KEEP MANY AMERICAN FAMILIES <u>LIVING</u> IN ENDLESS ANXIETY AND AGONY.



THE UNITED STATES TODAY HONORS FOUR MEN

OF UNCOMMON COURAGE WITH THE MEDAL OF HONOR. BUT WE CAN -- AND MUST -- ALSO HONOR THESE MEN BY LIVING UP TO THEIR EXAMPLE OF PATRIOTISM.





AS WE CELEBRATE OUR BICENTENNIAL YEAR,

WE TAKE SATISFACTION IN OUR POWER TO PRESERVE PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH• WE ARE TODAY THE STRONGEST NATION

IN THE WORLD.

•

AS PRESIDENT, I INTEND TO MAINTAIN

OUR DETERRENT POWER.

•

WHILE I WILL DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER

TO REDUCE THE DANGER OF WAR BY DIPLOMATIC MEANS, NY POLICY FOR AMERICA'S SECURITY CAN BE SUMMARIZED IN THREE SIMPLE WORDS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT PEACE. NO AMERICANS ARE IN BATTLE ANYWHERE. WE HAVE STRENGTHENED VITAL ALLIANCES THAT PRESERVE PEACE AND STABILITY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. BY MAINTAINING UNQUESTIONED STRENGTH AND RESOLVE, WE CAN COMMAND RESPECT AND PRESERVE THE PEACE. WE CANNOT WIN AGAINST THE ENEMIES OF FREEDOM, BIG OR SMALL, WITHOUT THE KIND OF VIGILANCE AND VALOR SYMBOLIZED BY THE MEDAL OF HONOR, THE HIGHEST OF ALL THIS NATION'S DECORATIONS. WE WILL WIN BY PATIENT AND PERSISTENT PURSUIT OF A DEFENSE SECOND TO NONE IN A WORLD THAT KNOWS THAT AMERICA SAYS WHAT IT MEANS AND MEANS WHAT IT SAYS. BY SO DOING, WE WILL PAY AMERICA'S DEBT TO THE MEN WE HONOR TODAY, AND THE MANY OTHERS WHO SERVED

WITH SUCH COURAGE.

A GRATEFUL NATION THANKS ITS DEFENDERS

FOR THEIR RESOLVE IN KEEPING THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THE WORLD'S BEST HOPE OF PEACE WITH FREEDOM.

.

ON BEHALF OF THE <u>AMERICAN PEOPLE</u>, I SALUTE THE <u>CHERISHED MEMORY OF CAPTAIN SIJAN (SIGH - JAN)</u> AND THE <u>LIVING EXAMPLE OF ADMIRAL STOCKDALE</u>, <u>COLONEL DAY</u>, AND LIE<u>UTENANT NORRIS</u>. <u>YOU SERVED YOUR NATION WELL</u> AND HAVE GIVEN US ALL <u>A CLEARER VISION OF A BETTER WORLD</u>.

END OF TEXT