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
MEDAL OF HONOR
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

• MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES
• DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

FYI INVITED

| SENATOR FANNIN | CONG. DEERLIN |
| FANNIN NELSON | WILSON |
| MATHIAS BEALL | STEIGER |
| STONE THURMOND | ZABLOCKI |
| | SPELLMAN |
| | 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 DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY.

I DEEPLY 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 CONFER THE MEDAL OF HONOR ON HEROES WHO DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES IN VIETNAM, WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN OTHERS WHOSE FATE STILL REMAINS UNKNOWN.

WE WILL CONTINUE, ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, TO PRESS FOR A FULL ACCOUNTING FOR THOSE MEN TO RESOLVE QUESTIONS THAT KEEP MANY AMERICAN FAMILIES LIVING 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.
WE CAN DO THIS BY FULFILLMENT OF OUR OWN DUTY AS A NATION, THE HIGHEST TRUST THAT WE BEAR.

THE PRESERVATION OF THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES IN A VERY DANGEROUS WORLD.
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, MY POLICY FOR AMERICA'S SECURITY CAN BE SUMMARIZED IN THREE SIMPLE WORDS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH.
I am gratified that the United States is today 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, \( \text{BIG OR SMALL,} \)

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 AMERICAN PEOPLE, I SALUTE

THE CHERISHED MEMORY OF CAPTAIN SIJAN (SIGH - JAN)

AND THE LIVING EXAMPLE OF ADMIRAL STOCKDALE, COLONEL DAY,

AND LIEUTENANT NORRIS. YOU SERVED YOUR NATION WELL

AND HAVE GIVEN US ALL A CLEARER VISION OF A BETTER WORLD.

END OF TEXT