

March 4, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President today will present the Medal of Honor to Captain Lance P. Sijan, USAF, (posthumously); Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale, USN; Col. George E. Day, USAF; and Lieutenant Thomas R. Norris, USN Reserve. Sylvester Sijan, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, will receive the medal for his son.

Prior to today's presentations, 232 Medals of Honor have been given for Southeast Asia.

Captain Lance P. Sijan, USAF. He was shot down over North Vietnam in 1967 and, while seriously injured and suffering from shock, he evaded capture for more than six weeks. After spending some time in a holding point for subsequent transfer to a Prisoner of War camp, he overpowered one of his guards and escaped only to be caught again and placed in solitary confinement. He resisted disclosing information despite torture. He died while still a prisoner.

Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale, USN. During 1969 while Senior Naval Officer in the Prisoner of War Camps of North Vietnam, he led the prisoners' resistance to interrogation and refused propaganda exploitation. He refused to cooperate despite torture. Admiral Stockdale is from Coronado, California.

Col. George E. Day, USAF. In 1967, Col. Day ejected from his aircraft over North Vietnam after it was hit by ground fire. After capture and despite broken bones and injuries, he escaped into the jungle and attempted to trek to South Vietnam. He was recaptured and taken to Hanoi. Col. Day is from Eglin AFB, Florida.

Lieutenant Thomas R. Norris, USNR. While serving as a SEAL advisor in 1972, Lt. Norris completed an unprecedented ground rescue of two downed pilots deep within heavily controlled enemy territory. Lieutenant Norris is from Silver Spring, Maryland.

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