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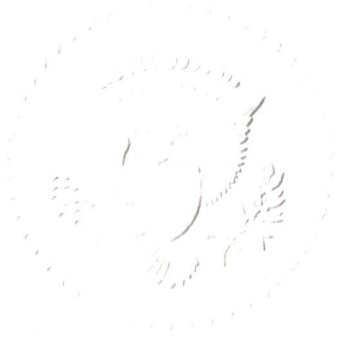
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THE PRESIDENT

welcomes you to

THE WHITE HOUSE

on the occasion of the presentation of the

MEDAL OF HONOR

(POSTHUMOUSLY)

to

CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT

RICHARD L. ETCHBERGER

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



Tuesday, September 21, 2010

CITATION

*The President of the United States of America,
authorized by Act of Congress,
March 3, 1863, has awarded, in the name of Congress,
the Medal of Honor to*

CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT
RICHARD L. ETCHBERGER
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

*For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life
above and beyond the call of duty:*

Chief Master Sergeant Richard L. Etchberger distinguished himself by extraordinary heroism on March 11, 1968, in the country of Laos, while assigned as Ground Radar Superintendent, Detachment 1, 1043d Radar Evaluation Squadron. On that date, Chief Etchberger and his team of technicians were manning a top secret defensive position at Lima Site 85 when the base was overrun by an enemy ground force. Receiving sustained and withering heavy artillery attacks directly upon his unit's position, Chief Etchberger's entire crew lay dead or severely wounded. Despite having received little or no combat training, Chief Etchberger single-handedly held off the enemy with an M-16, while simultaneously directing air strikes into the area and calling for air rescue. Because of his fierce defense and heroic and selfless actions, he was able to deny the enemy access to his position and save the lives of his remaining crew. With the arrival of the rescue aircraft, Chief Etchberger, without hesitation, repeatedly and deliberately risked his own life, exposing himself to heavy enemy fire in order to place three surviving wounded comrades into rescue slings hanging from the hovering helicopter waiting to airlift them to safety. With his remaining crew safely aboard, Chief Etchberger finally climbed into an evacuation sling himself, only to be fatally wounded by enemy ground fire as he was being raised into the aircraft. Chief Etchberger's bravery and determination in the face of persistent enemy fire and overwhelming odds are in keeping with the highest standards of performance and traditions of military service. Chief Etchberger's gallantry, self-sacrifice, and profound concern for his fellow men at risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty, reflect the highest credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

PROGRAM

Invocation
Chaplain (BG) David H. Cyr
Deputy Chief of Chaplains, U.S. Air Force

Remarks by
The President

Presentation of the
MEDAL OF HONOR

Benediction
Chaplain (BG) David H. Cyr
Deputy Chief of Chaplains, U.S. Air Force



CRITERIA FOR AWARD

The Medal of Honor is awarded by the President in the name of Congress to a person who, while a member of the Armed Forces, distinguishes himself or herself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life or her life above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States; while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. The deed performed must have been one of personal bravery or self-sacrifice so conspicuous as to clearly distinguish the individual above his or her comrades and must have involved risk of life. Incontestable proof of the performance of service is exacted and each recommendation for award of this decoration is considered on the standard of extraordinary merit.

