

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (When Filled In)

RECOMMENDATION FOR DECORATION		DATE
TO: (Organization and address) 56th Cmbt Spt Gp (CBFC-PA) APO San Francisco 96310		FROM: (Organization and address) 21st Special Operations Squadron (C) APO San Francisco 96310 (NARQC6)
RECOMMENDATION		
1. NAME OF DECORATION (Indicate number of clusters, if appropriate) MEDAL OF HONOR (AIR FORCE)		2. RECOMMENDATION IS BASED ON: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HEROISM <input type="checkbox"/> OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> MERITORIOUS SERVICE (Based on completed period of service)
3. INCLUSIVE DATE(S) OF ACT, ACHIEVEMENT OR SERVICE FROM: 6 October 1969 TO: 6 October 1969		
PERSONAL DATA ON INDIVIDUAL BEING RECOMMENDED		
4. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL CONRAN, PHILIP J.		5. AFSN [REDACTED]
7. GRADE Major		6. SSAN [REDACTED]
9. PRESENT ORGANIZATION AND STATION 21st Special Operations Squadron (NARQC6) APO San Francisco 96310		8. DATE OF BIRTH 13 Apr 37
11. PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS [REDACTED]		10. PRESENT DUTY ASSIGNMENT Pilot, CH-3E, 1025E
13. ORGANIZATION, DUTY ASSIGNMENT AND GRADE AT TIME OF ACT OR SERVICE 21st Special Operations Squadron (NARQC6) Pilot, CH-3E, 1025E Major		12. ORGANIZATION OF NEXT DUTY ASSIGNMENT (Indicate, if not) 6553 <sup>rd</sup> 1st Sq, PACAF APO San Francisco 96553 (LUHB8C)
		14. EFFECTIVE DATE OF PROMOTION TO GRADE IN WHICH SERVING 1 Jul 69
		15. INDIVIDUAL'S SERVICE IN AIR FORCE SINCE ACT OR SERVICE HAS BEEN HONORABLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
16. DATE OF <input type="checkbox"/> REASSIGNMENT, <input type="checkbox"/> RETIREMENT, <input type="checkbox"/> OR SEPARATION: THE CBFC WILL PROVIDE AND VERIFY THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: DERCS: 18 Nov 69. RETIREMENT OR SEPARATION IS <input type="checkbox"/> VOLUNTARY <input type="checkbox"/> INVOLUNTARY, AND THE FOLLOWING SERVICE DATES APPLY CDDS _____ TAFCSO _____ TAFMSD _____ PLSD _____ TFCSD _____ TMSD _____		
17. PREVIOUS UNITED STATES DECORATIONS, COMPLETE AUTHORITY THEREFOR, AND INCLUSIVE DATES OF SERVICE RECOGNIZED (Do not include service medals, with exception of citations or foreign decorations) AFCM, SOG-18, 15 Apr 65, HQARS, 4 Feb 62-5 Feb 65. VSM, AFM 900-3. AFCM (10LC) SOG-35, 23 Sep 68, AIR UNIVERSITY, 9 Mar 65-15 Jun 68. AM, SOG-648, 18 Feb 69, HQ7AF, 6 Dec 68-24 Jan 69. DFC, SOG-1522, 16 Apr 69, HQ7AF, 7 Feb 69. DFC (10LC) SOG-1527, 16 Apr 69, HQ7AF, 14 Feb 69. AM (10LC) SOG-2049, 27 May 69, HQ7AF, 25 Mar 69.		
18. ARE OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AWARDS TO THIS INDIVIDUAL PENDING (If yes, state awards) AIRMAN'S MEDAL-19 Jan 69. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO SS-3 Jun 69.		19. ARE OTHER INDIVIDUALS BEING RECOMMENDED FOR THE SAME ACT OR SERVICE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES 7 <input type="checkbox"/> NO
20. IF ANSWER TO ITEM 19 IS YES, ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE OTHER INDIVIDUALS FORWARDED AS A PART OF THIS RECOMMENDATION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO a. IF ANSWER TO ITEM 20a IS NO, EXPLAIN REASON FOR DELAY, INCLUDING DATE RECOMMENDATION(S) WILL BE FORWARDED, AND IDENTIFY THE INDIVIDUAL(S) BY GRADE, NAME, SERVICE NUMBER, PRESENT ORGANIZATION, STATION, AND DECORATION RECOMMENDED.		
21. HAS PREVIOUS AWARD BEEN MADE TO THIS INDIVIDUAL FOR THIS ACT OR SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		
22. IF AWARD IS POSTHUMOUS, OR INDIVIDUAL RECOMMENDED IS MISSING IN ACTION OR A PRISONER OF WAR, LIST NAME, ADDRESS AND RELATIONSHIP OF NEXT OF KIN. N/A		
23. DATE WHICH PRESENTATION OF AWARD IS DESIRED, IF APPROVED Feb 70		24. IF APPROVED, FORWARD FOR PRESENTATION TO (Organization and address) CBFC, 6592 Sup Gp, Los Angeles AF O1 ANX, CA 90045

AF FORM 642 JUN 68

PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF THIS FORM SHALL BE USED UNTIL STOCK IS EXHAUSTED

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD  
OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR

Name: Philip J. Conran

Status: Major, United States Air Force.

Organization: 21st Special Operations Squadron, Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand.

Conditions under which act performed:

Location: Classified in Southeast Asia.

Date: 1045, 6 October 1969-1830, 6 October 1969.

Terrain: Flat dirt airstrip surrounded with low brushy vegetation, rice paddies and a few large trees.

Weather: Clear.

Enemy Condition: Morale high, had set a trap around the helicopter landing area that had been frequently used by friendly helicopters in the past few weeks.

Defenders Condition: The landing site belonged to friendly forces in the area through 5 October 1969. Intelligence briefed that the site was still under friendly control. However, no friendly troops other than those on the helicopters were seen on 6 October 1969.

Narrative Description of Gallant Conduct:

At 1045, 6 October 1969, a flight of five helicopters departed a friendly forces camp carrying friendly troops to an advance buildup area. Major Conran was aircraft commander of the number two helicopter in the formation. After being advised that the area was clear, the helicopters started their approach in trail formation. The lead helicopter was shot down while making the approach and the crew members were forced to abandon it and take up defensive positions on the ground. Major Conran immediately climbed out of small arms range and assumed command of the remainder of the flight, leading it West and directing the A-1E Skyraider escort aircraft to sanitize the area. Major Conran computed his remaining fuel and figured his loiter time. When he reached minimum fuel he had two choices; return to a safe area and refuel, leaving his comrades, or attempt to rescue the crew members and reinforce the friendly troops on the ground. Major Conran concluded that the twenty six friendly troops on the ground would not be sufficient to provide adequate protection for the downed crew members. With concern for his comrades overriding the danger he would be facing by landing, and despite the fact that his helicopter was unarmed, Major Conran elected to add his troops to those already on the ground and attempt to rescue the crew members of the downed helicopter. Conferring with the A-1E, Major Conran selected the most probable safe approach route. As he approached the landing zone, his primary servos were shot out by hostile automatic weapons fire. Realizing that there was a sizeable enemy force and that his comrades would probably be overrun unless he was able to deliver the sorely needed friendly troops, Major Conran



lected to continue the approach rather than break off and return to a safe area. This decision proved correct as it later became apparent that the downed crew members from the lead helicopter could not have survived without the additional support. He landed the helicopter and unloaded the friendly troops. As the downed crew members were climbing aboard, enemy small arms fire destroyed his main rotor transmission, making take-off impossible; tracers ripped through the cockpit, and all personnel were forced to abandon the helicopter and take cover in a water filled bomb crater. After evacuating the helicopter, Major Conran quickly evaluated the defensive deployment and took immediate action to secure the area and provide maximum protection for both the friendly forces and his fellow crew members. He repeatedly exposed himself to heavy barrages of enemy automatic weapons fire to extract essential equipment from the downed helicopters. Major Conran returned to his helicopter for extra ammunition, food, water jugs, and parachutes to use as cover. When he returned to the defensive position, he distributed the supplies among his crew members. With the aid of the leader of the friendly troops and other crew members, Major Conran moved about forming the troops into a defensive perimeter. At times he would have to physically move them from one point to another and direct their field of fire. He repeatedly exposed himself during this action and his complete disregard for his own safety was an inspiration to both the friendly forces and his fellow crew members. Learning that the M-60 Machine Guns were still in the lead helicopter, Major Conran took the leader of the friendly troops and went after them. Moving the fifty feet required to reach the helicopter, he again exposed himself to enemy fire to secure the sorely needed machine guns and ammunition from the downed helicopter. While Major Conran was extracting the machine guns from the helicopter, enemy automatic weapons fire ripped through the cabin, but he continued evacuating essential equipment, knowing that he might not be able to defend the ground position without these weapons. Throughout the afternoon Major Conran directed air strikes at known and suspected enemy positions with deadly accuracy. Hostile fire intensified as the afternoon wore on and air strikes were unable to prevent the enemy from closing the ring about the downed personnel. At one point during the battle a HH-3E Jolly Green Giant Helicopter attempted to pickup the crew members of the downed helicopters but was driven off by an intense barrage of enemy automatic weapons fire. Soon a enemy rocket hit one of the downed helicopters and mortar rounds began falling into the friendly positions. Again Major Conran exposed himself, located the position of the enemy mortar crew and called in an air strike to silence the rockets and mortars. At approximately 1630 while in an exposed position trying to strengthen their position, Major Conran received a severe leg wound, in spite of this he continued to encourage the others and did not mention his wound until he had lost all feeling in his leg and felt that in case the rescue helicopter landed too far from their position when they were rescued, he might not be able to make it on his own and would need assistance. He refused to let anyone expose themselves to the now intense enemy ground fire to examine his wound. In spite of his injury, Major Conran would neither give up hope nor allow others to panic. He continued to be a source of energy and courage to the crew members and friendly troops alike. Just before nightfall the area was completely sanitized once again and two HH-53 Jolly Green Giants were able to complete a successful rescue of all personnel. Major Conran's decision to come to the aid of his downed comrades, his heroic actions above and beyond the call of duty while

under severe hostile fire, and his valiant attitude throughout the ordeal were instrumental in enabling the two helicopter crews and forty four friendly troops to withstand superior odds until a rescue could be made. The conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty displayed by Major Conran reflect the highest credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

The facts as contained in the proposed citation and this narrative accounts have been substantiated by the statements of eye witnesses.

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