

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting in the MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to

SERGEANT ROSS F. GRAY  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as Acting Platoon Sergeant serving with Company A, First Battalion, Twenty-Fifth Marines, Fourth Marine Division, in action against enemy Japanese forces on Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands, 21 February 1945. Shrewdly gauging the tactical situation when his platoon was held up by a sudden barrage of hostile grenades while advancing toward the high ground northeast of Airfield Number One, Sergeant Gray promptly organized the withdrawal of his men from enemy grenade range, quickly moved forward alone to reconnoiter and discovered a heavily mined area extending along the front of a strong network of emplacements joined by covered communication trenches. Although assailed by furious gunfire, he cleared a path leading through the mine field to one of the fortifications then returned to the platoon position and, informing his leader of the serious situation, volunteered to initiate an attack while being covered by three fellow Marines. Alone and unarmed but carrying a twenty-four pound satchel charge, he crept up the Japanese emplacement, boldly hurled the short-fused explosive and sealed the entrance. Instantly taken under machine-gun fire from a second entrance to the same position, he unhesitatingly braved the increasingly vicious fusillade to crawl back for another charge, returned to his objective and blasted the second opening, thereby demolishing the position. Repeatedly covering the ground between the savagely defended enemy fortifications and his platoon area, he systematically approached, attacked and withdrew under blanketing fire to destroy a total of six Japanese positions, more than twenty-five of the enemy and a quantity of vital ordnance gear and ammunition. Stouthearted and indomitable, Sergeant Gray had single-handedly overcome a strong enemy garrison and had completely disarmed a large mine field before finally rejoining his unit and, by his great personal valor, daring tactics and tenacious perseverance in the face of extreme peril, had contributed materially to the fulfillment of his company's mission. His gallant conduct throughout enhanced and sustained the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

/S/ HARRY S. TRUMAN