

## RECOMMENDATION FOR DECORATION

DATE  
NOV 6 1969

TO: (Organization and address)

56th Cmbt Spt Gp (CBPO-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)

THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

2. RECOMMENDATION IS BASED ON:

 HEROISM  OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT  
 MERITORIOUS SERVICE (Based on completed period of service)

3. INCLUSIVE DATE(S) OF ACT, ACHIEVEMENT OR SERVICE

FROM: 17 October 1969 TO: 17 October 1969

## PERSONAL DATA ON INDIVIDUAL BEING RECOMMENDED

4. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL

ARNAU, ROBERT R.

5. AFSN

FV3047899

6. SSAN

7. GRADE

MAJOR

8. DATE OF BIRTH

3 June 1933

9. PRESENT ORGANIZATION AND STATION

21st Special Operations Squadron (NARQC6)  
APO San Francisco

10. PRESENT DUTY ASSIGNMENT

Helicopter Pilot, CH-3E, 1025E

11. PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS

12. ORGANIZATION OF NEXT DUTY ASSIGNMENT (Indicate, if not applicable)

NA

13. ORGANIZATION, DUTY ASSIGNMENT AND GRADE AT TIME OF ACT OR SERVICE

21st Special Operations Squadron (NARQC6)  
APO San Francisco 96310  
Aircraft Commander, CH-3E, 1025E, Major

14. EFFECTIVE DATE OF PROMOTION TO GRADE IN WHICH SERVING

8 July 1967

15. INDIVIDUAL'S SERVICE IN AIR FORCE SINCE ACT OR SERVICE HAS BEEN HONORABLE

 YES  NO16. DATE OF  REASSIGNMENT,  RETIREMENT,  OR SEPARATION:

THE CBPO WILL PROVIDE AND VERIFY THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

DEROS: 28 February 1970

RETIREMENT OR SEPARATION IS  VOLUNTARY  INVOLUNTARY, AND THE FOLLOWING SERVICE DATES APPLY:

COOS \_\_\_\_\_

TAFCSO \_\_\_\_\_

TAFMSO \_\_\_\_\_

PLSD \_\_\_\_\_

TFCSD \_\_\_\_\_

TMSO \_\_\_\_\_

17. PREVIOUS UNITED STATES DECORATIONS, COMPLETE AUTHORITY THEREFOR, AND INCLUSIVE DATES OF SERVICE RECOGNIZED (Do not include service medals, battle ordies, unit citations or foreign decorations)

AFCM, SOG-7, 24 Mar 60, HQ8AF, 12 Aug 57-18 Jun 59.

AFCM(10LC), SOG-37, 30 Aug 68, HQ3AF, 1 Jan 67-15 Aug 68.

AM, SOG-2594, 30 Jun 69, HQ7AF, 27 Mar 69-7 Jun 69.

VSM, AFM 900-3.

18. ARE OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AWARDS TO THIS INDIVIDUAL PENDING (If yes, state awards)

 YES  NO

19. ARE OTHER INDIVIDUALS BEING RECOMMENDED FOR THE SAME ACT OR SERVICE

 YES 3  NO

20a. IF ANSWER TO ITEM 18 IS YES, ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE OTHER INDIVIDUALS FORWARDED AS A PART OF THIS RECOMMENDATION

 YES  NO

b. 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

 YES  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.

NA

23. DATE WHICH PRESENTATION OF AWARD IS DESIRED, IF APPROVED

15 December 1969

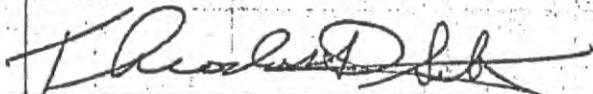
24. IF APPROVED, FORWARD FOR PRESENTATION TO (Organization and address)

CBPO, 56 Cmbt Spt Gp (PACAF)  
APO San Francisco 96310

25. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Description of the act, achievement or service, including specific dates, places and facts. If additional space needed, use plain 8 x 10 1/2 bond paper, the last sheet of which must be signed by the recommending individual in addition to the signature required on this form)

Major Robert R. Arnau distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as Aircraft Commander of a CH-3E helicopter at a classified location in South-east Asia on 18 November 1969. On that date Major Arnau was Mission Commander of a flight of three CH-3E helicopters and two A-1 Skyraiders on an emergency exfiltration of a Forward Reconnaissance Team under attack and surrounded by hostile forces. The weather enroute was poor and in the target area it became extremely marginal with the cloud bases only a few hundred feet above the mountainous terrain. The decision to launch the helicopters was made only because of the dire nature of the emergency; the team had already suffered one killed and two others wounded. Upon arrival at the target area, the Forward Air Controller advised that the weather had not improved; although he was directing air strikes against enemy positions surrounding the team, the cloud cover and severe turbulence would make a recovery attempt extremely difficult and dangerous. Also, the prebriefed rendezvous point and approach heading were not unusable. Major Arnau made the decision to go down through a hole in the undercast despite the fact that this would take the formation over prebriefed anti-aircraft emplacements since it was the only route available. Once below the low lying cloud layer, the formation rendezvoused with the Forward Air Controller and the other two helicopters held while Major Arnau followed the Forward Air Controller to the landing zone. Throughout this time the team was constantly under small arms and automatic weapons fire so the two A-1's followed them in to deliver protective ordnance. Major Arnau spotted the team's signal smoke on a ridgeline and made an approach despite the turbulence and reported hostile fire. The slope of the ridge prevented a complete landing so Major Arnau hovered the helicopter with only the nose wheel touching the ground. The wind gusting over the ridge caused excessive turbulence and the helicopter bucked violently while the team was being loaded aboard. With the entire team, including the body of the dead man, safely on the helicopter Major Arnau departed with all possible power applied. Major Arnau's selfless actions, instant decisions, and superb flying ability resulted in the successful recovery of the surviving members of the Forward Reconnaissance Team, saving them from being captured or killed. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Major Arnau reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

26. TYPED NAME, GRADE AND TITLE OF INDIVIDUAL INITIATING RECOMMENDATION  
 THEODORE D. SILVA, Lt Colonel, USAF  
 Commander

27. SIGNATURE  


28. ATTACHMENTS	
NUMBER	DESCRIPTION (Citation and supporting statements or other official documents)
1	Citation
3	Letters of Commendation (6 Cys)cc.

RECOMMENDATION FOR DECORATION		DATE
TO: (Organization and address) 56th Cmbt Spt Gp (CBPO-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) <b>THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS (10LC)</b>		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: 18 November 1969    TO: 18 November 1969		
PERSONAL DATA ON INDIVIDUAL BEING RECOMMENDED		
4. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL ARNAU, ROBERT R.	8. AFSN FV 3047899	9. SSAN
7. GRADE Major	6. DATE OF BIRTH 3 June 1933	
5. PRESENT ORGANIZATION AND STATION 21st Special Operations Squadron (NARQC6) APO San Francisco 96310		10. PRESENT DUTY ASSIGNMENT Pilot, CH-3E, 1025E
11. PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS		12. ORGANIZATION OF NEXT DUTY ASSIGNMENT (Indicate, if not applicable) N/A
13. ORGANIZATION, DUTY, ASSIGNMENT AND GRADE AT TIME OF ACT OR SERVICE 21st Special Operations Squadron (NARQC6) Aircraft Commander, CH-3E, 1025E Major		14. EFFECTIVE DATE OF PROMOTION TO GRADE IN WHICH SERVING 8 July 1967
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 CBPO WILL PROVIDE AND VERIFY THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:    DEROS: 28 Feb 70 RETIREMENT OR SEPARATION IS <input type="checkbox"/> VOLUNTARY <input type="checkbox"/> INVOLUNTARY, AND THE FOLLOWING SERVICE DATES APPLY CDOS _____ TAFCSO _____ YAFMSD _____ PLSD _____ TFCSD _____ TMSD _____		
17. PREVIOUS UNITED STATES DECORATIONS, COMPLETE AUTHORITY THEREFOR, AND INCLUSIVE DATES OF SERVICE RECOGNIZED (Do not include service medals, battle credits, unit citations or foreign decorations) AM(B), SOG-2594, 30Jun69, HQ7AF, 27Mar69-7Jun69. VSM, AFM 900-3. AFCM, SOG-7, 24Mar60, HQ8AF, 12Aug57-18Jun59. AFCM(10LC), SOG-37, 30Aug68, H3AF, 1Jan67-15Aug68.		
18. ARE OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AWARDS TO THIS INDIVIDUAL PENDING (If yes, state awards) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO    DFC, 17Oct69		19. ARE OTHER INDIVIDUALS BEING RECOMMENDED FOR THE SAME ACT OR SERVICE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
20. IF ANSWER TO ITEM 18 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 20 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 30 Jan 70		24. IF APPROVED, FORWARD FOR PRESENTATION TO (Organization and address) CBPO, 56th Cmbt Spt Gp, APO San Francisco 96310

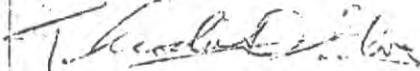
25. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Description of the act, achievement or service, including specific dates, places and items. If additional space needed, use plain 8 x 10% bond paper, the last sheet of which must be signed by the recommending individual in addition to the signature required on this form.)

Major Robert R. Arnau distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as Aircraft Commander of a CH-3 helicopter at a classified location in Southeast Asia on 17 October 1969. On that date Major Arnau was mission commander of a flight of three CH-3 helicopters and two A-1 Skyraiders on a flight deep into hostile territory for an emergency exfiltration of a forward reconnaissance team that was surrounded and under attack by an opposing armed force. After an extensive flight over high mountainous terrain and despite the fact that precise navigation was hindered by an undercast condition, the flight successfully arrived at the point prebriefed for rendezvous with the Forward Air Controller. As the formation reached the rendezvous point, the last of four separate flights of attack and fighter aircraft that had been supporting the beleaguered team expended the last of their ordnance and departed the area. The Forward Air Controller advised that the friendly team was located on a high, heavily jungled ridgeline and, due to the surrounding hostile forces, was unable to move to a clear landing zone. This fact was of vital importance due to the extremely adverse effects of the high altitude and temperature of the area on helicopter performance. It was determined that dumping fuel would barely allow them to make the recovery and retain range for return to the recovery base. Based on this information, Major Arnau elected to initiate an approach and directed the other two helicopters to hold. While the two escort aircraft circled protectively, the Forward Air Controller directed the lead helicopter to the team. After sighting their signal smoke, Major Arnau brought the helicopter to a hover over the team, lowering it until the bottom of the aircraft was literally in the trees. Since near maximum power was required to hover even before adding the weight of the team, this was done to increase the slight "ground effect" as well as to minimize the danger of hostile ground fire. Throughout the recovery all aircraft and the team were receiving moderate ground fire. On the first cycle of the penetrator three of the team members were extracted from the jungle. The penetrator was again lowered and two additional members started upwards. At that instant the number two engine Fire Warning Light illuminated. Since both engines were at near maximum power, they were faced with the decision of whether to continue hovering with high power and a possible engine fire or to sever the penetrator cable and depart the area. Without hesitation and with total disregard for their own safety, they continued the rescue. When the second cycle was completed, only one man remained on the ground. Once more a decision was required: to leave a lone man on the ground surrounded by hostile forces or to continue the hover in spite of the still present engine fire warning. Once again, for the third time, the penetrator descended. The final team member was extracted and with all possible power applied the helicopter slowly lifted from the treetops. As soon as the helicopter was safely airborne, Major Arnau immediately reduced power and the Fire Warning Light that had been illuminated for over two minutes finally went out. After arriving at the recovery base, the rescued team stated that hostile automatic weapons fire and small arms fire occurred continuously during the extraction. Due to the outstanding performance and dedication of Major Arnau, the forward reconnaissance team was successfully rescued and saved.

26. TYPED NAME, GRADE AND TITLE OF INDIVIDUAL INITIATING RECOMMENDATION

THEODORE D. SILVA, Lt Colonel, USAF  
Commander

27. SIGNATURE

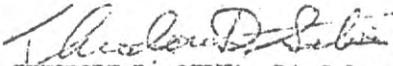


28. ATTACHMENTS

NUMBER	DESCRIPTION (Citation and supporting statements or other official documents)
1	Citation

AF Form 642, ITEM 24, Major Robert R. Arnau (Con't):

from certain death or capture by the opposing armed force. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Major Arnau reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.



THEODORE D. SILVA, Lt Colonel, USAF  
Commander