

**THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON**

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the NAVY CROSS posthumously to

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN A. BUTLER,
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS,

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

“For extraordinary heroism as Commanding Officer of the First Battalion, attached to the Twenty-Seventh Marines, Fifth Marine Division, during operations against enemy Japanese forces on Iwo Jima in the Volcano Islands, from 19 February to 5 March 1945. Landing with his battalion in the fourth wave on D-Day, Lieutenant Colonel Butler quickly advanced his men over ground swept by heavy hostile mortar and artillery fire to a position approximately 150 yards inland from the beach, where he promptly established his command post on top of an enemy occupied blockhouse. Directing his troops from this dangerous position as they made their tortuous way over the shifting, volcanic sands and gun-studded terraces toward Motoyama Airfield Number One, he repeatedly exposed himself to the smashing bombardment of powerful Japanese gun-batteries and, subsequently unable to obtain satisfactory information regarding the progress of battle, unhesitatingly moved forward to the base of the airfield. With observation masked from this point, he fearlessly advanced to the top of the field, moved out under the unabated fury of hostile fire, and making a personal reconnaissance of the area, observed that his left assault company had circled the southern edge of the field but his right assault unit had been stopped in its advance by the overwhelming volume of Japanese fire. Disregarding all

personal danger, he returned across the contested area under the direct fire of enemy riflemen concealed in the debris of wrecked planes and directed his right assault company forward. Cool and indomitable as the intrepid unit surged across the field in the face of savage resistance, Lieutenant Colonel Butler, by his daring combat tactics, outstanding valor and determined aggressiveness in the early critical stages of battle, had inspired his men to heroic performance during the final phase of this assault which culminated in the seizure of the entire southern end of the vital Japanese position before the close of D-plus-2. His dynamic leadership and astute military acumen throughout reflect the highest credit upon Lieutenant Colonel Butler and upon the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

For the President

James Forrestal
Secretary of the Navy