

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
Indianapolis, Indiana
May 2-3, 1990**

Resolution No. 48: Distinguished Service Award Nomination

Origin: Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials Committee

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion has created The American Legion Distinguished Service Medal and has authorized its award to distinguished Americans in recognition of their outstanding service to the nation; and

WHEREAS, It is in keeping with the principles, purposes, and traditions of this award that it be bestowed upon an American who pioneered and developed the medical methods which have made open heart surgery not only possible, but a procedure that has accounted for more than 674,000 open-heart surgeries and related heart operations such as angioplasties, according to the National Center for Health Statistics; and

WHEREAS, He has served the country through his exemplary military service during World War II as director of the Surgical Consultant's Division in the Surgeon General's Office where his work led to the development of mobile army surgical hospitals (MASH Units) and helped establish the specialized medical and surgical centers system for treating military personnel returning from the war which subsequently became the Veterans Administration Medical Center System; and

WHEREAS, He is a recipient of the Legion of Merit Award and holds the rank of colonel, Army of the United States (Reserve); and

WHEREAS, He has advanced the frontiers of medical science through the development of innumerable innovative surgical procedures, techniques, devices and surgical instruments for use in the treatment of cardiovascular diseases; and

WHEREAS, He has earned an enviable reputation as a medical statesman, serving as advisor to almost every president in the past fifty years, receiving the Medal of Freedom, the highest honor a United States citizen can receive, in 1969, and the National Medal of Science in 1987; and

WHEREAS, He led the movement to establish the National Library of Medicine in 1949, and served on the first Board of Regents; and

WHEREAS, He has served an unprecedented three terms on the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Advisory Council of the National Institute of Health; and

WHEREAS, He has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to research and public education in the prevention and treatment of heart disease, reflected in more than 1,200 published medical articles, chapters, and books and now serves as the chancellor of Baylor College of Medicine, the Olga Keith Weiss professor and chairman of its Department of Surgery, distinguished service professor and director of The DeBakey Heart Center, which was established by Baylor in 1985 for research and public education in the prevention and treatment of heart disease; and

WHEREAS, He has supported the highest principles and objectives of The American Legion through his life-long dedication to not only the people of this nation, particularly the armed forces personnel, but to the world as a whole, saving countless lives in the process; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 2-3, 1990, That the Distinguished Service Medal of The American Legion be presented to Dr. Michael E. DeBakey.