



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on October 20, 2003

Men of Honor

Among the elite fellowship of those who have earned our nation's highest decoration, the Medal of Honor, The John Birch Society is well represented.

The Medal of Honor has been called our nation's rarest gem. Of the millions of men who have served in our Armed Forces from Pearl Harbor to Somalia, only 842 have received this decoration for heroism above and beyond the call of duty. As of April 13, 2003 there were 137 living Medal of Honor recipients.



Hero at Pearl Harbor

When Japanese war planes attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, John Finn was stationed at nearby Kaneohe Bay Naval Air Station. According to his Medal of Honor citation, he manned a .50 caliber machine gun in an exposed area under heavy strafing fire. "Although painfully wounded many times," it reads, "he continued to man this gun and to return the enemy's fire vigorously and with telling effect throughout the enemy strafing and bombing attacks and with complete disregard for his own personal safety."

John and his wife Alice joined The John Birch Society in the 1960s. At age 94, John Finn is the oldest living Medal of Honor recipient and is also the last surviving recipient from Pearl Harbor.

A Courageous Leader

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Col. Lewis Millett served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. His medal of Honor citation records that in Korea he "distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty," in a charge to free a platoon pinned down by heavy enemy fire. According to the citation: "Capt. Millett ordered the 3d Platoon forward, placed himself at the head of the 2 platoons, and, with fixed bayonet, led the assault up the fire-swept hill. In the fierce charge Capt. Millett bayoneted 2 enemy soldiers and boldly continued on, throwing grenades, clubbing and bayoneting the enemy, while urging his men forward by shouting encouragement. Despite vicious opposing fire, the whirlwind hand-to-hand assault carried to the crest of the hill. His dauntless leadership and personal courage so inspired his men that they stormed into the hostile position and used their bayonets with such lethal effect that the enemy fled in wild disorder."

Col. Millett retired from the Army in 1973, but never stopped fighting. "When I came home, I found that the Communists and their sympathizers and fellow travelers in our government, the universities, the media, and Hollywood were far more dangerous than the ones I was fighting in the jungles of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia," he says. "I was also especially alarmed by the efforts to disarm the American people and to compromise our sovereignty through UN treaties." Col. Millett joined The John Birch Society and traveled the country speaking on the Society's speakers bureau.

One Man Saved the Day



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When he was 17 years old, Mitch Paige and a young friend walked and hitchhiked to the nearest Marine recruiting station — 200 miles away, in Baltimore. The year was 1936. A few years later he was on the other side of the world, defending Hanneken’s Ridge in a heroic stand against overwhelming Japanese forces during the fierce battle for Guadalcanal. His Medal of Honor citation notes: “When the enemy broke through the line directly in front of his position, P/Sgt. Paige, commanding a machinegun section with fearless determination, continued to direct the fire of his gunners until all his men were either killed or wounded. Alone, against the deadly hail of Japanese shells, he fought with his gun and when it was destroyed, took over another, moving from gun to gun, never ceasing his withering fire against the advancing hordes.” He held throughout the night, until reinforcements finally arrived the next morning. Then, forming a new line, he led a bayonet charge, driving the enemy back and preventing a breakthrough in the American lines. The Daily News of McKeesport, Pa., noted of Paige’s exploits that “one man, alone on a blood-stained field, saved the day on Guadalcanal.”

Col. Paige was introduced to the Birch Society by fellow Medal of Honor recipient Col. Lewis Millett. “The Birchers fight with courage for truth and liberty, God, family, and country — that’s what I like,” he told this reporter last year. “The motto of The New American, ‘That freedom shall not perish,’ says it all. It’s the greatest magazine in the world. I look forward to every issue.”

Photo: In this Sept. 28, 1942 photo provided by the U.S. Navy, Chief Ordnanceman John W. Finn is congratulated by his wife Alice at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, after he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor or heroism at Kaneohe Naval Air Station for his actions during the attack on Pearl Harbor: AP Images



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