

General Myers receives Presidential Medal of Freedom

By Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service / Published November 10, 2005

WASHINGTON (AFPN) --

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President George Bush presented retired Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers the Presidential Medal of Freedom during a White House ceremony today.

 [GENERAL RICHARD B. MYERS](#)

General Myers, who stepped down as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Sept. 30, was one of 14 Americans honored with the nation's highest civilian award.

President Bush praised the general for his efforts that helped free 50 million people in Afghanistan and Iraq. The president said General Myers took office less than a month after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, "and he was the right man for the job."

As chairman, the general served as the principal military adviser to the president and the rest of the National Security Council.

"Dick Myers was a source of wisdom, clear analysis and broad vision," the president said. "As chairman, he helped design a thorough and innovative strategy for victory in the war on terror."

The president also praised the general for his role in transforming the American military to confront the threats of the present and future.

President Bush called General Myers a model officer who retired after more than 40 years in uniform. He said Myers was always "deliberate, unflinching and calm in a storm."

General Myers left the service with "four stars on his shoulder and his place in American history secure," the president said.

The president also awarded the medal to three-time heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali, actress and comedian Carol Burnett, Internet pioneers Vinton Cerf and Robert Kahn, historian Robert Conquest, singer Aretha Franklin, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, actor Andy Griffith, broadcaster Paul Harvey, former U.S. Rep. Sonny Montgomery, golfer Jack Nicklaus, baseball hall-of-famer and Washington Nationals manager Frank Robinson and Paul Rusesabagina, who rescued thousands from genocide in Rwanda.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is in the form of a golden star with white enamel, with a red enamel pentagon behind it. The central disc bears 13 white enamel stars on a blue enamel background -- taken from the crest of the U.S. coat-of-arms -- within a golden ring. Golden American eagles stand between the arms of the star. It is worn on a blue ribbon with white edge stripes around the neck.

