

# Order of The Sword



## ORDER OF THE SWORD

This booklet contains the historical background of the "Order of the Sword," the Military Airlift Command adaptation of the ancient ceremony, procedures for nominating and selecting individuals for induction into the "Order of the Sword" and specific guidelines for the conduct of the formal induction ceremony.

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## ORDER OF THE SWORD

1. HISTORY: Traditionally, the noncommissioned officer corps as we know it today was established in the early 12th century. At that time, King Gustave I of Sweden enjoined the noblemen commissioned by him to appoint officers to serve them. These people became the noncommissioned officer as we know him today. They were the accountants, builders, craftsmen, teachers, scribes and other leaders responsible for conducting the ordinary daily affairs of the kingdom. The system worked so well that it was incorporated into the Army as a way to establish and maintain a cohesive, disciplined, well trained force for protection of lives and property in the kingdom. These ancient noncommissioned officers would on occasion honor a leader and pledge their loyalty by ceremoniously presenting him a sword. The sword, a symbol of truth, justice, and power rightfully used, served as a token for all to see and know that here was a leader among leaders and man among men. This ceremony became known as "The Royal Order of the Sword." It was passed through the ages, coming to this country about the time of the Revolutionary War. It lay dormant for many years after that, with the only known instance of its use being in the 1860s when General R. E. Lee was presented a sword by his command.

2. MILITARY ADAPTATION: The old "Royal Order of the Sword" ceremony has been revived, updated and adopted by the noncommissioned officers of the Military Airlift Command as their method for paying tribute to personages whom they hold in the highest esteem and whom those noncommissioned officers choose to honor. Any individual, regardless of status, may be inducted into the "Order of the Sword" by noncommissioned officers of the Military Airlift Command, in accordance with directions contained herein.

3. ORDER OF THE SWORD COMMITTEE: The chairman of the "Order of the Sword" committee will be the Chief Master Sergeant of the Military Airlift Command. Other committee members will be the Chief Master Sergeant of each MAC AF, CONUS Military Airlift Wing and Technical Service.

4. NOMINATION AND SELECTION OF HONOREES: Any group of MAC noncommissioned officers, at wing or comparable level, may induct any individual of their choice into the "Order of the Sword" once that individual is approved for such induction by the MAC "Order of the Sword" committee. Nominations will be made, by letter, from the representative of the nominating group to the Chief Master Sergeant of the Military Airlift Command. Letters of nomination must include a biographical sketch of the nominee and a synopsis of the events or other reasons for nomination. The nominating letter should not be all

inclusive but should be sufficiently complete so committee members can get an impression of the individual nominated. The Chief Master Sergeant of the Military Airlift Command will poll each committee member for his approval or disapproval of the nominee. A two thirds vote of all committee members is required for approval to induct any nominee into the "Order of the Sword." The Chief Master Sergeant of the Military Airlift Command will respond to the original request by letter, citing the approval or disapproval. Nominees not approved by the committee will not be recognized as "Order of the Sword" inductees.

5. PERMANENT RECOGNITION OF "ORDER OF THE SWORD" RECIPIENTS:

A large base mounted "master sword" symbolic of the formal "Order of the Sword" ceremony will be on permanent display at Headquarters, Military Airlift Command. Individual  $1\frac{1}{2}$  x 3 inch bronze plaques inscribed with the honoree's rank or position; first name, middle initial, and last name, and the date of the formal induction ceremony will be provided by the noncommissioned officer group conducting the ceremony. The individual bronze plaques will be permanently affixed to the base of the "master sword" by the honoring noncommissioned officers.

6. FINANCIAL ASPECTS: The hosting noncommissioned officers are responsible for the total cost of the ceremony from their own resources. This includes the banquet, the presentations made to the honoree, and any ceremonial equipment (individual swords, printed proclamations, etc).

7. THE FORMAL INDUCTION CEREMONY: The ceremony consists of a cocktail period and a formal dinner. Participants will be as follows:

Honoree - Previously described as the nominee in para. 4.

Honoree's Wife - (No other female except those in the Armed Forces).

Honored Guests - Individuals selected by the honoring group to sit at the head table.

Sergeant Major (SM) - The noncommissioned officer designated to preside over all proceedings and to perform those Sergeant Major duties prescribed herein.

First Sergeant (FS) - The noncommissioned officer designated to perform those First Sergeant duties prescribed herein.

Duty Sergeant (DS) - The noncommissioned officer designated to perform those Duty Sergeant duties prescribed herein.

Sergeant At Arms (SA) - The noncommissioned officer designated to perform those Sergeant At Arms duties prescribed herein.

Chaplain - A selected noncommissioned officer.

Color Guard Commander (CGC) - The noncommissioned officer designated to perform those Color Guard Commander duties prescribed herein.

Color Guard - Noncommissioned officers and/or airmen, as desired, to carry and to post the American, General Officer's (where appropriate) and unit flags/guidons in accordance with the procedures outlined herein.

Drums and Bugles - Drums and bugles, in the amount desired by the honoring committee.

Musicians - Any type of musical accompaniment, as selected by the honoring committee, to provide background music during the dining period.

Choral Group - An NCO and/or airman singing group of a size determined by the honoring committee, to perform as prescribed herein.

Guests - Guests will be as determined by the honoring committee.

Dress: Attire for all military participants will be formal or semi-formal military uniform. Attire for civilians will be formal.

HEAD TABLE ARRANGEMENT: The head table will be arranged as shown in Figure 1.

GUEST TABLES: The tables for other than the honored guests may be arranged in any manner suitable to the area where the ceremony is being conducted, as determined by the honoring committee. All squadron commanders, with first sergeants sitting opposite, will be seated at one table in a part of the dining facility where posting of the squadron guidons can be accomplished to the rear of the commanders.

8. ELEMENTS:

INVITATIONS:

HONOREE: The invitation to the honoree will be of rich grain wood construction, with ultramarine blue velvet lining. Left side of

invitation will contain a gold ribbon on which is imprinted "Order of the Sword" in ultramarine blue. Centered below the ribbon will be the unit crest superimposed over crossed swords. Right side of invitation; the invitation on parchment scroll. (See Figure 2.) Note: The MAC crest is used in the attachments to this booklet as a guide only. Units should use their own crests.

#### GUESTS AND NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Invitations to these personnel will be prepared on parchment paper as shown in Figure 3. Invitations to officer guests are the same as shown in Figure 3, except that attire will be mess dress.

TABLE SETTING: The head table configuration will be as shown in Figure 1. All tables will be covered with gold colored cloths. Silver, china and glassware will be placed in standard formal dinner setting. Napkins will be gold colored and folded upright in tricorner fold. Each place setting at the head table will be provided two wine glasses. First glass will be used for regular toasts, second glass will be used only for toasting the honored guest and broken in the toast glass receptacle after toasting. Place settings at all other tables will have only one wine glass which will not be broken after toasting the honored guest.

HEAD TABLE CENTER PIECE: The center piece will be the MAC Ceremonial Sword which is obtained from the keeper of the sword, the Chief Master Sergeant of the Military Airlift Command.

**PLACE CARDS:** The name and rank of each guest will be on a card embossed with the "Order of the Sword" symbol. Place cards will be used at the head table.

**MENU:** The menu (sample shown as figure 4) is prepared on parchment paper, folded down the center and placed inside menu cover (Figure 5). The cover is gold with black lettering.

**TOAST GLASS RECEPTACLE:** The receptacle (Figure 10) is covered by gold colored cloth and surrounded by blue decorative ropes on four corner stanchions. Decorative emblems or swords may be added.

**SCROLL:** The scroll (Figure 6), made of parchment paper on brass or bronze rollers, is signed by NCOs upon entering the ceremony. It is presented to the honoree by the Sergeant Major at the conclusion of the ceremony.

**PROCLAMATION:** An appropriate proclamation (Figure 7) is prepared by the honoring unit Order of the Sword committee. Titles and signatures of committee members are affixed at the bottom of the proclamation. Proclamation is mounted under glass in wooden shadow box.

**ORDER OF THE SWORD CITATION:** The citation (Figure 8), signed by the Sergeant Major, contains a gold ribbon on which is imprinted "Order of the Sword" in ultramarine blue. The citation is

mounted on ultramarine blue velvet background, under glass in a wooden shadow box.

**RANK-RATE AND INSIGNIA & DECORATION AWARD:** Rank insignia and decorations (example shown as figure 9) are placed on blue velvet background, under glass in wooden shadow box. NOTE: Additional awards which are appropriate for the honoree and in consonance with the dignity of the ceremony may be bestowed upon the honoree.

**9. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS:** Cocktail hour is scheduled prior to the start of the dinner. The Sergeant Major will escort the honored guest to the Open Mess. They will be met outside the main entrance by the First Sergeant and Duty Sergeant of the dinner. The Sergeant Major will introduce the guest of honor to the First Sergeant and the Duty Sergeant. The First Sergeant and Duty Sergeant will introduce the guest of honor to the guests. At the end of the cocktail hour "Drum Rolls and Bugles" will sound and dinner guests will move into the ballroom and stand behind their chairs. The Sergeant Major will escort the guest of honor.

**SM: "COLOR GUARD COMMANDER"** (At this time the Color Guard Commander (CGC) leaves his chair and centers on the head table. Salutes are exchanged between the SM and the CGC).

**SM: "POST THE COLORS, CGC."**

CGC faces about and commands: "SOUND ATTENTION." On this command, attention is sounded and the drum beat is started. The band sections move into the ballroom and take positions. At the same time, the General's flag bearer moves in and takes position. When band sections and flag bearers are in position, the CGC commands: "PRESENT ARMS."

The flag bearers present the General officers flags. The CGC faces about and salutes.

The band section (drum and trumpeters) sound the appropriate "ruffles and flourishes." At the end of "ruffles and flourishes," the CGC drops his salute, faces about and commands: "ORDER ARMS."

The flag bearers return to the carry position; the CGC commands: "COLOR GUARD, FORWARD MARCH."

The drum sections play the drum cadence and the color guards enter. The National-Air Force-Wing-Squadron Color Guard enters. All colors take positions.

When all colors are in position the drum beat stops and the CGC commands: "PRESENT ARMS."

The Wing and Squadron colors dip and color guards present arms.

The CGC faces about and salutes. The band section plays "To The Colors."

The Air Force colors present at the first note of the music.

On the last note of the music the Air Force colors return to the carry. The CGC drops his salute and faces about and commands: "ORDER ARMS." All colors return to the carry and the color guards come to Right Shoulder Arms. The CGC faces about. The SM commands: "POST THE COLORS." No salutes are exchanged. The CGC faces about and commands: "COLORS, POST, MARCH." He then faces about and remains at the position of attention. The drum section starts the drum cadence. The color guard splits with the National and Air Force colors moving to the right, followed by two color guards. The Wing and Squadron colors move to the left, followed by two color guards. The General flag bearers split and follow the colors, ranking flag to the right. The color guard and the flag bearers pass behind the head table and take their position. They do not cross to the other side with their respective colors. General officers' flag bearers take positions. All remaining movements are executed without verbal commands. All movements are executed by drum rolls played for each movement.

Drum Roll #1 - All color bearers grasp flag staff with left hand above right hand.

Drum Roll #2 - All color bearers lift the colors from the harness and place in color stands. Bearers remain bent over.

Drum Roll #3 - Color bearers come to a position of attention.

Drum Roll #4 - National, Air Force, Wing and Squadron color bearers take one step to the rear.

Drum Roll #5 - All color bearers come to Present Arms (hand salute) and color guards come to Present Arms from Right Shoulder Arms.

Drum Roll #6 - All color bearers drop hand salute and color guards return to Right Shoulder Arms.

Drum Roll #7 - National, Air Force, Wing and Squadron color bearers face to the side.

Drum Roll #8 - Color guard marches out.

Marching drum beat starts and the National, Air Force, Wing and Squadron color bearers move to their right and the color bearers move to their left, each followed by a color guard and General officers' flag bearer.

The band sections move out after the General officers' flag bearers.

The drum beat ceases when the last drummer has cleared the ballroom.

SM: "CGC TAKE YOUR POSITION." The CGC moves to his assigned place at the dinner table.

FS: "GENTLEMEN, PLEASE BE SEATED." Note: After all seated:

"CHAPLAIN, WILL YOU PLEASE GIVE THE INVOCATION."

Chaplain (Standing): Gives invocation.

DINNER AND MUSIC

AFTER DINNER

(Note: At prearranged signal from SM, the FS rings bell 7 times.)

(Standing) "SERGEANT MAJOR, MAY I PROCEED?"

SM: "YES, FIRST SERGEANT, YOU MAY PROCEED."

FS: "DUTY SERGEANT, ARE YOU READY?"

DS: (Standing) "YES SIR, I AM READY."

FS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS."

SA takes position and salutes.

SM: (Standing) Raps gavel 3 times. "THIS CEREMONY IS CALLED TO ORDER. THE CHAIR IS PROUD TO RECOGNIZE IN ATTENDANCE THIS EVENING OUR DISTINGUISHED GUESTS (by rank and position)."

FS: "DUTY SERGEANT."

DS: "YES SIR."

FS: "PLEASE STATE THE PURPOSE FOR THIS OCCASION."

DS: "FS AND HONORED GUESTS, THE PURPOSE OF THIS OCCASION IS TO HONOR (name of honoree)."

FS: "DO YOU HAVE THE RECORD?"

DS: "YES SIR, I DO."

FS: "VERY WELL, PLEASE PROCEED."

DS: Reads biographical synopsis, etc.

FS: "DUTY SERGEANT, YOU WISH TO MAKE A PROCLAMATION?"

DS: "YES SIR, I DO."

FS: "PLEASE READ THE PROCLAMATION."

DS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS." (At this point the Sergeant at Arms goes to the Duty Sergeant and gets the proclamation and returns to the center.) When the Sergeant at Arms is in place, the DS reads the proclamation.

FS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS, MAKE THE PRESENTATION."

Note: Sergeant At Arms makes the presentation and returns to the center.

FS: "I AM HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS OF THE (organization and base) HAVE ELECTED TO BESTOW THEIR HIGHEST AWARD TO (name of honoree) AND OFFER CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEWEST MEMBER IN THE ORDER OF THE SWORD."

FS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS."

Note: At this point the Sergeant at Arms goes to the FS and gets the Order of the Sword citation and returns to the center. When the Sergeant at Arms is in place, the DS reads the Order of the Sword citation.

FS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS, MAKE THE PRESENTATION."

Note: Sergeant At Arms makes the presentation and returns to the center.

FS: "DUTY SERGEANT, IS THERE AN AWARD TO ACCOMPANY THE CITATION?"

DS: "YES SIR, THERE IS."

FS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS." (At this point the Sergeant At Arms goes to the DS and gets the Order of the Sword plaque and returns to the center.)

FS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS, MAKE THE PRESENTATION."

Note: Sergeant At Arms makes the presentation and returns to the center.

FS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS." (At this point the Sergeant At Arms goes to the DS and returns to the center.)

When the Sergeant At Arms is in place, the DS says the following:

DS: "(Name of honoree) ENCLOSED HEREIN ARE INSIGNIAS OR RANK-RATE INSIGNIAS AND SERVICE RIBBONS. IT IS INSCRIBED (name of honoree and date) WITH HIGHEST ESTEEM, FROM THE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS OF (organization and base)."

FS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS, MAKE THE PRESENTATION."

Note: Sergeant At Arms makes the presentation and returns to the center.

SM: "FIRST SERGEANT, ARE THERE ANY FURTHER PRESENTATIONS TO MAKE?"

FS: "YES SIR, THERE ARE."

FS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS." (At this point the Sergeant At Arms goes to the FS and gets the cushion with the personal memento and returns to the center.)

FS: '(Name of honoree) ON BEHALF OF ALL THE NONCOMMIS-  
SIONED OFFICERS AT (organization) I AM PROUD TO PRESENT  
YOU THIS PERSONAL MEMENTO."

DS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS, MAKE THE PRESENTATION."

Note: Sergeant at Arms makes the presentation and returns to the  
center. If there are other presentations they are made at this time  
following the preceding procedure.

FS: "SERGEANT AT ARMS, YOU ARE RELIEVED."

At this point, after saluting with the sword, Sergeant at Arms returns  
to his seat.

FS: "DUTY SERGEANT, A TOAST."

DS: "GENTLEMEN, A TOAST TO OUR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF,  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, (full name)."

All present will reply: "TO THE PRESIDENT."

FS: "DUTY SERGEANT, A TOAST."

DS: "GENTLEMEN, A TOAST TO OUR CHIEF OF STAFF, GENERAL  
(full name)."

All present will reply: "TO THE CHIEF OF STAFF."

FS: "DUTY SERGEANT, A TOAST."

DS: "GENTLEMEN, A TOAST TO THE COMMANDER, MILITARY  
AIRLIFT COMMAND, GENERAL (full name)."

All present will reply: "TO THE COMMANDER."

FS: "DUTY SERGEANT, A TOAST."

DS: "GENTLEMEN, A TOAST TO (name of honoree) AN AIRMAN  
AMONG AIRMEN."

All present will reply: "HEAR, HEAR."

Note: Drink the toast and only those at the head table break the glasses.

FS: (Note: At this time, the FS will ask each guest at the head table  
to say a few words, starting with the lowest rank first.)

SAMPLE: "GENERAL JOHN H. DOE, DO YOU DESIRE TO  
ADDRESS THIS MEETING?"

FS: "(Honoree, rank and name), MAY WE HAVE A FEW WORDS  
PLEASE?"

Note: After honoree finishes....

FS: "DUTY SERGEANT, HAVE YOU FINISHED?"

DS: "YES, FIRST SERGEANT, I HAVE FINISHED."

FS: (Standing)--Raps the gavel 3 times.

FS: "GENTLEMEN, THIS ORDER OF THE SWORD CEREMONY IS  
TERMINATED."

#### RETRIEVING THE COLORS

After the dinner has been officially closed by the First Sergeant, the  
Sergeant Major commands: "COLOR GUARD COMMANDER." The  
CGC moves from his place at the dinner table to his original position  
centered on the head table. Salutes are exchanged between Sergeant

Major and CGC only. SM: "RETRIEVE THE COLORS, CGC."

The CGC faces about. Band faces about. Band starts playing when CGC faces about. No command is given.

The drums start the drum cadence and the band sections and the color details enter from both sides and take their places. The drum beat stops when all persons are in position. As the color detail enters, the CGC faces about and remains at attention. All dinner guests rise and stand behind their chairs on the first beat of the music. All movements are executed by drum rolls--no verbal commands are given.

Drum Roll #1 - Color guards come to Present Arms.

Drum Roll #2 - All color bearers bend over and grasp the flag staffs.

Drum Roll #3 - Color bearers straighten up and lift the colors out of the color stand and place them in their harness.

Drum Roll #4 - Color guards come to Right Shoulder Arms.

Drum Roll #5 - National, Air Force, Wing and Squadron color bearers take on step to rear. National color bearers stand fast!

Marching drum beat starts and all color bearers move out exactly the same way as they did after the initial posting of the colors prior to the dinner.

Note: The Squadron guidons that were placed behind each commander will not be retrieved.

When the band sections clear the ballroom, the drum beat stops.

The Sergeant Major instructs the CGC: "WELL DONE, COLOR GUARD COMMANDER."

Salutes are exchanged between the SM and the CGC. The CGC faces about and moves to his assigned place at the dinner table.

When the CGC is in his assigned place at the dinner table, the drum beat commences and the chorus led by the trumpets and drums enters the ballroom singing the honoree's favorite song and moves to a position in front and facing the head table. The trumpets and drums will take a position behind the chorus.

The band leader simultaneously moves to his position centered in front of the head table as the band enters.

When the chorus is in position they sing "THE AIR FORCE SONG."

At the conclusion of the Air Force Song the chorus renders: "BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC" accompanied by trumpets and drums. Other selections are optional.

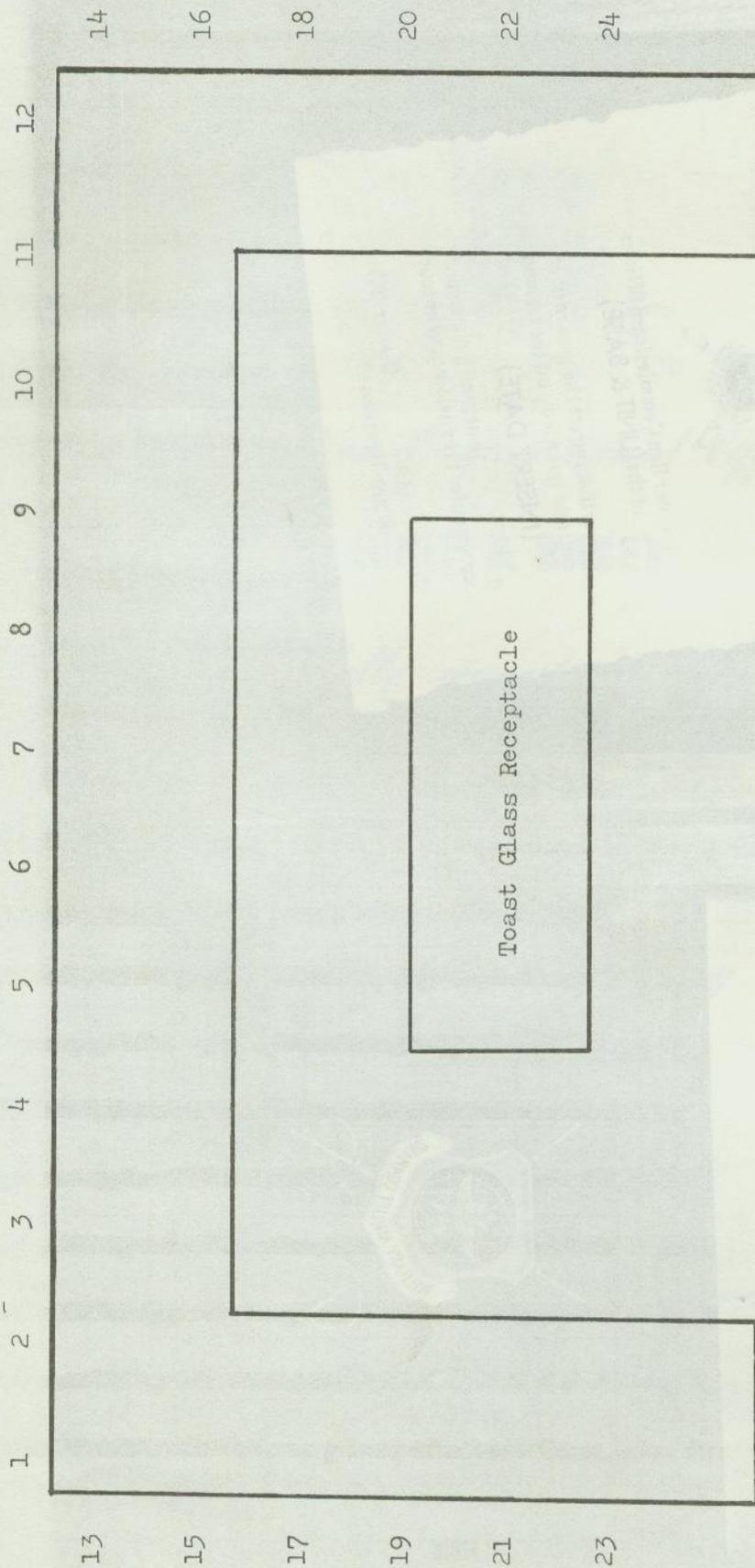
The chorus sings AULD LANG SYNE. When the chorus starts the second verse of AULD LANG SYNE, they march out singing--this must be timed so that the sound diminishes and is just faintly heard as the song ends.

At this time, the Sergeant Major will address the honoree with the statement: "MAY I PRESENT YOUR NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS TO YOU SIR." The honoree is then escorted by the Sergeant Major to

a convenient area at the front of the head table where the Unit Order of the Sword Committee will have formed on the First Sergeant with the Color Guard Commander last in line. The Sergeant Major will then present the Unit Order of the Sword Committee to the honoree after which the Sergeant At Arms will then escort the honoree and entourage through the tables in a manner permitting all guests to meet the honoree. The Sergeant At Arms will issue appropriate commands to assure attention when the honoree passes and "at ease" as appropriate. After all guests have been greeted, the Sergeant At Arms will escort the entourage back to the head table. Upon return to the head table, the Sergeant Major will request all personnel take their seats. At this time, the Sergeant Major will present the scroll and make appropriate closing remarks.

10. PUBLICITY: Order of the Sword ceremonies are considered to be of news interest primarily to the internal MAC audience. Public news releases, if made, should concern only the facts of the presentation, the nature of the award, and biographical data on the recipient. When an Order of the Sword ceremony has been scheduled, the sponsoring group should notify the local base Information Officer so that he may arrange appropriate coverage, including black-and-white photography for the base newspaper; materials should be forwarded to HQ MAC (MAFOII) for possible publication in the MAC News Service.

If the Order of the Sword ceremony is taped and filmed a copy will be forwarded to HQ MAC (MACCM) for permanent file.



- 5 - Honoree's Wife
- 6 - Honoree
- 7 - Sergeant Major
- 8 thru 18 - Honored Guests, according to rank
- 20 - Color Guard Commander
- 22 - Sergeant-At-Arms
- 24 - Duty Sergeant
- 23 - First Sergeant
- 21 thru 13 - Honored Guests, according to rank
- 1 - Chaplain
- 2,3,4 - Honored Guests

Figure 1

# Order of The Sword



# Order of The Sword



our Non Commissioned Officers  
of the (UNIT & BASE)

respectfully direct the presence of  
you and your lady on the evening  
of (INSERT DATE)

to attend a dinner and  
ceremonies to be held in your honour

Cocktails - 1830 Dinner - 1915  
Attire - Mess Dress

Figure 2

# Order of The Sword



*The Non Commissioned Officers  
of the* **(UNIT & BASE)**

*respectfully request your presence  
on the evening of  
Eighteen June, in the year of our Lord  
one thousand nine hundred and sixty eight,  
to attend a dinner and ceremony honoring*

**(HONOREE)**

*Cocktails-1830*

*Dinner-1915*

*Attire-Formal Dress Blues*

**(base)**

*Non Commissioned Officers Open Mess*

*Fresh Garden Salad*  
*with*  
*French Dressing*

*Roast Prime Rib of Beef*

*Baked Idaho Potatoes*  
*with*

*Sour Cream and Chives*

*Green Bean Almondine*

*Hot Rolls and Butter*

*Coffee and Tea*

*Fresh Strawberry Supreme*

*Honoring*  
**(RECIPIENT)**

Order of The Sword



Figure 5



Order of The Sword



Proclamation

Whereas:

Whereas:

Whereas:

Whereas:

Whereas:

Therefore:

Whereas:

Witness Whereof:

TEXT  
of  
PROCLAMATION



Figure 7

THE NON COMMISSIONED OFFICERS



Order of The Sword

TO

(NAME OF RECIPIENT)

In recognition of his unparalleled interest in, support of, and guidance to the Non Commissioned Officer Corps while serving as Commander

(UNIT & BASE)

This award shall serve as notice to Non Commissioned Officers of the Armed Forces that he has been accepted with due honour and ceremony

Given this (DATE)

(SIGNED)

(BASE)

Figure 8



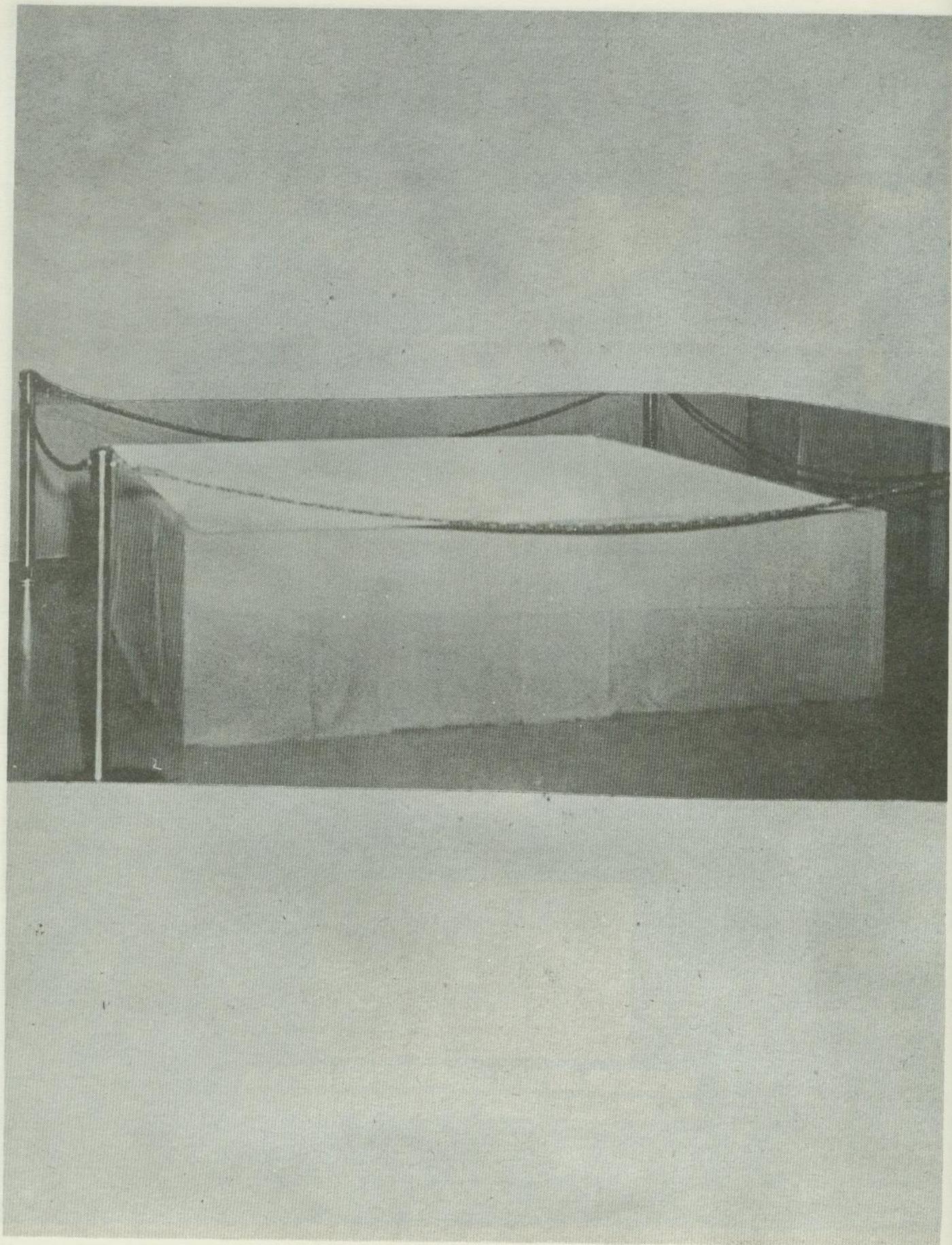


Figure 10