



**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AIR MEDAL**

TO

**LIEUTENANT COMMANDER DAVID CORSON
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant Commander CORSON is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on the night of 18 March 1973 while serving as aircraft commander of Coast Guard HH-52A 1416 helicopter engaged in the medical evacuation of a severely injured seaman from the Norwegian merchant vessel ASTRID BAKKE, which was encountering heavy seas about 70 miles southwest of Astoria, Oregon. Advised of the emergency, Lieutenant Commander CORSON and his crew departed Coast Guard Air Station, Astoria, to assist. Hampered enroute by winds gusting to 50 knots, icing at higher altitudes, visibility at low altitudes limited at times to one-fourth mile and the proximity of the coastal hills, Lieutenant Commander CORSON persevered in his task and after more than an hour of operating under these demanding flying conditions established direct communications with the ASTRID BAKKE which enabled him to locate the vessel. Upon arrival, he carefully positioned his helicopter 80 feet above the surface to avoid the ship's high rigging and moved in to commence a litter hoist from the equipment congested stern of the vessel which was pitching and rolling heavily in the storm tossed seas. This initial effort, however, was thwarted when the guideline parted as the vessel pitched in the turbulent sea. Undaunted, Lieutenant Commander CORSON once again moved in and established a hover position which, after several attempts, resulted in the successful completion of this arduous evolution. The helicopter was returned to Astoria under instrument flight conditions, at low altitude because of rain and sleet, and successfully delivered the injured seaman to medical authorities. Lieutenant Commander CORSON's initiative, perseverance and aeronautical skill contributed to saving the man's life. His courage, sound judgment and unwavering devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.