

1987



CITATION
TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF THE
KOREN KOLLIGIAN, JR., TROPHY

Captain Bradley J. Collins, 86th Tactical Fighter Wing, Ramstein Air Base, Germany, distinguished himself by exceptional airmanship while participating in aerial flight as an F-16 pilot on 26 May 1987.

Captain Collins was flying a dissimilar air combat training mission at Decimomannu Air Base, Sardinia. Just prior to terminating his second engagement, Captain Collins noted a zero oil pressure and immediately accomplished all required steps to recover the aircraft. At the time of the incident, the aircraft was at 6,000 feet above the water, over 600 knots airspeed in full afterburner, and 50 miles from the field. Despite the engine flameout, inoperative normal landing gear extension and a loss of nose wheel steering and brakes, Captain Collins successfully accomplished a flameout landing and cable arrestment.

Captain Collins' extraordinary alertness, outstanding skill and superior airmanship prevented the loss of a valuable aircraft, while avoiding potential risk to local civilian residents, and reflect great credit upon himself, the United States Air Force in Europe, and the United States Air Force.

USAF SAFETY AWARDS BOARD

RECOMMENDATION FOR THE KOREN KOLLIGIAN, JR., TROPHY

1. In accordance with AFR 900-26, the USAF Safety Awards Board evaluated seven nominations submitted by five major commands for the Koren Kolligian, Jr., Trophy for 1987. The board recommends Captain Bradley J. Collins, 86th Tactical Fighter Wing (USAFE), Ramstein AB, Germany, as the winner.
2. Captain Collins was nominated for coping with a critical aircraft emergency in an F-16 aircraft on 26 May 1987.
 - a. Captain Collins was flying a dissimilar air combat training sortie at Decimomannu AB, Sardinia, with his aircraft at 6,000 feet above the water and 610 knots airspeed in full afterburner when the master caution light and aural warning indicated a low oil quantity condition.
 - b. Captain Collins immediately confirmed these indications by observing zero oil pressure on the oil pressure gauge. He responded by simultaneously resetting the throttle to midrange, establishing a zoom climb, declaring an in-flight emergency, and heading for the nearest recovery field 50 miles away.
 - c. At this point, he ascertained recovery weather to be clear/unlimited and assessed alternatives to successful landing, including plans to avoid populated areas during his approach.
 - d. Captain Collins nursed his aircraft to within gliding distance of the field, then reduced power for the descent. Less than three minutes later and less than six minutes from the initial indication of oil loss, the engine caused airframe vibrations, smoke entered the cockpit, and the engine failed seconds later—almost 15 miles from the field. He already had a firm flameout plan in mind with several ejection alternatives.
 - e. Captain Collins checked to ensure the emergency power unit activated to provide the necessary hydraulic and electrical power required to maintain aircraft control and the accomplished critical action procedures for engine failure.
 - f. Attempts to restart the engine were unsuccessful, so he flew his aircraft to a position 8,900 feet above the field to initiate a 360-degree turn toward the landing runway. He identified his bailout location, heading and minimum altitude for a final landing or ejection decision.
 - g. Captain Collins lowered the gear handle at 6,700 feet above the ground but got no gear indications, so he lowered the gear using the emergency gear extension, confirmed the gear was down and locked, and lowered the hook.
 - h. Captain Collins skillfully maneuvered the aircraft and landed 2,000 feet from the approach end of a 9,800-foot runway. He immediately lowered the nose of the aircraft to the runway and applied wheel brakes, but because of

associated system failures caused by the seized engine, brakes as well as nose wheel steering were not available. He recognized the situation and maintained directional control using rudder and aileron inputs until the departure-end cable was engaged and the aircraft came to a stop.

i. Captain Collins' level-headed calculation of risks and outstanding airmanship in dealing with a grave mechanical difficulty prevented the loss of a valuable combat resource. His continual assessment of alternatives insured that, should he be forced to eject, his aircraft would pose minimum threat to civilian life and property.