

# Memorandum

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TO : Regional Commissioner, Burlington

DATE: October 18, 1979  
SWB 71/450-1

FROM : Chief Patrol Agent, Swanton, Vermont

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Special Achievement Award for Special Act -  
Border Patrol Agent Myron B. Merchant

At about 10:30 pm on October 14, 1979 Border Patrol Agents at Rouses Point, N. Y. received notification that two male subjects were walking south on the Cannon Corners Road near Mooers Forks, New York.

Agents Myron B. Merchant and Harry E. Oakley responded to the call in separate vehicles. Agent Merchant took up a surveillance position at the intersection of Route 11 and the Cannon Corners Road. This area is sparsely populated rural country. The nearest village, Mooers Forks, N. Y. is about seven miles to the east on Route 11.

At about 10:30 pm Agent Merchant saw two males walking south on the Cannon Corners Road a short distance from his position. Suddenly, they ran from the road into the woods after sighting a vehicle entering the area. Agent Merchant notified Agent Oakley by radio of the circumstances and leaving his vehicle followed the suspects into the woods. About fifty feet from the road he came under gunfire at extremely close range.

One shot struck Agent Merchant in the upper abdomen knocking him to the ground. One of the assailants walked toward Agent Merchant and raised his weapon apparently intending to kill him. Agent Merchant rolled along the ground as the assailant fired narrowly missing him. Merchant then drew his weapon, while still rolling, and returned fire. He fired two rounds, one striking the assailant in the right side and the other striking in the head.

During the gunfire the second suspect fled the area to be captured later at a New York State Police roadblock in Mooers, New York.



Investigation revealed that the dead assailant had fired four rounds from a .38 caliber revolver and that the second assailant had fired one round from a .38 caliber revolver. It was also found that two rounds in the second assailant's weapon had misfired, which may have been the motivating factor in his fleeing from the scene.

After the gun battle, Agent Merchant, seriously wounded, marked the position of the dead assailant with his lighted flashlight and then crawled on his back to the Cannon Corners Road. He then got to his feet and was seen by Agent Oakley who was responding to Agent Merchant's radio call.

The dead assailant was later identified as PIERRE RENAUD. The second assailant was identified as his brother, MICHEL RENAUD. The RENAUD brothers had escaped custody on October 10, 1979 after over-powering two prison guards transporting them to a court appearance in Montreal, Quebec. They had been in custody charged with the murder of a police officer and the serious wounding of two other officers in that city.

Mr. Merchant demonstrated great personal courage and coolness. Even though seriously wounded, his presence of mind enabled him to give a description of the fleeing subject.

I, therefore, recommend that Agent Merchant be granted a Special Achievement Award. He showed great personal courage while under fire in a life or death situation by successfully defending himself against the deadliest force possible. His presence of mind, even though seriously wounded, enabled him to give a description of the fleeing subject that later assisted police officers in identifying the fugitive at a roadblock.

In an unprovoked deadly attack, Border Patrol Agent Myron B. Merchant defended himself in the highest tradition of the U. S. Border Patrol. His dedication to duty and presence of mind assisted in the capture of the subject of a Canada-wide manhunt.

A Special Achievement Award accompanied by a cash award of \$300 is recommended.

*John Henderson*