

General Orders

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Washington, D.C., 21 October 1968

No. 59

Presidential Unit Citation (Army). 1. Award of the Presidential Unit Citation (Army) by The President of the United States of America to the following unit of the Armed Forces of the United States is confirmed in accordance with paragraph 194, AR 672-5-1. The text of the citation, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on 23 September 1968, reads as follows:

By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States and as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States I have today awarded the Presidential Unit Citation (Army) for extraordinary heroism to:

THE 1ST BRIGADE, 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION (AIRMOBILE) AND ATTACHED UNITS:

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division

1st Battalion (Airborne), 327th Infantry

2nd Battalion (Airborne), 502nd Infantry

2nd Howitzer Battalion (Airborne), 320th Artillery

Support Battalion (Airborne), 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division

Troop A, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry

Company A, 326th Engineer Battalion

181st Military Intelligence Detachment

20th Chemical Detachment

406th Army Security Agency Detachment (Airborne Brigade)

Battery B, 1st Battalion, 30th Artillery

The 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) and attached units distinguished themselves by extraordinary heroism in action against a hostile force in Dak To, Republic of Vietnam, during "**OPERATION HAWTHORNE**", 2 THROUGH 20 June 1966. "**OPERATION HAWTHORNE**" BEGAN ON 2 June 1966 when the Brigade was directed to relieve the beleaguered mountain outpost of Tou Morong. The 1st Battalion (Airborne), 327th Infantry teamed up with elements of the 24th Tactical Zone Command (42nd Army of the Republic of Vietnam Regiment and 21st Ranger Battalion) to accomplish this phase of the operation. Intelligence reports received at Brigade Headquarters indicated a major enemy drive was under way to overrun the Central Highlands. At 0230 hours on the morning of 7 June 1966, an estimated North Vietnamese battalion of the 24th North Vietnamese Army Regiment savagely attacked an artillery position in the valley west of Tou Morong. The position was manned by Battery B, 2nd Howitzer Battalion (Airborne), 320th Artillery; Company A, 2nd Battalion (Airborne), 502nd Infantry; and elements of Company A, 226th Engineer Battalion. The charging enemy was able to penetrate the artillery's perimeter. The battle that had the winner-take-all climax saw the valiant Americans secure their weapons and fire point-blank into the still charging North Vietnamese Army ranks. As dawn brought light to the exhausted warriors, 86 enemy bodies were counted, 13 of them inside the artillery position. After relieving the Tou Morong outpost, the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 327th Infantry, moved north. Another bitter battle erupted, this time engaging all three of the infantry companies of the Battalion at one time, each in a separate fire fight. As the battle raged, the Battalion's elite Tiger Force was hard hit and almost overrun by an estimated two companies of heavily armed, well trained North Vietnamese Army Regulars. On 7 June

1966, the 2nd Battalion (Airborne), 502nd Infantry, was helilifted into a blocking position where it began a sweep south to link up with its heavily engaged sister position where it began a sweep south to link up with its heavily engaged sister Battalion. Throughout the battle, the enemy strength was fixed as a well trained North Vietnamese Army regiment. Their heavy weapons were strategically placed in sturdy bunkers which were spread out along the fingers and draws placed in sturdy bunkers which were spread out along the fingers and draws of mountainside. As the battered but courageous 2nd Battalion (Airborne), 502 Infantry companies regrouped and the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 327th Infantry, continued their relentless attack from the south, a decision was made to have B-52 Bombers strike Dak Tan Kan Valley before the Brigade moved in for the final kill. **“OPERATION HAWTHORNE”** was one of the most viciously contested battles of the Vietnam War. Day and night the battle raged, moving from bunker to trench line, to spider hole, to bamboo thicket, to streambed, and finally to victory. At the conclusion of **“OPERATION HAWTHORNE”** the 24th North Vietnamese Army Regiment was rendered ineffective as a fighting unit, suffering 1200 casualties by body count and estimate. By comparison, friendly casualties were 48 dead and 239 wounded. A major North Vietnamese offensive to seize the North Central Highlands was blunted. Throughout **“OPERATION HAWTHORNE”** the extraordinary heroism, dogged determination, gallantry, and indomitable spirit with which the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, successfully accomplished all assigned missions were in keeping with the finest traditions of the United States Army and reflect great credit upon all members of the Brigade who participated in this remarkable combat action.

2. Award of the Presidential Unit Citation (Army) by The President of the United States of America to the following unit of the Armed Forces of the United States is confirmed in accordance with paragraph 194, AR 672-5-1. The text of the citation, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on 23 September 1968, reads as follows:

By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States and as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States and as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States I have today awarded the Presidential Unit Citation (Army) for extraordinary heroism to:

3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division
Brigade Command and Control Party at FSB Gold
3rd Battalion (less Company C), 22nd Infantry
2nd Battalion (less Company B), 34th Armor
2nd Battalion, 77th Artillery
2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry
2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry

The 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division and the attached and assigned units distinguished themselves by extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations on 21 March 1967 in Suoi Tre, Republic of Vietnam. During the early morning hours the Viet Cong 272nd Main Force Regiment, reinforced, launched a massive and determined ground attack and overran elements of the 3rd Battalion, 22nd Infantry and 2nd Battalion, 77th Artillery, located at Fire Support Base Gold near Suoi Tre, Republic of Vietnam. As the enemy penetrated the perimeter, the American troops set up an interim perimeter and continued to fire on the enemy. When the Viet Cong directed anti-tank fire upon the artillery position, heroic gun crews repaired their damaged guns and, at several points, fired directly into the advancing enemy. While the battle continued to rage and grow in intensity, the Brigade Commander was directing the 2nd Battalions of the 12th Infantry, the 22nd Infantry (Mechanized), and the 34th Armor, to the besieged fire support base. At

the same time, the support and service elements of the brigade began a furious aerial resupply of ammunition and medical supplies from the brigade rear base camp at Dau Tieng. As the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry, began its overland move to the fire support base, a heavy concentration of enemy mortar fire was directed upon their positions. Concurrently, mechanized and armor elements began moving across the Suoi Samat River at a ford which had only recently been located and which previously had been thought impassable. The mechanized unit, followed by the armor battalion, drove into the western sector of the engaged perimeter passing through engaged elements of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry. Striking the Viet Cong on the flank, the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry, smashed through the enemy with such intensity and ferocity that the enemy attack faltered and broke. As the fleeing and now shattered enemy force retreated to the northeast, the 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor, swept the position destroying large numbers of Viet Cong. Throughout the battle, fighters of the United States Air Force, directed by the brigade's forward air controllers, provided close support to the fire support base and hammered enemy concentrations outside the perimeter. As the Forward Air Controller aircraft dived through heavy anti-aircraft fire to mark enemy positions, the plane was hit by ground fire, and crashed. After securing the fire support base, a sweep of the area was conducted, revealing a total of 647 Viet Cong bodies and 10 enemy captured. It is estimated that an additional 200 enemy were killed as a result of the aerial and artillery bombardments. Friendly casualties were extremely light, resulting in only 33 killed and 187 wounded. Through their fortitude and determination, the personnel of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, and attached units were able in great measure to cripple a large Viet Cong force. Their devotion to duty and extraordinary heroism reflect distinct credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

3. Award of the Presidential Unit Citation (Army) by the President of the United States of America to the following unit of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam is confirmed in accordance with paragraph 194, AR 672-5-1. The text of the citation, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on 15 August 1968, reads as follows:

By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States and as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States I have today awarded the Presidential Unit Citation (Army) for extraordinary heroism to:

HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY;
3RD PLATOON, 5TH COMPANY;
AND
6TH COMPANY
OF THE 2ND BATTALION, 9TH REGIMENT, 5TH INFANTRY DIVISION
ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

The foregoing units distinguished themselves by extraordinary heroism during the defense of a Revolutionary Development Program pacification project near Tan Hung, Binh Long Province, Republic of Vietnam, on 11 July 1967 when they repulsed a full scale attack on their position by the 141st North Vietnamese Army Regiment. This numerically superior enemy force was equipped with numerous automatic weapons, large supplies of ammunition, and new equipment. During the early morning hours, the Republic of Vietnam units were subjected to a heavy volume of mortar fire followed by three separate human wave assaults against the position. In each case, the enemy penetrations of the perimeter were beaten back by fierce counterattacks. The viciousness of the close combat and the effectiveness of the defenders were fully demonstrated when more than 70 enemy bodies were found within the inner fortifications after the battle. Supported by air and artillery, the valiant defenders held

their position, accounted for more than 170 North Vietnamese soldiers, and captured over 90 individual and crew served weapons. The determination, devotion to duty, and indomitable courage demonstrated by these men of the 2nd Battalion, 9th Regiment, are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon themselves, their unit, and the Republic of Vietnam.

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

Official:	W. C. WESTMORELAND <i>General, United States Army, Chief of Staff</i>
	KENNETH G. WICKHAM, <i>Major General, United States Army, The Adjutant General.</i>

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