

GENERAL ORDERS }
 No. 14 }

HEADQUARTERS
 DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
 WASHINGTON, D.C., 5 April 1968

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION (ARMY) (FIRST OAK LEAF CLUSTER). Award of the Presidential Unit Citation (Army) (First Oak Leaf Cluster) 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 7 March 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) (First Oak Leaf Cluster) for extraordinary heroism to:

THE 42D RANGER BATTALION
 21ST INFANTRY DIVISION
 ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

The 42d Ranger Battalion, 21st Infantry Division, Army of the Republic of Vietnam, distinguished itself by extraordinary heroism in action while engaged in military operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. On 17 May 1966, the 42d Ranger Battalion was committed in battle against the Viet Cong elite Soc Trang Provincial Battalion in the vicinity of Vinh Chau, Vietnam. After being helilifted into the objective area the Battalion moved tactically to establish contact with the insurgents. As advance elements cleared a heavy mangrove thicket, the Viet Cong opened fire from well-prepared defensive fortifications. The Battalion immediately countered the enemy fire, deployed its forces, and assaulted the positions, with the main effort to the north. The left flank of the Battalion received intense machinegun and small arms fire from enemy positions to the west, impeding their advance. Determining this to be the main core of enemy resistance, the Battalion maneuvered to engage the insurgents and advanced to the west against increasing resistance. 1st and 3d Companies assaulted the enemy's flank, but were able to make only small gains even in heavy hand-to-hand combat. To preserve the momentum of the attack, the Battalion Commander moved 2d Company into position with 4th Company at the center, and in a coordinated effort the Battalion assaulted, vigorously, the Viet Cong stronghold. The Viet Cong positions were staggered, with three separate lines of entrenchments concealed in thickly vegetated canal lines. In the face of murderous fire from these positions, the determined Rangers closed with the enemy and engaged him in fierce hand-to-hand combat until the objective had been cleared and the Viet Cong resistance silenced. Throughout this action, the Rangers demonstrated outstanding courage and professionalism. The conspicuous gallantry of the 42d Ranger Battalion is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam."

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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

HAROLD K. JOHNSON,
General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.

Official:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM,
Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.

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