



COMMANDER
UNITED STATES NAVAL FORCES
VIETNAM

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star Medal to

JOHN FORBES KERRY
LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE

For service as set forth in the following:

CITATION

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving as Officer in Charge of United States Navy Patrol Craft Fast 94 and Officer in Tactical Command of an operation in the Republic of Vietnam. On 28 February 1969, Patrol Craft Fast 23, 43 and 94, in conjunction with Underwater Demolition Team 13 and Vietnamese Regional and Popular Forces personnel, conducted an operation on the Ca Mau Peninsula as part of Operations SEA LORDS. While transiting the Bay Hap River en route to an insertion point along the Dong Cung River, these craft with thirty Regional/Popular Force personnel embarked in each unit came under heavy enemy small arms fire from the river banks. The Officer in Tactical Command, Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY directed his units to turn to the beach and charge the Viet Cong positions. Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY expertly directed the fire of his craft at the fleeing enemy while simultaneously coordinating the insertion of the embarked troops. While the Regional and Popular Forces conducted an area sweep, Patrol Craft Fast 43 remained on station to provide fire support and Patrol Craft Fast 23 and 94 moved upstream to investigate an area from which gunshots were coming. Arriving at the area, Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY's craft received a B-40 rocket close aboard. Once again Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY ordered his units to charge the enemy positions and summoned Patrol Craft Fast 43 to the area to provide additional firepower. Patrol Craft Fast 94 then beached in the center of the enemy positions and an enemy soldier sprang up from his position not ten feet from Patrol Craft Fast 94 and fled. Without hesitation Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY leaped ashore, pursued the man behind a hootch and killed him, capturing a B-40 rocket launcher with a round in the chamber. Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY then led an assault party and conducted a sweep of the area while the Patrol Craft Fast continued to provide fire support. After the enemy had been completely routed, all personnel returned to the Patrol Craft Fast to withdraw from the area. While backing off the beach, these units again came under a hail of fire, this time from the opposite river bank. Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY immediately coordinated the firepower of his units and suppressed the enemy fire. Later, after disembarking personnel and while exiting from the Bay Hap River, the Patrol Craft Fast were again taken under fire. Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY immediately maneuvered his craft through several

strafing runs which completely silenced the enemy. As a result of this operation, ten Viet Cong were killed and one wounded with no friendly casualties. In addition, numerous sampans, structures and bunkers were destroyed as well as confiscation of substantial quantities of combat essential supplies. Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY's devotion to duty, courage under fire, outstanding leadership, and exemplary professionalism directly contributed to the success of this operation and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President



E. R. ZENWALT, Jr.
Vice Admiral, U. S. Navy
Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam