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HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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I. THE PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION (ARMY). 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, 3 December 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:

TROOP A, 3D SQUADRON, 5TH CAVALRY

1ST PLATOON, TROOP B, 3D SQUADRON, 5TH CAVALRY

3D PLATOON, TROOP C, 3D SQUADRON, 5TH CAVALRY

HEADQUARTERS SECTION, HEADQUARTERS TROOP,
3D SQUADRON, 5TH CAVALRY

GROUND SURVEILLANCE SECTION, HEADQUARTERS TROOP,
3D SQUADRON, 5TH CAVALRY

MEDICAL PLATOON, HEADQUARTERS TROOP, 3D SQUADRON,
5TH CAVALRY, OF THE 9TH INFANTRY DIVISION

AND TO

BATTERY B, 7TH BATTALION, 99TH ARTILLERY

UNITED STATES ARMY

The foregoing units distinguished themselves by gallantry in action while engaged in military operations against a heavily armed enemy on the night of 19-20 March 1967 in the second battle of Ap Bau Bang, Republic of Vietnam. Although initially outnumbered more than ten to one and completely surrounded, Troop A tenaciously contained the fierce Viet Cong attack. As the enemy pressed its coordinated attack with mortars, automatic weapons, recoilless rifles and anti-tank rockets, the courageous defenders of the artillery fire support base at Ap Bau Bang sustained many direct hits on their combat vehicles, destroying two of the vehicles and wounding over half the troopers. With dauntless courage, ignoring their wounds, they struck back at the fanatical enemy, breaking up the enemy's repeated assaults. In violently executed moves, the besieged Troop A perimeter was reinforced by elements of Troop B, C, and Headquarters Troop, to relieve pressure on the defenders and destroy the Viet Cong forces. As the armored reinforcing columns raced to the battle area, they broke through the Viet Cong ambushes prepared for them, continued on to the

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embattled perimeter under intense fire, charged through the heavy enemy concentrations, and accomplished the first successful night reinforcement by armored units of a perimeter under heavy Viet Cong attack in the Vietnamese conflict. Massed fires of the cavalymen and supporting artillery, armed helicopters, and tactical air fires poured into the enemy masses, as the troopers conducted successive counterattacks to complete the rout of the 273d Viet Cong Regiment. As dawn broke, after the 6-hour battle, enemy dead covered the battlefield. The indomitable fighting spirit and gallantry of the cavalry troopers achieved a signal victory at Ap Bau Bang which contributed significantly to the success of Operation Junction City in the Vietnamese campaign. The gallantry and heroism of the troopers was in keeping with the highest traditions of the cavalry and the United States Army.

II. VALOROUS UNIT AWARD. By direction of the Secretary of the Army, under the provisions of paragraph 202.1, AR 672-5-1, the Valorous Unit Award is awarded the following unit of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam for extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations during the period indicated:

The citation reads as follows:

The Valorous Unit Award is awarded by direction of the Secretary of the Army to:

THE 43D RANGER BATTALION

for extraordinary heroism:

The 43d Ranger Battalion distinguished itself by extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations against the Viet Cong on Operation LONG PHI 955, on the 11th and 12th of February 1966, in the Republic of Vietnam. While acting as the Reserve Force of the 9th Infantry Division, Army of the Republic of Vietnam, the 43d Ranger Battalion was committed at 1200 hours on the 11th of February to relieve the 2d Battalion of the 15th Infantry Regiment and the 2d and 3d Troops of the 2d Armored Cavalry Squadron which were pinned down and receiving heavy casualties. At 1215 hours, the commander of the Ranger Battalion called for air strikes and artillery support and attempted to organize a coordinated attack with the 15th Infantry Regiment and the 2d Armored Cavalry Squadron; however, after the artillery and air cover was lifted, the Viet Cong fire was just as intense, and it was apparent to the Ranger Battalion Commander that there was not enough time to launch a completely coordinated attack. He ordered the 43d Rangers to advance on their own. The attack was led by the 4th Ranger Company which penetrated the enemy position, the 2d Ranger Company was immediately ordered to reinforce the 4th Ranger Company, and the 1st Ranger Company was ordered to flank the enemy's position on the east to relieve the pressure on the 4th and 2d Ranger Companies. When the 4th Company reported that they had captured a 75mm Recoilless Rifle, the Battalion Commander knew that they were facing a much stronger enemy than was estimated. When the 2d Ranger Company also reported capturing a 75mm Recoilless Rifle, the 43d Ranger Battalion was obviously facing a reinforced main force Viet Cong Battalion, armed with the latest model weapons and deeply entrenched in well-prepared defensive positions. At this time the magnitude of the operation became apparent. The 3d Ranger Company, which had been sent to reinforce the 2d Armored Cavalry and attack the west flank, had taken heavy losses; however, they had succeeded

in closing with the Viet Cong and engaging them in close combat. The 1st Ranger Company, which was assaulting the east flank, was halted several times by intense small arms and automatic weapons fire and had become mixed with troops of the 15th Infantry Regiment, but continued the assault until ordered to halt by the 15th Infantry Regimental Commander because of the intensity of automatic and recoilless rifle fire directed upon them. At nightfall, all the friendly units were ordered to organize into defensive positions. At approximately 2130 hours, the Viet Cong counterattacked against the 43d Rangers with an estimated reinforced platoon supported by mortar fire. The Rangers held until, supported by a flare ship, they forced the Viet Cong to withdraw. At first light on the 12th of February, the 43d Rangers, the 15th Infantry Regiment, and 2d Armored Cavalry swept across the Viet Cong positions, picking up numerous weapons and Viet Cong bodies, but no significant contact was made. The Viet Cong, later identified as the undefeated U-MINH 10 Battalion, had been forced to escape by evasive tactics during the hours of darkness, leaving behind approximately 300 Viet Cong killed or wounded in action, much valuable equipment and many weapons, and effectively destroying the U-MINH 10 Battalion as a fighting unit. The 43d Ranger Battalion conducted themselves in an outstanding manner throughout the assault. Facing intense enemy fire, and knowing that the position attacked heavily favored the Viet Cong, the 43d Ranger Battalion, in a well-disciplined assault, gallantly penetrated the well-fortified defenses and routed a well-equipped and well-disciplined enemy. The Battalion's conspicuous gallantry on the field of battle contributed significantly in the success of Operation LONG PHI 955 and brought great credit to themselves and the nation they serve, and their actions are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service.

III--MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION. By direction of the Secretary of the Army, under the provisions of paragraph 203, AR 672-5-1, the Meritorious Unit Commendation is awarded to the following unit of the United States Army for exceptionally meritorious achievement in the performance of outstanding service during the period indicated:

HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY
UNITED STATES ARMY ENGINEER COMMAND VIETNAM
(PROVISIONAL)

AND THE FOLLOWING ATTACHED UNITS

227TH ENGINEER DETACHMENT (TOPOGRAPHIC LIAISON)

559TH ENGINEER DETACHMENT (TERRAIN ANALYSIS)

579TH ENGINEER DETACHMENT (TERRAIN ANALYSIS)

26TH PUBLIC INFORMATION DETACHMENT

The citation reads as follows:

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, United States Army Engineer Command Vietnam (Provisional), 227th Engineer Detachment (Topographic Liaison), 559th Engineer Detachment (Terrain Analysis), 579th Engineer Detachment (Terrain Analysis), and the 26th Public Information Detachment distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance

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of outstanding services in the Republic of Vietnam during the period 1 December 1966 through 20 March 1968. The Headquarters staff performed the duties in an exceptionally meritorious manner towards operational support planning and supervision, to direct, coordinate and monitor contract construction, and to coordinate the activities of assigned engineer brigades and other units engaged in mapping, construction, operational support and related activities within the Republic of Vietnam. The Headquarters provided the much needed continuity of the ever-growing engineer troop effort in the Republic of Vietnam where they provided control over 29,000 officers and enlisted men and controlled over 18,700 major end items of equipment. Through their outstanding accomplishments, they have displayed a high degree of professionalism and expertise which has brought great credit to the Corps of Engineers and the United States Army.

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

Official:

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

W. C. WESTMORELAND,
General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.

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